
Heart and Soul ... A Weekly Meditation

October 12, 2014

Filled By Christ

*“All the fullness of deity lives in Christ’s body.
And you have been filled by him, who is the head of every ruler and authority.”*
Colossians 2:9, 10 (Common English Bible)

This simple truth, that we have been filled by Christ, directly impacts the nature of our Christian life. Guidance for our decisions, the pattern of our behavior and inspiration for the common tasks of life each comes from our communion with Christ. This is what the New Testament means by, “walking by the Spirit” – the glad and spontaneous response to the love of the risen and living Christ. Jesus desires to have the same quality of relationship with us as does a good friend. The best of friendships are those that gently but courageously work in the depths of our hearts to change our habits and shape us to be better. It is this influence upon us that Christ seeks.

Unfortunately, there are some people of faith that never understand this. Their faith is one lived according to the law – a code of religious or moral duties which are accepted as binding. With a clear set of rules in hand, such people strive to please God by sheer effort of self-discipline and restraint. They seek to “get it right” by their own strength, convinced that this is what God wants in a relationship with us. What’s more, they do their best to impose their rules upon others. No one really wants to suffer alone.

Naturally, there is nothing wrong with living a disciplined life. The exercise of faithful obedience to the teachings of our Lord is an important part of following Jesus provided such a decision is freely accepted and not imposed upon others. But we must never substitute faithful obedience for a loving, grateful and direct relationship with the person of Jesus. God’s call to us has always been one to a relationship with God’s Son, not a rulebook.

With our primary attention directed to building a relationship with Jesus rather than learning the particulars of a rulebook, life is filled with wonder and mystery and delight. The joy of discovery that is characteristic of any relationship always trumps the experience of being observed by a watchful eye ready to pounce when we stumble. As our relationship with Jesus grows, life is lived with the confidence that one day we will be complete, not because of anything we have accomplished but because of what God has promised to accomplish in those who love Him.

Prayer: *Increase in me, O God, an awareness of Your presence in my life and my desire to know and love You more fully. Amen.*

Doug Hood