

‘AND COME AND DWELL THEREIN’

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Christ In You

"If you love me, you will obey what I command. And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Counsellor to be with you forever— the Spirit of truth. The world cannot accept him, because it neither sees him nor knows him. But you know him, for he lives with you and will be in you. I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you. Before long, the world will not see me anymore, but you will see me. Because I live, you also will live. On that day you will realize that I am in my Father, and you are in me, and I am in you."

John 14: 15 - 20

In an earlier lecture we alluded to Frederick Coutts insistence that there is no holiness apart from 'Christ in you.' This lecture falls into two parts: In the first part we will consider our experience of 'indwelling' from the perspective of the office and ministry of the Holy Spirit of whom Jesus says 'he lives with you and will be in you.' In the second part we will consider the paradox inherent in the text 'not I, but Christ living in me.'

The Lord and Giver of Life

The Nicene Creed is 'Nicene', not because it is the product of the Council of Nicea in AD 325, but because, after a long period of struggle and debate, the 'Nicene' formula was finally accepted and clarified at the Council of Constantinople in AD 381.

Our purpose in this exercise is to draw out from the creed and the Bible the sense in which the Holy Spirit 'will be in us.' The biblical material is attached to these notes as an appendix.

The Paradox of Grace

Having considered some of the ways in which the Holy Spirit is 'in us,' we now move to the question of what Jesus means when he says '*I am in my Father, and you are in me, and I am in you.*' (John 14), and what Paul means when he writes to the Colossians about 'Christ in you, the hope of glory!'

Is this a mystical union? Or is it simply an analogy?

When D.M. Baillie's *God was in Christ* was published in 1956 it was widely welcomed as a real attempt to come to grips with the incarnation, but it also touches on what it means for humankind to be 'in Christ.'

It hardly needs to be said the New Testament is conscious of great gulf between what Christ is and what we are, even when we are his people: and so to some it may seem that this should exclude all analogy between his experience of God and ours.

Baillie goes on to make an upward comparison – if humankind is capable of experiencing the grace of God: did Jesus also need or experience this grace?

It is relevant, however, to remember that the New Testament, while it speaks of the grace of God as given to Christ, speaks much more of the grace of Christ as given to us. And that indicates exactly the relation between his experience of God and ours, as conceived in the New Testament. Ours depends upon his.

If God, in some measure lives and acts in us, it is because first, and without measure, he lived and acted in Christ Thus the New Testament tends sometimes to say that as God dwells in Christ, so Christ dwells in us.

The grace of God at work in Christ is equally at work in us. Hence Baillie cites the prologue of John's Gospel: '*Of his fullness have all we received, and grace for grace.*' (KJV)

Baillie calls this a *paradox of grace*.

*St. Paul can express the paradox by saying: 'I live; and yet no longer I, but **Christ** liveth in me'*
Galatians 2: 20; *as he can say to Christians 'You are of Christ, and Christ is of God.* 1 Corinthians 3: 23

The Paradox of Grace in everyday experience

Moving from Christology to experience, we ask ourselves how this applies to Christian life and service. Again we turn to the New Testament and three texts which may help us understand the practical outworking of the theory.

The Testimony of Saint Paul

By the grace of God I am what I am, and his grace to me was not without effect. No, I worked harder than all of them—yet not I, but the grace of God that was with me.

1 Corinthians 15: 10

The words of Jesus to the 12 evangelists

But when they arrest you, do not worry about what to say or how to say it. At that time you will be given what to say, for it will not be you speaking, but the Spirit of your Father speaking through you.

Matthew 10: 19 - 20

Paul's testimony to the Galatians

I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me.

Galatians 2: 20

Having touched upon the doctrine of the incarnation and the doctrine of the Holy Spirit, we now come naturally to the doctrine of the Trinity in these three verses illustrating the paradox of grace.

I laboured, yet not I, but the grace of God that was with me
We speak, yet not we, but the Spirit of our Father speaks through us
I live, yet not I, but Christ lives in me.

Baillie goes on to say that when I make the wrong choice, I am entirely responsible, and my conscience condemns me. And yet, paradoxically, when I make the right choice, my conscience does not applaud or congratulate me. Instead of that I say: 'Not I but the grace of God.' Thus while there is a human side to every good action, so that it is genuinely the free choice of a free person, somehow the Christian feels the other side of it, the divine side, is logically prior. The grace of God is prevenient. The good was his before it was ours.

Or as Harriet Auber puts it:

*And every virtue we possess,
And every victory won,
And every thought of holiness,
Are his alone.*

The Holy Spirit

The Lord and Giver of Life From the Nicene Creed. 'And we believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord and Giver of Life, who proceedeth from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son together is worshipped and glorified, who spoke by the prophets.

Creator Spirit

Now the earth was formless and empty,
darkness was over the surface of the deep,
and the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters.

Gen. 1: 2

the LORD God formed the man from the
dust of the ground and breathed into his
nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living being.

Gen 2: 7

Recreator Spirit

I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you will be clean; I will cleanse you
from all your impurities and from all your idols. I will give you a new heart
and put a new spirit in you.

Ezekiel 36: 25 –26

I tell you the truth; no one can see the kingdom of God unless he is born
again. You should not be surprised at my saying, 'You must be born again.
Again – Greek 'anōthen' – from above, from first principle or over again.' The wind blows wherever
it pleases. You hear its sound, but you cannot tell where it comes from or
where it is going. So it is with everyone born of the Spirit.

John 3: 6 - 8

Transcreator Spirit

while we are in this tent, we groan and are burdened, because we do not
wish to be unclothed but to be clothed with our heavenly dwelling, so that
what is mortal may be swallowed up by life. Now it is God who has made
us for this very purpose and has given us the Spirit as a deposit Deposit –
Greek 'arrabon' – earnest, down payment, deposit, promise of things to come or, in modern Greek, engagement
ring or symbol of betrothal, guaranteeing what is to come.

1 Cor. 5: 4 – 6

you were marked in him with a seal Seal – Greek. 'sphragis'- guarantee, symbol of
authenticity, the promised Holy Spirit, who is a deposit guaranteeing our
inheritance until the redemption of those who are God's possession--to the
praise of his glory.

Eph. 1: 13 – 15

do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, with whom you were sealed for the
day of redemption.

Eph. 4: 30