

Notes for the Ekklesia Meeting

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Jesus In Me

by Dan Trygg

“I... ask on behalf of... those also who believe in Me through their word; ²¹ that they may all be one; even as You, Father, are in Me and I in You, that they also may be in Us, so that the world may believe that You sent Me. ²² The glory which You have given Me I have given to them, that they may be one, just as We are one; ²³ I in them and You in Me, that they may be perfected in unity, so that the world may know that You sent Me, and loved them, even as You have loved Me.”

John 17:20-23

“I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me.”

Galatians 2:20

“But thanks be to God, who in Christ always leads us in triumphal procession, and through us spreads in every place the fragrance that comes from knowing Him. ¹⁵ For we are the aroma of Christ to God among those who are being saved and among those who are perishing; ¹⁶ to the one a fragrance from death to death, to the other a fragrance from life to life. Who is sufficient for these things?”

II Corinthians 2:14-16

“...you are a letter of Christ, prepared by us, written not with ink but with the Spirit of the living God, not on tablets of stone but on tablets of human hearts. ⁴ Such is the confidence that we have through Christ toward God. ⁵ Not that we are competent of ourselves to claim anything as coming from us; our competence is from God, ⁶ who has made us competent to be ministers of a new covenant, not of letter but of spirit; for the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life.”

II Corinthians 3:3-6

It has been said that “**no one can live the Christian life, except Jesus Christ Himself**”. This is an important realization. **God never intended for us to be able to imitate Jesus by our own efforts.** He does not expect that we will be able to keep ourselves from sin in our own strength, any more that we could heal the sick or raise the dead by the power of our own will. **He knows we cannot live *supernatural* lives by our *natural* abilities.** The church was never to primarily be a gathering of people doing religious activities, or a society of moral reformists, or a company of social do-gooders, or a political coalition for righteous causes. As good and beneficial as any of these activities may be, they totally miss the *essence* of what God intended a believer in Jesus Christ to experience or express. **God expects nothing less than the power and presence of God to fill us, guide us and be expressed through us to the world.**

The Jesus-in-me life should look different than my best efforts. It should be qualitatively different than my best attempts at imitation. **It should be *noticeably* different. It should *look* different, *sound* different, *feel* different than what we would expect from an ordinary human being.** The darkness should be passing away, because the true light within us is shining (I Jn. 2:8; cf. Prov. 4:18; Eph. 5:8-14). There should be **a new righteousness** developing in our hearts and lives (Eph. 4:24; II Cor. 5:17). We should be experiencing **a new desire to obey God, and a revulsion toward evil** (I Jn. 2:1-6; Gal. 5:17; Rom. 12:9). **A new sense of love and compassion** for others will rise up within us (I Jn. 2:7-11; 3:14-18; 4:7-8; Gal. 5:22). We will find **a new joy** in our hearts, a joy in God Himself that permeates all aspects of our lives, if we will let it (Gal. 5:22; Jn. 15:11; 16:20-24; Rom. 14:17). We will notice God working **patience and steadiness of character** in our hearts (Gal. 5:22; Rom. 5:3-5; Jas. 1:2-4; I Pet. 5:8-10). We will be **conscious that our lives are important**, and that we have something significant to contribute that will benefit others and God's purposes (Heb. 3:1; Eph. 1:15-18; 3:20-4:1). There will be **a new peace** to guard our hearts and minds from the anxieties and uncertainties of life (Jn. 14:27; Rom. 5:1; 8:6; Phil. 4:6,7). The life of Jesus-in-me will often produce **a surprisingly radical change** in life (II Pet. 4:3,4). It will produce in me **the inworking of new power and new spiritual gifts** (I Cor. 12:6,11; Gal. 2:8; 3:5; I Pet. 4:10,11).

When an individual is operating by the “Jesus-in-me power” of the Holy Spirit, he or she will stand out as noticeable, but is often dismissed as “unusual” and “an exception” to what the normal Christian life is to be. **When a whole community of Christians begins to walk by the Jesus-in-me power, the impact is amazing!** The Spirit of God is free to move, and powerful things begin to take place. **The Word of God goes forth with power and credibility.** When there is an *entire community* of Spirit-empowered believers, it is easy to motivate newcomers to press through to learn to live the same way. It is hard to make excuses for a sub-standard life, when most everyone in the group is living in the power of Jesus in them. **When enough people come into this type of walk, the Body of Christ seems to reach something akin to a critical mass, and the outreach is explosive.** This phenomenon is often called “revival” or “awakening”, because it is a return to the life and power we read about as standard operating procedure in the NT. In the times between such “revivals”, the church seems to be nearly asleep, almost catatonic, because the life, vitality, and power of God seem to be all but lost. Yet, the truth is that **Jesus has not changed.** He remains the same. So **the Jesus-in-me life should produce the same qualitative results in every generation.**

This evangelistic impact is to be expected. It is a natural spreading out of the “leaven” of the power of the Kingdom of God (Matt. 13:33), as it is seen in the changed lives of people. **We are all set into families, neighborhoods, communities, and relationship systems. When we are radically changed by the power of Jesus living in us, people around us will see and take notice.** People will “read” the effect of Jesus that is being produced in us, and they will listen to our testimony as to what has produced this. **People are watching us, especially if we seem to be different from other people. They will “check us out” to see if we are for real, or if we are phony.** Our lives are like a canvas upon which God paints a picture to communicate what life with Him is all about. The illustration Paul used is that our lives are like a letter from God to people. **We are all audio-visual communications from God to those whose lives intersect with ours.** Jesus in us communicates to those around us by the words, expressions and actions of our lives. If you are His, the writing *is* there. He is attempting to communicate through your life, even if you are not consistently abiding in Him. Other messages may seem to be more evident, however, and it may be difficult for others to get a clear “read” about Jesus. What do people see *in you*?

In another illustration, Paul says that people will “smell” Jesus in us. **As we live lives that are offered as a sacrifice to God, by the power of Jesus in us, the sweet aroma of knowing Him will emanate from our lives, and others will notice.** Again, if we are His, ...if Jesus is in us..., then that aroma is *already* within us. Is that what people “smell” coming from *your* life? Is it a clear, strong, sweet smell, ...or is it mixed with other things that detract or confuse that fragrance? There is a passage in the OT that says, “Dead flies make a perfumer's oil stink, so a little foolishness is weightier than wisdom and honor,” and “one sinner destroys much good”(Ecc. 9:18; 10:1). It doesn't take a whole lot of inconsistency or hypocrisy to undercut or dull the power of your testimony. Thankfully, **Jesus Himself will always “smell sweet”, but people may sometimes catch a whiff of something else in our lives that is not so “sweet”. It is important to be honest, and not pretend. Be clear about what is Him, and what is not.** We are all in process of giving over more and more to Jesus. People can tell what smells like Jesus, and what smells like the rottenness of sin. They probably have their own “stinky stuff”. It's not about us, ...it's about *Him*. **He will always lead us in triumph, and He is able to manifest His sweet aroma even through us!**

How can we possibly “live the Christian life”? Our human flesh can't. **The key to “supernatural living” is a “supernatural source”. That source is already within us.** We see that Jesus prayed for us, those who would come to faith as a result of the preaching of the gospel by the apostles, and those following after. He did not just pray that we would understand how to behave. No. He prayed that we may be one as He and the Father are one. He prayed that He would live in us, and the Father in Him, so that we would be one as He and the Father are one. You see, Jesus clearly understood that a fleshly source could only produce a fleshly life. **In order to live a spiritual life, we would need a spiritual source, ...a new, spiritual nature** (Jn. 3:3-7; Matt. 7:15-18; 12:33). **That is exactly what God has done for us!**

Paul said he was crucified with Christ, and it was no longer he who lived, but Christ lives in him! How is that possible? It is only possible by the new birth and the indwelling Spirit of God. **Notice the next part, however, “...the life which I now live in the flesh I live by trust in the Son of God...”. Which is it? Does he live, or doesn't he?** The truth is that he was put to death with Jesus, and raised with Jesus (Rom. 6:2-11; Col. 3:1-5). On a practical level, however, it meant that he chose *not* to trust in his *own* plan, his *own* inclinations, or his *own* judgments. Instead, **he purposefully trusted in Jesus, who lived inside of him, to guide, motivate and empower him to live.** The supernatural source for Paul's supernatural life was Jesus Himself, living inside of him. Note, however, that **this did not mean that Paul could flip over to auto-pilot. He still had to choose. Instead of choosing to live by self, he chose to live by the indwelling Christ.**

This idea of God working in us offers a key insight to the Jesus-in-me life. The Greek word is *energeō*. The word “energy” is a direct derivative in English. **It literally means to “in-work”,** a very descriptive word picture. In I Cor. 12:6,11, it is the inworking of the Spirit to foster special manifestations of God's power to build up the Body. Galatians 2:8 uses the same word to describe how the Spirit inworked through Peter to minister effectively to the Jews, and through Paul to reach the Gentiles. Colossians 1:28,29 follows along similar lines. Paul's ministry was growing Christians up to maturity. **He preached “Christ in you, the hope of glory”** (vs. 27). On the basis of this inner truth, he was, “admonishing every person, and instructing every person so that I might present every person mature in Christ. **For this, I work-hard, wrestling according to the inworking of Him inworking in me in power.**” Galatians 3:5 mentions how God is the one “supplying the Spirit and inworking mighty-acts in” them. Ephesians 3:20 reminds us that God can do “exceeding abundantly beyond all that we can ask or think, according to the power inworking in us.” Philippians 2:12,13 incorporates both aspects of God's inworking and human choice. You must “work out your own salvation, for God is the one inworking in you, both to desire and to inwork for His good pleasure.” **Jesus-in-me is the source of this inner working. I must choose to act in agreement with Him. This is the key to effective Kingdom ministry, whether within us or outside of us: recognize what God is doing and join with Him** (Jn. 5:19).