

Session 16: Sonship Prayer – How God’s Power Works Today, Continued

(Note: Mike refers to this under the old system as Establishment, Part 10, Session 16)

The Second Question

Let us look at the second question, but before we do, let us look at the verse from which our second question comes.

Colossians 1:27 To whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory:

So we know that we are in Christ, but now we also see that Christ is in us. These are two sides of the same coin (so to speak). These work hand in hand together. That is not to say that they are the same thing; they are not.

Why does God want Christ in us? What is the purpose of that? Christ is in us for the purpose of him living his life in us and through us. That is what it means for Christ to dwell in us. It is more than just the fact that we simply “have him.” Christ dwelling in us means that his way holds sway in us, his desires are our desires, his thoughts are our thoughts, and his actions are our actions.

I am not talking about the totality of the transformation because all of this happens in a process; a piece at a time, as it were. But as each form of doctrine does its effectual work, Christ is being formed in us.

He feels perfectly at home in us, not because we just give him carte blanche without really knowing what he wants to do (hey Lord, feel free to do whatever you want, it’s okay with me whatever you do), but he feels at home in us because we are of the same mind. His thoughts have become our thoughts. We know whom we have been made to be in him, we know where we are in the education and we are committed to it, we are pulling together with him (we understand his will, we are actively engaged in godliness, and we are being transformed by the doctrine). When that is happening he is not just in us, he is dwelling in us!

When Christ dwells in us, it means he is living his life in and through us. And the only people through which he can do so are those who are “in him.” Being “in Christ” is the necessary requirement, but that alone does not automatically mean Christ is dwelling in us. We must engage in the process whereby Christ dwells in us if we are going to be conformed to the image of God’s Son. We need to be more than just a spectator if Christ is going to “dwell in us by faith.”

Being in Christ is what makes us fit for Christ to live his life in us. Christ in us is the process whereby he dwells in us. What is the mechanical means by which Christ “dwells in us?” Exactly how does that get done?

Ephesians 3:17 That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love,

Well, first of all, that process is “by faith.” Now we need to know, ‘faith in what?’

First of all, it is not merely believing he will do it; that is not what is meant by Christ dwelling in our hearts by faith. It is not as though we pray, ‘Lord Jesus, I know you want to live your life in me so I trust you right now to do that. I believe you are living in me and I claim it by faith; I believe your word that you are living in me day by day.’

What we are putting our faith in is not just the fact that he wants to live his life in us. In order for that to take place, we must believe (put our faith in) the doctrine which results in Christ dwelling in our hearts.

What is it that we put our faith in that makes it so that Christ dwells in our hearts? We put our faith in his word: the word of Christ. In response to our faith, the word of Christ dwells in us, and it produces the life of Christ in us. That is how Christ is formed in us.

Just as Paul told the Galatians:

Galatians 4:19 My little children, of whom I travail in birth again until Christ be formed in you,

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Session 17: Sonship Prayer – The Process of Christ in Us

(Note: Mike refers to this under the old system as Establishment, Part 10, Session 17)

Our faith is in the word which produces his life in us. It does not magically happen because we have faith he will live his life in us; rather, it is the result of putting our faith in his word which is designed to produce the life of Christ in us. So, what is it we put our faith in? It is faith in “the word of Christ.”

Colossians 3:16 *Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom...*

As the portion of God’s word which is specifically to us and about us as members of the body of Christ (Romans - Philemon) does its effectual work in our hearts, it begins to dwell in us and, as a result, it produces the life of Christ in us. That is how Christ lives in us.

Galatians 2:20 *I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.*

And how does the word ‘dwell in us?’ You know the process. First, we understand the doctrine, next we believe the doctrine and then we implement the doctrine into our conduct and behavior. In other words, we begin to live out of the doctrine we understand and believe.

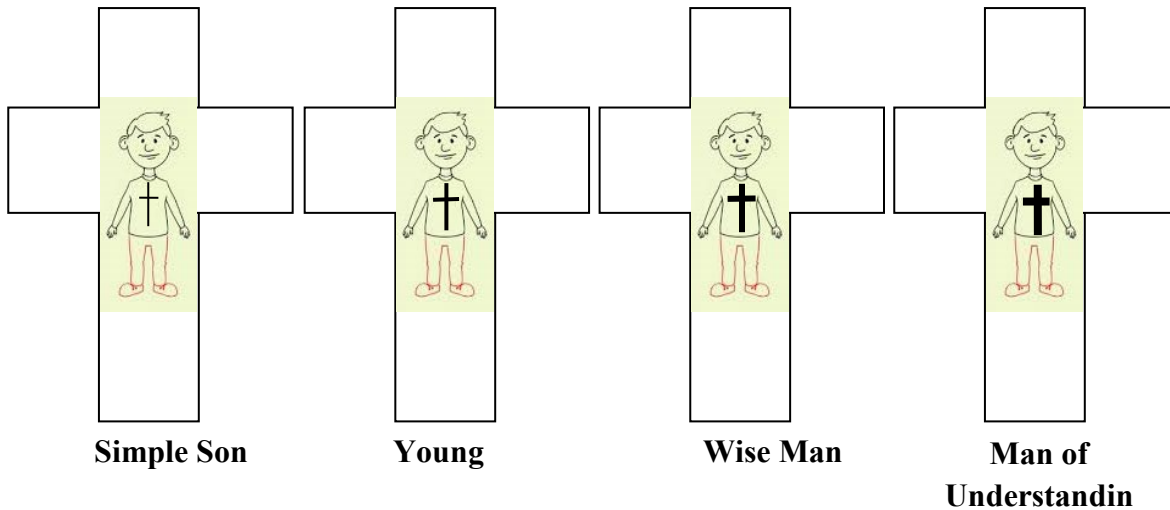
As we do this, the word of Christ dwells in us. As we do this, Christ is living in us, just as Paul wrote in Galatians 2:20. As we do this, Christ is dwelling in our hearts by faith. As we do this, we are being conformed to the image of God’s Son. As we do this, we become more skilled in applying the doctrine to our everyday lives.

As the word dwells in us, we impact Satan’s realm to the discouragement of the principalities and powers who joined with him. As Christ lives his life in us, we put on display the riches of his grace. As Christ dwells in our hearts by faith, we make known the manifold wisdom of God.

This is what the creature has been waiting to see. This is what Satan and his angels dread to see. This is what God’s angels rejoice to see. This is what the world has rarely seen. As saints we should desire, and rejoice to see in the lives of our fellow sons and daughters.

And we should yearn and long for Christ to dwell in our hearts by faith as much as we “groan within ourselves” for the redemption of our body. It should be the sincere desire of our heart every day.

Colossians 1:27 *To whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory:*



2 Corinthians 3:18 *But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.*

Romans 8:18 *For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.*

The glory that shall be revealed in us is the transformation produced by the word of truth as it conforms us to the image of God's Son.

Colossians 3:2 *Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth.*
³ *For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God.* ⁴ *When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory.*

Before we tie up all the loose ends, let me give you an example of that which we do not automatically have simply because we are in Christ (although we must be in Christ as a prerequisite), but we have because Christ is in us.

Philippians 4:6 *Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God.* ⁷ *And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.* ⁸ *Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things.* ⁹ *Those things, which ye have both learned, and received, and heard, and seen in me, do: and the God of peace shall be with you.*

- We must be “in Christ” before Christ can be “in us.”
- Some things we receive simply because we are “in Christ.”
- These are “the mercies of God” in that we did nothing to earn them; they are freely given to us.

Having the peace of God “keep” our hearts and minds is a wonderful thing.

Oxford English Dictionary

Keep: 14) To guard, defend, protect, preserve, save

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Session 18: Sonship Prayer – Prayer in Connection with Christ in Us

(Note: Mike refers to this under the old system as Establishment, Part 10, Session 18)

There are all kinds of things that will attack our hearts and minds. If we want the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, to guard and protect our hearts and minds, then that will only take place by having Christ in us.

The peace of God that keeps our hearts and minds is the result of Christ being in us. In other words, this is not something we get automatically because we are in Christ, but this is something produced in us by Christ dwelling in us.

Everything in our life is meant to be viewed and thought about from the standpoint of either us being in Christ or Christ being in us. The way we think about every circumstance should be in the context of us being in Christ or Christ being in us. When we think about it any other way, then we are not thinking about it properly.

Philippians 4:6 *Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God.⁷ And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.*

The way we think about problems and adversity needs to be in connection with us being in Christ or Christ being in us. If we do not think about our problems from these two ways, then we are thinking out of our imaginations, and we know what Paul said about that.

2 Corinthians 10:5 *Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ;*

Imaginations are thoughts that are contrary to the knowledge of God. Imaginations are thoughts that we prefer to think instead of thinking the truth. That is why Paul says they “exalt themselves against the knowledge of God.” We care more about our imaginations (our false way of thinking) than we care about the truth; we exalt the lie! The lie is ‘against’ (contrary to) the knowledge of God.

This is why Paul says to ‘cast down’ those imaginations. Tear them down like an infected building and ‘bring into captivity every...what?’ Bring into captivity, every thought to the obedience of Christ. In other words, let your thinking be in line with what Christ thinks; think about things like he does.

Romans 1:21 *Because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened.*

In Romans 1, Paul described a people who used to know God. But even though they knew God, they became vain in their imaginations. There was an element of pride there as those people emptied themselves (vain) of the truth they used to know and replaced it with empty lies: their vain imaginations.

Oxford English Dictionary

Imagination: 1) The action of forming a mental concept of what is not actually present to the senses; the result of the process, a mental image or idea which does not correspond to the reality of things

When we think about the way we want things to be instead of how the word of God says they are, those are imaginations that are exalting themselves against the knowledge of God. And eventually, if left unchecked, they will bring people to an utter rejection of God and a desire to no longer know him. This can be the product of some tradition we prefer over the truth or it can be the desire of our flesh.

The way we think about sickness, disease, sufferings of every kind (physical or mental), infirmities, and tribulations should always (and only) be in relation to us being in Christ or Christ being in us.

That is about our thinking. For a moment, let us talk about this from the standpoint of our living: our conduct. What we do in response to any situation should come out of our understanding that we are in Christ or that Christ is in us.

How we deal with adversity should be reflective of us being in Christ or him being in us.

And what does it mean that he is in us? How do we have “Christ in us,” in the sense that it is not that he is just in there somewhere rattling around doing nothing in particular, but rather that he is dwelling in us; that he is producing his life in us? Christ’s life is produced in us by the process of us understanding the doctrine, believing the doctrine, and then living out of what we now believe to be true.

And now, let us bring this back to the issue of prayer.

If we are going to pray “as we ought,” if we are going to “pray with understanding,” if we are going to talk to God properly the way he expects us to, if we are going to be praying in the will of God, then our prayers must be in connection with us being in Christ or Christ being in us. And remember, God put Christ in us for the purpose of Christ living his life in us. (This, by the way, is how we are conformed to the image of God’s Son.)

Christ's life being lived in us is the only life that God is interested in seeing. It is the only life that carries eternal meaning. It is the only life that is well pleasing to God. It is the only life that raises the creature's expectation of being delivered.

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