

Christ in You

by Paris Reidhead

The sermon emphasizes the importance of having a personal relationship with Christ, and that Christ in you is the central figure of Christianity.

Duration: 31:48

Scripture: John 15:25, Colossians 1:27

Topics: "Christ In You"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the importance of the witness of the Spirit in the lives of believers. He references several scriptures, including Romans 8:15-17, Galatians 4:4-6, and 1 John 3:24 and 5:10, to support his point. The speaker then focuses on the concept of the mystery of Christ, explaining that it is not just the historical events of Jesus' life, death, and resurrection, but also the indwelling of Christ in the hearts of believers that brings hope and glory. He concludes by highlighting the centrality of the relationship with Jesus in Christianity and the need to overcome prejudices and cultural influences to embrace God's love and grace for all people.

Transcript

Our text this morning is found in Colossians chapter 1, verse 27. Colossians 1, 27. I call to your attention, however, the scripture which was read from John the 15th chapter, to which I expect we will be returning.

I suggest that you seek to recall the import of those words as I read, beginning with the 25th verse and through the 29th, in order that we might have the setting for the text, which is the last clause of the 27th verse. Whereof, I am made a minister, according to the dispensation of God which is given to me for you, to fulfill the word of God, even the mystery which hath been hid from ages and generations, but now is made manifest to his saints, 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, whom we preach, warning every man and teaching every man in all wisdom, that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus, whereunto I also labor, striving according to his working which worketh in me mightily. The word mystery would seem to imply something hidden, something mysterious.

Perhaps it is true that we can take the connotation of the word and apply it to that which has preceded the occasion of writing and say that the Greek use of this word implies that hitherto it has been hidden before the point of disclosure it had been unknown, not mysterious but covered. Now at the time the word is used here, it means that something hitherto not understood, not seen, not known, has been uncovered, has

been revealed. It is mystery only in the sense in which others didn't know about it, not in the sense that it's mysterious or difficult to comprehend.

It had been covered but it has now been uncovered. The mystery is that the Gentiles are to be on identically the same level and basis as the Jews. And we understand of course that Peter had difficulty with this.

We recognize that when God gave to him the vision of the sheet let down from heaven, filled with all manner of beasts, beasts which Israel held to be unclean and unfit for food, and he was commanded to slay and eat, he probably had the same reaction that you would have had, had they said to you as they've said to some of our missionaries on the mission field, to the young expectant mother, now be sure to eat lots of nice large fat rats because this is going to be the means of ensuring a healthy baby. You can recognize the aversion and the repulsion that the mother would feel when she was told by the well-meaning woman that this was the only way to ensure a healthy child. And so when God said to Peter, rise up, there's the dragon, there's the little beast that crawls, the little lizard, eat it.

And there's the monkey, eat it. And there is the crow, eat it. You can imagine that there was considerable revulsion in his heart for there were not only dietary laws, but there were natural reticence and prohibition of his own mind, just as you would have prejudices and so would I regarding many things that we just wouldn't think to eat.

So Peter was faced with the problem. The problem was how he could recover from all of the prejudices that had been ingrained by centuries of tradition and teaching and all of the cultural influence in which he'd been reared. But we find that God wanted him to understand that in the mind of God, men who breathe the breath of human life and have human fears and human hopes and human needs are the objects of God's love and grace and are never to be viewed as intrinsically unclean.

That all men are unclean with the same uncleanness of sin, all are under the same sentence of death, and God, however, has made all men of kind of one blood and of one nature, with one crime their sin and one cure, the blood of Jesus Christ, God's Son. And thus the mystery was that the Gentiles were to have identically the same relationship to God through Jesus Christ that the Jews had, and that his church was to be thus made up of those of Jew and Gentile alike who were redeemed and cleansed and purged and purified and made partakers of divine life. Now this had been hidden, this had been covered.

Oh, we find in Isaiah, the 43rd chapter, that he says, I will do a new thing, I will bring springs into the wilderness and rivers in the desert, and the owls and the dragons shall drink thereof, and out of these that have been called unclean, I will show forth a people that will show forth my praise. So there had been an illusion or a prophetic utterance saying also that the Gentiles would seek whom the Jews had spurned, but now he is saying that the mystery had been hidden, this thing had been covered and it's been disclosed, that the church is going to have no middle wall of partition, but of the twain, those who've been two distinct groups, he's going to make this new thing his body of the redeemed. We could stop there and say that this is the primary meaning, but I think that as important as it is, the principle that is given in this last clause ought to engage us this communion morning.

The mystery hidden among the Gentiles, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory. We can be ever so correct as to our understanding of the history of Israel and the nature of the Gentiles. We can be ever so correct as to our understanding of eschatology with the future things and what's going to happen, but that which ought to engage us above all other concerns is that this new thing, his church, is to be made up of

those who have partaken of Christ, have been placed by the Father into Christ and by the Father Christ into them.

The mystery hidden from ages and generations, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory. Now the only religion of which we have, and I have any knowledge, where Christ as a founder is absolutely central to the continuance of the faith is Christianity. We recognize that one can be a Mohammedan without any reference to Mohammed, they can be a Buddhist without any personal loyalty to Buddha, but one cannot be a Christian without a personal, vital, experiential relationship to Jesus Christ.

It isn't just the fact that we hold Christ to be God come in the flesh. The doctrine concerning Christ is essential to Christianity, but Christianity is not found in its doctrine and in its teaching. A man is not a Christian in the biblical sense because he holds certain historical truths concerning the person of Jesus Christ.

He is not a Christian in the biblical sense because he has subscribed to certain doctrines about Christ, nor is he a Christian because he has submitted to certain rituals that have been subscribed or prescribed by the people of Christ, namely baptism and the Lord's Supper. One is not a Christian because he's been taken into the Church, having agreed to doctrine and to history. There is more to it than history, more than doctrine, and more than ritual.

There must be a personal relationship with the founder of our faith. For this reason, in 2nd Corinthians 13 and verse 5, Paul wrote to this Church that it had such difficulty and said, examine yourself whether you be in the faith, prove your own self, know you not your own self, how that Christ be in you. Ah, there it is.

He only is Christian into whom Christ has come. It is the presence of Christ, not the truth about Christ, that makes one a Christian. It is the person of Christ, not the profession of him, that makes one a Christian.

It is Christ who is our life, and he that hath the Son hath life. Now we understand that the Lord Jesus Christ was God come in the flesh, and he was known as Jesus, the Son of Man, as the Anointed of God, Jesus the Christ. This man, Christ Jesus, lived even as he was born of human parents, he lived in the family of man, and identified himself with all of the changes and needs and problems that man experienced.

In fact, he went beyond that and submitted to temptation and test that it could be said in all points he was tempted like unto his brethren, yet without sin. And God allowed the Lord Jesus Christ as God the Eternal Son to die and to be raised from the dead, and his resurrection body today is at the right hand of the Father. But six feet of human flesh could not hold and find the Son of the Living God.

For we must remember our faith, and we are Trinitarians. We believe in the trinity of the Godhead, that wherever God is manifest as Son, there the Father is, and there the Spirit is. Now Christ is in us the hope of glory, and obviously not in his physical body, which is there as the first fruit of the resurrection.

But he is in us, made real to us by God in his omnipresence, the Holy Spirit. Now this does not mean that the Holy Spirit has ceased to be Holy Spirit. It does not mean that at all, but it does mean that in the mystery of the trinity of the Godhead, where the Lord Jesus Christ is, he is by virtue of the presence of God in his omnipresence made real by the Holy Ghost.

You say, I don't understand this, and I quite sympathize with you. I cannot comprehend how God can exist in three persons, and how he can be in you and in me at the same time, and in all believers everywhere. I

can't comprehend how, but I do know that, and I know that the only one who has right to think himself Christian is the one into whom Christ has come, for it is Christ who is our life.

Now, since it is by the person of the Holy Spirit that the presence of Christ is made real, the attesting to our being in Christ, in Christ in us, is the work of the Holy Spirit. Some months ago, I heard in Albany a message by H. J. Sutton, the editor of our Sunday School Notes and the Alliance Witness, a message on the theme, The Witness of the Holy Spirit. I've asked him to come at some future time to minister to us for that message, such a proclamation of truth, such a declaration of the word in life, in fervor, and blessing I have never heard before.

It was my own conviction stated most completely and perfectly, and so I submit to you that the time will come when he shall be here under God to bring to us that ministry. But, meanwhile, let's refresh our hearts by remembering what the word says regarding the witness of the Spirit. When one has savingly repented and received Christ, the Spirit of God then witnesses to us that we have been born of God.

Familiar scriptures to many of you, Romans 8, 16, 15, 16, and 17, God has not given us the spirit of bondage again to fear, but the spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. And again in Galatians 4, 4 to 6, in the fullness of time, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons. And since we are sons, he has sent forth the spirit of his Son into our hearts, whereby we cry, Abba, Father.

And in 1 John, the third chapter, in the 24th verse, hereby we know that we are in him and he by the Spirit which he has given us. And in 1 John 5, 10, he that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness within himself. It is the witness of the Spirit.

It is God, the Holy Ghost, telling our spirits that our repentance was complete and right, that our faith was saving, and that his blood has been applied, and that we are accepted in the Beloved and that Christ is in us. This is the work of God. This is that interior ministry of the Holy Ghost.

This is that work which alone is the privilege of the Spirit of God. No one has the right to tell anyone that Christ is in them, the hope of glory, but God. This is where the tragedy results when we usurp the privilege of the Spirit of God, the right of the Spirit of God, and do that which is his sole privilege and prerogative.

We can do lots of things, but we cannot tell anyone that they're born of God. Because, you see, it's Christ in them, the hope of glory. And if Christ isn't in them, they have no hope of glory, none whatsoever.

They may have doctrine, they may have history, they may have church ordinance and ritual, but if they don't have Christ in them, there's absolutely no hope of glory, no ground for expectancy of forgiveness and pardon. It all centers in the person of Christ. Quite possible for a person to walk through the days of their years and to come to the very threshold of eternity and then to say, wait, I have doctrine, I have history, I have practice, but I haven't Christ.

And it's Christ who in us who is the hope of glory. And so we must recognize that only the Spirit of God has the right to tell anyone when Christ is in them. And when Christ is in them, this eloquent one whose voice fills the universe, who causes the stars to sing together, whose voice is heard over throughout creation, is abundantly able to tell us that our sins are pardoned, that we are accepted, that we are received, that we're his, we do not need to add some feeble muttering, some lispings of man's fading breath to the voice of eternal God.

When one comes into that relationship with Christ, they know, they know, they know, they know because he tells them. And so it's Christ in us the hope of glory, Christ in you the hope of glory. No hope apart from his presence in you.

It isn't Christ the hope of glory. We say so often Christ the hope of the world. No, no, it isn't.

It isn't. Christ is not the hope of the world. It's Christ in you, the hope of glory.

It's the relationship to the person, not the fact of the person. If it was Christ living, Christ dying, Christ raised from the dead, then the universalist would be correct. It would say, as in Adam all died, so in Christ shall all, underline five times with red pencil, be made alive.

And then there would be the grounds for universalism. But there are none, because it isn't that Christ died and was buried and raised again that becomes the hope of the world. It is that Christ who lived and died and was buried and raised from the dead has been so met on the basis of repentance and faith that he who fills the universe now indwells the heart.

And it's Christ in you that causes Christ to become the hope of glory. And this is why the relationship to the Lord Jesus is the very center of Christianity, the very heart and circumference of our faith. Not the relationship to biblical history or theology or to church, but to a person.

And it's all in this person. It's all in Christ. This is why the good Dr. Simpson sang so eloquently and frequently.

Christ in us, the hope of glory. Christ in you, and again, all in all, all in all, over and over again, in his own inimitable way, his eloquent way, testifying to the fact that he had discovered that the whole of Christianity is in the person of Jesus Christ, the son of the living God, in vital, living, warm relationship with him. And notice, it is Christ in you, the hope of glory.

What does this mean? I remember years ago going to the commentators and getting them lined up around me to try and find out what they meant by the hope of glory. And you know, I discovered that there'd been 100, 200 years ago a warm conflict going on. One man said, the hope of glory means the hope of one day being glorified with Christ.

And another reading this said, oh, he's wrong, he's wrong. That isn't what it means at all. All it means is the hope of one day being where Christ is glorified.

And another said, oh, it isn't even that. It's just the hope that one day we'll see Christ in his glory. Well, I figured that if they had sufficient reasons to contend for their position, there must be grounds to them.

So let's take them all and say that this is what it means, the hope that we'll be where we can see Christ glorified. For if you've ever been brought face to face with the grief that comes when you hear him maligned and his name taken in blasphemy, and you hear men use his name as a curse word, then you will understand what a joy it will be to be somewhere where he is the sun and furnishes the light, and he is the theme and furnishes the song. And everyone present is there for one purpose, and that's the glory of Jesus Christ.

And so the only hope of seeing him glorified is that he's in you. Then, of course, the other is that in beholding his glory, we might share his glory, share in the benefits of it, share in the accomplishments of it,

that we might not only be there as a spectator, but to be one who is benefited by that which he's accomplished and by that which he's achieved. And so if you'd like to be there to share his presence and share that joy, share that peace and blessing, then it's Christ in you.

The only way by which you'll have any part in glory is that he be in you. And then, of course, the other is that we be glorified together with him. And this, of course, strains our imagination and stretches our faith to think that in that day, we are going to be shown to be heirs and joint heirs with Christ.

That already in the Father's identifying love, we've not only been crucified with Christ, but we've been buried with him and quickened with him and raised with him and seated with him in the heavenlies. And one day that which is accomplished in the Father's purpose shall be brought out in our lives. And we that have known his indwelling presence through our pilgrimage will be there as heirs of all that the Father has given to the Son.

As the bride shares all the honors given to the bridegroom, so his church that's walked with him, persecuted, despised, hated, abhorred, is one day going to be given a robe of glory and the privilege of sharing in his glory and will be there as his ransomed bride. And so the hope of glory, name it as you will, enlarge it as you can, it still is this. All hope for the future rests on the presence of Christ.

Everything is in Christ and everything is from Christ. But I will not stop by saying it is Christ in us, only the hope of glory for the future. It's also for the present.

We are not as those who walk toward some gate that's going to be the opening into bliss. But if he is in us, then bliss has already begun and heaven has begun already in our hearts. And the thing that's going to make heaven glorious isn't the fact that we're there, but he's there.

And since it is Christ in us, then heaven can begin now, right now. And there can be joy and peace, exquisite and delightful. There can be the sense of his presence that makes everything else meaningless.

Has he ever become so sweet to you, sweeter than the honeycomb, sweeter than the sweetest thing that's ever touched your lips, that you could look into his face and say, Lord Jesus, nothing else has meaning, nothing else has value, and nothing else holds any interest to my heart. There's no position that anyone could offer that I'm interested in. There's no possession that I'm interested in.

There's no privilege that I want. The only thing in the universe that has any meaning to my heart now is the Lord Jesus Christ. Have you drunk of him and found him living water? Have you eaten of him and found him living bread? Have you tasted of him and found honey in the rock? Has the Lord Jesus become sweeter than oil to you? He is, you know.

You're made for him. Oh, when he fills your heart, then the world certainly loses its appeal. You can walk, be in it, and out of it.

You can have it and not hold it, nor have it hold you, because you've tasted of something infinitely beyond everything the world has to offer. Has the Lord Jesus become precious to you? Has he? Oh, when I see the masses scramble for this or that or the other, when I see this fanatic fierce race for some little coddling crown that's made of gilded paper that withers with the first wash of rain, some little coddling honor or recognition, some little possession, some little thing that is inconsequential in the light of eternity, and often by those who profess the name of Christ, my heart cries out, why? How can it be that anyone in the living world is going to have any interest in anything but the Lord Jesus? Why? Nothing else has meaning,

nothing else has value, nothing else has import, but Christ, the Lord Jesus Christ. He's your health.

For when Christ is in you, then the one who has all power in heaven and earth is in you, and healing doesn't come from above or without. Healing comes from the presence of the healer Jehovah Rapha, the Lord Jesus Christ. So it's Christ in you, your health, and health is from within, from the presence of the Son of God.

It's Christ in you, your wisdom, for wisdom doesn't then come from some revelation of letters printed in the sky, but the presence of a person who is himself made unto us wisdom. He is our righteousness, for it isn't something that we strive to do, but the presence of Christ enough grants to us now the one who is the lawgiver becoming in us the law keeper. He becomes our joy, he becomes our peace, he becomes the fruit of the Spirit, is nothing more than the fruit of the presence of Christ.

And so Christ does become all in all. Is he there? Has he come? Do you know? Is he in you? Nothing else has meaning, nothing else has significance, nothing else has value, only Christ. Christ in you, the hope of glory.

Don't you see? We preach Christ, not doctrine, Christ, not theology, Christ, not history, Christ. Oh, there's history, there's doctrine, there's theology, there's ritual, but that's like the envelope to the letter, that's like the clothes to the beloved, that's like the can to the food, it's not part of it. Part of it, yes, but not part of it.

Oh, dear heart, how important has Christ been to you this past week? How much time have you spent just telling him you love him? How much time have you spent just worshiping him and adoring him? How much time have you spent with him? How much has he filled the horizon of your heart? Has he been your wisdom and your strength and your peace and your help? Has he? Oh, listen, listen, our faith is all in Christ. Christ is my wonderful story. Christ to my heart has come, just Christ, the Lord Jesus Christ, God, who became flesh and dwelt among us so that we could see him and handle him and know him and that by his coming he wouldn't have to be separated from us, but he could come and make his abode with us and dwell in us and walk in us.

Let's pray. We're going to go in just a few moments into the communion service and you're going to take a little morsel of bread and put it to your lips and a little cup of grape juice and put it to your lips and you're going to take bread and the fruit of the vine into your body and what are you saying? All you're really saying is this, that you understand that it's the presence of Christ in you that makes you a Christian. You're acting out your faith.

You're saying that by virtue of his shed blood and his poured-out life, his broken body, the Son of God made it possible to come into you and you into him and that your whole faith is not in the wine or it's in the little morsel of flowers, it's in Christ spoken of by the emblems. Now if you have the emblems and you do not have him, then you're doubly impoverished because you have the symbol without the reality. The person that's ignorant of the symbol doesn't know what he misses but the person that has the symbol but doesn't have the reality is doubly impoverished for he has the need plus the knowledge of the provision and possibility of meeting the need.

How real has Christ been to you this past week? Has he been more real than your activity, more real than your work, more real than your family, more real than your possessions? What does Christ mean to you today? Has he been your wisdom, he been your strength, your health, your power? Do you know what I suggest we do? That we just come all alone, forgetting everybody that's near us and beside us, right into

the third heavens through the rent veil past the angels that stand with covered faces and see there the Lord Jesus Christ at the right hand of the Father exalted and realize that this one who has all power in heaven and earth not only fills heaven and governs the universe but he also by his death and resurrection made it possible that he could come into our hearts and make our hearts his home. I wonder if you would like to sing under your breath silently without even moving your lips into my heart, into my heart, come into my heart, Lord Jesus, come in today, come in to stay, come in.

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