

## The Christ-Centered Life

In the Old Testament, the prophets insisted that God be at the center... of all things! That He be the sole referrant, the living hub in all decision making. They would protest when it was otherwise (the Jewish prophets were the original "Protest-ants!"). In the New Testament, in the Christian life, Jesus Christ, the Son of God is central - the Chief, the Essential, the All Important.

Everything Christian is centered in Christ. All Christian origins, ideas, and actions are "Christo-centric". All Christian truth is CENTRALIZED in Christ - we measure all things by Christ the center (Col 3:17). All Christian worship is CENTRIPITAL - we move toward Christ the center (Matt 28:17). All Christian living is CENTRIFUGAL - we live from Christ the center (Ga 2:20). If this is not so, the spirit of anti-Christ has been among us.

To be centered in Christ is to have Him - nothing less, nothing more - as our point of focus, of concentration (Heb 3:1). We are not looking for other "ways", other "truths", other "lives", because Jesus' way is Jesus' truth about Jesus' life! We are not focusing on sin, centering in law or battling the devil. We have certainly learned the futility of being self-centered - whether it be self-improvement or self esteem. To be self-conscious is to be pulled to the periphery and experience a corresponding loss of center, with all its resulting dis-integration. If there is selfishness, indifference, pollutedness - what is that but a loss of center? If there are mercenary or self-serving interests - what are these but a move to the periphery?

To be centered in Christ is to be, first and foremost, Christ enlivened. Christ-delivered, Christ-birther, Christ-indwelt - made brand new (II Cor 5:17). As we learn Christ-esteem, valuing Him above all, our lives become unquestionably Christ-edited and inevitably Christ expressed. How? Well, that's up to Him! There are no pre-determined "maps" to scout ahead of time so see if we approve of the chosen routes along the way. (But we are each freely given an indwelling "GPS" - God's Personal Spirit - by which we may "re-calculate" throughout any given day!)

One thing is for certain - we cannot live Christ by being self-centered. A warning is also in order - to be Christ-centered is to be cross-centered to the cultures of this world. You will find yourself moving against its currents, its trends. And, a final seed to be sown for the Christ-centered messages to come... a disciple centered in Christ IS the will of God!

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## *Praise Reports & Prayer Requests*

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 **GREETINGS** 

Here are a few of the words I've heard in the counseling room in the past week or so: "overwhelmed", "afraid", "drained", "weak", "heavy", "tired". (Can I get a witness?)

Neither uncommon nor un-Christian as emotional reactions to life, such feelings only become an issue when we let them name us, define us, or drive a deceptive wedge between us and our God. We then become discouraged at the thought of our inability to overcome such states, rather than "taking courage" (en-couraged) from being joined to the One who has already overcome (Jo 16:33!).


Our faith is not faith that escapes the world (and all its attending mental, emotional, and physical upheavels). Our faith is faith that overcomes the world (I Jo 5:4,5) - a faith rooted and grounded in the Overcomer Himself.

"Frames and feelings fluctuate,  
These can ne'er thy source be!  
Learn thyself in Christ to see.  
Then be feelings what they will,  
Jesus is the Savior still!"  
*(John Wesley)*

 **CALENDAR** 

<b><u>JUNE</u></b>	
5,12,26	CCF
14	Alachua Study
17-19	Detroit, MI (wedding)
28	Ocala Study
<b><u>JULY</u></b>	
3-8	Bar Harbor, ME

 **PRAISE and PRAYER** 

-  An indwelling Overcomer
-  Encouragers in Christ
-  Christ-centered faith
-  Christ-centered churches