

The Christ-Centered Life (Christ-expressed)

The foundation of a Christ-expressed life is always a Christ-enlivened life - divine expression requires divine life! (Jo 15:5; Ga 2:20) Jesus Christ is more than a model or a motive, He is the very means of living Christianly. This may mean many different things, but it certainly means we cannot live Christ be paying attention to ourselves. Indeed, self consciousness may be the primary enemy to Christ-like transformation.

It is, then, personal communion born of a loving union that leads to a living expression of Christ. The fruit, the good deeds, the works of Christ - are these not the "consequences" of a nourished love affair? The issuance of abiding in and abandoning to Christ? The Christ-expressed life is forever a co-operative union. In fact, our calling, our "job" is to be employed in the daily choosing of trusting Christ. (Grace is not "unemployment income"!)

Deciding is a spiritual action, a vital component of a practical mysticism (Deut 30:19-20). It involves the set of our minds, the compelling of our hearts, the choosing of our wills - even the collaboration of our bodies - in order that we might "work out our salvation" in a manner consistent with "God Who is at work in (us)." (Phil 2:12-13) We are learning to will one thing - for Christ to be the Willer! (Jo 7:17) (For the beloved wants what the Lover wants.) Such responsivity calls for an un-self-conscious abandonment to Christ's life within us - trustworthy and adequate for every contingency. We desire for Him to have His Way, to live His Truth, to express His Life in and through us. (Jo 14:6) There is nothing passive, careless, robotic, mechanical, or accidental about it.

In the Christ-centered life the self-in-separation has been replaced by the self-in-union (Eph 4:18; I Cor 6:17). We may now freely boast of our inability (only if we are aware of being "under grace"!)... "not I"... and freely boast of Christ's ability... "but Christ." In this faith exchange of sufficiencies - "I receive Your supply for this moment" - I can do all things... everything God calls me to do... not by my strength or adequacy, but by His! With Christ Himself as the object of my faith, I am drawn not only into the intent of God, but also into the activity of God. I am not the doer but the willing expresser. In my life, in that moment, Christ lives and moves and has His expression... through me.

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 **GREETINGS** 

It seems we can never say "Thank You" enough to all who've joined us in this amazing journey over the past three decades. Your encouragement, your faithfulness, your prayers, your invitations, your corrections, your gifts have all been a vital part of who we are and what we do.

None of us generates our own "stuff", none of us grows up in isolation, none of us ministers Christ all on our own. I can't imagine attempting and maintaining all these years of ministry without your personal support.

Who knows what 2017 will bring? Things are certainly in flux - political things, economic things, gender things, religious things. Our feelings about these things will fluctuate. I love John Wesley's admonition to see through it all to Christ:

"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 thy Savior still!"

May 2017 be your richest ever in the "Source" of every good and perfect gift!

Steve

JANUARY

6-8 The Hill, Hardin, KY (270-437-4172)
 10 Alachua Study
 15,22 CCF
 26-30 San Antonio, TX (210-478-0618)
 31 Ocala Study

February

10-12 Moab, UT (859-393-4104)

March

3-5 OIC Florida Retreat

April

25-29 Baton Rouge, LA (225-769-8844)



2017 Florida Retreat



Tradition or Truth?

March 3 - 5, 2017 - Alachua, Florida

\$50 deposit Due February 5th, 2017

- \$295 Couple - (meals and room)
- \$250 Single - 1 to room (meals and room)
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