

So That You May Know We Can Live in Ultimate Reality I John 5:18-21

The Truth is what God says. Reality is what God sees. When we are trusting what God says, we may begin to see what God sees. Our fellowship with God in Christ is a sharing in the Life of the One Who is ultimately true and real (I Jo 5:20). Yet, the Bible makes its readers very aware of the false, the unreal - the presence of a counterfeit, death-dealing world. To which John says, "But we know WHO has come not only into this world, but also into us!" (I Jo 4:4; 5:20)

When we are joined to Christ - graciously placed into fellowship with Him - we can believe and come to know we are "kept", protected by Him. Why do we need to be kept? There is an "evil one", an adversary to God's truth and God's reality. He is not content to perish in his own corruption, he wants to destroy whatever God loves. The whole world (apart from Christ) may lie in his grasp (which explains so much about our world - to be under the controlling influence of one who despises you is a terrible place to be!). But, if Christ holds us, the devil cannot lay hold of us as we abide in our fellowship with Him. Our born again spirits, our new creation life, is off limits to the devil as we trust Christ to empower us to overcome whatever the devil seeks to do (I Jo 3:8; 4:40).

In fellowship with Christ we are free to live in the reality of what is true and real in Christ... and in us! (See I Jo 2:8 - "what is true in Him and in you"). How do we come to know what that means? By "faithing" what God says, not what the world, our tradition, our own thoughts and feelings may say. We can only be made real - become originals and not counterfeits, become solid and not wispy, become eternal ones and not transient ones - as we trust in the True God, the ultimately original, solid and eternal Life. One way we do that, John says, is to stay away from "idols" (I Jo 5:21). That is harder than you might think at a time where it is culturally fashionable to create you own "gods", your own determiners of reality. If your idol, your deliverer is un-real, it will make you un-real (Ps 115:1-8!). If idols are substitutes and counterfeits for what is real and true, they can offer only a substitute or counterfeit reality. Just as counterfeit money has no real purchasing power, counterfeit "gods" have no real delivery power. Want to know why the world is so un-real and empty? So unreliable? The world embraces unreal, empty, and unreliable "idols". Want to know why the world is so fearful and angry? Its "gods" are not delivering! Even our constructs of God can be idolatrous if we do not "know Him Who is true." (I Jo 5:20) Only in Jesus Christ will we ever receive a full "understanding" of what is real and true. Enthroned Him, worship Him in spirit and in truth, love Him with the Love He gives you... and the un-true, the un-real (the idolatrous) is de-throned.

Abide in Him alone, the Ultimately Real One, for all you need. Abandon to Him - The One Who has come into you - and discover THAT HE IS ENOUGH!

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Greetings

One of the enticing aspects of any fantasy is that, in them, you and I get to be our own "gods". In the un-real world of counterfeit existence, of self-created inventiveness (avatar, anyone?) nothing actually lives. Virtual reality may look and sound and feel real, but it isn't real... it's not even there! It is a faithless, hopeless, and loveless realm.

Our demon-inspired, man-made versions of reality offer no deliverance whatsoever from the alienation, the hostility, the despair, even the boredom which characterizes so much of "life" on earth. Empty fantasies, hollow distractions, wishful thinking save no none - no one in heaven, no one on earth.

Christ's coming to earth to deliver us from such things is no fantasy. The real God came to His real earth to take on real human flesh to really do for us what we can never virtually do for ourselves. Impersonal, long distance, non-suffering dreaming would not do. He so loved us ("so" = really, really, really!) He came in Person, up-close, knowing full well only His suffering and sacrificial love would be enough to overcome what is really going on in a very real and fallen world.

Don't you think it's about time we in the Body of Christ put aside our Christmas fantasies, renounce our un-real "virtual realities", and live as real children of God coming to trust that His real supply is enough for all we really need to live in a real world? Then maybe we could really come to know what "Merry Christmas" is about... every day of the year!



CALENDAR



DECEMBER

5, 12,,19, 26 First Baptist Alachua, FL
8 Ocala Bible Study
14 Alachua Bible Study

JANUARY

28-30 Heritage Community Church,
Fruitland Pak, FL (352-671-4600)

FEBRUARY 25-27 * * 2022 Florida Retreat * *

MARCH 11-13 Grace Life, Baton Rouge, LA

APRIL 22-24 Binghamton, NY

MAY 15-18 Pope Dr. Baptist, Anderson, SC

↩ 2022 Florida Retreat ↩

February 25-27 Alachua, Florida

\$50 deposit (per person) due by January 25, 2022



\$320 - couple

\$270 - single (1 per room)

\$165 - single (2 per room)

\$50 - conference fee and Saturday dinner

\$30 - conference fee only



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