

Study # 10

Cruciformity of the Christ Within Us

There is no reason to think that the nature of Christ Who lives in us is different than that of Jesus Christ Who suffered and died for us. Therefore, the indwelling Christ must be understood to express all aspects of cruciformity, some of which are found in the scriptures listed in Table I, pages 7-9. As a result, when we read the following verses, it is legitimate, beneficial, and crucial to keep in our minds that the indwelling Christ is a cruciform Christ:

I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but **[the cruciform] Christ lives in me**. The life I live in the body I live by faith in the Son of God who loved me and gave himself for me. (Gal 2:20)

I am again in the pains of childbirth until **[the cruciform] Christ is formed in you**, (Gal 4:17)

I pray that out of his glorious riches he may strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being, so that **[the cruciform] Christ may dwell in your hearts** by faith. (Eph. 3:17)

. . . the glorious riches of this mystery, which is **[the cruciform] Christ in you**, the hope of glory. (Col. 1:27)

. . . so that through them [His promises] you may **participate in the [cruciform] divine nature** (2 Pet. 1:4)

Further, according to Galatians 2:20 (included above), the indwelling Christ becomes our new identity. It must thus be necessary for us to become much acquainted with this our New Identity that is being “formed in” us and vital that we no longer live in our old identity. This obviously is a process requiring the power of the Spirit (Eph. 3:17—see above).

To accomplish the formation and dwelling of the real cruciform Christ in us requires the kind of faith (Gal. 2:20) that contains a **total commitment** to Christ's cruciform life to be worked in us and a **complete dependence** on the Lord to do so. (See Study # 7 "The Cruciformity of Faith".) Further, it is a daily exercise of faith to have confidence that as we depend on Christ to live in and through us, He truly will.

Moreover, this process of cruciformity depends largely on our receiving a clear revelation as to the cruciform nature of the indwelling Christ. First, we must be clear about Jesus' attitudes and actions demonstrating cruciformity. We must search the scriptures to discover the real identity of Jesus. As we examine the verses in Table I again, we may see Jesus as "The Jesus I Never Knew".¹ Secondly, we must relate His cruciformity to His life in us and commit ourselves to be transformed into the cruciform nature of Christ.

Each Christian group has its own concept of the nature of Jesus Christ and of the indwelling Christ. Sometimes, their idea of the Christ living in a person is merely that he or she acts like a "good" Christian. In some cases the view of Christ is what our society pictures as a prosperous, "nice" person rather than the Christ of the Scriptures. Unless we do have a clear concept of Who Christ is within us—of His cruciformity—we may be guilty to some degree of idolatry, worshiping a false image (an Anti-Christ). We have all been guilty of this to some extent and need to repent.

The fault . . . that the world has to find with Christianity is not a scientific one, not even an intellectual one. It is that Christians are so unlike Christ. Many who want to be Christians need to see Christ born again in someone like themselves.²

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¹The title of a good book: Philip Yancey, *The Jesus I Never Knew* (New York, NY, Walker and Co., 1995).

²D. Greeves, *Christ in Me: A Study of the Mind of Christ in Paul* (London, GB: Epworth Press, 1962), 3.