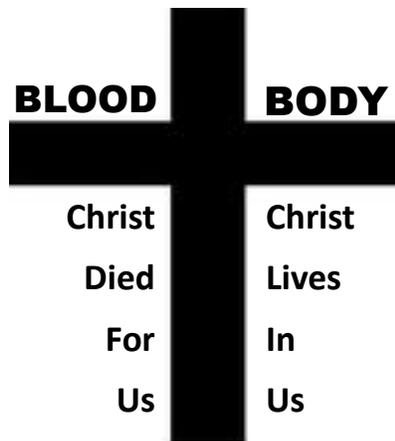


I. THE TWO SIDES OF THE CROSS

On the blood side of the cross, Jesus Christ died for our sins.

Through His death, we obtained forgiveness of sins and eternal life.



On the body side of the cross, in the unseen eternal realm, in our spirit, we experienced with Christ what He experienced. We died with Him and were raised with Him.

When Christ died on the cross, we died with Him. Our old, unregenerate spirit man (Old Adam) is dead and buried. We are dead to sin! We are dead to the Law. (Romans 6:3-7)

II. CHRIST DIED FOR US. † WE DIED WITH HIM.

This aspect of the cross, that we died with Him, can be called the **Double-cross**. Remember that there are two sides of the cross. The first side is the “**blood side.**” That is where Christ died **FOR** us. He shed his blood **FOR** the forgiveness of our sins. The second side is the “**body side.**” We were united **WITH Him on the cross - - participating in His death, burial and resurrection.** Our Old Man (OLD ADAM) was crucified **WITH Him.** Our New Spirit Man - - righteous, holy, loved, totally accepted and forgiven - - was resurrected **WITH** the Lord Jesus Christ. Colossians 3:1 tells us, “*Since we have been raised up with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sits at the right hand of God.*” Ephesians 2:6, also tells us that, “*We have been raised up together in the heavenly places **IN** Christ Jesus.*”

† In the unseen and eternal realm, an exchange has taken place in our spirit that, once we know it, produces through us a quality of life that is different from anything else the world has seen. **It is light in darkness. It is loving others unconditionally in a world of self-love. It is Christ IN us, the Hope of Glory, living His life through us, uniquely as us.**

Note: This is one elementary subject which many Christians need to fully understand! We are **MUCH MORE** than an old, forgiven sinner!

III. GODLY THINKING Vs. PSYCHO-BABBLE

There are many Godly virtues and character qualities which equips us to stand strong in the Lord and to maintain spiritual stability. (Philippians 4:8)

"Finally, brethren, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is of good report, if there is any excellence and if anything worthy of praise, let your mind dwell on these things."

The Apostle Paul strongly emphasized maintaining Godly virtues. In order to be spiritually stable and to experience joy, peace, humility, faith and gratitude, we need to focus on Godly virtues. This is another great key to living the victorious, Christ-centered life. What the Apostle is saying is summed up in that last phrase of verse 8, **"Let your mind dwell on these things."** Standing strong and maintaining Spiritual stability is a result of how we think and how we reason! **This is a key to experiencing the Spirit-filled life!**

† PSYCHO-BABBLE & NAVEL-GAZING = ANALYSIS-PARALYSIS

Modern psychology, today, says that - - if you want to be stable, if you want to get your act together, if you want to be delivered from your schizophrenia, from your various neuroses and psychoses, if you want to be a calm, comfortable, stable person who has it all together - - one of the things you need to do is to look into your past. You need to dredge up the scum of the past. You need to find your old sins, your old hurts, the abuses and mistreatments, all of the chaos of your past and your life failures. You need to poke around, stir it up, deal with all of it, regurgitate it all, etc.

This thinking, of course, has spilled over into the Church, as well. However, in the light of verse 8, this opinion seems to be utterly obtuse and ridiculous! What God's Word says clearly is this: We are to focus our minds completely on things that are true, honorable, right, pure, lovely and of good repute. The focus of the Christian is away from shame-based thinking! *Philippians 3:13 &14* says,

"Brethren, I do not count myself to have apprehended; but one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead, I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward

IV. As a Man Thinks In His Heart, So is He.

We, as believers, are a product of our thinking. "*As a man thinks in his heart, so is he.*" (Proverbs 23:7) Whatever we program into our minds is exactly what we are going to get out.

In computer lingo, it is **GIGO** = "garbage in, garbage out."

The mind is the command center which determines our conduct, based upon how we think and/or how we have been influenced to think. So, how one thinks is the critical issue. We are going to react according to how we think. The mind, then, has the power to shape our action. It is the most powerful element of human life! It is easy to become caught up in life's painful experiences. Some of us have enough of them to fill novels. Yet, Paul instructs the Philippians not to dwell on themselves so much, but, rather, "Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others." (Philippians 2:4) At times, the best way to put aside pain is to care for the needs of someone else.

† The Battle Over SIN Is Won or Lost at The Threshold of The Mind.

God has commanded us to think. Isaiah 1:18 says, "*Come now, let us reason together.*" Let's think this thing through. He did not say, "Come, let us feel one another's feelings." He did not say, "Come, let us experience this together." He said, "*Come, let's reason this through, together.*"

We were given Spiritual birth through believing the Gospel **of the Grace of God**. He began His good work in us. Christ, Who has freely given us Spiritual Life, also empowers us, by His Spirit, to walk victoriously over sin that is in our flesh. We need to remind ourselves that we have been saved **FROM the penalty of sin** by what Christ HAS DONE **FOR US!** We will be kept **FROM the power of sin** by what Christ **IS DOING IN us.**

Since our sins have been put away and removed from us, and we are justified, that is, made right with God, we are entitled to a clean and undefiled conscience! Hebrews 9:14 says, "*How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself, without spot, to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?*"

If we are still beating ourselves up over our past failures, which have been nailed to the cross, we are denying the work that Christ already has done for us! A clean conscience before the Lord agrees with what Christ has done in removing our sin and declaring us justified or innocent before the Lord.

V. DO WE HAVE A SIN PROBLEM - - OR AN IDENTITY PROBLEM?

When we think about what Christ gives us in salvation - - what He brings to us, what He provides for us, what He grants us - - it is absolutely thrilling! The Lord opens our minds to the need of having our sins forgiven and to receive Him as our Savior. After we have our sins forgiven, often our question is: How do I live a sin-free, victorious Christian life? What many of us have discovered is this: You don't!!! and You can't!!! We cannot consistently produce the Life of God out of our self-life. We cannot bring the uncreated (God-Life) out of the created (me). How could we do that?

The Holy Scripture impresses our mind and spirit with the understanding that Jesus Christ truly is our Life! He is the only Life acceptable to the Father. Not only did He forgive us; but He also wanted to live His life in us and through us, uniquely as us. Wow!

† The Life that the Lord Jesus lives, He lives to God the Father. He is in us in the person of the Holy Spirit. The Lord Jesus, in us, naturally lives His life unto The Father. He lives only unto God The Father. We do not have to strive and to try to live the life in our own strength. We need to enter into His rest. "For he who has entered His rest has himself also ceased from his works as God did from His," Hebrews 4:10. God the Holy Spirit, lives His life within our spirit. He is prompting our minds and activating His Spirit in us. If we know that the old us (our Old Adam) is dead and out of the way, we can rest assured that the Spirit of the Lord in us is going to live for the glory of God.

The Well of Eternal Life is springing up in us. That Life is adequate; that Life is sufficient; that Life is never exhausted, never tires and never tastes bitterness. That life always is light, always has mercy in it, always has a second chance in it, always carries God's forgiveness toward others and always is Love in action!

THEREFORE:

"Being confident of this very thing, that He which has begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ."

VI. LIVING FROM BEING PERFECTLY NATURAL, COMPLETELY PRACTICAL AND INTENSELY SPIRITUAL

God breaks through our intellectual barriers and speaks His confirming Word to our spirit. The eternal real you is a spirit that is living in a body that has a soul. God says, "You are not a liability to Me. You are an asset to Me. It is not you; rather, it is Me, living My life in you and through you, uniquely as you. I have chosen to love and touch your world by living through you as you."

There is no reason to mistrust or fear our humanity anymore. We can accept it, because we know Who is alive in us. God has revealed to us what Life is all about. He has counted us faithful to be His inheritance.

† God is pleased to love through us, just as we are. Paul wrote to the Ephesians, ***"For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we would walk in them."*** (2:10)

We are His workman - - right now! Yes! God in us! We can reach another person with the Gospel of the Grace of God right now in our spiritual development. Next year, we will be someplace else spiritually, and He will use us then. But He can use us right now, everyday, wherever we are in our walk with Him. He uses us right where we are, because there are those out there who could not receive us if we were any deeper. They can receive us right now where we are. He sends that kind of person to us continuously.

It is amazing when God sends someone to us. We might think that we do not have an answer for people, but they will pull God's Spirit out of us. They will pull God's answer out of us. We are God's vessels, living from being perfectly natural, completely practical and intensely Spiritual. No matter how we look externally, we are His workmanship right now. Everything we do, whether work or play, is His opportunity to speak through us. We are ambassadors for Christ. God is making His appeal through us. He is just using our mouths. The burden is off of us. He is talking through us. It sounds like us; but, it is the Spirit of the Lord God Living His Life within us - - perfectly natural, completely practical

Our Identity

In Christ:



Key

to Standing

Strong In Christ