

## *Now Are We*

“See how great a love the Father has bestowed on us, that we would be called children of God; and such **we are**. For this reason the world does not know us, because it did not know Him. Beloved, **now we are** children of God, and it has not appeared as yet what we will be. We know that when He appears, we will be like Him, because we will see Him just as He is.” (1Jn 3:1-2 NASB)

A part of our journey, into the “Christ Life,” has been of special interest in the time we are now living, seeing our “salvation” being revealed as part of our “last time” experience. This cannot be according to understanding we embraced in the “early days,” in our relationships with those brothers and sisters we looked to as tutors, mentors and expressions of the “Christ,” in them.

“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His great mercy has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to obtain an inheritance which is imperishable and undefiled and will not fade away, reserved in heaven for you, who are protected by the power of God through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. In this you greatly rejoice, even though now for a little while, if necessary, you have been distressed by various trials, so that the proof of your faith, being more precious than gold which is perishable, even though tested by fire, may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ; and though you have not seen Him, you love Him, and though you do not see Him now, but believe in Him, you greatly rejoice with joy inexpressible and full of glory, obtaining as the outcome of your faith the salvation of your souls. As to this salvation, the prophets who prophesied of the grace that would come to you made careful searches and inquiries, seeking to know what person or time the Spirit of Christ within them was indicating as He predicted the sufferings of Christ and the glories to follow. It was revealed to them that they were not serving themselves, but you, in these things which now have been announced to you through those who preached the gospel to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven--things into which angels long to look.” (1Pe 1:3-12)

Memories of our beginning, as part of a new creation in Christ, are being brought to mind in a light that is giving new meaning and understanding to what our Loving Father has been preparing for us to apprehend in the eternal dimension of His Spirit.

Lois and I were a small part of a body of believers who had “forsaken all,” to become disciples of our Lord Jesus Christ, and were dedicated to living a life of “faith.” The earliest days were a time of being refreshed by the Spirit of God and enjoying an intimacy we had not known before. The fellowship in the gospel, with the congregation, with the “saints” and in the Spirit was and is a valued part of our growth and development. The ministries who were part of that persuasion were “seasoned veterans” who nurtured and cared for us like fathers and mothers in the faith. They had suffered, endured much tribulation, and had a vision for Zion that made most of us envy their expression of the Christ in them.

As time went on there were changes in the outward growth and expansion of the “work” and the leadership began to take on interests that seemed to place the emphasis outside of the initial purposes we discerned to be of God, and we began to be concerned about the direction and evolution that was happening. The “workers,” who were added quickly to the “ministry,” were often from elements of what was known as the “Charismatic Movement,” where most of the emphasis was on the music, activities, and gifts of the Spirit being manifest. Many of the young people had been part of a collection of “street” groups, who maintained a very loose and carnal lifestyle. Precious as they were in their zeal and exuberance, it became a life draining “work” to help them grow and embrace truth, as revealed by the Spirit of Christ. The Word of God seemed to be hard pressed to produce the Christ Life in many of these babes.

It began to be apparent that, what was intended to be a life of faith, established in the faith of Jesus Christ, was being reduced to a “doctrine” of faith. Likewise, the traditions followed by the elders were being revealed as traditions of men, and the teachings were established “doctrines” to be taught as tenets of just another “denomination.” Fellowship outside of the “order” was discouraged and Lois and I became a threat to many who believed they were the “true Church,” expressing outwardly that, all other persuasions were inferior and not to be associated with. It remains a cloistered group to this day, who believe the only ones who will stand in/on Zion will be those who are joined to the Lord according to the “way” they have chosen to believe and follow.

One of the most troubling things to witness, while in that setting, was the death of one of the elder sisters, who had been in the ministry for many years. She was recognized as a prominent teacher and her knowledge of the bible and charismatic lessons were a great blessing to anyone fortunate enough to spend time with her and hear her teach. Nearing the time of her death, she confessed to the “senior pastor” that she wasn’t “sure” that she was, “saved.” Her spirit was troubled and she agonized about her decline and ultimate passing. It seemed that she had embraced the doctrine of faith, as taught in her early experience, but struggled with the reality. When her personal belongings were being gathered, following her death, there were thousands of dollars in cash, stashed in shoe boxes, under drawer liners — in her “dresser,” in clothing articles, old purses, and various containers that were hidden throughout her humble apartment. Those of us who knew her have no doubt that she, with all her eccentricities, is at home with her Lord and Savior and has made peace with her past, through death.

When Lois and I came back to Ohio, which is a story that may be considered in a future writing, the “Chief Pastor” of that fellowship came to visit us and he, in earnest, asked, “What are you going to do now?” I assured him that we were going to continue to live as we had for the seven years we had been with that order — we would continue to live by faith. Then I asked him if he could tell me how many of the “workers” in that ministry were living by the faith of Jesus Christ, and how many were living by “his” — the pastor’s faith? He knew immediately what I was asking and only responded by saying that a “door” would always be open for us to come and “teach” the things we had come to know by the Spirit of Truth. We have not gone back.

The Lord has been very patient and gracious to mercifully lead us into relations with some of His chosen vessels, who have been consecrated and set apart for His pleasure. One such person, reminds me of the sister I described as a gifted teacher but that is where the similarities end. The sister we are now blessed to be joined to in heavenly places — as a member of the Body of Christ — has been through a myriad of tests and trials throughout her life and the “gem” that has been fashioned in the process has become a “jewel,” set in fine gold. She has been blessed with dreams and visions of how the Lord is preparing His elect for a life that is hidden with Christ, in God. When she shares from her early experiences it is not for the purpose of re-living or reviving the past. She is getting precious insight and understanding of what God has purposed in bringing her through the fires of refinement and has given her the anointing and ability to share these things with words that are spirit and life.

We have come into contact with a number of others who share the same experiences and have testimonies that reflect the same kind of “in-workings and out-workings,” performed by the Spirit of God, to cause all who have eyes to see and ears to hear, to walk in His ways. These are not satisfied to see only the works of former moves of God among His people, they desire to know His Ways and to realize what it means to be complete in Him. All have the reality of God becoming All in all — in the eternal realm of God Most High and each one has a revelation of the kingdom of God coming in our earth — not just a doctrine concerning the kingdom that many use to build their own little place where they can exercise “man’s” authority. It is encouraging and a source of strength as each member of His Body provides a continual flow of life to the rest of the body.

It is my hope that what is being shared is not perceived as either, “judging” or, “exalting,” any person or group we have known throughout our journey. The purpose intended is to contrast the many experiences we have been led through and into by the Spirit of God. Each of these are a precious aspect of our Father’s purpose in completing His work and bringing us home — back to the land of our nativity, (birth), where we can find rest. In some measure, we have all been “prodigal sons.”

Each of us, at one time **or another**, have taken our inheritance and, “struck out from Father’s house, roaming the streets of Babylon, seeking our own pleasure, then finding ourselves in the pig pens of “religious orders”, of one kind **or another**, eating the “husks” of erroneous doctrines and wallowing in the muck and mire of the traditions and rituals of men. Fortunately, in this “Day of the Lord,” the Holy Spirit is convicting many in the world, (and those who’ve been overcome by worldly desires,) of sin, righteousness, and judgement, causing them to come to their spiritual senses and realizing that it would be better to be a servant/slave in Father’s house than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season. Praise God for dragging us out of the “mud” and taking us home to Father’s house.

The “REALITY” of who and what we are, in Christ, is the Voice being heard by many as a loud trumpet that is sounding a clear call to assemble God’s elect, in order to exercise His will and

purpose \_\_\_ in heavenly places \_\_\_ and \_\_\_ in the earth, seas and His vast universe. The invisible realms of spirit are being revealed, as the eyes of our understanding are being enlightened, to see into the eternal dimension of His Spirit. "Come out of her, (Babylon), My people," and "Come up hither," (higher), are not, "suggestions or requests." These are the Voice of Kingdom Authority \_\_\_ "COMMANDING" obedience which results in being declared to be God's people, a people for His Name, and for God to forever be, "OUR GOD". TODAY, if we hear his Voice, our hearts cannot bear to be hardened.

"Come, let us praise the LORD! Let us sing for joy to God, who protects us! Let us come before him with thanksgiving and sing joyful songs of praise. For the LORD is a mighty God, a mighty king over all the gods. He rules over the whole earth, from the deepest caves to the highest hills. He rules over the sea, which he made; the land also, which he himself formed. Come, let us bow down and worship him; let us kneel before the LORD, our Maker! He is our God; we are the people he cares for, the flock for which he provides. Listen today to what he says: "Don't be stubborn, as your ancestors were at Meribah, as they were that day in the desert at Massah. There they put me to the test and tried me, although they had seen what I did for them. For forty years I was disgusted with those people. I said, 'How disloyal they are! They refuse to obey my commands. I was angry and made a solemn promise: you will never enter the land where I would have given you rest.'" (Psa 95:1-11 GNB)

Many in this Day of the Lord, have been drawn, (dragged), onto a place of isolation \_\_\_ by the Will of God. It is my conviction that this time of separation, and returning to our own homes, seems to be a time of, "inactivity," but, is not anything akin to \_\_\_ "inactivity." Although the called out ones may not be involved in the plethora of outward "religious" activity, so prevalent in the social orders we call "Church," these consecrated saints are deeply committed and have fully surrendered to the will of God in spiritual realms \_\_\_ where they patiently and expectantly await the Lord's command, in readiness to obey.

"Waiting," doesn't mean there isn't anything happening. While in this time of trouble, that we see unfolding around our daily lives, we are at war with the forces of evil in the heavens and upon earth \_\_\_ engaging spiritual wickedness that attempts to deny us of an overcoming life and from being made perfect in Christ. Without doubt, the battle is the Lord's and He is victorious over all enemies who would oppose, depose, or usurp His throne authority. We must be of good courage, knowing that He has already overcome the world.

It is difficult for those who, "strive for the mastery," and are trying their best to maintain control of their daily lives, to submit fully to the reality of Christ's, "Headship," while continuing to pursue the equality of "sonship." The mere thought of our Lord, "COMMANDING," seems totally foreign to all who have not surrendered completely to His will. A belief that the Christ is a King who "requests" that his subjects obey His Voice, and keep His commands \_\_\_ according to free choice \_\_\_ and that He suffered, died, arose, and ascended into heaven for our sake, pleasure, prosperity, health, happiness and eternal wellbeing is a lie being perpetuated throughout the religious orders today, and is in total disregard of the Father's purpose, pleasure, glory and honor in doing all of these, "righteous works."

The reality of our lives being in the "Now" moment of time has been having a measure of impact that has affected many in ways that have not been experienced in the past. Thoughts of things "above" and greater focus concerning eternal realities has caused an increase in interest to review our journey in the "Christ Life," (which we are currently enjoying), and a deepening desire to know and understand our Father more intimately and personally than ever before. Scriptures that speak loudly of, "Now, and Today," are bringing greater light, life and understanding to our spirit and a renewing of our minds that exceeds what we could ask or think. The assurance that He is going to finish the work He has begun has brought peace and new hope to our calling and election as sons of God Most High.

"Ah, **now** you are using plain language," said His disciples, "and are uttering no figure of speech! **Now** we know that you have all knowledge, and do not need to be pressed with questions. Through this we believe that you came from God." "Do you at last believe?" replied Jesus. "Remember that the time is coming, nay, has already come, for you all to be dispersed each to his own home and to leave me alone. And yet I am not alone, for the Father is with me. "I have spoken all this to you in order that in me you may have peace. In the world you have affliction. But keep up your courage: \*I\* have won the victory over the world." (Joh 16:29-33 WNT)

“All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness;” (2Ti 3:16)

“For I do not want you to be unaware, brethren, that our fathers were all under the cloud and all passed through the sea; and all were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea; and all ate the same spiritual food; and all drank the same spiritual drink, for they were drinking from a spiritual rock which followed them; and the rock was Christ. Nevertheless, with most of them God was not well-pleased; for they were laid low in the wilderness. **Now** these things happened as examples for us, so that we would not crave evil things as they also craved. Do not be idolaters, as some of them were; as it is written, “THE PEOPLE SAT DOWN TO EAT AND DRINK, AND STOOD UP TO PLAY.” Nor let us act immorally, as some of them did, and twenty-three thousand fell in one day. Nor let us try the Lord, as some of them did, and were destroyed by the serpents. Nor grumble, as some of them did, and were destroyed by the destroyer. **Now** these things happened to them as an example, and they were written for our instruction, upon whom the ends of the ages have come.” (1Co 10:1-11)

The above portions of scripture should cause us to pause and embrace the truth, as revealed by the Spirit, and not rely on former teaching or the understanding we received from others as newborn babes in Christ. God wants to introduce into our experience the necessary elements that get us beyond the first principles of the oracles of God, to a growth and development that completes the work He has begun, so that, we may realize the measure of His Life that belongs to the full stature of Christ. We are sons becoming like unto the first born Son. Putting off everything that has been purposed and provided for us **NOW** until sometime in the future is part of the carnal, earthly minded and demonic lie of the devil. The tree of the knowledge of good and evil can no longer be the bearer of the fruit we continue to feed upon and expect an outcome other than DEATH.

Before continuing this writing it may be of some value to re-affirm a few statements from Scripture that may help us to know our “Now,” place in Christ: ( Note: Text is from NASB unless otherwise noted.)

“For through the Law I died to the Law, so that I might live to God. “I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I **now** live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me.” (Gal 2:19-20)

“**NOW FAITH** is the assurance (the confirmation, the title deed) of the things [we] hope for, being the proof of things [we] do not see and the conviction of their reality [faith perceiving as real fact what is not revealed to the senses]. For by [faith--trust and holy fervor born of faith] the men of old had divine testimony borne to them and obtained a good report.” (Heb 11:1-2 AMP)

“Beloved, **now** we are children of God, and it has not appeared as yet what we will be. We know that when He appears, we will be like Him, because we will see Him just as He is. And everyone who has this hope fixed on Him purifies himself, just as He is pure.” (1Jn 3:2-3)

But God, being rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in our transgressions, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), and raised us up with Him, and seated us with Him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, so that in the ages to come He might show the surpassing riches of His grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not as a result of works, so that no one may boast. For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand so that we would walk in them. (Eph 2:4-10)

“Are you the Christ? Tell us.” “If I tell you,” He replied, “you will certainly not believe; and if I ask you questions, you will certainly not answer. But from this time forward the Son of Man will be seated at the right hand of God’s omnipotence. “Thereupon they cried out with one voice, “You, then, are the Son of God?” “It is as you say,” He answered; “I am He.” “What need have we of further evidence?” they said; “for we ourselves have heard it from his own lips.” (Luk 22:67-71 WNT)

“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ, just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the

world, that we would be holy and blameless before Him. In love He predestined us to adoption as sons through Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the kind intention of His will, to the praise of the glory of His grace, which He freely bestowed on us in the Beloved. In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of His grace which He lavished on us. In all wisdom and insight He made known to us the mystery of His will, according to His kind intention which He purposed in Him with a view to an administration suitable to the fullness of the times, that is, the summing up of all things in Christ, things in the heavens and things on the earth. In Him”  
(Eph 1:3-10)

“Therefore as you have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in Him, having been firmly rooted and now being built up in Him and established in your faith, just as you were instructed, and overflowing with gratitude. See to it that no one takes you captive through philosophy and empty deception, according to the tradition of men, according to the elementary principles of the world, rather than according to Christ. For in Him all the fullness of Deity dwells in bodily form, and in Him you have been made complete, and He is the head over all rule and authority;”  
(Col 2:6-10)

This has only been a sampling of the many verses that could be shared to assure us of our being set apart for the purposes God has foreordained, that we should live and walk in the power of His Holy Spirit, conducting ourselves in a manner worthy of His finished work.

“How lovely are Your dwelling places, O LORD of hosts! My soul longed and even yearned for the courts of the LORD; My heart and my flesh sing for joy to the living God. The bird also has found a house, And the swallow a nest for herself, where she may lay her young, Even Your altars, O LORD of hosts, My King and my God. How blessed are those who dwell in Your house! They are ever praising You. Selah. How blessed is the man whose strength is in You, In whose heart are the highways to Zion! Passing through the valley of Baca they make it a spring; The early rain also covers it with blessings. They go from strength to strength, Every one of them appears before God in Zion. O LORD God of hosts, hear my prayer; Give ear, O God of Jacob! Selah. Behold our shield, O God, and look upon the face of Your anointed. For a day in Your courts is better than a thousand outside. I would rather stand at the threshold of the house of my God than dwell in the tents of wickedness. For the LORD God is a sun and shield; The LORD gives grace and glory; No good thing does He withhold from those who walk uprightly. O LORD of hosts, How blessed is the man who trusts in You”! (Psa 84:1-12)