*At Work or At Play*

I am impressed that the Lord desires to live in us, through us and out of us ... and in such a practical, daily way. This fact is implicit in 1 Timothy 3:16, "**He who was manifested in the flesh**." As a young believer years ago, I thought that to follow God meant to know the Bible, preach it to others, and know the proper teaching or so-called truth. After years of study, I think I know the Bible as good as most and I have tried my hand at preaching door to door, in the streets, market places, fairgrounds, etc. Eventually, I have learned that what most people call 'truth' is actually doctrine, practice, culture, or history. Their kind of 'truth' has become a great source of division in the Body of Christ. On the contrary, the Lord desires us to possess and live His humanity. One of the greatest truths possible is that we as fallen human beings can tap into the divine life and touch the uplifted humanity of Christ in our daily lives!

I am learning to seek and find Christ EVERYWHERE. I find Him at work. I find Him in my son's baseball aspirations. I find Him in disciplining my children. I find Him in "courting" my wife of 35 years! I find Him when driving in my car. I find Him in all I do and especially wherever He leads me. And He leads me very practically. Why do I bring this up? Because so many Christians think that doctrine is the way to live. Others think that our practical daily living doesn't count for anything, but we should know "truth". Jesus said, "**I am the way, the TRUTH, and the life**." Our person is our truth. How much we incorporate the living Christ into us is the amount of truth we possess. No amount of doctrine, ritual, religious practices, accepted culture, and established history can issue forth the divine life of Jesus on this earth. Jesus is a person, not a doctrine. Jesus is a life, not a practice. Jesus is the Author and Perfector of our faith, not a culture or history to adapt to or follow.

Recently, I have had a deeper experience of Christ at work. We have had many changes in my job and it has costs hundreds of hours of extra work to make transitions. One aspect is preparing new materials. In one case, I am preparing materials for three other coworkers to use. For one week's worth of materials, it takes me 30-40 hours of behind-the-scenes work ... outside of work hours. It is demanding, time consuming, and often stress producing. Yet, the Lord is faithful to give me ideas, to give me energy, to help me put the materials together in a professional and easy-to-use way. One of my colleagues has been complaining about a couple minor points in the materials I prepared. This person simply uses what I have produced and does not have to spend the 30-40 hours each week to prepare them. So, my flesh reared up towards this person. I walked by their room one day and heard my name taken in vain. I was upset. The Lord then used another situation (totally unrelated) to get my attention. I was signing up to be a volleyball official and forgot a couple of things on a website application. I remembered late at night and when finished, I could not sleep. Therefore, my wife could not sleep either. However, the more I tossed and turned, the more I turned to the Lord ... although complaining and argumentative. He waited patiently for an opening and brought the real issue to the surface.

In the morning, I found Christ. I asked Him, "Why would this coworker not be appreciative. I do good work and have saved them hundreds of hours of work. Yet, they bad mouth me. At least they could show a little appreciation." The Lord spoke to me clearly in my spirit. I sensed Him telling me that this coworker was nervous due to the novelty of the materials. As they presented them, they would feel inadequate and their way of dealing with that is to criticize me rather than allow themselves to look poorly in other people's eyes. My anger began to subside and I started to sense some compassion. The Lord also gently rebuked me, "You're proud. Who gave you the ideas, the energy, the design, the capability to produce all the materials?" I realized that the Lord was very much with me and I was not giving Him the credit due nor gaining the blessing He had prepared for me in a difficult situation. He was fully aware of the situation and He was intimately walking with me. I need not worry about what others say or how they handle the riches I offer. That is in His hands. My role is to seek, find, and follow Christ.

It seems the hardest lesson for me to learn is to accept the environment the Lord allows and then seek Him in that situation. I always try to run away from the nasty stuff. My thought is: "I'm a believer and should not have to put up with a lot of negative things. The world is evil and getting worse. I want to hide and find solace elsewhere." But the Lord is training me that I am His child and He is mapping out my path. I need to cooperate with Him in everything. Instead of reacting in anger to situations, I need to see them as opportunities for ME to gain Christ. He has placed me in the world as a light and salt. He is the Light in me shining forth. He is the salt issuing out of me to affect others. He is the Master Designer, the Master Architect, and the Master Builder for all the situations in my life. I've always tried so hard to do the right thing. Now, I realize, that I simply need to seek and follow Christ and He will become the solution in any situation: whether good or bad.

So, the moral of this story is that our daily, practical affairs are a marvelous avenue of gaining Christ and expressing His humanity to others. Case in point, I do not have to feel guilty about playing ball with my son as if that is not spiritual. When I follow the Lord's leading to take my daughter out to dinner, I do not have to feel I've squandered the Lord's blessing of my finances. When I spend some time cuddling with my wife in front of a movie after a hard day’s work in the trenches, I do not have to feel guilty as long as I sense the Lord’s presence. On the contrary, when I follow Christ, everything becomes spiritual. When I follow His intimate leading in my daily life, I find inner peace, inner joy, and inner stability no matter how messed up the world is or how unstable I feel outwardly.

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