

IDENTICAL WITH CHRIST

The basis of the gospel is the fact that Christ was wounded for our transgressions and chastised for our iniquities, and by His stripes we are healed (Isaiah 53:5).

This is the basis of our faith. We start out by identifying ourselves vicariously with Him in His experiences; through meditation, through the power of our imagination, we begin to experience what he went through.

But our relationship to Him is not so much based on our identifying ourselves with Him as it is based on an identical experience with Him.

He did not ask us to identify ourselves with Him. He said, "Suffer with Me; you are a partaker of My sufferings." We do not merely identify ourselves with His righteousness; we are identical with His righteousness. It is not just an identifying experience; it is an identical experience.

The work of the cross is not just an event that causes us to rejoice that He died for us. Rather, we have an identical experience. We may not physically hang on a cross; but as far as the spiritual reality of it is concerned, we do go through an identical experience. We are made conformable to His death. There is no greater privilege than to be a partaker of the sufferings of Christ.

Paul had to fulfill in his body what remained of the sufferings of Christ for His Body's sake (Colossians 1:24). Paul suffered the same agonies that Christ did—maybe not to the same measure or extent, but it was an identical experience.

We do not merely identify ourselves with the love of Jesus Christ; we have an identical love. The Word says, *We love him, because he first loved us.* 1 John 4:19. When He loved us, He did not impart to us a divine love to see us echo back a feeble human love.

When we are born of God, we love Him with His own identical love. Our love may not be in the same quantity or to the same degree; but when we love God, it is with His love. It is an identical love. It is not human love; it is a divine love. When He loves us, we are given the capacity to love Him back with the same kind of love.

When we suffer, it is not a little mystical experience of identification. We reach into His sufferings, it is an identical suffering. *But whatever things were gain to me, those things I have counted as loss for the sake of Christ. More than that, I count all things to be loss in view of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them but rubbish in order that I may gain Christ, and may be found in Him, not having a righteousness of my own derived from the Law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which comes from God on the basis of faith, that I may know Him, and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings (as we walk with the Lord, we walk right into the fellowship of His sufferings), being conformed to His death; in order that I may attain to the resurrection from the dead. Not that I have already obtained it, or have already become perfect, but I press on in order that I may lay hold of that for which also I was laid hold of by Christ Jesus.* Philippians 3:7–12. Paul admitted that he did not attain the resurrection out of the dead yet, but he was pressing toward it.

This is an experience available to us, where the D.N.A in our physical body is changed.

In a very real sense, when we accept Christ, we experience some of His resurrection life, that power to quicken us and make us alive. “You hath he made alive, who were dead in your trespasses and sins” (Ephesians 2:1).

To come into the resurrection out of the dead, we have to become conformable to His death, of coming right into the same experience that He had and into the fellowship of His sufferings.

Romans 8 speaks about the manifestation of the sons of God, about moving up into this place of authority with Him. *The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, heirs also, heirs of God and fellow-heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him in order that we may also be glorified with Him.* Romans 8:16, 17.

This Scripture is not speaking about identification with Christ’s sufferings. It is talking about going through His sufferings with Him. It is not that we identify ourselves with His rule; we are going to rule with Him. We will suffer with Him, and we will rule with Him.

In the work that Christ does in our lives, there is absolutely no distinction between Him and us—in what He has been through, what He is, or what He is going to be.

This is the will of God, for whom the Father foreknew, He predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son (Romans 8:29). That is not just some reasonable facsimile. We actually go through everything He went through. We experience everything with Him. We suffer with Him. We are crucified with Him. We are so identical with Him that He becomes the first born among many brethren. He is leading many sons to glory; and all of them will be conformed to what Christ has been, to what He is, to what He has gone through, and to the authority that He inherits.

We are not just identified with Christ; we are identical with Him. When Paul said that the Body is not one member but many, yet it is one Body, and so also is Christ, he was not speaking blasphemy (1 Corinthians 12:12–14).

Christ intends to manifest Himself throughout eternity in a many-membered Body, made one in Christ. Christ will eternally be one, and all the members will be one with Him because they have experienced the identical dealings. Whatever He went through, He sees that they appropriate and go through an identical experience, though it may not be on the same scale or in the same measure.

An example of this principle of an identical experience with him could be likened to a man who has a terrible illness and barely survives. After he recovers, the scientists and doctors may take some of his blood and make a serum with which they inoculate his children.

The father watches anxiously as the children have the same symptoms that he had, though not as severe. They do not come nearly as close to utter destruction as he did, but they have a fever, and their bodies must fight the same germs. They experience the same disease, but in a much milder form, and they build up the same immunity that is in his body. The children have not identified themselves with their father's illness; they have partaken of it. They have experienced it. They are identical with him.

We have an identical experience with Christ because his seed, his D.N.A has been planted into our spirit. We come into the spiritual state where we cannot sin for we are born of God, and His seed remaineth in us (1 John 3:9). We will come to that sinless state, too. We do not attain it through our individual experiences, but through an identical participation in Christ's experience.

We partake in it. We believe to become the righteousness of God. We believe that everything God is, we are becoming by virtue of what Christ is producing and experiencing within us.

If indeed we suffer with Him in order that we may also be glorified with Him. We notice the phrases: “with Him”—“suffering with Him,” “glorified with Him.” In bringing many sons to glory, He made the Captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings (Hebrews 2:10).

We are coming into the same glory. *For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that is to be revealed to us. For the anxious longing of the creation waits eagerly for the revealing of the sons of God.* Romans 8:18, 19.

Paul spoke about wanting to reach up into all the experiences God has prepared for His people. Paul said he had not really attained unto the resurrection from the dead, and that was true (Philippians 3:10–12).

But we do not have to wait for all these experiences to be identically and perfectly reproduced in us before we can move into God’s authority.

To the extent that we submit to the sufferings of Christ being wrought in us, to that extent the beginning of authority starts to move in us also.

At a very early time, before the disciples had gone through many testing’s and while they were still carnal, arguing over who would be the greatest, they were commissioned; authority was laid upon them;

and they went out to heal the sick, cast out devils, and do many wonderful works (Luke 10).

Christ's experience that He wrought for us is operating in us. A man does not have to wait until he is twenty-one years of age to inherit the entire estate of his father. The will could stipulate that if the son can prove he is a true son and an heir, he can stand upon the document that his father issued and go before the court and have released to him whatever he has need of until the time when the entire inheritance will be given him.

The same principle applies to those who are moving into sonship. We will frustrate people if we try to convince them that they will move into sonship all at once. It would also be a grievous error to tell them they cannot reach into this provision of God until the sweet by-and-by.

We speak of the things to come and also of the way to walk in them right now. Not only has God given us a glorious heritage, but He has given us an earnest of it, a foretaste that we can have now.

we can move much more rapidly if we continue, with all our hearts, to submit to the marvelous work of the cross being wrought in us—identifying ourselves completely in an identical experience with Christ and His sufferings, being willing to bear His reproach, and at the same time reaching out in the spirit to draw the provisions of that inheritance in which we can walk right now.

The Lord is bringing many sons to glory, and He knows how to do that (Hebrews 2:10). He knows what kind of experiences are needed to make us mature. The time will come when we will walk in our full inheritance, but He has ordained that many of His provisions are to be our inheritance now.

We are learning the delicate balance that exists between submission to God and the exercise of authority. The more we submit, the more we can resist. This is a fantastic balance that He is working within us.

The more we die, the more we are alive. The Apostle Paul said, *So then death worketh in us, but life in you.* 2 Corinthians 4:12. Two things are working at the same time. We are coming closer and closer to the identical experience of Christ; and as we are, we are moving more and more into complete authority.