

Articles and Sermons :: The Impetus of Christ Revealed - Bryon Wiebold

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The Impetus of Christ Revealed

By Bryon Wiebold

impetus noun

- 1.a moving force; impulse; stimulus:
 - 2.the momentum of a moving body,
- esp. with reference to
the cause of motion.

In the Book of Revelation, the Holy Spirit takes meticulous measures to give a clearly distinctive representation of Gods Son. As Gods Pattern, Christ overshadows and encompasses everything because all that exists was made by Him and for Him. As the standard of Gods judgment, Revelations depicts Christ first dealing with the Church, then the nations of the earth and finally the kingdom of Satan. In the end, Christ is revealed ultimately establishing the universal and eternal Kingdom of God.

Undoubtedly, God is governing the movements that are accelerating humanity toward the consummation of this age. At this most critical point in human history it is indispensable that the Church become conscious of and effectively function according to the position God originally intended for His people. That position can only be achieved by conforming to the pattern God established in the person of Jesus Christ. Only an accurate revelation of Christ as Gods Pattern will propel the Church to understand what the Christian life truly is, how the Church is to accurately function and how to fulfill its destiny in Gods plan.

The Apostle Paul serves as an example of what transpires when Christ is accurately revealed and apprehended. Paul states in 2 Corinthians, chapter 4:

For what we preach is not ourselves but Jesus Christ as Lord, and ourselves as your servants (slaves) for Jesus' sake. For God Who said, Let light shine out of darkness, has shone in our hearts so as the Light for the illumination of the knowledge of the majesty and glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ (the Messiah).

Unquestionably, Paul is speaking of his encounter with Christ on the road to Damascus as he was being driven by religious zeal to persecute Christians. Christ accurately revealed initiated the process of Reformation in a man named Saul that would ultimately become Paul the Apostle.

Once Paul saw Jesus Christ by revelation of the Holy Spirit, an entire operational system collapsed within him. His entire system of religious patterns, methods and operations were shattered when he realized that Christ was Gods Pattern. He withdrew right away into the desert for three years reconstructing every mentality according to the light of this revelation. He did not utilize his past religious training, current pious fads or even the other Apostles assistance in coming to terms with Christ. He realized that it had always been Gods purpose to reveal the Pattern of Christ in him.

and when God was well pleased -- having separated me from the womb of my mother, and having called through His grace -- to reveal His Son in me Galatians 1:15-16, Youngs Literal

Indeed, when Paul apprehended this truth, it produced an unprecedented impact and a tremendous affect in his life. In due course, the expansion of this revelation would lead him to declare what should be every true believers substantiated creed: For me to live is Christ..

The third chapter of Philippians portrays Paul commitment to a lifestyle of Reformation and pursuit of Christ being expressed through his existence. He discounts his past religious experiences and training while disregarding any opportunity for the flesh, other than dying, to be used in revealing Christ. He clearly discloses his full intention:

That if possible I may attain to the resurrection out from among the dead .Not that I have now attained , or have already been made perfect, but I press on to lay hold of (grasp) and make my own, that for which Christ Jesus (the Messiah) has laid hold of me and made me His own. I do not consider, brethren, that I have captured and made it my own ; but one thing I do : forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead, I press on toward the goal to win the prize to which God in Christ Jesus is calling us upward.

What a simple truth! It pleased God to reveal His Son in me.

What a magnificent influence it had on that man! For me to live is Christ!

His prayer for you regarding this matter is also found in Philippians 3:

So let those who are spiritually mature and full-grown have this mind and hold these convictions; and if in any respect you have a different attitude of mind, God will make that clear to you also.

May I submit to you that we as believers today, in fact do, have a different attitude of mind regarding this simple truth? We have made Christianity and Church something more and other than what God originally intended.

Although we are Christians and have all the teachings of the New Testament, we have need of Reformation to replace our religious traditions of men and our forms of godliness that deny the power of God. We have established Christian systems according to our personal preferences. They are comprehensive, complete and convincing according to worldly standards. They have been equipped with wide-ranging peripheral trimmings yet, all the while, produce no impact. Christianity has become just another religious system. It is therefore necessary for God to place His people in the process of Reformation so that all that is not of Christ can be extracted out of His Church.

The great need in the Church today is for a reformational process to be ignited by the same type of revelation that came to Paul. It is necessary for God to make clear to us that we do have a different attitude of mind regarding His concept, desire and purpose for His Church. We must see, as Paul saw, Jesus as Gods pattern!

Let me ask you a question. What is a Christian?

It would be interesting to know how you would answer that question.

A person who believes certain things about Jesus? A person who has made Jesus their Savior. A person who has given themselves to Christ? How do you define it?

In light of his revelation, with Christ as the Pattern of God, what do you think Pauls answer would be?

In describing his concept to the Corinthians of what a true Christian is, Paul explains it in simple terms:

Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it. I Corinthians 12:27

The Greek words he uses to express part literally means, one of the constituent parts of a whole. In other words, each individual believer contains a deposit, a part of Christ and is essential in the accurate make up and expression of Christ.

According to Paul, a Christian is a part of Christ. Every true Christian is a piece of Christ, if you will. From Gods standpoint, the only thing in you that interests Him is that bit of Christ that you represent. There is nothing redeemable in your flesh that interests God. There is no quality, trait, talent or attribute resident within you that God requires. If it is not the quality of Christ, God does not desire, want or need it.

Lets take ownership of Paul's statement:

For to live, is Christ!

Now, say it out loud and really listen to what you are declaring.

Christ is all that God is concerned with because Christ is His Pattern! God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into our hearts whereby we cry, Abba, Father. Every true Christian is a piece, a part, a portion of His Son.

God's initial focus is upon the deposit of Christ that has been made a part of us by new birth. Through re-generation, He has placed a portion of Christ in us. It may be a small part but it has an incredible intrinsic value to God. It is an eternal investment that He has made in us.

God is initially interested to have it as a piece in us and then His concern is to enlarge it. According to scripture, His intention is to grow and mature it to as full a measure of Christ as possible.

Now, wherever you go, you are a part of Christ and Christ is represented and expressed wherever you go to the measure that He is formed in you. Wherever you are, Christ is, according to the portion of Him that you carry.

There is great freedom in stripping off everything that has been gathered around being a Christian and developing this accurate mentality.

I am a part of Christ!

For me to live is Christ!

Now, in relation to this understanding, another question must be answered.

What is a Church?

What was Paul's mentality about churches? Do you really think that Paul's vision and mission was to start churches? Do you think he desired to establish a network of churches that bore his name and particular doctrinal lineage?

To Paul, the Church was simply Christians gathering together in certain places as the corporate life of Christ. The Church was the gathering of the parts into fellowship so that there could be a larger expression of Christ formed in that place. In gathering as many pieces of Christ as possible together the measure of Christ would increase and be as strong as possible. His desire was that Christ should be all the more expressed in that location.

Paul was governed by God's pattern that Christ should fill all things; starting with the individual believer, integrating naturally into the corporate life of the local Body of Christ and ultimately flowing over into the world. He knew that the more parts of Christ brought together, the stronger the impact of Christ would be in any place.

It is not God's idea to start churches or religious organizations built around limited expressions of Christ.

We are Pentecostal because we believe in the baptism of the Holy Spirit. We are Baptist because we believe in a variation of baptism and salvation. We are Charismatic because we believe in the gifts of the Holy Spirit.

So on and so forth through over 30 thousand different denominations!

(If you did research on the etymology of the word denomination, you would be surprised to find out that it means "a calling by anything other than the proper name.")

Such divisions were not permitted according to the revelation of Christ as God's Pattern. Paul declared to the Corinthian believers in 1 Corinthians 1:

I appeal to you, brothers, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that all of you agree with one another so that there may be no divisions among you and that you may be perfectly united in mind and thought. I have informed that there are quarrels among you. What I mean is this: One of you says, "I follow Paul"; another, "I follow Apollos"; another, "I follow Cephas"; still another, "I follow Christ." Is Christ divided?

He continued in chapter three to explain why they were allowing divisions and schisms to exist:

HOWEVER, BRETHREN, I could not talk to you as to spiritual , but as to non-spiritual , as to mere infants in Christ I fed you with milk, not solid food, for you were not yet strong enough ; but even yet you are not strong enough , for you are still of the flesh . For as long as envying and jealousy and wrangling and factions among you, are you not unspiritual and of the flesh, behaving yourselves after a human standard and like mere (unchanged) men? For when one says, I belong to Paul, and another, I belong to Apollos, are you not ordinary (unchanged) men?

Satan knows the implications of the presence of Christ corporately expressed. Therefore, he works in the midst of believers to destroy the fellowship of the Spirit of Christ and break up the unity of Christ so as to weaken Christ's true expression. He drives men to labor according to the flesh in God's name and set up various religious institutions and organizations. He will permit them to grow and prosper according to worldly standards and present a picture of success, all in God's name. Meanwhile, the true, eternal Pattern of God for His Church is set aside as worldly, temporal measures of success become the defining mark of God's people.

If any company of Christians fails to be a corporate and accurate expression of the Lord Jesus, they have failed in the purpose of their existence before God. The true, defining mark of the Church is that Christ's Life is preeminent in their midst. The presence of Christ must be in proportion to the parts of Christ present.

There is no man-made design or form that can facilitate this organic flow of Christ's Life. Quite simply, as recorded in the Church of the Book of Acts, form follows function. The form of the Church is produced purely by the government of the Holy Spirit as He administers Christ's Life, establishes spiritual authority and expands influence. Such matters are not left to man's speculation or planning.

In the Book of Revelation, as Christ walked among the Churches, Ephesus was the representative Church of all the Churches. As Christ viewed their existence, there were many commendable things. Labor, toils, works. But they were just things. The Church had lost sight of Him in the midst of the things. THE thing alone which justifies and gives meaning to any local company of the Lord's people is not the people, not their procedures and not their forms but Christ is present. Their true purpose was not to set up a Christian church in Ephesus with programs, teachings and meetings but rather to represent Christ there. The bringing together of these parts of Christ is only to increase the measure of Christ so that He can accurately be expressed and anybody who is seeking Christ will find him there.

The word to the Church at Ephesus is the same word that the Head of the Church speaks to His Church in the earth today. Repent! Change your thinking. Reprogram your mentality. Have the mind of Christ. The Church is not to be conformed to the spirit of this age which is an anti-christ spirit but the Church is to be transformed by the total restructuring of mentality.

It is incumbent on end-time believers to rediscover Christ as God's Pattern for their lives and the Church's life and allowing that Truth to form proper mentalities. Decades prior to their being addressed in the Book of Revelation, Paul declared to the Ephesian Church the Truth of God's Pattern:

There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; One Lord, one faith, one baptism, One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all. But unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ. That in the dispensation of the fullness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even in him: Ephesians 4:4-7/1:10

It is undeniable that God's chief concern is Christ being formed and expressed, both individually and corporately. May we, as Paul, have an encounter with the living Christ that will cause our spiritual eyes, ears and understanding to be opened. May the God that declared for light to shine out of darkness send forth the light that illuminates His true desire regarding the Pattern of Christ.

Before the world was created and this cosmic system arranged, God had in view, a universe whose existence was dependent upon His Son. He was before all things and all things were to be made with the embodiment of the spiritual and eternal features of Christ.

In His omniscience, God set in motion all the creative processes, all redemptive processes, elective processes, sovereign and providential processes of history to work out this Pattern of Christ. When God reaches His end and the work is completed, the one thing ultimately acquired will be that everything in the creation will reveal something of Jesus Christ. All

things will be according to the order of Christ!

God is looking to form a people in the earth that live according to that Pattern now in the earth. He desires a Church, the Nation of His People in the earth, who will allow the governing motive and power of their existence to be consistent with the Divine Nature that has been deposited into them. A people who will arise in the earth and declare that the reality of their existence is according to this one Pattern:

For me to live is Christ!!
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