Christ Living In Me!

By Andrew Murray

How does Christ enable us to live as God wants us to live? Too often we think of Christ as a Person separate from ourselves who hears and helps us. Jesus Himself, however, in the parable of the Vine and the Branches speaks about the life that Christ lives in us. *"I am the vine, ye are the branches,"* He says in John 15:5.

What can be closer or more intimate than the union between vine and branch? There are many kinds of grapes, but in each one the sap that is in the vine is the very same as that in the branch. Just so, the very same life and Spirit which are in Christ are to be in us.

Many look upon Christ as a Saviour who is separate and external. Such persons can never fully enjoy His salvation. I must believe in the indwelling Saviour. I must know that even as Christ is in Heaven, so He is here in me, His branch. He comes into my innermost life. He lives within and by living there enables me to live as a child of God.

Some think that when Christ dwells within us He lives somewhere in the region of the heart. They think of a separate person within them, working from time to time.

That is not the way it is. Christ comes into me and becomes my very life! He comes into the very root of my heart and being. He comes into my willing and thinking and feeling and living, and lives in me in the power which the omnipresent God alone can exercise.

When I understand this, my soul bows down in adoration and confidence toward God. I live in the flesh the life of flesh and blood, but Christ dwelling in me is the true Life of my life.

The Scriptures say it beautifully: *"I am crucified with Christ, nevertheless I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me"* (Gal. 2:20).

Now my special point is this: if Christ is to live in me, He does not live in me by a blind force, nor without my knowing it. He calls me to come and see what His life is. If I desire His life, I must give up mine.

I must also give up all wrong ideas about what the life of Christ really is. I cannot have the life of Christ in me in power unless I seek to know truly what the life is that He lived.

Oh, come and let the living Christ live in you! To that end, seek to know the life He has set before you in His example. Not that we will be able to imitate Christ. But because Christ lived His life for us, and imparts it to us, therefore we can share His life.

What folly it would be for a three-year-old child to say, "All that my father can do, I can do." How then can I say, "I can live as did the mighty Christ"?

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Yet the Bible tells me I must do it. The Bible also tells me I can do it, not in myself, but because *"Christ liveth in me."* If I allow the living Christ to take possession of my will and desires, I can walk even as He walked.

Let us therefore examine the life that He lived on earth with His Father. There are not two Christs, only one; the Christ who lived on earth. He is the Christ who lives in the heart according to John 15 and Galatians 2:20.

Look closely at the life of Christ as recorded in Scripture and you will see that the great mark of that life is that He lived in the deepest humility and dependence upon the Heavenly Father. He said, "I can do nothing of Myself." In everything He had His life from God.

Note five points in His life: His birth, His life and walk on earth, His death, His resurrection, and His ascension. In each aspect His was a partnership with the Holy God in Heaven.

From beginning to end of Christ's earthly ministry, God the Father was everything. If I understand that – that the Christ who is going to live in me is the Christ who honored God in everything – He will work that same disposition in me.

That will be the beauty, blessedness and strength of my life, when I learn, like Christ, to know that in everything God is all. The motto of His life will become mine: "For God, to God, through God, are all things."

His Birth

Look at the birth of Christ. God gave the power of the Holy Spirit in the Virgin Mary. It was by the almighty power of God that Christ was born as a babe in Bethlehem. He was the workmanship of God.

Christ always remembered that. He always told the people His Father sent Him. He always acknowledged that His life was from God. "The Father hath given all things into the hands of the Son," He said. Again He added, "So hath He given to the Son to have life in Himself."

That was Christ's starting point. "My life comes from God. I come from God. I have nothing of Myself, and everything I get I must get from God."

If Christ took that stand, we ought to do the same. We ought to say in deep truth, "This new life is a life that I have from God. He gave it to me. I have a work of God right in my heart, by the Holy Spirit, in regeneration. I have a new life from God."

And what about that life that God has given? Who is going to maintain it? God alone can sustain what He has begun. He must work it out to completion. He must perfect.

It is the highest folly for me to think I can keep it myself. I have received from the living God the living Christ in me, and I am not to try to live out that life. I am to take it to God and acknowledge, "My God, Thou hast planted it in me; Thou, alone canst keep it."

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Do this if you want to realize how Christ lives His whole life in dependence upon God's will, God's strength and God's might. He said regarding that question of strength, *"The Son can do nothing of Himself"* (John 5:19).

Was that true? Yes. He said, "The words I speak, I speak not of Myself, but as the Father hath given them. The Father showeth the works. Them I do." (See John 14:10.)

He said in regard to what He did, "I come not to do My will. I wait fully upon My Father, that He may work out what is right."

If Christ, the Holy One, needed to say that, don't you think you and I need ten thousand times more to say the same? That is what we want Christ to come into us for: to breathe into us that very disposition.

The highest virtue of any Christian life is to let God have His way. We need to give God the opportunity of doing His work in us. We need to come day by day, hour by hour, to the place of absolute dependence upon God. We need to learn one lesson: "O, God, I have nothing! I do not know anything. I am nothing, and I can only do what God enables me to do."

And how is Christ to bring me near to God? He cannot bring me near God in any other way than the way He came Himself. What was that? The way of deepest self-abnegation; the way of entire surrender to God.

He was forever expecting God the Father to work in Him. He looked to Him for strength. He prayed to Him for guidance. He cried to Him in His trouble. God was everything, everything to Him, and Christ was content to be nothing.

I cannot speak too plainly. The great reason why our Christian life does not advance more is that we try to do too much ourselves. We are far too self-active and self-confident. We have never learned the elementary lesson that the only place for us before God is to be nothing. Then God will work in us.

Think of the angels in Heaven, the seraphim and cherubim. Why are they such bright flames before the throne of God? Because they are nothing; there is nothing in them to hinder God, and He can let the glory of His presence burn right through them.

Why was Christ so perfect, and why did Christ gain such victory, and why did Christ please God the Father? One reason: He allowed God to work in Him from morning until night. Every step was in dependence upon God the Father. His attitude was "Father, guide Me"; "Father, I wait upon Thee"; and "Father, work in Me."

When Christ comes to live in us, the first and chief thing He wants to work in us is absolute dependence upon Him. Christian, do you not have to confess, "I have never realized that. I have not lived it out. I have not understood that, from morning to night, I must let God work in me. I must do nothing."

"How can we do our work?" you may ask. Was Christ also inactive? Was the Apostle Paul

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inactive? With what restless purpose he traversed the world, and yet repeatedly, he said, "I am nothing." Waiting upon God will not make us inactive. It will give us great activity.

Pray God to teach us that if we are to know the power of Christ in us, we need a life of absolute, entire dependence upon God.

Christ's Death

What does the death of Christ teach us concerning our dependence on God? It shows us that the life God had given His Son He yielded up entirely to God. "I do not regard My life as My own," He said in effect. "If the Father wants it, however much suffering, however much shame, and however agonizing the suffering of death, I give it to Him."

That is fair. That is right. If everything I have is from God, then everything ought to return to Him.

It was thus with Christ. When He was only twelve, remember, He said to Mary, *"Know ye not that I must be about My Father's business?"* Later He was to say, *"My meat is to do the will of Him that sent Me and to finish His work."*

Again He was to say, *"I came down from Heaven, not to do Mine own will, but the will of Him that sent Me."* In Gethsemane, in those last hours of anguish before His death, He said to the Father, *"Not My will, but Thine be done."*

We as believers have never acknowledged the rights God has. We have never even understood that every power we have comes from God.

My whole life comes from Him, and every moment of my life ought to be yielded back to Him. Every strength I receive in spiritual life comes from God, just as the sunlight comes from the sun, and everything ought to go back to God so every action will be to God's glory.

A Christian who has Christ in him will be truly sacred, a person given up wholly to God. That is not easy. Why? Because self in us is so strong. Sin has brought us into that fearful condition. Instead of considering it an honor and a privilege to be nothing and to do God's will, we have come to look upon it as hard.

We have come to look upon submission of self as a high attainment, something out of reach. Yet, if a person will give up himself and yield to God, he can experience the life of Christ within him.

Paul's companion Epaphras, praying for the Colossian believers, asked that they might stand perfect and complete in all the will of God (Col. 4:12). Think of it! Paul expected that to be true of each Christian.

Christ lived only for God's will, and do you want that Christ in your heart, or do you want to try to live a little for your own will? Do you want the living Christ, the Christ who reveals God, who gave up everything?

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If there was ever anyone who had a right to say, "I will live for myself," it was Christ. But He did not. This is the One I want to live in me – a Christ who will enable me to live in dependence on God.

God gives you this Christ if, from the heart, you give up your life, time, and will to Him to do that very thing in you.

Think of that beautiful, perfect life of Christ, a life without one sin! Was it necessary to give up His life? Yes!

Christ lets us know, "If you want Me to live in you, you must do what I did. Your own life must be given up to the very death, unto the death of the cross, to be crucified." We must be an actual partaker of the death of Christ.

Thus the Word of God says, *"If we have been planted together in the likeness of His death, we shall be also in the likeness of His resurrection"* (Rom. 6:5).

Therefore, I as a Christian must say to God, "I want to lose my life. I want to die to self. I want Christ to come into me with His death, and to take me down into it that He may live in me."

Christ's Resurrection

The next step is resurrection. When Christ laid down His life, God gave it back to Him in far greater glory. After Christ had gone down into the grave, God lifted Him up, giving Him a new life, infinitely higher and better than the life He laid down.

Christ's resurrection teaches me this: that if I am willing to lay down my evil life, my evil will, my heart and its affections, all my power in this world, to give it all up to God, God will give the new resurrection life of Christ in my heart here on earth. Christ the Living One, who was raised from death, will come and live in my heart.

Study the grave of Jesus. What does it mean? Christ gave Himself up unto death, utter helplessness, to be nothing before God. There He lay, just allowing God to take His time to do His work.

What did God do? He fulfilled His promise, and gave Him a life a thousand times more glorious than His life before Calvary. If you want Christ really to live in your heart, you want that Christ who went down into the grave. You want Christ with the resurrected life to come into you, and be one with you, the Christ who was dead and is alive for evermore.

He it is who comes and brings the power of His death in me, so that everything dies to self and sin, and brings the power of His life, so that everything in me can live with a new life from God.

Do not be content with mere thoughts about the presence of Jesus. Let His coming be a reality. Let Him be a living presence.

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Who is this Christ who lives in me? He is a Man who received His life from God, who lived that life in intimate dependence upon God, a Man who gave up His whole life and will to God, the Man raised from the dead by the almighty power of God. This is the Christ who wants to live in you.

He is the God-Man who was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit, who lived on earth in intimate dependence upon the Father in Heaven, the God in human flesh who gave up His whole life and will to the Father, the One raised from the dead by the almighty power of the Eternal. This is the Christ who wants to live in you.

Christ's Ascension

After Christ's resurrection, He ascended into Heaven. God took Him up into the place of power, to share His throne of glory, making Him partaker of the Divine power. He sent forth the Holy Spirit.

Many ask, "How can I be a blessing to my fellow men?" How did Christ become a blessing to the world? He gave Himself up to God, died to Himself and to His own natural life and waited for God to raise Him up.

Because He did so, God lifted Him up to the place of blessing. Because of His death and resurrection, He could send us the Holy Spirit.

You want Christ, but you cannot have Him until you learn the lesson of dependence on God. You must die, and then learn by faith to claim Christ in the resurrection and in the ascension.

Thus, as Jesus Christ lives in you in your earthly life, you will become a sharer of the glory of His heavenly love. The whole Christ-life in you – the Christ-dependence upon God, the Christ given up to God, the Christ raised up by God, and the Christ exalted above with God – this Christ wants to live in you.

If Christ is to bring me near to God, it cannot be as One outside myself. He must live in me, united (with me) in harmony and obedience in the service of God. This is a spiritual mystery, but God is a Holy, Spiritual Being, and I cannot draw nigh to Him by my thought or by thinking about a certain locality of Heaven.

Being brought to God means that Christ comes into me and lives His life in me. He leads me into personal fellowship with the living God.

The great question that stirs the church is, "Why are Christians so feeble?" And the great question with many is, "What can we do to get the full Christian life, to live as God promises we can live? What can we do to become just such children of God as the Father is able to make us, branches of the Living Vine?"

What do we have to do? First, we must look upon this Christ, and ask ourselves, "Am I willing to give up everything that this Christ can live in me?" You see and know how Christ lived in Paul. It was as if Christ had become incarnated in His apostle – the same zeal for God, the

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same love for souls, the same readiness to sacrifice everything. Everything great in Paul was the complete Christ-life in him.

Are you willing to have this Christ in you?

Suppose you were to be as poor as Christ, as persecuted as He was, and suppose God were to say, "My children, I am giving the highest glory to man, to allow the Christ to come and live in him, live this suffering life that He lived." How many would say, "Yes, Lord, I would give anything that Christ might take possession of me"?

How many would say, "Here, where I live, it would cost too much to take Him in me that way"?

Friend, God comes to us with that question. "Are you willing to have My Son, Jesus, as you find Him in the Word, in His humility, in His dependence, in His submission and obedience, in His surrender to death and the grave, in His waiting upon Me to raise Him? Are you willing to have that Christ live in your heart?"

Are you willing? If you are not willing, are you willing to be made so? If so, tell Him. Say, "I want that Christ to live His life in me and make me exactly like Himself." He is ready to do it.

Do not be content any longer with a half-hearted Christianity, saying, "I am saved, and pardoned. I have a little of Christ. I do my best."

Oh, come to the full life that God offers! Let Christ take entire possession. Let Christ come in – the Humble One, the Obedient One, the One who lived in dependence upon God – and say, "That shall be my life, if Christ will live it in me."

– From *Andrew Murray's Ministry at Moody*.

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