

Sabbath School Lesson #13 – Crucified and Risen – 20-26 Jun 2015

Christ said He will die and rise again, “Saying, The Son of man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, and be crucified, and the third day rise again” (Luke 24:7). Christ died, and being truly dead, He did not raise Himself, but His Father raised Him up (1 Cor. 6:14; Rom. 6:4; 8:11; Eph. 1:17-20; Acts 5:29-32; 1 Thes. 1:9-10; Heb. 13:20-21). “Yea, and we are found false witnesses of God; because we have testified of God that He raised up Christ” (1 Cor. 15:15). “After His resurrection He tarried on earth for a season, that His disciples might become familiar with Him in His risen and glorified body” {DA 829.1}.

Christ is Crucified and Risen – Christian is Crucified and Risen. “If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth. For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then ye also will appear with Him in glory. Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth” (Colossians 3:1-5). Paul also says, “But God, who is rich in mercy, for His great love wherewith He loved us, Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ (by grace ye are saved;) And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus” (Ephesians 2:4-6). Keep these two passages in my mind as we proceed.

Here we have death and resurrection. In Ephesians 1, we find that Christians are expected to have the same experience that Christ had. We are to know the exceeding greatness of the power of God in us who believe, “according to the working of His mighty power, Which He wrought in Christ, when He raised Him from the dead, and set Him at His own right hand in the heavenly places” (verses 19-20); and we know this power only by being made alive, and raised up with Christ, and made to sit with Him in heavenly places.

Note the exact parallel: Christ says, “I am He that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen” (Revelation 1:18); we should say, “I am (was) crucified (dead) with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me” (Galatians 2:20), and since Christ is our life, and He says, “because I live, ye shall live also” (John 14:19), it follows that we also have “life for evermore” (Psalm 133:3). That is the blessing that God commanded.

Then if we are really in Christ, where are we? – where He is, of course, in heaven. All the life the Christian has is there; “For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God” (Colossians 3:3). So we are to live as being in heaven. But someone will say, ‘I am on this earth, nevertheless.’ The Spirit of the Lord has anticipated this objection, by saying, “Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth” (verse 5). Do not try to live in two places at once, to keep up two establishments, as it were. Why put your members on earth to death? – for the reason just given, because we are risen with Christ and have been seated with Him in the heavenly places. We are to have our individual life in heaven.

Crucified and risen together with Christ and in Him. We have members on this earth, it is true, but they are to have no more voice in our control than if they were buried. “The life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave Himself for me,” and who spoke of Himself while on earth talking with Nicodemus as “the Son of man which is in heaven” (John 3:13). Even so it is to be with us. The body is flesh; but it is the Spirit that is to have supreme control. God will demonstrate with us, as He did in Christ, that the flesh cannot control Him, but that He has “power over all flesh” (17:2). Who has not felt the flesh, the nature of his members which are on earth, to be a hindrance in the Christian life? We could not do the things that we would. God’s purpose for us is that the flesh shall be so deadened that it will have no more power to hinder us from living as we ought, than it will when it is changed from corruption to incorruption. Thus He gets glory.

“The carnal mind” – the mind of the flesh – “is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be” (Romans 8:7). The carnal mind is the mind dominated by the flesh. It is enmity against God, because the flesh is opposed to the Spirit. And the flesh will control the mind as long as it has any power. The flesh cannot be converted, for “flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God” (1 Corinthians 15:50). Therefore it is the mind of Christ, that must take possession, for it alone is able to subdue the flesh and put it to death. The dead members then become simply passive instruments of

righteousness. The mind of Christ can do this, because it led Him to humble Himself unto death (Philippians 2:6-8), and He literally put Himself to death, that is, He laid down His own life (John 2:17-18). When Christ is given unreserved right to dwell in us in His fullness, the power of His death and resurrection will crucify our flesh (Galatians 5:24) so that our members on the earth will be “dead indeed to sin” yet alive to righteousness as though already changed from corruption to incorruption. “Thanks be unto God for His unspeakable gift!” (2 Corinthians 9:15). A crucified carnal mind is subdued continuously; “self” is crucified.

For “self” to be crucified *with* Christ does not mean a human effort to torture ourselves by an agonizing do-it-yourself crucifixion. It is always “with Christ.” When Paul says, “I am crucified with Christ,” he is not saying, “See what a strong Christian I am! I am nailing nails through my hands and feet, I am crucifying myself!” Rather Paul is saying: “My proud self is already crucified with Him. I have learned from Him – I too ‘am crucified *with Christ*.’ I kneel with Him in Gethsemane. To do mine own will is so strong that it was like sweating blood for Christ to say ‘No!’ to human will; but I say ‘*let* this mind be in me, which was also in’ Him.”

Self *cannot* live and reign any longer because His *agape* has annihilated the love of self. Honest human hearts identify with Christ on His cross. And with Him, the natural result is: self is crucified. The slightest taint of legalism “frustrate the grace of God” and denies the cross (Galatians 2:21). Now, Paul goes on to say, “nevertheless I live: yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave Himself for me.” To respond any less than that, says Paul, would be to “frustrate the grace of God,” and that I, Paul, now refuse to do, he adds (Galatians 2:20-21).

When in verse 16 Paul says emphatically it is “not by the works” he means not even one percent. Paul’s impassioned Letter to the Galatians is on one side of the perennial debate: “I do not frustrate the grace of God [even one percent ‘works’ will frustrate that grace!]: for if righteousness come by law, then Christ is dead in vain” (Galatians 2:21). There is no “balance” between righteousness by faith and righteousness by works – indeed, Laodicean lukewarm-ness, hot and cold water “balanced,” this confusion, is only a Laodicean problem.

Christ was not motivated even one percent by egocentric concern for Himself; it was to save us that He consented to die at the cross. Bearing our sin, although “He feared that sin was so offensive to God that their separation was to be eternal,” He still consented to die for us {CSA 39.2}. “The pain of the separation from His Father eclipsed even His extraordinary physical pain” {AC 55.1}. “At the ninth hour the darkness lifted from the people, but still enveloped the Saviour” {CSA 39.5}. He cried, “My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?” He “poured out His soul unto death,” even the second death (Isaiah 53:12). Not even one percent of an egocentric motivation – totally love for us, none for Himself – That was *agape*! It is the *agape* of Christ that delivers us from egocentric motivation, for “the love of Christ constraineth us” (2 Corinthians 5:14-15) when we behold His matchless *agape* at the cross.

At the cross, we also learn the lesson of choice from the two thieves. One choice is to join the believing thief who was crucified with Jesus, and pray, “Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom” (Luke 23:42); after all, people like that thief, is where we all belong (Romans 3:23). The only other choice is for us to join the unbelieving thief who was crucified with Jesus. We cannot evade making this choice. The whole world will eventually stand with the one or the other, and this will be included in the mark of the beast or seal of God choices all will make (Revelation 13:15-17; 6:1-4). Let us permit the Savior to “draw” us (John 12:32, 33)! We either embrace the third blessing of the sermon of the mount and allow a meekness to flow into our souls and then the dawn of hope causes a hunger and thirst for righteousness, or refuse to accept our responsibility and begin to rail on the Saviour saying “If thou be Christ, save thyself and us” (Luke 23:39). The desire for salvation without death, the desire to save one’s life without losing it, will indeed cause the loss of the soul.

Crucified and risen and glorified – “But if the Spirit of Him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, He that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by His Spirit that dwelleth in you” (Romans 8:11). That is, the spiritual life which we now live in the flesh by the Spirit is the surety of the glorified spiritual body to be bestowed at the resurrection when we will have the life of Christ made manifested in our immortal bodies.