

Fruitfulness Explained: John 15.1-8 Abiding Crucified

This morning the key to all you and I will ever be is summed up by two words "in Christ". Our identification with Him in His work on the Cross brought us salvation. Our continuing with Him brings everlasting rewards.

When we were saved we became born again what? Christians. A Christian is one who is "in Christ".

Jesus tells us the secret to being "in" Him. Open with me to John 15 as Jesus invites us into living His life – the Christian Life. The Christian Life is being "in Him". To be in Christ is to abide in Him.

Listen again the Christ's words in John as we continue to savor the depths of the truths Christ Jesus offers to us this day. John 15.1-7 repeatedly tells us we are "in" Him. That is the basis for our abiding.

How does it continue into daily life? Paul addresses that in Galatians 2.20. That is our next portion of God's Word we need to look at. Please stand with me.

Galatians 2.20 I am ⁴⁹⁵⁷ crucified¹ ⁵⁷⁶⁹ with Christ: ⁵⁵⁴⁷ nevertheless
¹¹⁶¹ I live; ²¹⁹⁸ yet ²⁰⁸⁹ not ³⁷⁶⁵ I, ¹⁴⁷³ but ¹¹⁶¹ Christ ⁵⁵⁴⁷ liveth ²¹⁹⁸ in ¹⁷²²
^{me:} ¹⁶⁹⁸ and ¹¹⁶¹ the life which ³⁷³⁹ I ²¹⁹⁸ now ³⁵⁶⁸ live ²¹⁹⁸ in ¹⁷²² the flesh
⁴⁵⁶¹ I live ²¹⁹⁸ by ¹⁷²² the faith ⁴¹⁰² of the Son ⁵²⁰⁷ of God, ²³¹⁶ who ³⁵⁸⁸ loved
²⁵ ⁵⁶⁶⁰ me, ³¹⁶⁵ and ²⁵³² gave ³⁸⁶⁰ ⁵⁶³¹ himself ¹⁴³⁸ for ⁵²²⁸ me. ¹⁷⁰⁰ NKJV

¹ **4957** *sustauroo* { *soos-tow-ro'-o* } from 4862 and 4717; TDNT - 7:786, 1102; v; AV - crucify with 5; 5; GK - 5365 { *sustauroww* }; 1) to crucify alone with; The death of Christ on the cross has wrought the extinction of our former corruption, by the death of Christ upon the cross I have become utterly estranged from (dead to) my former habit of feeling and action. The tense is perfect. **5778 Tense – Perfect:** The perfect tense in Greek corresponds to the perfect tense in English, and describes an action which is viewed as having been completed in the past, once and for all, not needing to be repeated. Jesus' last cry from the cross, TETELESTAI ("It is finished!") is a good example of the perfect tense used in this sense, namely "It [the atonement] has been accomplished, completely, once and for all time." Certain antiquated verb forms in Greek, such as those related to seeing (*eidw*) or knowing (*oida*) will use the perfect tense in a manner equivalent to the normal past tense. These few cases are exception to the normal rule and do not alter the normal connotation of the perfect tense stated above.

Galatians 2:20 I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me. NKJV

Pray.

Now let me translate this vague concept of being “crucified” with Christ --into a very vivid, sobering, and life transforming reality.

In the justice of the Roman Empire, murderers were often subjected to the result of their crime. This gruesome form of punishment was called staking where the murderer was tied to the one that they had killed. As their bodies were staked to the ground the death of the murdered one infected and eventually killed the murderer.

The word for staking the criminal to the crime to execute him is the same word that is used for crucifixion². Only when Paul says we are crucified with Christ, nailed with Him, attached with Him a reverse effect is implied. In the Roman torture the dead one transferred their death to the living one and they died. In Christ our death is absorbed by Him, our sin is taken, our stench is removed with our evil, and our decay – and we in turn receive from Him His life, His health, His fragrance, His power, and His righteousness.

Attached to Christ we begin to see His life lived out in us. Our hands attached to Him do His bidding, our feet go as His went, our eyes see as His saw, and so on.

Romans 6: 1-6 What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? 2 Certainly not! How shall we who died to sin live any longer in it? 3 Or do you not know that as many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death? 4 Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. 5 For if we have been united together in the likeness of His death, certainly we also shall be in the likeness of His resurrection, 6 knowing this, that our old man was crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves of sin. NKJV

The Roman death by staking meant eye to eye, face to face, body to body in horrible transference of death. In Christ we find that being planted together with Him, crucified with Him means that we now are staked to Him so that His compassion and kindness can flow from us.

² 4717 stauroo { stow-ro'-o } from 4716; TDNT - 7:581, 1071; v; AV - crucify 46; 46; GK - 5090 { staurovw }; 1) to stake, drive down stakes; 2) to fortify with driven stakes, to palisade; 3) to crucify 3a) to crucify one; 3b) metaph. to crucify the flesh, destroy its power utterly (the nature of the figure implying that the destruction is attended with intense pain) .

Mouths crucified/staked to Christ speak His way. Jesus spoke compassionate and healing words. Remember how He spoke?

- Luke 4:22 So all bore witness to Him, and marveled at the gracious words which proceeded out of His mouth. And they said, "Is this not Joseph's son?" NKJV
- John 7:46 The officers answered, "No man ever spoke like this Man!" NKJV
- John 8:11 She said, "No one, Lord." And Jesus said to her, "Neither do I condemn you; go and sin no more." NKJV

When He speaks through us as we abide in Him our words become energized and empowered by Him.

- Colossians 4:6 Let your speech always be with grace, seasoned with salt, that you may know how you ought to answer each one. NKJV
- Psalm 141:3 Set a guard, O Lord, over my mouth; Keep watch over the door of my lips. NKJV

When abiding in Him my mouth becomes a tool God uses to spread His love and compassion. But most of all – to witness His life and forgiveness offered through His salvation.

Give your mouth to Jesus. Let Him guard it and then fill it, and then use it!

Hands crucified/staked to Christ touch as He touched. Jesus touched others with love, kindness, and acceptance. Remember His Hands?

Jesus came to do God's will, so His hands were extended to do what His Father wanted done.

- John 4:34 Jesus said to them, "My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me, and to finish His work. NKJV
- Hebrews 10:7 Then I said, 'Behold, I have come— In the volume of the book it is written of Me— To do Your will, O God.' " NKJV

So what happened with those hands given to God? They were constantly stretched out for the good and glory of God. Watch Christ's Hands and Matthew saw them.

- **THE UNCLEAN WERE TOUCHED:** Matthew 8:3 Then Jesus put out His hand and touched him, saying, "I am willing; be cleansed." Immediately his leprosy was cleansed. NKJV

- **THE HOPELESS WERE TOUCHED:** Matthew 9:20 And suddenly, a woman who had a flow of blood for twelve years came from behind and touched the hem of His garment. NKJV
- **THE BLIND WERE TOUCHED:** Matthew 9:29 Then He touched their eyes, saying, "According to your faith let it be to you." NKJV
- **THE SICK AND TROUBLED WERE TOUCHED:** Matthew 14:36 and begged Him that they might only touch the hem of His garment. And as many as touched it were made perfectly well. NKJV
- **THE FEARFUL WERE TOUCHED:** Matthew 17:7 But Jesus came and touched them and said, "Arise, and do not be afraid." NKJV

THE TOUCH OF JESUS. What kind of people did Jesus associate³ with? Whom did he consider important enough to touch? Here we see many of the people Jesus came to know. Some reached out to him; he reached out to them all. Regardless of how great or unknown, rich or poor, young or old, sinner or saint -- Jesus cares equally for each one. No person is beyond the loving touch of Jesus.

When abiding in Him my hands become His hands that touch with love, kindness, tenderness, and patience. Hands that reach out to hold children (not push them away). If I wasn't already committed to this service each week I would be somewhere in the nursery or in childrens ministry. Jesus thought so much of children that He promised the surest rewards to those who serve them in His Name. It is not when will my time be up so I can get out of working with the children – it is how can I get more time to be Christ's Hands holding the hearts and lives and hands of these children we serve for Him.

- Mark 10:16 And He took them up in His arms, laid His hands on them, and blessed them. NKJV
- Mark 9:41 For whoever gives you a cup of water to drink in My name, because you belong to Christ, assuredly, I say to you, he will by no means lose his reward. NKJV

Give your hands to Jesus. Let Him use them to touch lives for His Glory!

Eyes crucified/staked to Christ see as He saw. Jesus looked at people with love, kindness, and acceptance. Remember His eyes?

Jesus looked at the people of His world and was moved with compassion. Matthew 9:36 But when He saw the multitudes, He was moved with compassion for them, because they were weary and scattered, like sheep having no shepherd. NKJV

³ Barton, B. B. 1994. *Mark*. Life application Bible commentary . Tyndale House Publishers: Wheaton, Ill.

When He saw one taken by sin He gently looked at them offering them His cleansing and life transforming forgiveness in John 8.1-12.

We are to live life looking unto Jesus as we saw last week in Hebrews 12:2 looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. NKJV

When abiding in Him my eyes become His eyes. Jesus sees what I am looking at is the best way to say it. Just like a video cam that displays on a monitor somewhere, Jesus dwells within our minds looking out at what it is we are seeing.

On a practical note, Jesus had pure eyes. Habakkuk 1:13 You are of purer eyes than to behold evil, And cannot look on wickedness. Why do You look on those who deal treacherously, And hold Your tongue when the wicked devours A person more righteous than he? NKJV

Remember the Old Testament saint Job? He had a practical plan. Job 31:1 "I have made a covenant with my eyes; Why then should I look upon a young woman? NKJV. I find the greatest deterrent to the sinking morality of humanity that can be seen all around us is the reality that Christ is looking through my eyes. On earth His eyes were turned upward to look at His Father, His eyes dripped tears of love and compassion. His eyes burned with hatred of sin and hypocrisy and yet His eyes spoke of acceptance and forgiveness.

Give your eyes to Jesus. Let Him use them to see life purely, and to see people as He does!

Feet crucified/staked to Christ walk His way. Jesus walked to the glory of His Father. He went and did what God willed. His feet were swift to obey. Remember His feet?

When crucified/staked to Christ my feet become His feet. What did His feet do? They constantly walked God's way.

- They walked to the synagogue to learn and honor God.
- They walked to the Temple to celebrate the Feasts, remember God and obey His Word.
- They walked to work even though He was God. Even though all in the Universe was His – He worked to support His family faithfully for those years until He was 30.
- Christ's feet walked to minister the Gospel. Mark 1:38 But He said to them, "Let us go into the next towns, that I may preach there also, because for this purpose I have come forth." NKJV

- Christ's feet walked to defeat the Devil in Matthew 4. His feet walked to lonely places early in the morning and late at night to stay in prayerful communion with His Father.
- Christ's feet walked across the dusty roads of Galilee to serve the sick and hungry and needy and poor.
- And finally those feet walked the way of suffering, the Via Dolorosa out of His love for you and me – He walked unflinchingly to face the Cross

Those feet that walked in Eden's splendor calling out for the hiding, fallen first family, would crisscross the Promised Land seeking and saving lost ones. Then those feet would be stopped. In the dead of night they would rise from kneeling and turn to face a scattering flock and a seething mob. Those feet would walk to phony trials, mock hearings and wicked dens of torture. Then with blood drops staining those feet they would trudge till they collapsed on the way to Calvary.

Those feet that had walked the wings of the dawn, that had stood in the chariots of the thunder clouds, that had walked with Enoch and Abraham, and had crossed the expanse of the universe. Those feet that had left the streets of heaven were now crudely pushed onto rough splintered wood. Pressed and held by the hands of one of His own creatures now stained with sin. The Holy One of God would be spiked to a tree He had created by a creature He had come to rescue.

Give your feet to Jesus. Let Him use them so you can walk worthy of God in all that you do! Here are some ways to walk for him.

- Romans 10:15 And how shall they preach unless they are sent? As it is written: "How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the gospel of peace, Who bring glad tidings of good things!" NKJV
- Ephesians 5:2 And walk in love, as Christ also has loved us and given Himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling aroma. NKJV
- Ephesians 6:15 and having shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace; NKJV
- Colossians 2:6 As you therefore have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in Him, NKJV
- 1 Peter 2:21 For to this you were called, because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that you should follow His steps: NKJV
- 1 John 1:7 But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin. NKJV

Mind crucified/staked to Christ thinks His way. Jesus was always operating with the Mind of His Father.

- Luke 22:42 saying, "Father, if it is Your will, take this cup away from Me; nevertheless not My will, but Yours, be done." NKJV
- John 4:34 "My food," said Jesus, "is to do the will of him who sent me and to finish his work. NIV
- John 6:38 For I have come down from heaven not to do my will but to do the will of him who sent me. NIV
- Philippians 2:5 Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, NKJV
- Colossians 3:2 Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things. NIV
- Isaiah 26:3 You will keep in perfect peace him whose mind is steadfast, because he trusts in you. NIV

What should we do? Obey God's Word when He tells us to give our minds back to Him and let His transform us from our center of our being and outward. Romans 12:1-2 I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service. 2 And do not be conformed to this world, **but be transformed by the renewing of your mind**, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God. NKJV

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Attached to Christ we begin to see His life lived out in us.

Is your mouth "staked" to Christ?
 Are your hands attached to Him do His bidding?
 Are your eyes attached to His?
 Are your feet crucified to His?
 Is your mind attached, staked, nailed down to Him?

So how can we today get a handle on our bodies offered to the Lord? It starts in our minds as we from our wills declare our allegiance to Him. Turn again with me to the testimony book of hymns. Look at number 379.

TAKE MY LIFE AND LET IT BE

⁴ 4717 stauroo { stow-ro'-o} from 4716; TDNT - 7:581, 1071; v; AV - crucify 46; 46; GK - 5090 { staurovw }; 1) to stake, drive down stakes; 2) to fortify with driven stakes, to palisade; 3) to crucify 3a) to crucify one; 3b) metaph. to crucify the flesh, destroy its power utterly (the nature of the figure implying that the destruction is attended with intense pain) .

Frances R. Havergal (1836–1879) was an *English poet whose poetry made a significant contribution to Christian hymnody*. Havergal's father, William Henry Havergal, was an Anglican rector in Worcestershire. An accomplished musician who wrote about one hundred hymns, he instilled in his daughter a lifelong passion for knowledge. She was educated in boarding schools in England and Germany, where she learned several modern languages plus Greek and Hebrew. Her poems communicate a simple, childlike faith, yet they are still profound. The most well known of her fifty hymns and two hundred poems are "Take My Life, and Let It Be" (1874), "Like a River Glorious" (1878), "Who Is on the Lord's Side?" (1877), and "I Gave My Life for Thee."

At the age of forty-two, when told by her physician that her physical condition was serious and that she did not have long to live, Miss Havergal replied, "If I am really going, it is too good to be true." At the bottom of her bed she had her favorite text placed where she could readily see it: "The blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin."

Her prayer, "Take my silver and my gold; not a mite would I withhold," was not lightly stated. In August, 1878, Miss Havergal wrote to a friend,

"In this day of self-centered living and pleasure-oriented lifestyle, the total commitment to God of body, mind, and possessions portrayed in this text is difficult for many Christians to achieve. Even though we realize that we have nothing we have not received, we must act like we are only stewards of the good gifts He has given. The Lord has shown me another little step, and, of course, I have taken it with extreme delight. "Take my silver and my gold" now means shipping off all my ornaments to the church Missionary House, including a jewel cabinet that is really fit for a countess, where all will be accepted and disposed of for me....Nearly fifty articles are being packed up. I don't think I ever packed a box with such pleasure⁵."

- 1 Take my life, and let it be
 Consecrated, Lord, to Thee;
 Take my moments and my days,
 Let them flow in ceaseless praise.
- 2 Take my hands, and let them move
 At the impulse of Thy love;
 Take my feet, and let them be
 Swift and beautiful for Thee.
- 3 Take my voice, and let me sing
 Always, only, for my King;

⁵ Osbeck, Kenneth W., *101 Hymn Stories*, (Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Publications) 1997.

Take my lips, and let them be
Filled with messages from Thee.
4 Take my silver and my gold:
Not a mite would I withhold;
Take my intellect, and use
Ev'ry pow'r as Thou shalt choose.
5 Take my will, and make it Thine:
It shall be no longer mine;
Take my heart it is Thine own:
It shall be Thy royal throne.
6 Take my love, my Lord, I pour
At Thy feet its treasure store;
Take myself and I will be
Ever, only, all for Thee!