

CHAPTER 3

CHRIST LIVETH IN ME

“Christ liveth in me” (Galatians 2:20). That is the revelation of this age. That is the discovery of the moment. That is the revolutionizing power of God in the earth, the factor that is changing the spirit of religion in the world and the character of the Christian faith. It is divine vitalization.

The world is awakening to the marvelous truth that Christ is not only in heaven, but that Christ is *in you*.

The world lived in darkness for thousands of years. There was just as much electricity in the world then as now. It is not that electricity has just come into being. It was always here. But men have discovered how to utilize it and bless themselves with it.

THE GREAT MYSTERY

Christ's indwelling in the human heart is the mystery of mysteries. Paul gave it to the Gentiles as the supreme mystery of all the revelation of God, and the finality of all wonder that he knew.

Christ has a purpose in you. Christ's purpose in you is to reveal Himself to you, through you, in you. We repeat over and over that familiar phrase, “The Church which is His Body,” but if we realized the truth of it and the power of it, this world would be a different place. When the Christian church realizes that they are the tangible, living,

pulsating body—flesh and bones and blood and brain of Jesus Christ—and that God is manifesting through each one every minute, and is endeavoring to accomplish His will for the world through them, not through some other body, then Christian service and responsibility will be understood.

Jesus Christ operates through you. He does not operate independently of you; He operates through you. Man and God become united. That is the divine secret of a real Christian life. It is the real union, the conscious union of man and God. There is no substitute for that relationship. You can manufacture ordinances and symbols until you become dazed with them all, but still you must find God.

There is only one reality. That reality is God. The soul of man must contact God, and unless the spirit of man is truly joined to God, there is no such thing as a real Christian manifestation. All the processes of preparation by which a soul is prepared by God for such manifestation are only preliminary processes. The final end is that man may reveal God, and that God may not only have a place of residence, but also a right of action in the body and spirit of man. Every Spirit-taught man in the world is aware of how gradually his own nature has become subjected to God and His will.

I was visiting with a gentleman who had a complaint against me. He said, "I wrote you a twenty-four-page letter, and you have not received it. If you had you would not be here." I laughed. That man has been a Christian for thirty or forty years. Always a devout man, I have spoken of him frequently to my wife and my friends as one of the most consistent Christian men I have known. Yet every once in a while we see how the human nature can rise above the spirit and spoil the beauty of the life that is revealing God.

God's purpose in us is to bring all the conditions of our being into harmony with His will and His mind. God's purpose is not to make us automatons. We see a ventriloquist operating a wooden dummy, and the dummy's lips move; it looks as though it is talking. He is just moving in obedience to another power.

God has a higher purpose than making man an automaton. God's highest is to bring out all the qualities of God in your own soul, to bring out the individuality that is in your life; not to submerge or destroy, but to change it, to energize it, to enlarge it until all your individuality and personality are of the nature and substance of God.

GOD DOES NOT ELIMINATE MAN'S PERSONALITY

Once while I was in Chicago I met a couple of old friends who invited me to dinner. At dinner the lady, who is a very frank woman, said: "Mr. Lake, I have known you so long and have had such close fellowship with you for so many years that I am able to speak perfectly frankly."

I said, "Yes, absolutely."

"Well," she said, "there is something I miss about you. For lack of words I am going to put it in Paul's words—'I bear about in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus.' You do not seem to have the marks of Jesus."

I said, "That depends on whether it is the marks or mannerisms. If you are expecting that the personality God gave me is going to be changed so that I will be another man and not myself, then you will be disappointed. If those are the kinds of marks you are looking for, you will not find them. But if you are expecting to observe a man's flesh and blood, bones, spirit, and mind indwelt by God, then you will find them. Not a machine, not an automaton, or an imitation, but a man with a clear

mind and a pure heart. A son of God in nature and in essence."

What is all God's effort with the world but to bring out the real man in the image of Christ, that real man with the knowledge of God? That real man, reconstructed until his very substance is the substance of God. And when you stop to reason that to its proper conclusion, that is the only way in which Jesus Christ Himself, or God the eternal Father will ever keep from living in loneliness forever and ever.

When one stops to analyze that fact, we see that God is trying to make us in all our nature and being and habits and thought, in all the structure of our life, just as beautiful and just as real and just as clear-minded and strong as Jesus Himself. Then we understand what Christ's redemption means. It is the bringing out of Christ in you until Christ in you is the One manifest. Manifest through your eyes, just as God was manifest through the eyes of Jesus; manifest through your touch, just as God was manifest through Jesus. Not a power or a life separate from yourself, but two lives made one, two natures joined, two minds operating as one, Christ in you.

THE WOMAN AND HER RHEUMATICS

In a conference in Chicago I sat with a black woman one afternoon after the meeting. She told me of her woes and sicknesses and they were many. After a time when she had grown somewhat still, I said, "Dear mother, how long have you been a Christian?"

She replied, "Since I was a child."

Then I tried to show her that God expected a development of God and His nature and the action of God in His transforming power, through the agency of the Spirit, and that there was a process of remaking and remolding that should change

her nature and dissolve the rheumatics, Bright's disease, and all the other difficulties, just as truly as long ago sin dissolved out of her soul.

After the conversation had gone on to the proper point I said, "Dear sister, anybody can see that Christ dwells in your spirit." Her eyes were lovely, delightful. "Let your mind extend just a little bit. Let your thoughts comprehend that just as Jesus dwells in your spirit and also possesses your soul, in just exactly the same way He is possessing your blood and your old rheumatic bones, and that the very same thing will happen in your bones when you realize the truth that happened in your spirit when you were converted at the altar." (She had told me how she had prayed 22 days and nights until Christ was revealed in her soul as Saviour. She seemed to want to wait 22 days and nights for God to manifest Himself in the rheumatic bones, and I was trying to get her away from it.)

She said, "Brother, lay your hands on me and pray for me, and I will be healed."

I answered, "No, I want you to get well by realizing that right now that same Christ that dwells in your spirit and your soul is in your bones and in your blood and in your brain."

Presently the old lady hopped to her feet and said, "My God, He is." She had it. Christ had been imprisoned in her soul and spirit; now He was permitted to be manifest in her body.

Brother Tom Hezmalhalch came into a black meeting in Los Angeles one day where they were talking about the baptism of the Holy Ghost. He had picked up a paper and read of these peculiar meetings, and among other things that they spoke in tongues. That was new to him. He said, "If they do, and if that is real, that is an advance in the Spirit of God beyond what is common. I am going to get it."

He went and listened as the old black Frank

Seymour taught. He was trying to develop the thought of conscious cleansing, and he used the beautiful text, "Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you" (John 15:3). That became very real to Tom. After awhile the congregation was invited to come and kneel at the altar and seek God for the baptism of the Holy Spirit. Tom later told me, "John, I got up and walked forward to that old bench with the realization in my soul of the truth of the Word the man had spoken, and that the real cleansing and Cleanser was in my heart."

He knelt and prayed for a minute or two. His soul reached up and his heart believed for the baptism of the Holy Ghost. Then he arose and took one of the front seats. One of the workers said, "Brother, don't stop praying until you are baptized in the Holy Ghost."

He replied, "Jesus told me I was baptized in the Holy Ghost."

Mr. Seymour said, "Just leave him alone. He has got it. You wait and see." A few days passed, and one day Tom said the Spirit began to surge through him, and a song of praise in tongues, an angelic voice, broke through his lips.

GET STILL AND LET GOD MOVE IN YOUR LIFE

An old preacher came into my office in South Africa and said, "Brother Lake, there is something I want to talk to you about. There used to be a very remarkable manifestation in my life. It was the manifestation of tongues and interpretation. But I have not spoken in tongues for a year. I wish you would pray for me."

I said, "No, go over and lie down and get still and let God move in your life." I was writing a letter. I went on with my writing. Presently I observed that something wanted to speak in me, and I turned my

head just a little to see that the old man was speaking in tongues, and I was getting the interpretation of it as I wrote the letter.

Christians are stumbling over that fact every day. You are doubting and fearing and wondering if Christ is there. Beloved brother and sister, give Him a chance to reveal Himself. He is there. Probably because of your lack of realization your soul is closed, and He is not able to reveal Himself. You know, God is never able to reveal Himself outside of the spirit or soul. The real secret of the ministry of healing is in permitting the grace of God in your heart to flow out through your hands and your nerves into the other life. That is the real secret. And one of the greatest works God has to perform is to subject our flesh to God. Many Christians, the deepest Christians who really know God in their spirit and enjoy communion with Him, are compelled to wait until a process of spiritualization takes place in them before God can reveal Himself through them. Do not imprison Christ in you. Let Him live, let Him manifest Himself, let Him find vent through you.