



MESSAGE

STUDY GUIDE

GROUP MATERIAL

SONGS

Examining the text & our hearts:

Bible Reading: Galatians 2:19-21

1. I am 'in Christ'—united with Christ – my identity
 - a. United with Christ by faith – believing into Christ
 - a. The person “who is joined to the Lord becomes one spirit with him” (1 Cor. 6:17 ESV)
 - b. ‘Union’—believers are ‘in Christ’ (en Christo)—by believing (Gal. 2:16) & by baptism (Rom. 6:3)
 - a. Believers are “in Christ” due to their transfer into Christ {e.g. “justified in Christ” (Gal. 2:17)}
 - b. “Paul does not argue the case that union with Christ is a central part of the believer’s experience. He assumes it, and assumes... that his readers have experienced this union...” [Jouette M. Bassler, Navigating Paul, p. 46]
 - c. “‘In Christ’ [implies] the sphere where Christ has influence. The term ‘Christian’ was unavailable to Paul, so his ‘in Christ’ [serves as a proxy].” [William L. Newell, Rapture of God, p. 256]
 - c. ‘Union with Christ’—Not merely a Metaphor
 - a. Union with Christ is not a sentiment, metaphor or illustration, or even primarily a ‘doctrine.’ Nor is it a way of speaking about something else—whether justification, sanctification, or any other benefit of Christ (even if it includes all of these & more!). Our union with the living Christ is the essential truth of our new & eternal existence. In a way that...transcends our finite understanding; we are really & truly joined—spiritually & bodily—to the crucified, resurrected...person of Christ. There’s no better news than this.”—Marcus P. Johnson, “10 Things...about Union with Christ,” Aug. 23, 2016
 - d. Represented by Christ

- a. “Christ represents his people...[all those] ‘in him.’ When God looks at Christ, he sees all those who belong to him, who have come ‘into him’ in baptism, who are ‘clothed with him,’ who are ‘one in him,’—and, who, in particular, have died & risen in him, as in Gal. 2:19-20...‘Christos’ [is] ‘the one in whom God’s people are incorporated,’ the one in whom they participate’.” [N. T. Wright, “Messiah-ship in Galatians?” in N. T. Wright, et. al., Galatians & Christian Theology, p.]
- b. “Union with Christ means that He represented us in His death and resurrection. But it means more, for it is a living union. Jesus is present with the believer; by the Spirit the Lord lives in inward fellowship with His own. Paul does not mean that the individuality of a person is suppressed or absorbed; he lives ‘in the flesh’ by ‘faith.’ The union is a spiritual relationship of the utmost intimacy.” [ESV Reformation Study Bible]
- c. “...The fact that [the] Messiah has been crucified & raised means that all his people share that death & resurrection. That is now their ultimate identity.” [N. T. Wright, Galatians, p. 152]

e. Participating with Christ

- a. “We were buried with him [co-buried] by baptism into death, so that...we too may walk in newness of life...We’ve been united with him [co-grown] in the likeness of his death...We know that our old self was crucified with him [co-crucified].” (Rom. 6:4-6)
- b. “Faith is real participation with Christ. Faith has an adhesive quality to it: it attaches you to Jesus Christ...Paul’s language assumes & explains faith as being joined to Christ...” [Klyne Snodgrass, “Gospel of Participation,” in Earliest Christianity..., p. 414]

f. Example of David & Goliath (Israel & Philistines)

g. Crucified with Christ (Gal. 2:20)

- a. “with Christ” (Gk. syn Christo)
 - a. “There’s a “profound sense of participation...in a great & cosmic movement of God centered on Christ &...his Spirit.” —James Dunn
- b. “Co-crucified with Christ” (Gal. 2:20; Rom. 6:6)
 - a. “The assertion, ‘I’ve been crucified with Christ’ (2:20a) is followed immediately by a second assertion that strongly suggests union with Christ, ‘and it’s no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me’ (2:20b).” [Jouette M. Bassler, Navigating Paul, p. 42]
 - b. “I died to the Law so that I might live for God. I’ve been crucified with Christ...” (Gal. 2:19 CSB)
 - c. “The aorist [‘I died’ (Gal. 2:19a)] points to the event of dying for Paul. [It] is further specified by the perfect passive compound verb [‘co-crucified’] that refers to the cross of Christ...The aorist [‘I died’ (2:19a)] has no significance as to a thing’s endurance & is ambiguous about its time of occurrence...It is the fact...of the event, but without regard to its duration nor...the actual point of time of its accomplishment. The perfect tense [‘crucified with Christ’ (2:19c)] is specific regarding both these matters: [1.] the event took place when Christ was crucified, and [2.] it is still presently in effect. When Christ was crucified so was (& still is) Paul crucified with him.” [Gary E. Gilthvedt, Dying and Deliverance, p. 40]
- c. “I’m crucified with Christ...” (Gal. 2:20) explains “I died...to live to God” (Gal. 2:19a)
 - a. “In 2:20 Paul enlarged on...2:19. He ‘died to the Law’ because he was ‘crucified with Christ’; he was able to ‘live for/to God’ because Christ lived in him. Basic to understanding this verse [Gal. 2:20] is...union with Christ.” [Bible Knowledge Commentary, p 596]
 - b. Gal. 2:19 occurs within “the larger context of our intimate union with Christ. We ‘died to the Law.’ Why? Because Christ died & we’re crucified in/with him. We ‘live to God.’ Why? Because Christ lives. ‘It’s no longer I

who live but Christ lives in me.'... Christ died for me & lives in me. Why? Because he loves me." [DA Carson, Christ set us Free, p.]

b. 'I no longer live'

a. No relationship to the Law—"I died to the Law" (Gal. 2:19)

b. No longer ego-centered, but Christ-centered

c. Not suppressing our personality or individuality

a. ...No longer I who live doesn't mean... Paul has no personality of his own (...his writings show...he does) but...his own personal interests & goals no longer direct his life; rather, 'Christ who lives in me' now directs & empowers all he does. How...does he, as a 'crucified man,' gain any strength to go on living? the life I now...live by faith in the Son of God. Paul trusts Christ moment by moment, Christ then works in & thro' Paul to give spiritual effectiveness to all...he does. ESV

b. "Some [expositors]...seem to suggest that the individual or self or "I"—presumably the person—is annihilated but then somehow replaced...[Thus some] interpreters...claim that: "the whole of the ... [ego] is gone" & "there is no more ... [ego]" (Beverly Gaventa); Paul is "speaking of the execution of his own identity" (Alastair Campbell)" [Thomas McCall, "Crucified with Christ: Ego & the Omega," Journal of Analytic Theology, Vol. 8, p. 8]

c. But, "Paul's autobiography doesn't hint of a total annihilation & complete replacement of his 'I'/Ego: "Paul...talk[s] about his own life ...in terms of a stable & continuous personal identity. He recalls his...former way of life...[he] persecuted the [church] & tried to destroy it (Gal. 1:13)—and he owns it as his own. From...conversion [onwards]...he recounts the story as one with undivided personal agency & apparent continuity of identity." [Tom McCall, "Crucified with Christ...", Journal of Analytic Theology, Vol. 8, p. 9]

d. We are not diminished

a. By "Christ living in me'...the believer is...not diminished...Paul's language requires us to banish 'zero-sum' calculations of agency (the more God, the less the human)..."—John Barclay

b. Note: John the Baptist's statement about Christ—"He must increase, but I must decrease." (John 3:30)—does not apply in this context. John was referring to his ministry (of introducing Christ); he's not talking about his person or identity.

e. 'Dual agency' —'I live' & also 'Christ lives'

a. "Both statements... 'Christ lives in me' and 'I live' can be taken as true...The agency of a 'new creature' in Christ is simultaneously the agency of the believer and the agency of Christ." [John Barclay, "Paul's Story," in B. Longenecker, Narrative Dynamics, p. 143]

b. J. Barclay [comments] on Paul's paradoxical account of his own agency in the Christ event in Gal 2:19–20: 'In one clause Paul can say he no longer lives (but Christ lives in him); in the next he refers to how he now lives. Again the alteration seems conscious: this is not a careless self-contradiction but an attempt to express a duality in agency in which the death of the "I" is the precursor to its reconstitution.' [John M. G. Barclay, "Grace & the Transformation of Agency in Christ," in F. Udoh (ed.) Redefining First Century Jewish & Christian Identities, p. 379]

f. Christ lives in and through us.

2. Christ lives in me & I live in my body

a. Christ lives in me – a transformative life

a. "A text like Galatians 2:15–21...is inherently participatory & transformative."—Michael Gorman

b. To have 'Christ living within' one is a matter of actual, personal, inner transformation. The Galatian believers were already 'en Christo'...but Paul was 'in labor' until Christ was fully formed in them (Gal. 4:19)...This transformation is vital for Paul and it is effected through Christ's transformative indwelling...It is not the same thing either as 'being in Christ' or 'justification'...through that new status." [N. T. Wright, "Messiah-ship in Galatians?" in N. T. Wright, Galatians & Christian Theology, p.]

b. Christ lives and I live

- a. "Both...'Christ lives' & 'I live'—[are] true...[It's] simultaneously the agency of the believer and the agency of Christ."—John Barclay
- b. "Paul...[has a particular] concept...of human agency [the faculty for action], namely, those in Christ have a dual agency—that Christ lives in & through them (Gal 1:16; 2:19–20;...)...Union or participation in Christ, replaces the Law as an agent in Paul's life..." [Trey Moss, "Relationship of Law & Scripture as Agents in Gal.," pp. 2-3]

c. Our identity

a. Our identity determines how we live—Saul/Paul's example:

- a. Before the Damascus experience, Saul's living was defined by the Law
- b. After Damascus, a new living (crucified, raised, Christ living in him...)
- c. Paul de-centers the Law & puts Christ in the center
 - a. It "is entirely unnatural for anyone...in Jewish tradition...to de-center the Torah [Law]...But this is precisely what Paul does." [John Barclay, Paul & the Gift, p. 401]

b. What's your primary identity?

- a. As Christians our primary "identity [is] determined by God's story...[& that] we are known by God, baptized into Christ & made alive by the Spirit...placing us in...a story bigger than ourselves...Amartya Sen argues 'identities are robustly plural,' so we don't cease to be other things...[e.g.] female, Dutch-Chinese, heterosexual, physiotherapist, Man. United fan, mother, wife, daughter, [etc.] But...these things are relativized & subordinated to a Christian meta-identity, an 'executive self'...being a child of God, co-heir of Christ, [indwelt by] the Spirit—that is the essence of our being...We've 'died to the world' with its ideologies & identities in favor of a Christian identity shaped by the gospel...Christians are...incorporated into the story of the cross as those crucified with Christ (Gal. 2:19-20)...Our primary identity is shaped by [God's story]." [Michael F. Bird. Evangelical Theology, pp.]
 - a. Paul's primary identity—'...a man in Christ' (2 Cor. 12:2)
 - b. In Paul's view the Jesus-follower has both "a primary & a secondary identity, where the first [primary identity] is Christ-centered and the second[ary identity] is multifaceted, including, for example...Jewish identity." [Karl O. Sandnes, Paul Perceived, p. 212]
 - a. Paul's 2ndary identity—'I'm a Jew' (Acts 21:39; 22:3); 'Israelite, Abraham's descendant, Benjamin's tribe' (Rom. 11:1)
 - c. The various aspects of "Paul's self-description: 'circumcised; of the seed of Abraham...tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew born of Hebrews...a Pharisee, regarding...the Law, blameless' (Phil. 3:5-6)...Such components [are] sub-identities of which being 'in Christ' is the primary [identity]. Paul shares with Gentiles in Christ the primary identity-marker which is faith in Christ... [Yet,] Paul is an Israelite [Rom. 11:1] but they are not Israelites despite being in Christ...In Christ ethnic difference is not [abolished, but it's relativized]." [William S. Campbell, Paul & Creation of Christian Identity, pp. 157-8]

c. “the life I now live in the flesh...” (Gal. 2:20)

a. “The point is not that ‘fleshly’ life...has ceased to exist. The point, rather, is that it no longer determines identity.” [N. T. Wright, Galatians, p. 154]

3. Living by faith and by the faithfulness of God’s Son

a. ‘I live by faith in the Son of God’ & ‘by the faithfulness of the Son of God’

a. “The Christian life is not merely to be ‘justified by faith’, but also “to participate in [Christ’s] faithfulness... Thus is Gal. 2:20 Paul confesses the importance of Christ’s faithfulness in his life. He says Christ lives in him and he wants to live...by ‘the faithfulness of the Son of God’...[a subjective genitive...makes better sense]...Paul’s point is not that he wants to live ‘by faith in Christ,’ but that he wants to live by ‘Christ’s faithfulness,’ because Christ is everything to him.” [Y. S. Kim, Rereading Galatians, p. 6]

b. Christ—‘the Son of God who loved me & gave himself for me’

a. Living in a relationship of love

b. Responding in obedience to the one who gave Himself for us.

c. Living in fellowship with God & fellow-believers

a. “When we make Paul’s confession of faith in Christ our own, we must keep in mind both the spiritual & social dimensions of our union with Christ. Without the social dimension, our faith in Christ degenerates into individualism. We then become interested only in our personal faith & neglect to maintain & express our union with all believers in Christ...But without the spiritual dimension, all efforts to maintain unity in the church are fruitless. Not until we can truly know & experience the reality of Paul’s affirmation—‘I no longer live, but Christ lives in me’—will we be able to live in true harmony with our brothers & sisters in Christ. For until then we will be ego-centered, not Christ-centered.” [IVP NT Commentaries, pp.]