

Thursday, April 2, 2020

Turn off the outside "noise" for a couple of minutes and consider this message from God's Word.
I am praying that it calms your spirit and encourages your heart.

PHILIPPIANS 4:4-9 (TNIV)

⁶ Do not be **anxious** about *anything*,
but in **every** situation,
by **prayer** and **petition**,
with **thanksgiving**,
present your requests to God.

⁷ And **the peace of God**,
which transcends all understanding,
will guard your hearts and your minds
• **IN CHRIST JESUS.** •

— PART 6 —

*I found that when a passage of Scripture has been very familiar to me for a long time — such as this passage! — if I will simply **slow down** . . . take my time . . . and read thoughtfully and reflectively, it can become alive to me in new and fresh ways.*

Here is little more on those three simple words. *In. Christ. Jesus.*

"in Christ Jesus" — One of our finest preachers, Darrell Johnson, lives in Vancouver, British Columbia. Today I'd like to yield the floor to him. Would you take a moment and listen to his reflections on this phrase? He is writing to those who preach . . . but his words apply to all of us who follow Jesus:

"In Christ" is, according to James S. Stewart, the center of Paul's theology because it is the center of his existence.

All of Paul's theology "is gathered up in the one great fact of communion with Christ." All that Paul preached and taught and wrote are "but radii of the same circle of which **union with Christ is the centre.**" "For me, to live is Christ" (Phil 1:21). "I count all things to be loss in view of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord" (Phil 3:8). "If anyone is in Christ — a new creation!" (2 Cor 5:17, my translation). "Christ in you, the hope of glory" (Col 1:27). **In truly is a blessed preposition! We can be in Christ, and Christ can be in us.** Paul's powerful, effective preaching of Christ emerges from a life lived in Christ.

He was simply obeying Jesus' command spoken the night before he was handed over to death. In one of the central discipleship texts, John 15:4-5, **Jesus says, "Abide in Me, and I in you." Live in me, and I in you. Make your home in me, and I in you. "I am the vine, you are the branches; the one who abides in Me, and I in him or her, bears much fruit; for apart from Me you can do nothing"** (NASB modified). From this text, E. Stanley Jones said he learned his one major job

in life: abide in Jesus; the rest is his to do. ***“The business of my life, and the only business of my life, is to abide in him. All else follows.”*** The call to preach Jesus is first and foremost to abide. Simple as that.

I love what Jones goes on to say about this being “in.” Listen: ***“Being in him we are in everything that is in him. Being in him we are in everything good, everything joyous, everything creative, everything healthy, everything for time and eternity.”*** Do you agree? ***Being in Jesus means being in everything that is in Jesus: in his love, his light, his life, his holiness, his wisdom, his power, his peace, his hope and on it goes. And when Jesus is in us, everything that is in Jesus is in us: his love, his light, his life, his holiness, his power. On it goes.*** The call to preach is first and foremost the call to live this double abiding: he in us, we in him.

What we soon discover as we live in him is that he lives in the one he calls “Father” and in the one he calls “the Paraclete.” That is, Jesus lives his life in relationship with the Father and the Spirit; Jesus lives his life in the inner life of the triune God. And, wonder of wonders, he, through his death and resurrection, makes it possible to live with him in the inner life of Father, Son and Holy Spirit. It takes my breath away every time I say those words. ***Imagine: mere human beings, and mere sinful human beings at that, invited to live in — really in — the inner life of the living God.***

DARRELL W. JOHNSON, *The Glory of Preaching: Participating in God’s Transformation of the World* (InterVarsity Press, 2010).

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Father, it’s so easy to become absorbed in the situation we are “in”...
the trouble that we find ourselves “in.”

**Would you help us remember today
that we are not simply “in trouble.”**

We are “in CHRIST”!

**So help us to live today “in CHRIST”!
“In his love, his light, his life,
his holiness, his wisdom, his power,
his peace, his hope” and his joy!**

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May God’s serenity and peace be poured out on you today,

Pastor Doug

P.S. We would love to hear from you! How are you doing right now? And we would love to pray for you! Email us at info@bethanyonline.net

P.P.S. Keep checking this page — we will try to post fresh encouragement **every day** during this crisis!

P.P.P.S. And watch our **LIVE-STREAM Worship Service** this coming Sunday at 10:30 a.m. for more encouragement.