

Holiness Is Being Ceaselessly Crucified With Christ:

The Path to Perfected Ecclesia

Pastor Jeffrey Grupp, Church of the Nazarene

INTRODUCTION

In this article I will discuss the mission and holiness of believers as being derivative from God's holiness. It will be assumed in this paper, as has been for hundreds of years among holiness believers/worshippers in America, that holiness is at risk of decline, and therefore our response should be to push radically in the opposite direction of decline. I will argue that the art of being crucified with Christ (Galatians 2:20) is the specific direction to push, since it is the pinnacle of holiness, the pinnacle of living a life of trust in Christ, and thus the life of fullest surrender to the Trinity. For holiness is about victory over sin, and that happens via the Cross. So our purest dip into holiness is also via the Cross: being crucified with Christ. Noble writes:

Only by meditating on the doctrine of the cross can we be captivated by the love of God in such a way as to love him with that full and whole-hearted love of mind, soul, and strength, which is the essence of "entire" sanctification. The question, therefore, can be formulated like this: what happened on the cross that makes it possible for believers to be "entirely" sanctified now in such a way that they love God with an undivided heart. (Noble 2013, 137)

In developing this thesis, I will need to discuss how holiness relates to the atonement of Christ on the Cross, which allowed for the gifts of sanctification (crisis and progressive sanctification), and this will all point to the conclusion that this bursting surrender to the Trinity—which is what Galatians 2:20 level of surrender is—can lead to significant ecclesiastic Kingdom expansion and sanctified congregations.

SURRENDER AND GALATIANS 2:20

Christian mysticism, being union with Christ via radical surrender to Him, is widely acknowledged to be the ultimate meaning of Galatians 2:20 (Shaup 2006, 86). Being crucified with Christ is not about conversion / initial sanctification. Rather, Paul is talking about *a way of life, a way of being, of existing*. And what it means can only be what *it simply says*--there is no secret and tricky

interpretation that experts have to disclose for us. It simply says what it says: that Paul was crucified, and thus exists in that sort of a state. Now Paul was not at The Skull on that day, so the crucifixion Paul is referring to cannot have been with His body literally along-side Christ's body on *that* day, so the crucifixion must be his Self, rather than Paul's physical body—what else can “I” refer to, *but Paul himself*, so the crucifixion is of *the self*. This is a very significant thing to unfold in dissecting Galatians 2:20. So this is the way of life Paul lived out, being crucified with Christ. Therefore, that is what we are to do as well.

So what does it mean to be crucified with Christ, in the way Paul discusses? (1) In our life of full surrender, we are to live it most by identifying with Christ via His Cross, His moments on the Cross, and seeing it as the primary way to understand Christ-likeness in us. And we are (2) to be living out the atonement.

Our lives are about living as Christ on the cross, all the time.

This is, the deepest sort of surrender, always in a state of death. Galatians 2:20 teaches us what it means to surrender, and how to surrender—it's like the blueprint for surrendering to Christ.

HOLINESS: CEASELESSLY RECEIVING GOD'S LOVE INTO THE HEART

First, I will explore how holiness relationally imparts onto humans via God's holiness, mission, and triunity. Holiness comes from God, and when imparted into a human, God's holiness in the person gradually deletes and crucifies the self, gradually replacing it more-and-more through time—via letting go of self, deepening in constant communion with Christ via surrender to Him—with a *new self* (2 Cor. 5:17) of holiness: the person is a new creation, which is Christ living in the person (Gal. 2:20), and which is being the Mind of Christ (Phil. 2:5). Initially, the crucifixion with Christ exists in the person only partially. *To more fully deepen into proper surrender to Christ, the person must live on the Cross with Christ.*

Scripturally, our thesis is pervasive throughout the Word. Consider, for example, the following verses:

Philippians 1:21 (NIV)

21 For to me, to live is Christ and to die is gain.

Galatians 2:20 (NIV)

20 I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I now live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.

Galatians 2:20 (NLT)

20 My old self has been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me. So I live in this earthly body by trusting in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.

Philippians 3:10 (NKJV)

10 that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death,

Romans 6:6 (NASB)

6 knowing this, that our old self was crucified with Him, in order that our body of sin might be done away with, so that we would no longer be slaves to sin...

2 Timothy 2:11 (NIV)

11 ...If we died with him, we will also live with him;

1 Peter 4:13 (NIV)

13 But rejoice inasmuch as you participate in the sufferings of Christ, so that you may be overjoyed when his glory is revealed.

Our task as Christians is to be in constant faith, ceaseless unity, and unbroken fellowship with the Trinity, as the apostle Paul (1 Thess. 5:16-17, Galatians 5:25), King David (Ps. 112:7), Isaiah (Isa. 26:3), the author of Hebrews (Heb. 12:2), John Wesley (2005), and many others clearly have pointed-out. When a human is in this *constant* communion with the Trinity, *one has the capacity for being crucified with Christ*. As Noble pointed out in the introduction, we are (paraphrasing) to focus on being crucified, carrying our cross, meditating on nails going through our hands, our life ending *right now*, in perfect surrender to Jesus Christ. Holiness is imparted and implanted by the Holy Spirit into the human's deepest inner being by the gift of Pentecost, but it has varying levels of intensity into which the Trinity reveals it in us, and the most intense level is via meditating on our Cross with Christ (being crucified with Him): experiencing the thirst Jesus had on the Cross,

the laughter and scorn people had for Him, His very moment of death, and after, the sword going into His side.

By being in constant communion with the Trinity—which is to be in the ceaseless relationship of faith with the Trinity—the holiness and Christlikeness of the Trinity is implanted into a human, they undergo automatic heart changes that lead the surrendered ceaseless praying worshipper of Christ into *both* spontaneous *and* decision-based repentance, forgiveness, loving of enemies, loving God with all one's Heart, fiercely trusting Him, and fearing Him. In other words, by being in the relationship of receiving God's infinite love, He changes one's innerness (heart), and a person is recreated in His likeness. But the purest moment of Christ's ministry on earth was the Cross, and most specifically, the moment of death on the Cross, and so, if one were to be in a maximal state of likeness to Christ, they would be in a state of *being crucified with Christ*, at the most intense points at the end, and at that every point of death on the Cross. This is to be in a state, a life of maximal love, of highest loving and compassion, due to being in a state of sinless/perfected total giving of self to others.

By the word “surrender,” used multiple times up to this point in this paper, I mean the aforementioned constant communion with Jesus. This starts gradually at conversion, where a self starts the progressively sanctified processing (before perfection starts, see below) of becoming crucified with Christ (Galatians 2:20), where one gradually obtains the Mind of Christ (Phil. 2:5): One gradually becomes the opposite of their previous life in the world (where one becomes weak instead of strong, loving instead of hateful, pure rather than fleshly, etc.). Leclerc writes:

If holiness is anything, it is absolute dependency on God. We have done well through the decades to explore the meaning of holiness under the following rubrics: holiness as instantaneous experience; holiness as progressive character development; holiness as purity; holiness as perfection; holiness as relational; holiness as love; holiness as empowerment. These are all appropriate ways to get at the content of what holiness looks like. But holiness might be further expressed if placed under the rubric of weakness. (Leclerc 2010, 250)

THE MISSION OF THE TRINITY

The Trinity's mission is to create a holy fellowship of believers, that starts on Earth, and who are chosen to populate Heaven (that is, the New Earth of the future) in maximal joy forever. This

ecclesial creation of fellowship occurs via God's supernatural grace and love, where undeserving hearts of stone are replaced with hearts of flesh and of praise inside of people, where people then have the capacity to fellowship with one another and have love between one another, unlike before surrender to Christ starts. The new heart starts at conversion, progresses to entire sanctification (unless a believer falls away from the Lord before entire sanctification), and the Christian Perfection that exists after entire sanctification, and which is where a person has the capacity to be fully crucified with Christ. The Trinity does this by revealing infinitesimal aspects of Himself to humans, via confirmations, answered prayers, the feeling of His holiness and His presence, prophecies, dreams and visions, cloud and/or light experiences (for example, Matthew 17:1-6), and the aforementioned heart change (heart replacement). Eventually, the response of the surrendered believer will be to fully let go of their prideful *self* and allow themselves to be crucified with the Trinity. According to the syllabus of a class I took at Nazarene Theological Seminary during the summer of 2017:

His self-disclosure to us is free expression of his holy living. This is the principle fact of revelation—God spoke, God has spoken, and God speaks because He is holy love—and in this speaking, He communicates Himself... and He continues to speak the Word of redemption in the Church by the Spirit of Truth (John 14:17, 15:26), thereby creating for Himself a community that shares in His own holy loving. God's mission in the Son and the Spirit, is to create holy fellowship. In His fellowship-creating mission, God discloses Himself freely and capacitates his church to know Him and worship Him. Herein is divine holiness made visible as mercy, loving-kindness and Lordship: He imparts knowledge of His own loving, disclosing His essential condescension and self-giving in Christ... (Class syllabus from Doctrine of Christian Holiness, NTS, summer 2017)

God, in making the surrendered, faith-filled believers like Him, prepares us for His mission, by putting His Spirit into us via personal Pentecost. With personal Pentecost, the Cross of the Son allows us to be *like Him*, so that we can again have Him living inside of us, wherein we can again have fellowship with Father. Our job, as humans, is to cancel our lives, be crucified to Him in constant faith-awareness of Him, and receive His ever-present reaching out in grace and love to us. God's infinite love spreads into and through existence, out of nothing, it cannot be contained and controlled, and it is responsible for Creation and salvation. By the overflowing of His love, His essence, this love spreads out from Him and results in the creation of worlds, and it results in

grace, peace, joy, and the capacity for fellowship among the surrendered believers, His chosen ones (Rom. 8.29), that He reaches into, extracting sin and implanting love, to create His holy community. Full Ecclesial explosion, in Upper-Room-like prayerful intensity, stems most productively out of fully crucified congregants.

If the capacity for fellowship requires full surrender, to the point of living ceaselessly as crucified with Christ, then the focus of much of the Body of Christ is in need of intensification—the Body is contaminating itself with world, sin, pride/ego, self, and with being un-crucified (and likely to the point of being *fearful* of being crucified, where fear, which is sin [Rev. 21:8], replaces Galatians 2:20-level holiness). As stated, the surrendered believer most aptly participates in Ecclesial power by merely meditating on the Cross, trusting Christ infinitely, and being crucified with Him—where without these, the perfected loving-compassion of the One Mind (Phil. 2:2) of the Mind of Christ is replaced in part or in full by dysfunction. Being crucified with Christ will reveal the Light of God, His peace that transcends all understanding, most purely, and thus will lead to the most intensity among the Ecclesia. Anything less than fullest holiness, fullest surrender—being crucified with Christ—will lead to a non-maximal devotion to Christ and His Ecclesia, and thus the Church will contain dysfunction and darkness, instead of light and love.

HOLINESS IS LOVE; HOLINESS VIA THE CROSS

There is no greater gesture of love than to give one's self, one's essence, away *completely*, giving it to another who does not deserve it. The maximal holiness mindset, of being crucified with Christ on His Cross, is the maximal point of love. In Wesleyanism, the number-one quality of holiness is love. Leclerc writes:

...any definition of holiness must include love. We could go so far as to say that *holiness is (holy) love*,... both in reference to God and to the holiness that God works in us... And yet the scriptural message of salvation is that his holy God comes near to us, most powerfully in the incarnation of the Son and most perpetually through the presence of the Holy Spirit. The Wholly Other becomes “just as we are” because of love (Heb. 4:15)... Holiness without love is no holiness at all... If we simply define human holiness as sinlessness, we have defined it only by an absence (namely, the absence of sin). But holiness is never a passive state; nor is it vacuous. There must be the presence of love in

the holy life to which God calls us. Holiness and love cannot be separated. (Leclerc 2010, 274)

Ipso facto, the maximal life of love is being crucified with Christ. It is the beautiful Cross of Christ that allows holiness to be implanted and imparted into humans. Put most succinctly, Christ's atonement relates to Wesleyan holiness in that the atonement broke the power of sin within humanity, within us, and this allowed holiness to exist in the hearts of humans: since sin and holiness cannot exist in the same heart, the eradication of sin (to put it in a way more in church tradition, rather than in the Wynkoopian tradition) ushered in holiness. Because nature contained a perfect God-Man—functioning as the opposite of the virus of sin that contaminated all of Creation into sin via Adam—the atonement established that personal Pentecost could occur, and thus there were places in Creation where the curse of sin was displaced out of—namely, within surrendered human hearts. The displacement is only *completed* when a person is in union with Christ (Christian Perfection)—and I would assert further that this union is most holy and Christlike when it is a union of surrendered self with Christ *crucified*: in His most genuine existence, which is the moment of death on the Cross, arms spread out, embracing the entire world with His supernatural, *sub contrario* love. Our lives are to be like Him, like Christ, since in our fullest (self-crucified/Galatians 2:20) surrender we become like God: sinless, perfected, overflowing with love, diametrically opposite of the world. We are to pray, and we ask God to crucify us with Him, *ceaselessly*. Noble writes: “Christ’s victory for us, Greathouse explains, is not only a victory over Satan, but a victory over the power of sin entrenched *within* us. This means the crucifixion of the old man (*anthropos*, humanity), that is, our existence in Adam, the head and representative of fallen humanity” (Noble 2013, 139). To sink into the end-of-life, with Him, on the cross, is to fully absorb into Him, and into all other people in the world, by reaching out, and into them, via supernatural love and sacrifice.

ENTIRE SANCTIFICATION (CHRISTIAN PERFECTION) AS UNION WITH JESUS VIA GALATIANS 2:20

So far in this article, we have elaborated on the mechanics of the nature of the most holy life in Christ, which is the life of all-surrender to, and a *way of life* as full contemplation on, being on the Cross with Christ. As seen in the quote from Noble in the introduction, it is not unusual for Christian mystics to assert that the Galatians 2:20-level of full surrender is the very place a

Christian is to reside always. In his book *Poverty and Joy*, in discussing the mysticism of Bonaventure, in a powerful and very relevant passage, Professor Short writes:

In developing another facet of the incarnation, he presents the body of Christ as the resolution of the great speculative questions of Christian mysticism in his classic work of mystical theology, *The Soul's Journey into God*. 'Passing over' even the mind itself, the contemplative sees Christ and specifically Christ on the cross as 'the way and [the] door', the 'ladder and vehicle',... the way out of the impasses of reconciling apparently opposite dimensions of Christian religious experience (Creator and creature; infinite and finite; divine and human). (Short 45)

To be saved and admitted into Heaven (either before or after bodily death, cf. Col 3:20, Phil. 2:5), we are to be in sinless union with Jesus Christ, the Word. In our union with Christ, we no longer live, but Christ lives in us: *Christ is all!*

Colossians 3:11(KJV)

11 Where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, Barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free: but Christ is all, and in all.

I interpret Wesleyan Christian perfection (entire sanctification) as being synonymous with Christian mystical union with Jesus. The crisis of sanctification amid the processes of progressive sanctification and perfectedness (Rom. 6:19), are the course-map for a person's ever increasing in God in their life of increasing surrender to, crucifixion with, and existing *within* (John 15:5), God. When a person rejects the self and for the first time invites Jesus Christ to take over their life, they are initially sanctified, wherein they enter into the process of progressive sanctification. That first moment (conversion) is the crisis point, or transition point, *from* being fleshly and pre-surrendered, *to* commencing into a life with Christ of ever-increasing surrender to Christ and oneness with Yahweh. The conversion moment, that severing of the old life, that breakage point, the start of the deletion of the old that brings in the new man (2 Cor. 5:17), is the beginning of the *end* the life of the pre-saved/pre-surrendered person, which is replaced by another life: the life of forever deepening in surrender to Christ, and existing in His will and His Being: a moment splits a life, from being unholy to holy, as a new creation.

Conversion / initial sanctification leads to progressive sanctification, but temptations, and occasional sin and disobedience (pride, separation from God, love of the world) will remain and nag at the person during progressive sanctification (which is the time between initial and entire sanctification). *If* the person does *not* fall away from the Trinity amid the temptations and worldly inundation during the time of progressive sanctification, their deepening commitment to and surrender to God will eventually prompt God, at an unexpected time, to bless the person again with a second gift of grace, called *entire* sanctification, and according to my formulation, this is a point where a the entirely sanctified person falls into a all-encompassing drive to be ceaselessly crucified with Christ--which may be, in these end times, a state of surrender rarely exhibited today among the world's "believers." Oswald Chambers writes:

Paul lived in the basement; the coherent critics live in the upper storey of the external statement of things, and the two do not begin to touch each other. Paul's consistency was down in the fundamentals. The great basis of his coherence was the agony of God in the Redemption of the world, viz., the Cross of Jesus Christ. Restate to yourself what you believe, then do away with as much of it as possible, and get back to the bedrock of the Cross of Christ. In external history the Cross is an infinitesimal thing; from the Bible point of view it is of more importance than all the empires of the world. If we get away from the brooding on the tragedy of God upon the Cross in our preaching, it produces nothing. It does not convey the energy of God to man; it... has no power. but preach the Cross, and the energy of God is let loose. (Chambers 1963,. Nov. 25th entry)

If you want to know the energy of God... in your mortal flesh, you must brood on the tragedy of God. Cut yourself off from prying personal interest in your own spiritual symptoms and consider bare-spirited the tragedy of God, and instantly the energy of God will be in you... We lose power if we do not concentrate on the right thing. The effect of the Cross is salvation, sanctification, healing, etc., but we are not to preach any of these, we are to preach Jesus Christ and Him crucified... We have to concentrate on the great point of spiritual energy--the Cross, to keep in contact with that center where all the power lies, and the energy will be let loose... The feebleness of the churches is being criticized today, and the criticism is justified. One reason for the feebleness is that there has not been this concentration of spiritual energy; we have not brooded enough on the tragedy of Calvary or on the meaning of Redemption. (Chambers 1963,. Nov. 26th entry)

As Chambers points out, the heart, the core, of Christianity is the energy of the Cross of Christ, which Paul tells us we are to participate in as a way of life:

2 Corinthians 4:10-12 (KJV)

10 Always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body.

11 For we which live are always delivered unto death for Jesus' sake, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh.

12 So then death worketh in us, but life in you.

2 Corinthians 4:10-12 (ESV)

10 always carrying in the body the death of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be manifested in our bodies. 11 For we who live are always being given over to death for Jesus' sake, so that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our mortal flesh. 12 So death is at work in us, but life in you.

If Wesleyan entire sanctification is not identical to this life of ceaselessly being crucified with Christ, then Wesleyan entire sanctification is to be disregarded. But I theorize that ceaseless Crucifixion with Christ is precisely what Wesley was referring to in his theology of love, his entire sanctification. About the entirely sanctified person, Wesley wrote:

This man can now testify to all mankind, 'I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me.' [Galatians 2:20] ... Indeed, his soul is all love, filed with 'bowels of mercies, kindness, meekness, gentleness, long-suffering... This is to be a perfect man, to be 'sanctified throughout;' even 'to have a heart so all-flaming with the love of God' (to use Archbishop Ussher's words), as continually to offer up every thought, word, and work, as a spiritual sacrifice, acceptable to God through Christ.' In every thought of our hearts, in every word of our tongues, in every work of our hands, to 'show forth His praise, who hath called us out of darkness into His marvelous light.' (Wesley 1966, 37)

There is no question that Wesley is talking about the *fiercest of around-the-clock all-surrender to Jesus*. It's not about us, it's not about feeling good—it's only about service to the King, and fixing our eyes on Him (Heb 12:2).

Entire sanctification is a second crisis / breakage-transition, wherein which a person's indwelling sin (original sin, see Ps. 51:5) is extracted / removed, and *the power of sin is broken in the person*: the sinful life no longer works for the saint of Christ: what was once darkly enticing no longer holds even a speck of interest to the believer deep within: what was once natural and spontaneous worldly activity and fascination (immoralism, sinful proclivity, fascination with the physical domain), no longer makes sense to the perfected Christian, and even seems foreign, strange, distant, and eerie, to the perfected Christian. This life after entire sanctification is called Christian Perfection: the capacity for perfected (sinless) obedience is lived-by thereafter. Fullness of communion with the Trinity is the perfected life after the entire sanctification crisis, made possible because God has given us "a heart to love Him" (Carole 2013, 35). This is the life of having the Mind of Christ (Phil. 2:5), Christian Perfection. Professor Carole writes:

It is the singular reign of pure love in the heart and life... The believer who is made perfect in love is freed from self-will and desires nothing but "the holy and perfect will of God."¹ Thus, fullness of communion is a life of love and obedience to God, which finds expression in love for one's neighbor. (Carole 2013, 31)

In this life of one desire, and of having our single mind's eye focused on Jesus (Matt. 6:22), the person will have the discernment of Christ, and Christ will guide the person to living His Cross, His atonement, ceaselessly. To have one desire, one eye, on Christ, is to be with him most fully, which is being with him at the moment of his last breath in agony on the Cross, it is to be genuinely crucified with Him as a way of life, always, since you are overtaken by hunger and desire for constant communion with the ecstasy of being *in* Him, with Him, always, and He in you (John 15:5).

HOLINESS AS THE ENGINE FOR ECCLESIAL KINGDOM PERFECTEDNESS

Most succinctly put, humans do not have the capacity for fellowship until perfected holiness overtakes a person's life, which above was argued, is only fully realized when a person's life is

¹ This is a quote from John Wesley, from *Plain Account*.

equal to ceaselessly being crucified with Christ: ceaselessly living that moment of death on the Cross of Glory. That being the case, entire sanctification and Christian Perfection are of utmost importance. Before that, “sin and death... are... ‘powers’ holding humanity in captivity... internal[ly]” (Noble 2013, 138). And the Galatians 2:20-level of ceaseless worship and surrender that I have discussed above, is the communion needed with God for people to finally stop being self-absorbed, lonely, isolated, frustrated, cruel, arrogant, delusional, and greedy beings who do not have the capacity to be close to others, and who cannot participate in intimate Christian fellowship with other Christians or sinners. With this Galatians 2:20-level of surrendered ceaseless life on the Cross with Christ, a human can *finally* be eradicated of wordiness, dysfunction, satanic devotion (1 Jn 3:8), and of course, sinfulness. Anything other than a Galatians-2:20 level of surrender will serve as opposition to the Ecclesia of Earth--which is why the church today is so feeble (to use Oswald Chambers' word), so in opposition with the Bible and the Ecclesia of the New Testament, and so in accord with the world. Many believers will say they are salvific and/or entirely sanctified, not understanding that the gate is narrow. So, again, being crucified with Christ is a type of holiness and surrender that is a subset of perfectedness of post-entire-sanctification living, a type of profound surrender that is not merely the removal of inborn original sin, but further, is a way of having union with Christ where we are unified with Him at His most important moment, where we are united with Him in the most appropriate way.

The love that a person lives in this meditative life of ceaseless atonement is overpowering; the person is overtaken in joy and love, powered by Christ *possessing* a person's heart and self. This love among Christians can give rise to perfected Ecclesia. Love is required for fellowship, all love comes from God, and thus inner holiness and personal Pentecost is required for the body of Christ to have fellowship (with one another or with Christ), by being one mind (Phil. 2.2), by each member of the Body having the Mind of Christ (Phil. 2.5). Carole writes: “...for Wesley, fellowship with God is an ever-flowing wellspring, which finds deepening expression in love for God, and one’s neighbor... Thus, personal knowledge of God imparts the capacity to engage in fruitful relationships.” (Carole 2013, 30) Without holiness, we are the antithesis of God’s love, and we are in the image of the Devil: the pre-surrendered, pre-Galatians 2:20 person is hateful, spiteful, filled with gossip, lustful and adulterous, prone to suicide (in all sorts of different forms and levels of suicidal living and behavior), and murderous thoughts, driven by self-interested pride. Leclerc writes:

We are, as a community, holy people. We are the holy, though the broken, body of Christ. And when one part suffers, all suffer... We empty ourselves out for each other so that all are seen as real persons, as part of the community of faith, as parts of the body that are just as valuable as we are... And as we are truly the church, the image of God shines forth precisely in the weakness of us all... Holiness then, down to its very foundations, is about God's kenotic love for us. (Leclerc 2010, 251)

If one suffers we all suffer, and therefore conversely, if one is crucified with Christ then that profoundest of perfected holiness has a chance to pull others towards it.

PHYSICAL REALITY IS LESS REAL THAN SUPERNATURAL REALITY

A life of Galatians 2:20-level of constant surrender will take us out of the physical plane, where the physical will start to feel more like a dream than a reality, and where the presence of God/Jesus will become actual reality.

The only way to be crucified with Christ is to *always* be crucified with Him--*ceaselessly*. This life--which is a life on the Cross--and it is a life where

1. there is no tomorrow (Matt. 6:34, Phil. 3:13),
2. there is no material value (1 John 2:15),
3. every moment is lived at the point of death (many verses in the Bible),
4. every moment is lived not as a resident of the physical plane (Col. 3:1-2, Phil. 3:20),
5. where we are impartial (James 3:17), letting go of all but Christ (Heb. 12:1, 1 Pet. 5:6-7, John 15:19), and where we are always one moment away from bodily death,
6. and we are abused by the world as if in the Roman Colosseum as a spectacle of death in the dark entertainment for the onlookers partaking in the world's sinful fascinations that are separated from God (see 1 Cor. 4:9-13--a highly overlooked passage by the believers of Earth).

Oh how different the average so-called Christian of Earth is from this list!

Being crucified with Christ is to be not living in the *world*—*literally!* When we focus our eyes on Jesus, when we are actually looking at Him, and we exit, partially or fully, the world. Being

crucified with Christ is a form of dying to, letting go of, and exiting from, the world. Consider 1 Pet. 1:17:

1 Peter 1:17 (NIV-84)

17 Since you call on a Father who judges you impartially, live your lives as strangers here in reverent fear.

1 Peter 1:17 (ESV)

17 And if you call on him as Father who judges impartially according to each one's deeds, conduct yourselves with fear throughout the time of your exile,

1 Peter 1:17 (KJV)

17 And if ye call on the Father, who without respect of persons judgeth according to every man's work, pass the time of your sojourning here in fear:

We have seen in this article that ceaseless crucifixion with Christ is required for full surrender. In many ways the following verse can sum up what this like of ceaseless crucifixion with Christ is all about:

Luke 9:23 (ESV)

And he said to all, "If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me.

This life is a sort of exiting from physical reality, in the sense that it becomes not the most fully real aspect of reality that one lives through in their daily life of ceaseless Crucifixion with Christ. In this life, life is filled with the awareness of another Power deep within, and above, and all around (omnipresent), in mind, body, soul, and spirit. Notice how the NIV-84 translation reads for 1 Pet. 1:17:

1 Peter 1:17 (NIV-84)

Since you call on a Father who judges impartially, live your lives as strangers here in reverent fear.

The calling on God-Christ-Holy Spirit results in our feeling like a stranger here in physical reality. We should feel like a stranger here, we should feel like this is not our home, where there is another

home that is where we are not a stranger, which is in God's presence. So we should feel like this world is less real than God. We are in two realities: the physical and in Heaven with Christ. Being in the presence of Christ continually, crucified with Him, He should be more real than this physical reality is, thus making physical reality the dream, and *Christ* the actuality of moment-to-moment existence.

We are to feel this physical world is a place of exile, a foreign land we are not at home in. This happens when we call on the Lord, and when we are looking right at Him, then we are crucified with Christ. Life is fast, and dreamlike, only half-real, as compared to the reality of the afterlife with God. Milbank, Žižek, and Davis call this "the fundamentalist view:"

In other words, how do we follow the biblical injunction to live in the world, but not of the world (see John 17)? The standard interpretation of this injunction today takes the form of two different views. The first, fundamentalist view is simply to detach the material world from one's eternal "soul." Thus the tension is neutralized. The world will finally vanish and does not ultimately matter. In that sense the world really does not exist after all but is more like a passing illusion. (Milbank, Žižek, and Davis 2010, 4)

CONCLUSION

When believers co-surrender, in co-self-crucifixion with the King, in constant prayer, like the Upper Room, then Christ will come to us supernaturally and implant the words "peace be with you" into our souls, and deliver us His Pentecost. When humans are fully crucified with Christ, the Ecclesia exists purely, genuinely, sanctified, as the most powerful Beacon of discipleship: maximal holy giving of self to save the dark, damaged, fallen world and the mob of sinners inhabiting it in a state of death.

Verse after verse in the writings of Peter and Paul in the New Testament clearly tell us to participate in the sufferings of Christ, die for him, participate in His death, and be crucified with Him, but these verses, and the overarching NT theme of being crucified with Christ are rarely, if ever, discussed by the average contemporary pastor of an American church. There is a dichotomy between the Word and the words of American pastors and seminary professors. The vibe is softer in the latter, and the Bible is far more intense, and next-worldly than American pastors and scholars who focus more on love and joy than on sin, Hell, suffering, the immanent return of Christ, and the joy and ecstasy of poverty in Christ. The point of this paper is to bring back the philosophy,

theology, and way of life of ceaselessly suffering with Christ, living not in this dark world but rather in Christ's kingdom of light.

Being on the Cross with Christ, crucified with Christ, means we have no future on the physical plane, we are in agony and pain, with our bodies destroyed, in the final moments of life, since we are on His Cross with Him. We are ever-talking to the Trinity, looking up into the sky (just as Jesus did on the Cross, also see Psalm 5:3, KJV), as Christ was on that Day. We are nothing in this world, and the world should not interest us, as a result of our radical surrender to Christ and consequent deleting of the old self that we were: I no longer live but Christ lives in me.

-Pastor Jeffrey Grupp, Tecumseh Church of the Nazarene, Tecumseh MI, August 18, 2017

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