

Bible Mysteries

By Charles Pinkney

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(1 Corinthians 2:6 - 1 Corinthians 2:7) - - We do speak a message of wisdom, but not the wisdom of this world or of the rulers of this world, who are passing off the scene.

(7) Instead, we speak about God's secret wisdom that has been hidden, which God destined for our glory before the world began.

THE MYSTERY OF THE CROSS

[Jesus Was Crucified For US & with US](#)

[The Mystery of Baptism](#)

[The Only Good Christian is a Dead Christian](#)

[Warfare and Battling in the Mind and in the Flesh](#)

[Attributes of A flesh-Centered Person](#)

[Walking In The Spirit](#)

[Offloading the Burdens of our Lower Nature](#)

[An effort to Change our Worship or' Meditations'](#)

[Tears of Cleansing Revealing Restoration](#)

Jesus was Crucified For Us and With Us

"And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts." Galatians 5:24

Jesus was sentenced to die in the place of a condemned man Barabbas. Barabbas was a flagrant sinner, (who represents every man without God), Jesus called his death "his baptism", Paul states that, "as many who are baptized into Christ are baptized into His death." We are also likened to have risen with Him, a figurative picture portrayed in the coming forth out of the water in immersion baptism. *"Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? - Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life."* (Romans 6:3,4 kjv)

"Be it known unto you all, and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom ye crucified, whom God raised from the dead, even by him doth this man stand here before you whole." (Acts 4:10) "But we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumbling block, and unto the Greeks foolishness;" "But unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God." (1 Corinthians 1:23,24 kjv)

BAPTISM: A SUPERNATURAL MYSTERY

**Baptism is more than a token act or a sacramental religious act:
Jesus meant it to usher in a supernatural life wherein believers
become crucified to the world, and reassigned to a new category, the elect of God
It happens - NOW - in this life!**

Baptism is an act of faith which has been performed as a religious act for a very long time and sacramentally as an even longer time. Churches practice baptism in various forms. Some sprinkle while others immerse. In some denominations it is performed upon children. In new testament application it was only administered to those who professed Christ as savior and Lord.

It is in Baptism that the believer yields to the Holy Spirit power afforded in the cross. It is in Baptism that the believer determines that the old life with its sins and weaknesses have had their season and must now come to an end. It is in Baptism where Jesus reached the full release into his ministry and received the Holy Spirit in His greatest measure. It is in Baptism where the old nature is separated from the person and is killed. Any demonic strongholds can not remain in the person who body is dead! Fleshly appetites are no longer a problem for the body who is dead. A dead man can no longer function as a sinner. If Baptism were explained more fully, instead of being a mere religious requirement, the believer would advance quickly to leave the old life, nature, and natural limitations behind. The un-named thief on a cross near Jesus was "baptized" into Jesus' death in the most literal sense and became the first to enter in the Kingdom of heaven as a new creation. This is baptism in the truest sense.

Jesus asks us to take up our own cross in following him. Though we are not expected to die on a cross we are expected to know that it is a powerful force to initiate a Spiritual life in the Kingdom of God and that "by faith" we can access all of its promise and potential. We come forth from the water, resurrected. We come forth from the water, in the power of the Christ life within. We come forth from the water, separated from the old nature with its lusts. We have symbolically put the old "me" to death. The Ethiopian eunuch who Phillip ministered to in Gaza was taught only the essentials of Christ crucified and risen and as Messiaich who fulfilled all prophetic scripture a substitutionary sacrifice for each sinner. Phillip also taught the essentials of Baptism to him. *It just so happened* that they found a place with enough water at this juncture of the journey through Gaza. Phillip baptized the man and immediately sent him on his way to Ethiopia in the power of the Spirit. This was the extent of his discipling but we can be assured that it was enough and fully empowered by the Holy Spirit. It was this man who carried the Gospel in power and simplicity to hundreds in his own land, who provided a tradition of apostolic Christianity which lasted

hundreds of years.

Infants who have not yet reached the age of reason may be dedicated or blessed, in a special act of faith, but this is not Biblical baptism which is a dedicatory act of a believer. Baptism is to submerge in water to come up out of the water symbolizing *the crucifixion* of the old man and the the entry into a new resurrected life.

Paradox of Losing One's Life

"Whoever would lose his life for my sake will find it; whoever will save his own life will lose it." (Luke 9:24 and 17:23) Jesus addresses the issue of two lives each one opposing the other. Within the mysteries of God numerous paradoxes are introduced. Among these, one about a seed which needs to fall and die before it can bring forth any fruit (read John 12:24). Though the outer manifestation of the seed form dissolves from its original identity this allows that seed to bring forth a crop or fruit. Decreasing to our own self interests is essential before God can use us. This is portrayed in the "pruning of the vine" in another parable. Dying to self is the result of bearing a cross daily. The self and the flesh need to be buried.

Life and life more abundant are what Jesus promises his disciples. But this abundant spiritual life lies in an entirely different sort of configuration than that which worldly persons value or seek. As we grow spiritually, God causes us to feel alienated from the world, distinct and apart from it, owning different values and treasuring other kinds of treasures than the world treasures. We can not simple "will" to despise worldliness it is something which the Spirit begins to grow in us as a fruit of righteousness.

We eventually begin to hate both the ways of the world and its impact on our own lives (in its pettiness, shallowness and spiritual blindness).

In the beginning of our spiritual walk, that which some describe as spiritual infancy, we tend to migrate back to life as we had known it. We had a familiar lifestyle and a pattern of thinking, speaking and reacting to others. Our old nature included our habitual excesses, our reputations for good or evil, our self pride, our name, our looks, our offices, our talents, our careers and educations. These things do not impress God nor did they ever impress him. Until we regard them as "dung," as Paul stated in his letter to the Phillipians Chapter 3 and verse 8. We do not yet have a heavenly perspective. Our old vanities were forged in the semblance of this world and its vain idolatries and will pass as the fog in the morning."- if a man think himself to be something, when he is nothing, he deceiveth himself." (Galatians 6:3)

Jesus reminds us to not cling to this life nor any of its apparent treasures. Which are merely passing things, apparitions which soon vanish like the dew of morning. *"Take up your cross daily and follow after me."* (Take this cross as a reminder that you are already reckoned dead to yourself, crucified in the human nature and alive on a higher level, that of having been raised to new life, resurrected into the position of being seated with Christ in the seat of His transcendent authority.

The Only Good Christian is a Dead Christian

"For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection:" Romans 6:5; "Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin." 6:6; "For he that is dead is freed from sin." 6:7; "Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him:"6:8

"Knowing that Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over him." 6:9; "Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord." (Romans 6:5-11)

"For though he was crucified through weakness, yet he liveth by the power of God. For we also are weak in him, but we shall live with him by the power of God toward you." (1 Corinthians 13:4) "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me." (Galatians 2:20)

Warfare, Battling in the Mind and in the Flesh

Our bodies and our lives were once the property of Satan! You may personally have a higher view of your own present or past lifestyle than this, but nonetheless it is the scripturally correct viewpoint which we must adopt. A life without redemption through Jesus Christ was a life lived in Satan's domain. The 'God of this world' wants desperately to continue in it.

Attributes of A CARNAL-Centered Person

The following list describes attributes of the natural man man or woman, carnal, that is to say the unredeemed and souish, self-centered personality

"Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness," "Idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, Envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God" (Galatians 5:19-21)

Walking in the Spirit

(Living with an awareness of God's presence and being led by communication with the Holy Spirit)

Scriptural *proof passages* describe the serious limitation of the human soul in its natural state. The natural man can not know God. Now, we know that many people are marvelously gifted with natural virtues and abilities. Some intellectual, some physical, some musical, some poetical, some marvelous organizers, etc. These natural abilities are still inadequate to do what the Lord wishes to do through us. We need to have some insights on how we can go beyond natural abilities or natural limitations. How does God

instruct us to overcome these natural abilities or limitations? **By walking in the Spirit.** The natural man (Gk. *psuchikos*) is also translated the man without the spirit. It denotes a human being whose life centers around his or her own soulish nature. The soulish being is personality centered, comprised of natural intellect, will, feelings and emotion. (1Corinthians 2:14) states that such soulish persons can not receive things which are of the Spirit of God, such things are foolishness to him.

Walking in the Spirit is more than having knowledge about God or the Bible. It is even more than renewed attitudes and beliefs, it is walking in (a present-moment awareness) of the life of God within us; to be aware that we are enshrouded and encompassed by Christ's life and Spirit.

Walking in the Spirit is a state of Spiritual consciousness of actually partaking of the mind of God. There is a way of entering in to this state, through an act of faith of yielding and entering. Preparing the heart may take some attention, we must turn from many things which have us bound up; cares, fears, other voices inside have to be stilled; we give place to God, both through will and word. Walking in the Spirit means letting go of our own self-life, personality and all of life's lusts and idols.

One can not partake of this life with hatred or unforgiveness in your heart. One can not partake of this life with rage or jealousy in your heart. One can not partake of this life with unforgiveness or bitterness in your heart. We must unload all burdens, set aside all anger and filthiness of the flesh. Then we enter in, as follows.

Off-loading the Burdens of our Lower Nature

The things we do and the things we think regulate spiritual life. David the psalmist king of Israel knew this and dealt with the whole issue saying, "*May the words of my mouth and the meditations of my heart be acceptable unto you O Lord, my strength and my Redeemer.*"(Psalm 19:4)

The purity and integrity of our spiritual lives is based upon the meditation(s) of our hearts, those things which occupy our thought life when no one is around and no one else influences your behavior.

Jesus taught that it is in the heart where man's treasure lies. As we value and treasure things we give thought and meditation to these things. After thinking and meditating on the matters of greatest interest to us we are likely to respond with words and actions which will map our treasures.

Jesus spoke of good treasures and evil treasures and said that we speak as an overflow from the abundance of our hearts, thus we may bring forth either good or evil. Evil meditations will ultimately bring forth corrupted worship. It is the thing which we worship most highly which occupies the meditation of our hearts.

An effort to Change our Worship - Meditation

In a spoken petition you might say something like this, "Jesus, I ask you to be my burden bearer. Jesus, I know you want to walk with me and carry my burden as your yoke. Even as you take my burden from me let me partake of your yoke of a higher life." "Relieve me of my burden of ---." (supply the name of the thing.) "I cast down my idol of ----." (supply the name of that thing.)

"Father, Cleanse me, make me pure. Remember me TODAY in your kingdom. Give me your spirit now so that I become a child of God. Release me in the Spirit of worship and praise. Father, I thank you for receiving me into your presence. Saying these things with your mouth will activate your faith and God's response. in Jesus name I pray this. "Say it! And say it only if you mean it!"

Tears of Cleansing Reveals the Spirit at Work

Allow this token of cleansing to do its work, It is part of the seed dying and the vessel being broken so it can give forth a new incense out of your life, an incense of praise unto God.

Press into the Holy place which is that secret place of the most high, revealed in your spirit. This process may take minutes, hours or even days. Wait upon the Lord for Him to complete you. Give praise to God. Speak to Him and listen to Him respond to you. Begin to walk in the Spirit.

"If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit." (Galatians 5:25) "Let us not be desirous of vain glory, provoking one another, envying one another." (Galatians 5:26) "Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ." (Galatians 6:2) "But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world." (Galatians 6:14)

Mysteries, [Chapter 5](#)

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