

## Christ in You

*Just as he who called you is holy, so be holy in all you do; for it is written: "Be holy, because I am holy." (1 Peter 1:15-16, NIV)*

If you've tried to live up to those verses, you've felt the frustration and guilt they can bring. How can anyone ever be holy as God is holy? We just don't seem to have the ability in us.

That has always been the problem. Even in Old Testament times, God's people knew they were to be holy, but the "how" eluded them. That's why Paul refers to *"the mystery that has been kept hidden for ages and generations, but is now disclosed to the saints"* (Colossians 1:26, NIV).

And what is this mystery, this long-hidden key to our being all He wants us to be? Simply this:

*Christ in you. (Colossians 1:27)*

No, we in ourselves cannot live holy lives. We can try as hard as we want. We can try anything—it won't work. But Christ, who is completely holy and completely human, can live His holy life in us and through us.

Most of us began experiencing this "mystery" at the moment of conversion, when we first trusted Christ. Remember the freshness, the new life you sensed within? That was the Spirit of Jesus himself, coming to live within you.

But as we struggled to live this holy life, the "mystery" remained partially hidden. The Galatians had a similar problem; listen to Paul's words to them:

*Remember how you realized that Christ died for your sins? You received His Spirit within you, not by measuring up to some set of rules, but by trusting Him. Are you so foolish as to think that having begun life in the Spirit this way, you can bring it to fulfillment by your own efforts? Does God work His wonders within you because you make yourself perfect, or because you simply trust Him? (Galatians 3:1-5, para.)*

God's holiness and freedom from sin are completed in our lives the same way they began. When we simply trust Him, day by day, decision by decision, He lives His holy, beautiful life through us, by His own Spirit within us.

Self-discipline is wonderful, but we cannot achieve holy living through it. Desiring holiness is good, but struggling for it won't make it happen. We cannot live holy lives by trying harder. Holy living only comes by trusting God more completely and more constantly.

Sometimes in a moment of spiritual crisis, we wholeheartedly commit ourselves entirely to God. But later, if we fail in a moment of weakness, we wonder if our commitment was fervent enough.

Perhaps we doubt if we can ever measure up, or even if God really expects us to be holy. But as important as such crisis moments are, no single decision can eliminate the necessity of making the touch decisions one at a time. No onetime commitment can make the daily commitments automatic. We must still turn to Him and trust Him in each temptation, in each situation, in each area of our lives.

That is where holiness happens. The process of holy living is the process of trusting God.

And every struggle we face is essentially a struggle of faith. Whether the opponent is sin or discouragement or some distraction that seeks to lure our attention away from God, our challenge is to continually look to Him and trust Him.

As we realize the Living Christ is always with us and in us, that trust is nurtured and strengthened. It grows more personal, more intimate, more face-to-face. He is unbelievably faithful, always drawing us to himself, always reminding us and teaching us and forming himself within us. We are never left to our own weakness. He is always there, in all His love and strength and purity, ready to prove himself more than adequate for every need.

*I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit in you...I will put my Spirit in you and move you to follow my decrees...you will be my people, and I will be your God. I will save you from all your uncleanness. (Ezekiel 36:26-29, NIV)*

Hymn: [Holy, Holy, Holy God](#)

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