

## Hidden in Christ

### *Three Keys for Divine Protection*

Whether you are willing to admit it or not we are in a war. Not acknowledging the enemy does not mean that the war does not exist. It just proves either your apathy or ignorance. When you take time to read the entire counsel of God's Word it becomes clear that the war has already been won and the deed to this world has been put in the name of Jesus Christ. However, He has decided to put this world on a "lay-a-way plan." That means that the one who owns the world has yet to return to claim His property. Until that time a battle is being waged by the enemy. This is clear in Scriptures: 1 Peter 5:8-9 (ESV), *Be sober-minded; be watchful. Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour. Resist him, firm in your faith, knowing that the same kinds of suffering are being experienced by your brotherhood throughout the world.* Job 1:7 (ESV), *The LORD said to Satan, "From where have you come?" Satan answered the LORD and said, "From going to and fro on the earth, and from walking up and down on it."*

Through the years in ministry I have become convinced that we do a disservice when we do not teach about the spiritual warfare every believer is engaged in. So often we teach the great eternal hope of heaven; the wonderful blessing of embracing the goodness and grace of God. We speak of the importance of engaging in community and fellowship, and encouraging our brothers and sisters to grow in God's grace and doing good works. All these great truths are a reality in the life of a born-again Christian, but there is much more that we are called by His Word to embrace.

Philippians 3: 10-11 (ESV), *That I may know him and the power of his resurrection, and may share his sufferings, becoming like him in his death, that by any means possible I may attain the resurrection from the dead.*

Jesus warned us about being persecuted: Luke 21: 10-12 (ESV), *Then he said to them, "Nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. There will be great earthquakes, and in various places famines and pestilences. And there will be terrors and great signs from heaven. But before all this they will lay their hands on you and persecute you, delivering you up to the synagogues and prisons, and you will be brought before kings and governors for my name's sake.*

This passage is interpreted by most Bible scholars as referring to the end times and this paper is not to discuss the timing of what many refer to as the great tribulation. We know through the writings of the apostle John in Revelation 6 that earthquakes, famine and pestilences will be part of the last days of this earth as we know it. However, as we hear and see reports of current events around the world throughout modern history, we see there are pestilences. We know of great earthquakes and famine. The purpose of this paper is not to argue whether we are in the last days of the earth. Instead, the focus is on what the apostle Paul refers to when he says we are hidden in Christ. Colossians 3: 2-4 (ESV), *Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth. For you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. When Christ who is your life appears, then you also will appear with him in glory.*

### **Hide Ourselves in Christ**

What the apostle Paul is telling us through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit is that our spiritual life positionally is one that cannot be touched by the enemy without the approval of Our Savior. What the

enemy can do during this age of grace is to bring fear into our lives through pestilence, famine and earthquakes. Fear can only be a reality if we permit our fleshly bodies to become more important than our spiritual lives. Remember, our bodies are simply tents we are using while on this earth. We are eternal beings and when our bodies are extinguished on this earth, our souls are transferred to our permanent home. Paul is telling us in Colossians 3 that we are to remember when we accepted the free gift of salvation offered to us by Jesus' death on the cross, we spiritually joined in His death. We are now hidden by the blood of the Lamb until that great day when He takes earth off the lay-a-way plan and the new heaven and new earth appear.

To be hidden in Christ is to place more importance on what we were ultimately created for (fellowship with God) than building a life here on earth. I believe that is why Jesus encouraged us to be vigilant in waiting for His second coming. We, the church, corporately are His bride and when our Bridegroom appears, we need to be looking for Him, not fretting about the things of this world. There is a saying, "He/she is so heavenly minded they are no earthly good." Yet, we are commanded in Colossians 3 to set our minds on things that are above, not on the things of the earth. To be hidden in Christ means our focus in life is Jesus and not our circumstances of life. This is not hiding your head in the sand or not facing reality, but rather embracing the life He has for us. We are hidden in Him, therefore we keep our focus on Him. This is living out Colossians 3; *Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth.* Our eternal souls, our spiritual life are so much more important. We are to be heavenly minded; therefore, all the troubles of this world, the attacks the enemy can bring us, cannot touch us if we keep our focus on Him. This is what it means to be hidden in Christ. So how do we hide ourselves in him you ask?

### **1. Abide in Him.**

Do you recall the testing of Abraham with his son Isaac found in Genesis 22? Isaac was the fulfillment of God's promise to Abraham, his only son. Yet, God tested Abraham through instructing him to sacrifice his only son. We know the end of the story. Isaac asked his father in Genesis 22:7-8a (ESV), *And Isaac said to his father Abraham, "My father!" And he said, "Here I am, my son." He said, "Behold, the fire and the wood, but where is the lamb for a burnt offering?" Abraham answered, "God will provide for himself a lamb for a burnt offering."*

In this story we find a key ingredient to abiding in Him. ***The fear of the Lord is refusing to replace God with anything.*** Fear is a powerful tool in the Enemy's hands. Persecution, famine, pestilence and earthquakes are big-ticket items that bring fear into every phase of life. What are you afraid of right now? What have you replaced God with on the top of your priority list? Abraham stuck with God's promise to him. Abraham knew Isaac was going to live because Abraham's lineage was going to populate the earth. He trusted God. When, and if, we face giving up our life for the cause of Christ, His promise to us is, to be absent from our body is to be present with the Lord. *For we know that if the tent that is our earthly home is destroyed, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens, 2 Corinthians 5:1 (ESV).* Our earthly tent is our human body. The building we have from God is our soul. The only One who can destroy that is the One in Whom our spirit dwells!

Another important point about Abraham's test is this: Everything that was promised to Abraham was also offered up by Abraham to God. In responding as he did with his son, he was taking all his hopes, his dreams and the fulfillment of God's promise to him, and putting it on the altar as an offering to God. Why? God asked him to. Abraham humbled himself before a holy, all-powerful God.

Abraham modeled to us exactly what it means to abide. The word 'abide' means to 'remain permanently there.' To abide in Him is to trust in His provision, His protection, His faithfulness, and to realize God is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him. *I love those who love me, and those who seek me diligently*

*find me*, Proverbs 8:7 (ESV). Abraham trusted in the God who made him wait more than two decades for the fulfillment of His promise. Once the promise in Isaac appeared God asked Abraham to place him on an altar of sacrifice and still Abraham trusted in God. We need to follow Abraham's example of abiding in God, and the first step is to know His promises to us and then trust without fear in His faithfulness.

To abide in Him means we can also be hidden by Him. Again, I refer to Colossians 3 where we are hidden with Christ in God. That is a place of safety. Do you recall the time found in Mark 4: 38-40 (ESV) when Jesus asked the apostles to get into a boat on the Sea of Galilee, *But he was in the stern, asleep on the cushion. And they woke him and said to him, "Teacher, do you not care that we are perishing?" And he awoke and rebuked the wind and said to the sea, "Peace! Be still!" And the wind ceased, and there was a great calm. He said to them, "Why are you so afraid? Have you still no faith?"*

Keep in mind that the apostles were with Jesus, yet there was a storm all around them raging to the point they were full of fear. Why? They were responding to the circumstance around them in the flesh, fearful for their lives, and not focused on the reality that they were called by God to be where they were (in a boat on the sea with the Lord). When we are in a place where God has called us, we can trust our safety is in His hands. This safety in our minds can only be accomplished when we walk by faith (knowing with certainty that God is faithful in His provision and protection over our souls) and not walking by sight (looking at the circumstances surrounding our lives). In the apostle's case they were fearful of the wind and waves crashing around them. This leads us to our second point on being hidden in Christ. We need to live our life in His anointing.

## **2. An Anointed Life**

As we permit ourselves to be hidden in Christ, we begin to abide in Him. In doing so we permanently live by faith in His promises, provision and protection—unabashedly relishing in His grace and mercy. As we understand we are given every heavenly blessing we need (Ephesians 1), we then need to let His Spirit anoint us. In doing so He renews us, remakes us and restores us to the plans and purposes for which we were created.

The word 'anointed' means 'to smear, or to rub.' In Old Testament times kings and priests were anointed with oil to symbolize being set apart by God for a purpose. When God met with Moses and handed down the Ten Commandments he then told Moses in Exodus 19:5-6 (ESV), *Now therefore, if you will indeed obey my voice and keep my covenant, you shall be my treasured possession among all peoples, for all the earth is mine; and you shall be to me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.' These are the words that you shall speak to the people of Israel.*

In the New Testament the apostles were told to wait for the promised Holy Spirit. Acts 1:8 (ESV), *But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.*

It is important to note that the Holy Spirit is key to bringing the impartation of that anointing. Yet, many fail to realize that our response to this anointing is also significant. Just as the kings and priests of the Old Testament were 'set apart' for a purpose, we too in the New Testament age are to be 'set apart.' We are to be set apart from the world, or another way of saying this truth is, **we are to be holy**. We are to be set apart from the evils of this world—set apart from our old way of living. We cannot accomplish godly goals through ungodly means. In other words, if we desire to live an anointed life, we need to let the Holy Spirit bring His impartation to us first in order that our lives are transformed by Him.

A good example of this is found in the life of Jacob. I always chuckle when I write or teach using Jacob because his name literally means, 'dirty rotten heel-catcher.' Genesis 28 records a time when Jacob was on the run from his brother Isaac. He grew weary and he took some time to stop and rest. Putting his

head on a rock to sleep, God began to do a work in Him. This is where each of us is when we begin to let the Holy Spirit work in our lives. We need to stop and simply spend time with Him and drink Him in. We need to detach ourselves from the world and develop a spiritual sense, where we see, feel, touch, taste and hear the world through the impartation of the Spirit. This is done through obedience; obedience to what we see in His Word. The Holy Spirit can impart to each of us His Word of truth, yet knowledge of His Will does not bring transformation. ***Obedience to His Word is what brings transformation.*** Jacob learned that truth. In Genesis 28 he had an experience with God and in verse 20 he made a vow to the Lord. But Jacob had a relationship with God on his own terms—that is a perfect definition of religion. ***Precious readers, religion may bring experiences but to be hidden in Christ and to abide in Christ, living an anointed life, can only be accomplished through a relationship where we submit to Him completely.***

Many of us know about the armor of God found in Ephesians 6 and the victorious life that is found in this great chapter. Yet, when you study the book of Ephesians it is important to note that the first three chapters are devoted to who we are in Christ positionally. He has given us every heavenly blessing because we are chosen and destined by Him to be sons and daughters of God through His redemption. In Chapter 2 we are told that we are made alive in Christ and are no longer objects of the wrath of God. This brings us to Ephesians 3: 10 (ESV), *... so that through the church the manifold wisdom of God might now be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly places. This was according to the eternal purpose that he has realized in Christ Jesus our Lord, in whom we have boldness and access with confidence through our faith in him.*

There is a confidence and a life of victory found in the eternal purposes that Jesus, Our Lord and King, won on the cross of Calvary. We have been given authority in His name to walk in the victory found in Ephesians 6. Yet, there is more to all of this found in Ephesians 4: 1-16, where we learn to walk in unity with one another. In Ephesians 4:17-5:18, we learn to walk in purity. In Ephesians 5:18-6:9, we learn to walk in harmony. It is **after** we have walked in unity, purity and harmony that we are then able to walk in victory, found in the armor of God at the end of Chapter 6.

It is in this process that we learn how to walk in the anointing of the Spirit of God. As we mature in His anointing of the Spirit, we will find that He is at work making us supple and pliable; remaking us in His image. The Apostle Paul writes about this truth found in Ephesians 4: 21-24 (NLT), *Since you have heard about Jesus and have learned the truth that comes from him, throw off your old sinful nature and your former way of life, which is corrupted by lust and deception. Instead, let the Spirit renew your thoughts and attitudes. Put on your new nature, created to be like God—truly righteous and holy.*

It is in submitting to His impartation of His Spirit that we are then transformed into the nature of Christ—walking in His righteousness and separate from the world. This leads us to the third step of being hidden in Christ.

### ***3. Washed in the Blood of the Lamb***

We must always remember we are in a blood covenant with God. Without the shedding of Jesus' blood there would be no forgiveness of sins. Romans 3: 21-26 (NLT), *But now God has shown us a way to be made right with him without keeping the requirements of the law, as was promised in the writings of Moses and the prophets long ago. We are made right with God by placing our faith in Jesus Christ. And this is true for everyone who believes, no matter who we are. For everyone has sinned; we all fall short of God's glorious standard. Yet God, in his grace, freely makes us right in his sight. He did this through Christ Jesus when he freed us from the penalty for our sins. For God presented Jesus as the sacrifice for sin. People are made right with God when they believe that Jesus sacrificed his life, shedding his blood. This sacrifice shows that God was being fair when he held back and did not punish those who sinned in times past, for he was looking ahead and including them in what he would do in this present time. God*



*did this to demonstrate his righteousness, for he himself is fair and just, and he makes sinners right in his sight when they believe in Jesus.*

I have been a follower of Jesus for more than forty years and the more I fall in love with the Lord the more I hate the fact that I sin every single day. Why? Because the flesh that is my tent while I am on this earth is at war with the Spirit of God that is within that flesh. Every day it is necessary and advantageous for me to plead the blood of Christ. I do this because of the blood covenant. It tells us in the passage in Romans shown above that it is the blood of Jesus that paid for my sins. It also tells us in 1 John 1:9, if we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and all unrighteousness. This is the washing of the blood of the Lamb. This is humbling ourselves in admission that He is God and we are not. This is a key ingredient of hiding ourselves in Christ. As we wash in the blood of the Lamb, we are given victory over the death that the enemy so desperately wanted for us. Consider this verse:

*Revelation 12:11 (NIV), They triumphed over him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony; they did not love their lives so much as to shrink from death.*

It is because of the blood of the Lamb that we do not have to live in fear. It is because of the blood of the Lamb that we can hide ourselves in Christ. As we abide in Him, and we are guided by His Spirit through His anointing, we are pliable and remade in His image. During our time on this earth we understand there will be skirmishes with the enemy where we will sin. Those are the times where we plead His blood and are washed clean through our confession of sin, making us fresh anew for our Bridegroom, Who could return to take us home at any moment.

Let me encourage you to apply the blood in your life. In Exodus 12 Israel was instructed to apply the blood of the Lamb with a branch of the hyssop bush. In Exodus 12:7 they were instructed to apply the blood to the sides and the top of the doorposts of their homes. This was to signify the going out and the coming in of their daily lives. If they failed to do as instructed, they would not receive the effect of the blood. It had to be applied for it to be transformational.

We wash in the blood of the Lamb for the forgiveness of our sins, yet we can also apply the blood of the Lamb in every concern of our lives. When my wife and I move into a home I will metaphorically apply the blood of the Lamb on our doorposts consecrating our home to God. Everything we have is His and it needs to be consecrated to Him. Consecrate every aspect of your life to Him through the washing of His blood: your relationships, your job, your material blessings.

***Here is an example of a prayer you can say to Him:***

Heavenly Father, I confess today that you are my Lord and my God and because of that I am Your child; covered in the blood of the Lamb and anointed by the power of Your Holy Spirit. I do plead the blood of Jesus Christ over myself, my family, and my loved ones, and ask that you put your hedge of protection around us. I ask, Lord, in the name of Jesus Christ that His blood come against any disease, virus, pestilence, or wiles of the enemy that would try to come against Your plans and purposes in my life.

Thank You, Father, that through the blood of Jesus I am hidden in Christ and you have paid the price for my redemption. I know that by Your Word you will never leave me nor forsake me. Please impart to me the strength and courage to take my rightful authority because of what You have done in my life and to claim my right to curse every demonic assignment upon my body and stand firm in the faith you have imparted to me.

Empower me today, Lord, by your Spirit to be bold and without fear to preach the gospel, to let your love flow through me and to hold fast to the truth that the blood of Jesus will come against any hidden dangers that might come against me. In Jesus' name. Amen!

***Precious reader, know you are hidden in Christ by the blood of the Lamb. Go be a witness for Him and realize He rewards those who diligently seek Him!***

