

Two-Dimensional Living

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We are, according to scripture, "...in the world," but "..not of the world." Failure to recognize that truth will inevitably get you into hot water in your life. You cannot live in such a way as to, in effect, remove yourself from having an existence within the world, that is, within this present orderly arrangement or system.

Not some elite super-revelatory conceptualizing; not the most careful, disciplined consistency of positive confession; not even some hyper-bold embrace of spiritual identity will free you from the pressures of "this life." Jesus made it clear that He was not praying that we'd be taken out of the world, but that we'd be kept from the evil one while remaining in it.

Quick change of emphasis, before my readers conclude that I have no heavenly perspective: Yes, though we are IN the world, we are not OF the world, bless God. We, the saints of God, are a two-dimensional community. We sit in heavenly places in Christ Jesus, complete in Him, presently enjoying in Him and with Him, the Reality of being joint-heirs of the glory of the Father, but, but, but, BUT, the Person that you are as one who has his being in God, has been subjected, according to the wise counsel of God, to existence within the world, to existence within a strange and alien "land" where we are strangers and sojourners. but not in such a way as to compromise our intrinsic sainthood.

We are here, not awaiting a time of removal; rather, we are here for the purpose of transforming time, space, materiality, and all of it's corruption into God-stuff, into the God-substance that lies hidden within its present distortion.

We are here, as Jesus prayed, not to finally be yanked out of the present and coming mess, but that the world may come to know that the Father sent Him into this present evil caldron of existential ambiguity.

The spirit of escapism takes many subtle forms and presumes to make scripture prove that earthly problematic existence is not integral to the out-working of Father's plans for His Sons and through them

for the whole cosmos. We need to become increasingly clear about the relationship between OF and IN. Be a person OF heavenly citizenship IN a land of giants and walled cities, for while you are in the world, you are still in Christ Jesus and He in you, and greater is He that is in you than he that is in the world.

In this world we shall have tribulation, but rejoice, He has overcome the world, and will demonstrate, confirm and reveal that victory in His body, corporate. What is to be our posture in the world? It is to be one of patience that yields peaceable fruit. That which requires patience (endurance) is God's instrument that will necessitate the drawing forth from within us of the riches of His glory and the strength of His might.

You've heard of persons in the natural who "reached down deep" within themselves to find hitherto unknown strength while in the crucible of some human crisis, and that deep-down reaching brought forth a quality of excellence that had not previously characterized their lives. So it is with the saints of God who shall receive the kingdom. So it is also in our spiritual experience.

Be on the look-out for theological scenarios that tend to weaken your disposition of being in this thing for the long-haul "with all the saints." Don't get hung up on being part of, and a prophet for, some tiny little spiritual minority that's supposedly going to have the final full spiritual break-through ahead of everyone else. Ooh, ooh, is there some squirming in the pews out there? Did I, in the opinion of some, stop preachin' and got to meddlin'? Have I raised some doubt as to how the manifestation of the sons of God is going to be play itself out? Frankly, I hope so.

God does, according to the principle of firstfruits and remnant-election, send some ahead to "take the point," to put it in military terms, and they do break through into dimensions of spiritual territory ahead of their brethren, but, NOW GET THIS, PLEASE; a firstfruits company CANNOT break through into all the fulness of resurrection, glorification, immortality and the setting-free of creation short of every member of the body of Christ arriving with them.

There is no such thing as absolute perfection that is not corporate. It will be a whole body edifying itself in love to which "the perfect" will come and through them, come to the world. No lesser company than the complete body of Christ will attain to "the measure of the stature which belongs to the fulness of Christ."

We need to reflect on a very simple gospel fact---that Christ came out of the tomb in one piece. That statement may sound very strange, but it seems to me that many believers who have embraced the truth of the manifestation of the sons of God have, in a state of soulful excitement, become convinced that they will be part of an elite minority within the body of Christ that will come into immortality ahead of their less spiritual and less revelation-endowed brethren.

Think now. It was the whole body of Christ that arose from the dead as a wholly whole body. We're stuck with one another, brethren. We're going to have to climb the mountain dragging our sick and wounded with us, treating their wounds as we go and nurturing them into maturity in the realization that we are dependent upon Christ in one another, even in the weakest members, in order to realize existentially, that ultimate perfection which is already ours TOGETHER in Christ.

Paul opened his heart regarding his own personal expectation concerning the resurrection from among the dead. In Phil. 3:10, he pointed out the Way to that resurrection, the Way of knowing Him in the power of His resurrection, and in the fellowship of His sufferings, being made conformable to His death. It was that Way that he chose (by God's choice) in order that he might attain to the resurrection from the dead.

Allow me to point out that no man, the apostle being no exception, can "know Him," can have a deep, intimate experience of Christ, apart from knowing Him glorious in the Spirit in one another. Paul would shortly, after penning those moving words, join the company of those who "without us cannot be made perfect."

Yep, none other than the great apostle, with others, awaits our onward advance into all that is ours in Christ, before he can attain to the resurrection from among the dead, and we, as one mystical body

of Christ, continue to receive edification from, as it were, the "other side."

There is an interdependence on the part of those who presently are "absent from the body," and those who still live in tabernacles of clay, for each, whether absent from or present in the body, bring to the communion of the saints the distinct advantages of their respective states.

Soon our shadowy existence shall give way to the substance of the eternal One New Man-Reality, and death will be swallowed up in victory.

Be respectful of one another in the meantime. The brother or sister that you might tend to depreciate may be very strategic to your maturation.

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