

Paul's Two "Ins" Part Three
The Jesus Version
John R Gavazzoni

Though it is Paul who, within the context of the New Testament, theologically frames what some have called, "the mutual abode," i.e. that we are in Christ, and Christ is in us; that He is wonderfully both our Residence and Resident, of course, the same did not originate with Paul. Clearly he received it from His resurrected Lord via and as the Spirit of Truth.

One of the reasons I've spoken of John as very uniquely the complement of Paul, is because it is John who recorded the transcendently sublime realization that informed Jesus of the nature of His Being and gave Him His true life-instructing, Personhood-identification.

If I may be so bold as to suggest a very condensed paraphrase of what is at the heart of Jesus' affirmation directed to the Father and recorded in Jn. 17, it boils down to the equivalent of Jesus saying, "I am the One who particularly dwells in you Father, and I am the One in whom You particularly dwell. You are my home, and I am your home, yet as I dwell in You, there are many in Me, who, being in Me, have You as their abode with Me in Me. And as it is also true that I am Your abode, they too, with Me are Your abode. We are all at home in You as You are at home in us."

"How firm a foundation, ye saints of the Lord," have we in the reality of this mutual abode. The imperative of abiding in Christ is based upon the indicative that Christ, IS our abode and the Father is His abode. We cannot make Christ our home any more than we can make Christ our Lord.

God has already done that, and as the reality of this sinks in, we abide, we settle into Him, we heave a big sigh of relief and peace and we say to ourselves, "I really am home, safe at home," and truly spiritual living becomes spontaneous.

Also as recorded in the Gospel of John, Jesus, literally in the Greek, speaks of men believing INTO Him. Does that mean that our "act of faith"

gets us into Christ? No, most certainly not. "It is of God that we are in Christ Jesus..." We believers, representative of all men, are in Christ from eternity.

"Our" faith is ours in Christ and, in turn, part and parcel of God's gift to us, His Son, in us, so our faith is really His faith, "the faith OF Christ," but we may gratefully say that it is our faith for it has been given to us. What God gives to us by grace truly is ours but He is its content and we possess it in Him.

A good illustration and analogy might be for us to think of having been born in the private birthing-room of a great mansion. That's where we started from, but as we mature, we become more and more aware of the vastness of our home, and we begin within the mansion to explore "into" the whole of our home so as to enjoy all that is ours there.

So, being in Christ by nature, in the process of ongoing faith, our faith---His faith in us---enters more fully, further and further into Christ until we come to know His breadth, length, depth and height, and to know His love.(Eph 3:18-19)

Remember Jesus spoke of "he who believES in me,"(John 14:12 etc,.) not merely of a person's act of faith.The Greek carries the idea of a continuation of faith, a believING, an ongoing "faithing" (too bad we don't have that verb form of the noun faith in the English language.)

That we should possess the faith and "faithing" of Christ was not our decision, it was God's. As the Holy Spirit CAUSES us to participate in the decision of God, His decision becomes our decision by the force of reality. He gives, and His giving translates into our receiving, for please understand that the life of Christ in us, the life that is our life, is a giving and receiving life.

We tend to think that giving originates with God, but receiving originates with us. Not so! Both giving and receiving reside in God. He is the source of both to His Son who becomes the source of both to us.

The conjugal love that God is, is both giving and receiving. That is at the heart of what makes the Divine Nature what I have called Perfect Relational Being. WHAT IS INITIATED IN AND BY THE DIVINE NATURE IS RECEIVED IN AND BY THE DIVINE NATURE. It is that dynamic in which we are made participants by the will and grace of God.

There is no "God's part and our part" in the administration of God. There is only the all-inclusive Divine Nature in which we are granted participation.

Has the reader considered that "Christ" is inclusive of both Bridegroom and Bride; that the Bride of Christ came forth out from the Body of Christ, so that the Bride has the same constitution as the Groom, and in that Perfect Relational Being, received from the Father, is both the pursuing, wooing quality of love, and the surrendering, receiving quality. As my dear friend, Lenny Antonsson would say, "It's all God."

And I would add, It's all God in Christ.

John R Gavazzoni