

The Things That Are Above

Colossians 3:1-4 _ If then you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. ² Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth. ³ For you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. ⁴ When Christ who is your life appears, then you also will appear with him in glory.

Reflecting on the Things That Are Above:

- There is something Greater than me that God in Christ has wrapped me up in!
- Wholeness... Shalom... Belonging,
 - things that just are not found in this world

*I Have been raised with this Man
And I have died with this Man
I am hidden with this Man in God
And I will appear with him when he comes!*

I can easily put my mind on things of this earth:

- When I put my mind on things of this earth,
 - I am possessed by those things
 - I believe those things
 - I become those things

Share about my parent's divorce:

- The brokenness of their relationship became the brokenness I looked out into the world
- My fractures created the foundation for the divorce I would bring my own children thru
 - What I learned:
 - People who I should be able to trust will hurt me
 - I will be hurt, so I will hurt first
 - No matter what I do I cannot fix my emptiness

BUT... Now I belong to this Man!

- The idea I am most excited about is the Unity and Bond that every Christian has with Christ and with one another!
- Because of Christ, I am part of something BIGGER than me
- It's bigger than all of us, but faith is the key that unlocks the door and permits us into heave.... TOGETHER

WE need to shake off the Things That Are On Earth, and put OUR thoughts and OUR seeking on The Things That Are Above:

- How am I possessed by Him?
- How am I to join Him where He is and in what He is doing?
- And, lastly, what has He called me into?

John answers these 3 questions by telling us to look at the means thru which He came to us:

1 John 5:6-12_ This is he who came by water and blood—Jesus Christ; not by the water only but by the water and the blood. And the Spirit is the one who testifies, because the Spirit is the truth. ⁷ *For there are three that testify:* ⁸ the Spirit and the water and the blood; and these three agree. ⁹ If we receive the testimony of men, the testimony of God is greater, for this is the testimony of God that he has borne concerning his Son. ¹⁰ Whoever believes in the Son of God has the testimony in himself. Whoever does not believe God has made him a liar, because he has not believed in the testimony that God has borne concerning his Son. ¹¹ And this is the testimony, that God gave us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. ¹² Whoever has the Son has life; whoever does not have the Son of God does not have life.

If Jesus came thru the Spirit, the Water and the Blood, then we too come to Him... and to one another... thru those SAME means:

- It is these 3 things that BIND ALL Christians together with Christ!

He came to us thru the Spirit:

Romans 1:1-7_ Paul, a servant of Christ Jesus, called to be an apostle, set apart for the gospel of God, ² which he promised beforehand through his prophets in the

holy Scriptures, ³ concerning his Son, who was descended from David according to the flesh ⁴ ***and was declared to be the Son of God in power according to the Spirit of holiness*** by his resurrection from the dead, Jesus Christ our Lord, ⁵ through whom we have received grace and apostleship to bring about the obedience of faith for the sake of his name among all the nations, ⁶ including you who are called to belong to Jesus Christ,

⁷ To all those in Rome who are loved by God and called to be saints:

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

So we come to Him thru His Spirit:

- WE are all possessed by Him thru His Spirit!

Ephesians 1:11-14_ In him we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to the purpose of him who works all things according to the counsel of his will, ¹² so that we who were the first to hope in Christ might be to the praise of his glory. ¹³ In him you also, when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and believed in him, were ***sealed with the promised Holy Spirit***, ¹⁴ who is the guarantee of our inheritance until we acquire possession of it, to the praise of his glory.

He comes to us thru the Water:

Matthew 3:13-17_ Then Jesus came from Galilee to the Jordan to John, to be baptized by him. ¹⁴ John would have prevented him, saying, "I need to be baptized by you, and do you come to me?" ¹⁵ But Jesus answered him, "***Let it be so now, for thus it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness.***" Then he consented. ¹⁶ And when Jesus was baptized, immediately he went up from the water, and behold, the heavens were opened to him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and coming to rest on him; ¹⁷ and behold, a voice from heaven said, "This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased."

So we come to Him thru the Water:

- WE join Him where He is and in what He is doing thru the Water!

1 Peter 3:18-22_ For Christ also suffered once for sins, the righteous for the unrighteous, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh but made alive in the spirit, ¹⁹ in which he went and proclaimed to the spirits in prison, ²⁰ because they formerly did not obey, when God's patience waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was being prepared, in which a few, that is, eight persons, were

brought safely through water. ²¹ ***Baptism, which corresponds to this, now saves you, not as a removal of dirt from the body but as an appeal to God for a good conscience, through the resurrection of Jesus Christ,*** ²² who has gone into heaven and is at the right hand of God, with angels, authorities, and powers having been subjected to him.

Romans 6:1-11_ What shall we say then? Are we to continue in sin that grace may abound? ² By no means! How can we who died to sin still live in it? ³ Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? ⁴ ***We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life.***

⁵ ***For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we shall certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his.*** ⁶ We know that our old self was crucified with him in order that the body of sin might be brought to nothing, so that we would no longer be enslaved to sin. ⁷ For one who has died has been set free from sin. ⁸ Now if we have died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him. ⁹ We know that Christ, being raised from the dead, will never die again; death no longer has dominion over him. ¹⁰ For the death he died he died to sin, once for all, but the life he lives he lives to God. ¹¹ ***So you also must consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus.***

He came to us thru the Blood:

Revelation 5:3-10_ And no one in heaven or on earth or under the earth was able to open the scroll or to look into it, ⁴ and I began to weep loudly because no one was found worthy to open the scroll or to look into it. ⁵ And one of the elders said to me, "Weep no more; behold, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has conquered, so that he can open the scroll and its seven seals."

⁶ And between the throne and the four living creatures and among the elders ***I saw a Lamb standing, as though it had been slain, with seven horns and with seven eyes,*** which are the seven spirits of God sent out into all the earth. ⁷ And he went and took the scroll from the right hand of him who was seated on the throne. ⁸ And when he had taken the scroll, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb, each holding a harp, and golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints. ⁹ And they sang a new song, saying, "Worthy are you to take the scroll and to open its seals,

for you were slain, and by your blood you ransomed people for God from every tribe and language and people and nation,¹⁰ and you have made them a kingdom and priests to our God, and they shall reign on the earth.”

So we come to Him thru the Blood:

- WE have been called INTO His Body and thru His Body to be members of one another!

John 6:41-59_ So the Jews grumbled about him, because he said, “I am the bread that came down from heaven.”⁴² They said, “Is not this Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? How does he now say, ‘I have come down from heaven?’”⁴³ Jesus answered them, “Do not grumble among yourselves.⁴⁴ No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him. And I will raise him up on the last day.⁴⁵ It is written in the Prophets, And they will all be taught by God.’ Everyone who has heard and learned from the Father comes to me—⁴⁶ not that anyone has seen the Father except he who is from God; he has seen the Father.⁴⁷ Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever believes has eternal life.⁴⁸ I am the bread of life.⁴⁹ Your fathers ate the manna in the wilderness, and they died.⁵⁰ *This is the bread that comes down from heaven, so that one may eat of it and not die.*⁵¹ *I am the living bread that came down from heaven. If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever. And the bread that I will give for the life of the world is my flesh.*”⁵² The Jews then disputed among themselves, saying, “How can this man give us his flesh to eat?”⁵³ So Jesus said to them, “Truly, truly, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you have no life in you.⁵⁴ *Whoever feeds on my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life,* and I will raise him up on the last day.⁵⁵ For my flesh is true food, and my blood is true drink.⁵⁶ Whoever feeds on my flesh and drinks my blood abides in me, and I in him.⁵⁷ *As the living Father sent me, and I live because of the Father, so whoever feeds on me, he also will live because of me.*⁵⁸ This is the bread that came down from heaven, not like the bread the fathers ate, and died. Whoever feeds on this bread will live forever.”⁵⁹ Jesus said these things in the synagogue, as he taught at Capernaum.

1 John 5:9-12_ If we receive the testimony of men, *the testimony of God is greater, for this is the testimony of God that he has borne concerning his Son.*¹⁰ Whoever believes in the Son of God has the testimony in himself. Whoever does not believe God has made him a liar, because he has not believed in the testimony that God has borne concerning his Son.¹¹ And this is the testimony, that God gave us eternal

life, and this life is in his Son. ¹² Whoever has the Son has life; whoever does not have the Son of God does not have life.

As we join one another in Christ's Eucharist, let us all put out of our minds the Divisions, Disorder, and Dis-Unity that belong to this world, and put our minds on The Things That Are Above:

- Be present with Christ
- Receive Him fully, knowing He is fully present with us in this Eucharist
- Be present for one another

Ephesians 4:1-7— I therefore, a prisoner for the Lord, urge you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called, ² with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, ³ eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. ⁴ *There is one body and one Spirit—just as you were called to the one hope that belongs to your call—* ⁵ *one Lord, one faith, one baptism,* ⁶ *one God and Father of all,* who is over all and through all and in all.