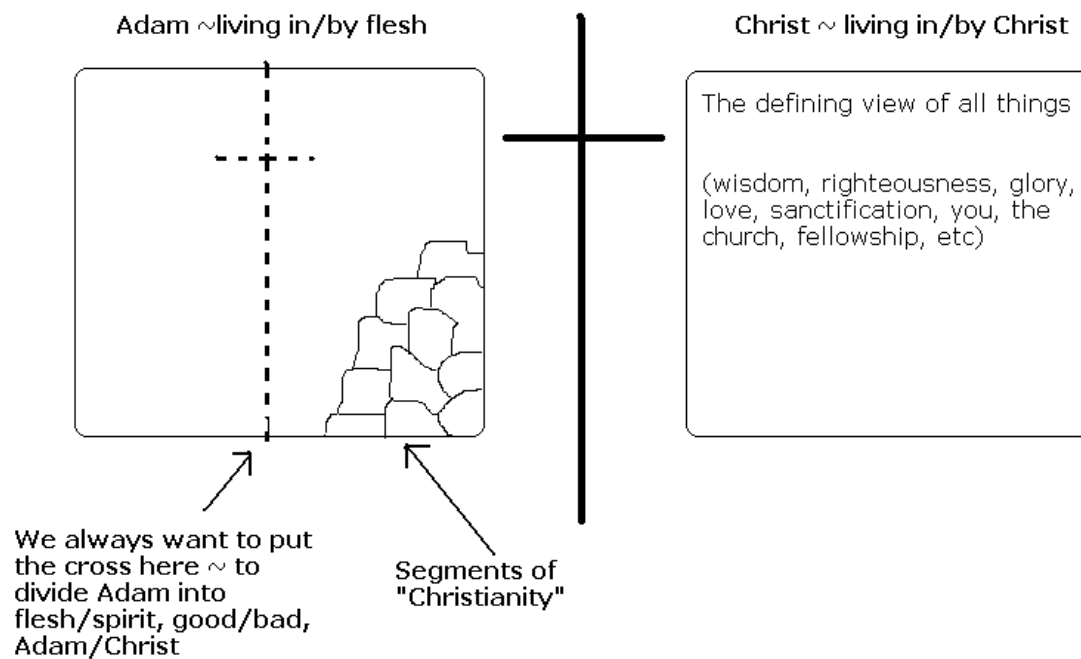


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## All Things Defined By A Person



A couple weeks ago I started talking about being found in Him. And I want to continue with that today...and try to bring us into a greater view, a greater understanding of that. We don't really see ourselves until we see ourselves in Him. We think we do. And that's sort of what I want to talk about...defining ourselves, defining all things by a person.

Defining all things according to how they are in Christ. And when I say "the defining of all things by a Person", I'm not talking about theological definitions here. I'm talking about coming to truly see all things as they are. I'm talking about your heart seeing and knowing all things according to truth.

I'm not talking about our natural mind saying "this means that, and that means this". I'm talking about our heart coming into a view of the Lord where all things are defined by Him. Where we see Him as the fullness and substance of all things...and then, and only then, do we see things as they are.

Remember, the Scriptures say that He is the fullness of all things.

- Ephesians 1:23 ~ says that Christ "fills all and all"

- Ephesians 1:10 ~ says that all things in the heavens and in the earth are gathered up into Him.
- Ephesians 4:10 ~ says that Christ ascended that He might "fill all things"
- Colossians 3:11 ~ says "Christ is all and in all"

And if he fills all things, if He is their fullness and their life, if He is their substance, and all things are gathered up in Him. Well then, we don't understand what we're looking at until all things are defined by Him. We don't understand ourselves. We don't understand the church. We don't understand fellowship....until all things are defined in relation to this one Person. We don't even understand the written Word until it is seen in the light of the living Word. Until it is defined by a person.

It was the Father's good pleasure to establish everything according to a measure. And that measure is Christ. And all things are defined by that measure, by that stature, by that man. Christ is that measure.

Ephesians 4 tells us that the body of Christ is being built up unto something. Unto what? Ephesians 1:22 tells us that the body is growing into a living habitation of the Lord. But unto what measure? What's the defining measure of it? Ephesians 4:13 "unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ"

Christ is the measure. He is the measuring stick next to which all things are measured. And it's not just a measuring stick that tells you how much they look like Christ. It's a measuring stick that tells you how much is Christ. The measurement isn't the imitation of Christ...the measurement is the very person Himself. And until you see all things in the light of the one who is their fullness, in the light of the one who is their substance...then you haven't seen those things.

Have you understood a balloon until it's blown up? Until it's full of the substance that makes it look and act like a balloon? All things are like that.

And so that's what I want to talk about for a little while. And I specifically want to get into defining the believer by this Person. Defining the church by this person. Defining fellowship by this person. Because, again, until we see Him...we haven't seen these things. And to the measure that we see Him, to that measure will we see these things.

And maybe you says "Jason, why are we talking about this? How is this important? What's the point of seeing all things defined by a person?" Well, my answer to that is that just about every problem we have is a result of not seeing all things defined by this Person. And I mean that quite literally.

**Why do I still feel condemnation?** Because you're not defined by this person. Your relationship to God and others is not defined by this person. You don't understand yourself in relation to this person.

**Why am I dead inside and full of doubt?** Because you're not defined by this person. Because your heart sees doctrines, believes doctrines, and not enough of the person who defines the doctrines...the person who is the substance of those doctrines.

**Why can't the church get along?** Because we don't understand it as it is in this person. Because church is a gathering of Christians in buildings, and not a gathering

of members in one body. Because we gather unto leaders and doctrines...and don't gather up in Him.

If that doesn't make sense to you yet, bear with me here. I think it will clear up as we go along.

Again, I'd like to suggest to you this morning that, until we see all things gathered up in Christ... Until we see that He fills all things...then we are still shortsighted and haven't come to see things as they are. And if we haven't seen things as they are, then we'll not walk in the truth, abide in the truth.

1 Corinthians 1:30 says "But of him are you in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption"

Now do you see what this is saying? Its saying that God has placed you in Christ. And now Christ is wisdom unto you. Now Christ is righteousness in you. Now Christ is sanctification and redemption unto you. He is these things. These things are defined in Him. They don't have some other definition. They are aspects of Christ's life working in you.

But friends...as with all things...until we see these things defined by Christ, we're gonna think that we need to go out and "do sanctification". We think that we need to go out and "perform righteousness". But don't you see what this verse says? "By His doing you are in Christ, who has been made unto you these things!". Praise God. These aren't the works of man. These are the fruit of the Seed working in you.

But if we have these things defined with an earthly definition...with man's definition... If these things lack definition in Christ, then, my God!...we're going to go out and try to do them according to what we think they are. We're going to live by whatever defining view we have. We're going to live by whatever defining view we have of all things. Do you see my point. We always live by our defining view of reality. But all things are defined by Him.

And so much of the time we just try to define things with our carnal mind, and we act upon that definition. We think we know what love is. Its this or its that. No, love is part of the nature of Christ. God is love, and those who abide in God abide in love. You're never going to understand love if it isn't defined by a Person.

We mentioned this several weeks ago, but when 1 Corinthians talks about love and says

*"Love is patient, love is kind, and is not jealous; love does not brag and is not arrogant, does not act unbecomingly; it does not seek its own, is not provoked, does not take into account a wrong suffered, does not rejoice in unrighteousness, but rejoices with the truth; bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never fails;*

Brothers and sisters, if we don't understand that all of this is a description of the nature of Christ, if we don't have these verses defined by a Person...then you know what we're going to do with them. Rather than thinking that this is the nature of a Person that can be formed in us, we're going to think that its something that we can drum up in the power of our flesh.

Do you see the importance for having heavenly definitions for all things? And by that, I don't mean a definition of what things will one day be in heaven. I mean a defining view of all things according to the reality of being seated in the heavenlies in Christ right now.

But that's what we do. We read things that have heavenly definitions, and we don't understand those things as defined by a Person. We read Scripture, or we have a vision or a dream. And we don't see all things gathered up in Him. We don't see Him, we just see the things. And so we live according to such a huge misunderstanding.

Again, we think that sanctification is a work of human effort – rather than “Christ has been made unto you sanctification. We think that love is a human emotion, its something that has a definition apart from Christ – rather than “God is love, and those who abide in God abide in love”. We think that salvation or deliverance is us not being punished for sins...but these things must be defined by Christ as well.

Lets talk about salvation for a minute. Israel wanted to define salvation as being brought out of Egypt. But they did not know true salvation until they were seated in mount Zion. Salvation isn't the act of coming out. Salvation is the act of coming in. Yes, coming out is wonderful. Yes coming out is necessary. But the salvation was in the Land. The salvation was coming to live and move and rest and feast in the land. Do you hear what I'm saying?

That's why, when you read the exodus story, God continually says to them this and that will happen “in the Land, in the land, in the land”. Rest? In the land. Milk and honey? In the land.

You see, the Israelites wanted to define salvation as dead Egyptians. But that wasn't their salvation. You and I want to define salvation by dead Egyptians. You and I want to define salvation by a dead Adam. But that's the coming out. Its wonderful and necessary, but its not the great salvation. The salvation of the Lord is not a dead Egyptian. Of course we need to see dead Egyptians. We need to see our Adam life crucified with Christ. But our salvation is greater than all of that. Its greater than a dead Adam. Our salvation is a living Christ. A resurrected life.

But again, salvation, deliverance, liberty, love, sanctification, wisdom...all of these things and more are only seen and understood in relation to the person who is their substance. To the person who defines them. And everything must come to find its existence and reality in relation to Christ. In union with Christ.

We must come to a view where, as Colossians 3 says “Christ is all and in all” for us to understand all things.

And so, what I want to spend a few weeks on, is trying to gather up some things and define them in relation to this Person. I want to try to help us see some things according to their heavenly definition.

And I want to start by defining the believer by this person. I want to talk about defining you. Coming to an understanding of you, a comprehension of you, in relation to Him.

And the real question that we face every day is how do we see ourselves. That's the most significant question in our lives in terms of what effects our emotions, attitudes, actions, affections. How do you define yourself? When you look at yourself, as in a mirror (but not physically)...what do you see? That is probably the most practical question you can ask yourself, because everything about your life flows out of that view. There's a defining view of you – and everything else...everything you do and feel and think flows out of that view. There's a view that defines you. What is that view?

I'm not being weird to super spiritual here. I'm being really practical. You see yourself, as in a mirror, and there is a view that defines all things about you. A view that makes all things feel real. A view that interprets life, experiences, God, relationships. It's a defining view.

And we've been talking about coming to a place where we are found in Him not having a life of our own. Discovering ourselves in Christ. We've been talking about suffering the loss of all things that were gain to the old man, so that we might be found in the one new man.

And generally speaking it comes down to this: we don't know who we are, we don't manifest who we are because we still think that we're supposed to be alive. We still think that we are the life of the believer. We think we're supposed to be living our own life. Now, I didn't say that we think we're supposed to be living our own way. We all know that we're supposed to live His way. But living His way without living by His life is impossible. The Law proved that, and that's what the New covenant is. A new life that, when we live by it, we can live His way.

But there is the confusion. We think we're supposed to be living His way by our life. And our life can never live His way. Only His life lives as He is.

And that's exactly what Jesus meant when he said over and over "you won't gain my life until you lose yours", "you can't be a disciple until you lose your life. You have to hate your life and let it go to find mine". And He wasn't saying you need to hate your way and find my way. He didn't say choose my "way", not yours. He didn't say "way", he said "life". You can never live his way without living by His life. Do you see that? Its not about the choosing of the right way to live. Its choosing the right life...its losing one and gaining the other...and that life always goes the right way. That's the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus. Romans 8:4.

You see, we always want to put the cross in the wrong place. This is slightly tangential, but let me try to show you this in a diagram.

You see, on one side is living in the flesh, living in Adam. On the other side of the cross is living in Christ. And the cross separates the two realms. And what we're always trying to do is think that the cross separates the good and the bad from this realm. We're always trying to put the cross right here. We think that its about choosing the Christ-like way.

And Jesus says that unless you go through the cross, you cannot be my disciple. Do you see that. Unless you choose this life, you'll never know my way. My way doesn't exist over here. My way doesn't exist in this old life. My way flows out of my life. And you can't find my life in the old. You have to come out of the old to see my life.

And until your heart turns to the Lord in this way, to see Christ revealed in you, then you see all things according to this one side. You see the cross over there. You see yourself over there. You see all things in relation to living in the flesh, living in Adam. All things are defined by this view. And so you see spiritual gifts, and you see the church, and you see terms like sanctification, and love, and gospel, and glory, and redemption, and fellowship...and you see them all over here in this old view. You say...“that’s got to be on the good side over here”... In this view of the old man. Its gotta be somewhere over here. How do I do it? How do I find it. Its not in that life. You can’t find it here. You can’t define it apart from this Person.

And so you try to find all things over here on the left and none of it can be seen there. And its all a bunch of different things. And you say, “wow this is complicated....**[start drawing segments in the left side]** love is one thing, and then there is sanctification, and then there is wisdom, and then there is the church”...and you need some really smart guy to come tell you how it all fits together.

Christianity is a bunch of things. It’s a bunch of systematic theology. Man, I was working on the sanctification part, and I neglected the wisdom. I was going to church, but didn’t feel like I was really fellowshiping. And then, suddenly the light begins to shine in your heart and you begin to have a defining view of all things in relation to a Person.

And you say...MY GOD!...Christ has been made unto me wisdom. And if there is any wisdom in me at all, it is a participation in His life!. And Christ has been made unto me righteousness, and if there is any righteousness in me at all it is not because the cross divided Adam, its because righteousness flows out of His life. And then you say, Christ has been made unto me sanctification. And if there is anything changing in me, anything being sanctified, it is because I am coming out of Adam, through death, burial, and resurrection, and finding myself in Christ. And the church...the church isn’t a gathering of people with similar beliefs...the church isn’t a “what”. The church is a “who”. It’s the body of Christ. It’s the corporate experience and expression of His life. The purpose of a body is to contain and manifest the life that lives within it.

Lets go back to our questions?

- Why do I feel condemnation?
- Why do I experience doubt?
- Why doesn’t the church get along?

IT all comes into focus through a defining view of Him. Its like a bunch of dry bones laying on the ground and suddenly start rattling together and snap into place because they’re joined to a life. They’re understood in relation to a living person. They’re defined, they’re comprehended when seen connected in and by a person.

And here’s what we do: we read about something over there in Christ, and we try to extract it back across the cross and make sense of it in the old man. Where everything is just a bunch of empty balloons. And you can’t figure out what a balloon is for because there’s no life in it. There’s no substance filling it.

But when the heart turns to the Lord you begin to see all things fulfilled in this person. All things defined in this person. All things understood in relation to this

person. Christ fills the screen and swallows up the definition of all things. I know this perhaps sounds like nonsense to some...but there's reality here.

But until a heart turns to the Lord, the veil remains. 2 Corinthians 3. It doesn't say when your mind turns to the Lord. Your mind can turn and try to see the other side, and it's just going to see the curtain. It doesn't say when you decided you're going to serve him with all that you got. If your heart turns to the Lord...the veil begins to tear...little bit at a time. And you see this person who defines all things. You see this person who defines you. Because, as Col 3:3 says "Whenever Christ is revealed, then you are revealed". And you could say that about anything. Whenever Christ is revealed, the church is revealed. Whenever Christ is revealed, love is revealed. Whenever Christ is revealed, sanctification is revealed. Praise God.

Because in Christ is the fullness of all of these things. But can you see in this diagram what we do without defining all things by a person. Again, We see things over here in Christ. Or we read things over here in Christ...and we try to bring them back onto the other side of the cross. And we dissect them like **Fluff the cat**.

Did all of you here Randy's story about Fluff the cat while he was here. Its was so good. Tell Fluff story.

And that's what we do with Jesus. We see all of these concepts, we see the church, we see ourselves apart from Him...and we gather them up in little compartments and categories (really so that we can control the whole thing). And we think we know it all. But you can't understand a cat's toenail apart from an understand of that cat. Without a defining view of the cat, without understanding the full measure of the cat, you'll never really comprehend a cats liver. "But when Fluff is revealed, then his toe is revealed".

And that's just a goofy way of saying what I've been saying all along. We need to understand the substance, or we'll never understand the things that that substance fills. Because the substance defines the things.

And, I was going to try to get into defining the believer by this Person today. But I think I'll leave that for next time. We're going to look at defining a believer according to this person. We're going to look at defining the church. We're going to look at defining fellowship and relationship. But I'm content if today we've just started to see the concept of the defining view of Christ.