

*We aim to reconcile people unto God through Christ*

<b>SERMON TITLE:</b>	<b>BECOMING LIKE CHRIST</b>
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Our goal this year is to become more Christ like. Although it is something I am preaching on in the beginning of the year to set the tone for the year we should pray this prayer everyday of the rest of our lives. Our continuous prayer this year should be transform me Lord so I can become a transformer. That is why I said that our greatest challenge in 2010 will be to become more Christ-like.

**The Key passage for last week was** John 13:17 <sup>15</sup>"I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you."

1 Pet 2:21

<sup>13</sup>Submit yourselves for the Lord's sake to every authority instituted among men: whether to the king, as the supreme authority, <sup>14</sup>or to governors, who are sent by him to punish those who do wrong and to commend those who do right. <sup>15</sup>For it is God's will that by doing good you should silence the ignorant talk of foolish men. <sup>16</sup>Live as free men, but do not use your freedom as a cover-up for evil; live as servants of God. <sup>17</sup>Show proper respect to everyone: Love the brotherhood of believers, fear God, and honour the king.

<sup>18</sup>Slaves, submit yourselves to your masters with all respect, not only to those who are good and considerate, but also to those who are harsh. <sup>19</sup>For it is commendable if a man bears up under the pain of unjust suffering because he is conscious of God. <sup>20</sup>But how is it to your credit if you receive a beating for doing wrong and endure it? But if you suffer for doing good and you endure it, this is commendable before God. <sup>21</sup>To this you were called, because Christ suffered for you, leaving you an example, that you should follow in his steps. <sup>22</sup>"He committed no sin, and no deceit was found in his mouth." <sup>23</sup>When they hurled their insults at him, he did not retaliate; when he suffered, he made no threats. Instead, he entrusted himself to him who judges justly. <sup>24</sup>He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, so that we might die to sins and live for righteousness; by his wounds you have been healed. <sup>25</sup>For you were like sheep going astray, but now you have returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls.

The call to follow Christ's example, and to walk in His footsteps, is so high that there is every reason to ask "How can it be expected of sinful men that they should walk like the Son of God? The answer that most people give is practically, that it cannot really be expected: the command sets before us an ideal, beautiful but unattainable.

The answer Scripture gives is different. It points us to the wonderful relationship in which we stand with Christ. We are in Christ and this union sets in operation within us a heavenly life with all its powers. We should thus take the command "Live as Christ did" seriously and pursue with all our being. The more we get to understand the relationship we have with Christ, the more we understand the transforming power of God at work in us then more we earnestly desire to follow His example.

What then is this relationship? It is threefold. Peter speaks in this passage of Christ as our Surety, our Example, and our Head.

Christ is our collateral/warranty/ Surety/guarantee/indemnity

"Christ suffered for us" Jesus bore our sins on the Cross. As indemnity, Christ suffered and died in our stead. He bore our sin, and broke at once its curse and power. As Surety, He did what we could not do, what we now need not do. ",

1 Pet 2:<sup>24</sup>He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, so that we might die to sins and live for righteousness;

Christ is also our Example too. In one sense His work is unique; in another we have to follow Him in it; we must do as He did, live and suffer like Him. "Christ suffered for us, leaving us an Example" that we should follow in His footsteps. Even when we suffer for his name sake we should do it as he did it. We should endure suffering for the sake of Christ with a Christ-like example.

Can I be expected in the weakness of the flesh to deal with suffering as Christ did? How is it possible to become this Christ like person? My emphasis is not on perfection, which no one on this side of the grave can attain, but on ongoing growth, "from glory to Glory, in fact ever increasing Glory.

2 Cor 3:18

<sup>18</sup>And we, who with unveiled faces all reflect the Lord's glory, are being transformed into his likeness with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit.

We can start our walk from Glory to Glory if we get to know Christ better in our relationship with Him. Christ is not only our indemnity that when we sin He stands in our stead, not only is He our example he is also our Head.

As a believer I am spiritually one with Him. In this union He lives in me, and imparts to me the power of His finished work.

Gal 2:20

I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ **lives** in **me**. The life I live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved **me** and gave himself for **me**.

On the basis of the finished work on the Cross, on the basis of the power of His sufferings and death and resurrection. It is on this ground we are taught in Romans 6 and elsewhere that the Christian is indeed dead to sin and alive to God.

Rom 6

Dead to Sin, Alive in Christ

<sup>1</sup>What shall we say, then? Shall we go on sinning so that grace may increase? <sup>2</sup>By no means! We died to sin; how can we live in it any longer? <sup>3</sup>Or don't you know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? <sup>4</sup>We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life.

<sup>5</sup>If we have been united with him like this in his death, we will certainly also be united with him in his resurrection. <sup>6</sup>For we know that our old self was crucified with him so that the body of sin might be done away with,<sup>[a]</sup> that we should no longer be slaves to sin— <sup>7</sup>because anyone who has died has been freed from sin.

<sup>8</sup>Now if we died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him. <sup>9</sup>For we know that since Christ was raised from the dead, he cannot die again; death no longer has mastery over him. <sup>10</sup>The death he died, he died to sin once for all; but the life he lives, he lives to God.

<sup>11</sup>In the same way, count yourselves dead to sin but alive to God in Christ Jesus. <sup>12</sup>Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body so that you obey its evil desires. <sup>13</sup>Do not offer the parts of your body to sin, as instruments of wickedness, but rather offer yourselves to God, as those who have been brought from death to life; and offer the parts of your body to him as instruments of righteousness. <sup>14</sup>For sin shall not be your master, because you are not under law, but under grace.

The very life that Christ lives, the life that passed through death, and the power of that death, work in the believer, so that he is dead, and has risen again with Christ. :It is this thought Peter gives expresses when he says in

. <sup>24</sup>He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, so that we might die to sins and live for righteousness;

*For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.*

*John 3:16 NKJV*

Christ is not only our Surety who lived and died for us, our Example who showed us how to live and die, but also our Head, with whom we are one, in whose death we have died, with whose life we now live. This gives us the power to follow our Surety as our Example:

We have got to understand the Grace of God in the context of Justification and in the context of sanctification.

Grace in the context of justification means that because we could not keep the law in order to be saved or be made right with God we needed a sacrifice for the forgiveness to be saved and to put us in right relationship with God. Something the Jews had to do daily. But in Christ we have that one and for all we need no further sacrifice to be justified.

What we do need under the new covenant is the grace of God when we stumble in the process of sanctification. Which is the process of becoming holy and righteous. We need the grace of God to be extended to us when we fail in this process. But we cannot believe that we do not have to keep the commands of God anymore. Under the new covenant we still have to listen to

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The big difference is that we now have the Christ dwelling in us through the power of the Spirit to overcome and not to submit to the sinful man, even though this will be our ongoing struggle. Under the new covenant sin shall not be our master anymore.

There are some who try to follow Christ without passion and commitment to obedience and righteousness. We also cannot seek from within ourselves the power to live like Him; these efforts will be in vain. We cannot receive his atonement unless we are also committed to walk in His footsteps.

The only way in which we can start walking in His footsteps is when we see Him as our head. We need to see that the Son of God in His glorious presence love in me and I in Him and because of this I can grow in this journey of Christ likeness. His blood not only bought guilt, his blood united me in Him and the more conscious I become of this powerful fact the more I will walk in His footsteps.

<sup>24</sup>He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, so that we might die to sins and live for righteousness; by his wounds you have been healed.

As surely as He conquered sin and its curse for me, He will conquer its power in me. What He began by His death for me, He will perfect by His life in me.

What has happened to the good old Gospel truths "It is no longer I that liveth but Christ that liveth in me, He lives, He lives, Jesus is alive in me, it is no longer I that liveth but Christ that liveth in me"

There is nothing that weakens the power of Christ's example so much as the thought that we cannot really walk like Him. Do not listen to such thoughts. The perfect likeness in heaven is begun on earth, can grow with each day, and become more visible as life goes on.