

The Bishop's Message
October 2009

Christ in Us

William Holman Hunt painted a picture in the middle of the nineteenth century called "The Light of the World," with which many of us are probably familiar. It was once quite popular. I've seen it in many Sunday school rooms over the years. It depicts Jesus knocking on a door. It was inspired by the 20th verse of the third chapter of the Book of Revelation which says: "Behold, I stand at the door and knock..."

An interesting feature of the painting is that there is no doorknob on the outside of the door. It was an obvious and deliberate omission by the painter in an attempt to convey the reality that the door must be opened from within -- Christ will knock, but He can only enter if the person opens the door to Him.

It is critical that we open our lives to Jesus and invite Him to live in us and through us. The impact of His indwelling presence is readily seen. Contrast the lives of those without Christ and those who have opened the door to Christ and invited Him to dwell within them -- like Albert Schweitzer and Mother Theresa. Contrast the proud, the envious and the greedy with those who possess Christ by living in Him in peace. Compare the weak in spirit who are trapped by their worldly desires and pursue only temporal pleasures with those who seek justice, love mercy and walk humbly with God resulting in unburdened consciences and yokes that are easy.

This is what St. Paul refers to as "Christ in you" in the first chapter of his Epistle to the Colossians. Paul emphasized this reality frequently and passionately. "For this I toil," Paul says in verse 29, "striving with all the energy which He mightily inspires within me."

This is the basic and essential power of the Christian life. Christ dwelling in us is as crucial as the engine in an automobile. Christ is the causation of every good intention and every positive action. Christ within us is always the difference. The good news is He continually seeks entrance into our lives. The question is, do we honestly desire Him to make His abode in us in the here and now insuring that we may dwell with Him in all eternity?

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