

In Christ: In the Arena of Interpersonal Participation

To Be Immersed "in Christ" Is to Be Immersed into a Family, a Participatory Community.

- into a life of fellowship with God AND all who belong to Him
- our experience and expression of Christ are not just for our own sakes, but for others

The "Problem" of Community Is A Double "Problem":

- overcoming fear - I Jo 4:18
 - overcoming loss of faith - II Thess 3:4-5
- ...In Christ, I have His love and His faith for you!

IN CHRIST...

...GOD MADE ROOM FOR US IN HIS FAMILY - Jo 14:6

- We were strangers, aliens, outsiders - Ro 5:10; Col 1:21; I Jo 3:16
- God was in Christ reconciling us to Himself - II Cor 5:19

...GOD HAS ACCEPTED US - Ro 15:7; Jo 6:37

- He receives us unto Himself - Jo 14:3
- God is in Christ ever accepting us

...GOD HAS BEEN GOOD TO US - Eph 1:3; II Pet 1:3,4

- God does not treat us according to our sins but according to His Lovingkindness
- Ps 103:10; Matt 20:15
- God in Christ can't keep anything good to Himself - Jer 31:3,14

...GOD LOVES US ENOUGH TO TELL US THE TRUTH - Jo 3:16; 17:17; 18:37

- Christ is the Word, the Truth of God, of Man, of God in the man - Jo 1:1-4
- God in Christ has spoken the Truth to us in love

...GOD INTERCEDES FOR US - Heb 7:25; Ro 8:34

- God's interceding life is the poured out life - Is 53:12
- God in Christ meets the needs behind our faults - Ps 103:10

In Christ, We See the Truth of What It Means to Be God

- God is hospitable, accepting, good, truthful, intercessory
- We also see the truth of what it means to be the people of God

IN THE BODY OF CHRIST...

...WE MAKE ROOM FOR STRANGERS - I Pet 4:9; Heb 13:2

- Hospitality: the gift of open hearts and open homes - Matt 25:35
- We look out for the overlooked - Lk 14:12-14

(God made room for us in Christ - now in Him we make room for others!)

...WE ACCEPT ONE ANOTHER - Ro 15:7

- Grace overflows all the boundaries and barriers that would separate us
- We do not judge others through the lens of our own personal preferences and convictions - Ro 14:1-10
- We personalize and concretize the accepting love of Christ
 - ...speak to the new man - II Cor 5:17
 - ...celebrate diversity - Ro 12:10

(God accepted us in Christ - now in Him we accept others!)

...WE ARE GENEROUS TO OTHERS - Eph 2:10; Ro 15:14; Acts 10:38; Titus 2:14

- God's love/life cannot be put in the service of self-interest - II Tim 3:17; I Tim 6:18
- We are servants: paying the price so others go free - Lk 22:27
- We practice the presence of people - I Jo 4:20
 - ...listening ...affirming ...compassion ...edify - Eph 4:29

(God is good and generous to us in Christ - now in Him we are good and generous to others)

...WE ARE AGENTS OF LOVING TRUTH - I Jo 5:20; Eph 4:15,25

- Our objective is not to see others charged with a crime but changed by the truth
 - Jo 8:31,32,36
- We sit together in love under the truth of God - II Tim 3:16-17

(God is loving and truthful in Christ - now in Him we love each other enough to tell the truth!)

...WE ARE INSTRUMENTS OF REDEMPTION - I Jo 3:16

- We give the gift of ourselves - I Thess 2:8; Phil 2:17
- We are allowed to see fault only that we might intercede - Ga 6:1-2

(God interceded for us in Christ - now in Him we become intercessors!)

This is Who He Is...

...This is who we are in Him...

...This is what we do because of who we are in Him...

...we participate together in the sharing of His Life!