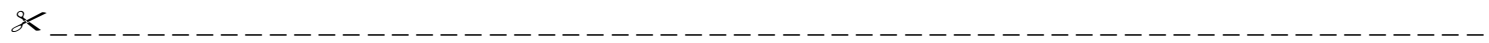


The Bible recognizes two (and only two!) categories of human life – life “in Adam” or life “in Christ”. Two “races”, if you will, two groups of distinct persons based upon lineage or descent – natural, “adamic” life, or, spiritual, “Christ-indwelt” life. One is born of the flesh, the other is born of the spirit (See Jo 3:6; I Cor 15:22,47).

This life in Adam is born dead – it is without “the Life” of God, disconnected from eternal life (not only “forever” life, but also, God’s “kind” of life!). By itself, it is self-determining, self-interested, self-serving. It is “me-ological” – me and my way, me and my truth, me and my life. It can appear nice or mean, seem productive or destructive, act caring or hateful. No matter – if it is separated from God it is without God’s life. It is common, it is temporal, it is hell bound – it is dead!

The life in Christ is born again, born from above. Made alive by the saving activity and the indwelling saving life of Christ, it is newly created life – fully justified, fully sanctified, fully glorified. (See Col 2:9-10; II Pet 1:3,4). However, that does not mean the “Christian” (the Christ-one) cannot be “led astray” (II Cor 11:3). She can be lured in to living “fleshly” (sarkikos) – as “mere men” (II Cor 3:1-4) – as though Christ’s life were not in her. He can exist as a “soul man” (psuchikos – I Cor 2:14) – under the influence of body and soul with a disregard for the indwelling Spirit of Truth. Either can live as “law men” (nomikoi – under the influence of law – Titus 3:9) like the Judaizers of Galatia – with a disavowal of the pure grace that is sufficient for every Christian need. The “fleshly man”, the “soul man”, the “law man” are all common – way too common in the church of the Lord Jesus Christ. Paul was in frequent conflict with them and their worldly, gnostic, legalistic, and “common” ways.

Why so? They were neglecting the more excellent way – the uncommon way of the Spirit (pneumatikos – I Cor 2:13; 3:1; Ro 8:4; Eph 5:18). The “sarkokoi”, the “psuchikoi”, the “nomikoi” were all going to heaven, but they weren’t having a very heavenly time getting there! They were, indeed, connected to Christ, but due to the normalization of the aberrations of what it means to be “in Christ”, they were failing to express the true character of Christ – the One “full of grace and truth” (Jo 1:14). Our task – if we know better – is not to avoid, condemn, ridicule or look down on such normalizations. Our task – because we know better – is to demonstrate that more excellent way – the uncommon way of the Spirit. We are not spirit indwelt, spirit-led, or spirit-filled for the purposes of exhibition – but for the purpose of edification. All His authority is for the edification of the saints (for those in Christ) and the demonstration of Christ and His Love for the sinners (for those in Adam). Check out Ephesians 4:29; I Corinthians 12:7; II Corinthians 12:19 and II Cor 13:10! And don’t forget John 13:34-35! Sounds to me like the “spirit men and women” are on a mission – to unleash the Uncommon Life of Christ in both the church and the world!



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Greetings


It seems that retreats and conferences are somewhat diminishing on the horizon of what God is doing. Nothing wrong with that! Along with various other "forms" from generations past (two week "revivals" anyone?) things change as our God continues to make all things new. (Mostly so we keep trusting in Him, not the "things"!). Due to rising costs, health crises, unpredictable schedules, and the cultural decline in our ability to follow through on a "yes", this format faces increasing challenges.


Having said all that, we are considering one more year of our Florida Retreat. (34 years is a pretty good run!) I have secured rooms at a manageable cost, but rooms and catered meals do require a minimum number of participants, or we pay the difference,


So here's the deal. Without asking for a hard fast commitment from anyone - no down payment required - we'd like to know how many of you remain interested in this event. Our scheduled date is February 23-24, 2024. We have a few months before we are "locked in". So, without holding anyone to anything, could you send us a text or a phone call to 352-672-1275 just to help us gauge whether or not to pursue this? We'll let you know by October where we stand! Thank you, Steve

Praise & Prayer

 The Indwelling Spirit of Christ

 His fullness of grace and truth abiding in us

 Compassion for the "deceived"

 Energy and desire for the mission fields of both the church and the world

Calendar

SEPTEMBER

3,17, Oct 1	FBCA
7-10	Louisville, KY Men's Retreat (502-664-5622)
13	Alachua Study
22-29	Redmond, OR