



Dwelling Outcomes

Review

When we started the series, from our anchoring scripture we saw how Christ dwelling in us involves a kind of intimacy with him.

For this reason I kneel before the Father, from whom every family in heaven and on earth derives its name. I pray that out of his glorious riches he may strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being, so that **Christ may dwell** in your hearts through faith.

And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, may have power, together with all the Lord's holy people, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, and to know this love that surpasses knowledge—that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God.

- Ephesians 3:14-19

We looked at a number of tools for entering into this intimacy such as:

Worship

Meditation on Scripture

Gazing upon Christ

Confession and Repentance

Spoken Praise and



Have you have been using these tools to enter into intimacy with Christ in your personal time with Him? In those times, do you think more and more you are grasping how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ for you? Do you feel you know this love that surpasses knowledge? Have you seen that you are being filled to the measure of all the fullness of God?

If you did the [Getting Started](#) session, you may have written down how you felt about these things at that time. Have they changed at all?

Different Responses

If you haven't experienced as much of this as you expected, don't lose heart. God has made us all different (how boring it would be otherwise) and these practices are going to impact each of us differently. The tools are not formulae or recipes that are guaranteed to give the same result for everyone.

The Spirit of God works in every person's heart, doing what only He can do so that Christ may dwell there. This same Spirit of God also gives us the capacity to experience His love. The way we experience His love is according to the unique way He has made each one of us.

Faith

Each time we enter into time with Christ and we make the effort to connect with him deeply, we are exercising faith – faith that God has strengthened us with power by his Spirit in our inner beings so that Christ may dwell in our hearts. Ephesians 3 says God will do this, and we are acting upon our belief that He will do what He says.

So if you have tracked through all of the sessions so far, where to from here?

Transformation

As Christ dwells within us and we experience His love, change is bound to happen.



Have you noticed any changes on the outside as a result of what's been going on in the inside?

John the Baptist seemed to understand the change that happens when Christ comes near.

He must become greater; I must become less.
- John 3:30

This verse is in the specific context of John's unique ministry of preparing people for the arrival of Jesus. However, it also describes what happens in our lives when Jesus approaches us. The *old us*, with all of its destructive habits, fades away while *Christ in us* increases more and more. With more of Christ and less of the old us, there should be a noticeable difference over time.

Another verse from our [Gazing Upon Christ](#) session speaks of this transformation.

And we all, who with unveiled faces contemplate the Lord's glory, are being transformed into his image with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit.
- 2 Cor 3:18

As we spend time with Jesus, deepening our heart relationship with him, we are changed to be more like Him.



What do you think this transformation looks like? What do you think will be noticeably different in you as Ephesians 3: 14-19 happens in your life?

His Love -> Our Love

1 John gives us some hints on evidence of Christ dwelling in us.

We love because he first loved us.
- 1 John 4:19

As we grasp how wide and long and high and deep the love of Christ is, we desire to love in return. We may want to show God love and/or we may want to show this love to others. Let's start with love towards God.



How do you think we can show God we love Him?

Loving God

In John, Jesus relates love towards God with obeying Him.

If you love me, keep my commands.
- John 14:15

Also 1 John tells us something more about keeping His commands.

We know that we have come to know him if we keep his commands.
- 1 John 2:3

When we can see that we're keeping his commands, that's a demonstration of our love to God and evidence that we know Christ.



But which commands do we keep? All of them? What are his commands?

Before we get overwhelmed in this, let's look and see what Jesus says.

Command To Love

In the gospels, Jesus gives us many instructions on how to live. However, in John 15 He gives us one overarching command.

My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you.
- John 15:12

We are all called to love, but it doesn't have to be in the same way. Each of us is a unique creation of God and He has wired us to love in different ways. When we seek Him, He will show us specific ways that we can love others.

He did this for Peter, a leader of the church, in John 21.

When they had finished eating, Jesus said to Simon Peter, "Simon son of John, do you love me more than these?" "Yes, Lord," he said, "you know that I love you." Jesus said, "Feed my lambs."
- John 21:15

Peter was told specifically to teach, guide and nourish the church that was soon to be born. For us individually, we can ask God how he specifically wants us to love others.

1 Corinthians paints a picture of what that kind of love looks like.

Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It does not dishonor others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres.
- 1 Corinthians 13:4-7

- Take some time now to think of how God has made you and what he has put on your heart. Wait and listen for anything he may reveal to you about loving others. What is He showing you about how you can express your love to Him through how you love others?

24/7 Dwelling

Well, we have almost finished the series. We have gone through a number of sessions focussed on what we can do to increase our intimacy with Christ when we spend time with Him alone. In this session we looked at what happens as a result of our increased intimacy with Christ.

Before we wrap up, let's touch on Christ dwelling in our hearts beyond our personal devotional times.



What does Christ dwelling look like in our everyday life? Is it possible to consciously be aware of Christ dwelling in us while we're with our friends or family, working, studying, commuting and doing all the other activities that make up our day? What does this look like? How do we get to this place from where we are now?

It is certainly possible that God will reveal himself to us as we are walking down the street or

talking with someone and not thinking of Him at all. However, that is not the norm. If our goal is continuous communion with Him, we will move more quickly towards that goal if we exercise the faith of Ephesians 3:17 in our everyday activities.

Colossians gives a clue to some things we can do to encourage that continuous dwelling.

Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things.

- Colossians 3:1,2

Notice the “set your hearts” and “set your minds”? We are encouraged to take action to set our hearts and minds on things above. We can take that to include setting our hearts and minds on Christ himself.

A.W. Tozer talks about a continuous inward gaze of the soul upon Christ. Just like we learned in the Gazing Upon Christ session, we fix our eyes upon Christ. The difference is that we do it not just in a time alone with God but continuously in the midst of our everyday life.

Paul may have been hinting at this type of lifestyle when he spoke of praying continually.

Rejoice always, pray continually, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God’s will for you in Christ Jesus.

- 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18

Sound impossible? While it doesn’t come naturally, it can be slowly learned over time. It does require persistence over a longer period to break old habits and develop new ones.



What has been your experience in connecting with God throughout your everyday activities? What have you found practically helpful to walk with God beyond your devotional time and through your day?

Series Wrap Up

Well this brings us to the end of the Dwelling series. But it doesn't have to be the end of Dwelling for you. Hopefully it is the beginning of a lifelong practice of intentionally providing space for God's Spirit to strength your hearts so that Christ may dwell there.

You can come back to the material at any time to remind yourself of one of the practices for your devotional time. You may even want to use some of the sample practical material in your quiet time to get you started again.

If you have found Dwelling useful, feel free to share it with your friends. If you want to make it more personal with your friends, you can always facilitate a group. There is a facilitator's guide on the [download page](#).