

December 2009

Cyberspace News

Michigan News



## Dead, Risen and Hidden

Elder Charles Moore

Have you ever noticed how earthly minded we are? This should not be surprising. After all, we are earth dwellers. We live on this planet at a certain time and in a certain place. We are physical beings in a physical world. It's natural for us to think about our jobs, our material possessions, our finances, our health, and the people who are important to us. We live in the dimensions of time and space, and we must function in this natural world by the physical principles that define it. However, those physical principles should not define us.

In Colossians 3, the apostle Paul reminds us of who we are in Christ and of how important it is to see ourselves from that perspective. He shows us that how we live our lives on earth depends on our having a heavenly perspective. So many Christians do not understand exactly who they are in Christ. Our understanding, obviously, must come from the Bible. In other words, we are who God says we are and we have what God says we have.

His word is the determining factor, not our feelings or what someone else has said about us. The infallible word of God tells us the truth about us. The truth that I want us to see is that, in Christ, we are already dead, risen and hidden. This month I will be writing about those parts of the passage that are underlined, next month I will examine other parts of the passage. **Colossians 3: <sup>1</sup> If then you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. <sup>2</sup> Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth. <sup>3</sup> For you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. <sup>4</sup> When Christ who is your life appears, then you also will appear with him in glory.**

The word "if" does not suggest that Paul's readers might not have been "risen with Christ", for all believers, are identified with Christ in death, burial,

resurrection, and ascension. The word "since" gives the truer meaning of the word. **Since you have been raised with Christ**, our exalted position in Christ is not a hypothetical thing or a goal for which we strive. It is an accomplished fact in Christ.

Our text tells us that three important things have happened to us--we died, we rose from the dead and our life is hidden with Christ. But how can this be? According to the Scripture, if we've given our life to Jesus Christ, when Christ died on the cross for our sin, we died there with Him. We were then resurrected--given a new eternal life not tainted by sin. We died to sin. We have been set free from the penalty of sin and the power of sin. In theological terms, this is called the 'substitutionary atoning death of Christ'. Then, when He rose from the dead, we rose with Him. Because of his resurrection, we have been raised to a new life of the Spirit. The Bible calls this 'being born again'. We have been born from above by the power of the Spirit to live an abundant life in a new spiritual dimension. According to our text, we dwell spiritually with Christ in a heavenly realm. Our old self has been put to

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death and our new self has been made alive. We are now a new creation in Christ. It is not necessary for us to understand how it happens or figure out how to make it happen. We must just believe it is true and it has been accomplished by Jesus.

The exciting truth here is that we have been united with Christ. We are identified with Him and Him with us. As Christians, we should never see ourselves apart from Christ. Our lives are hidden with Christ in God. We are thoroughly identified with Christ. He is our life. We are one with Him. We dwell with Him. We're not simply earth dwellers. We are heaven dwellers.

We no longer belong to the world, but to Christ; and the sources of life that we enjoy come only from Him. The Christian life is a "hidden life" as far as the world is concerned, because the world does not know Christ. Our sphere of life is not this earth, but heaven; and the things that should attract us and excite us belong to heaven, not to earth. This does not mean that we should ignore our earthly responsibilities. Rather it means that our motives and our strength come from heaven, not earth. It doesn't mean that you simply don't know the world around you even exists so you quit your job and lay on the couch all day. It means that the things that should be important to you are the things that involve your heavenly citizenship not your earthly.

Now, it is easy to say these things. It's harder to see them and it is even harder to walk in them. But we must see them, even though we may be dealing with all of the problems we face in this physical world. You see, that is the point of it all. The point is that if I see this new reality, it will change how I feel about my current reality. If I see myself as dwelling with Christ, it makes all the difference in how I deal with the affairs of this life. It makes all the difference in how I see myself and where my self worth is found. That is why Paul reminds us that we have a new identity in Christ and we should never see ourselves apart from Him. We can take courage from that and find joy in that for sure!

Save this date:

Ladies Dessert and Salad Bar  
Saturday March 20, 2 pm

Happy New Year everyone! 2010 is here already and we never thought things would be right after 2000 came. Nothing happened that long-ago night, except we welcomed a new millennium in. Hope this next year will be a great one for each of you.

Christmas Eve found us at church again this year with many folks joining us to celebrate our Savior's birth. Our farthest outlying family was Kane and Jennie Begeman from Glendale Arizona. Laurie Eckles was able to come from north of Detroit with her sons Alex and Michael. They later were able to travel to their home in northern Michigan to ski and enjoy the snow. Larry and Peggy Charles traveled down from the Howell area to celebrate with us. I think they have faithfully come over all the years we have been in our church, which reached the 40 year mark this past month! They were one of the earliest marriages performed in the new church. Lynn and Rob Vaughn's wedding was the first one in the newly built church.

We were also happy to have Darran Chapman from Cleveland Tennessee with us Christmas Eve also! He had flown to Michigan to be with sister Vicki and brother Steve. Steve has been helping Samaritan's Purse put together their shoeboxes for the world's children each year at this time. True Christmas spirit! They gather in Atlanta, Georgia and go through each box, there are over a million and send them overseas. He goes down there and stays a week and has made some marvelous friends! What a great Christmas tradition, Steve.

Rox-Ann and David Brugman, Charlie and Aurine's daughter and son-in-law, were happy to celebrate Christmas in Hillsdale, Michigan with mom and dad and their four children. In the Maryland area the usual Christmas Eve party at the Layton home was moved to Karen and Mark Dorsey's home the day after Christmas. Dorothy reports a wonderful time with her 8 great-grandchildren under the age of 10 running around enjoying their cousins and gifts while doting great-grandma looked on. She said around 30 of them were there to enjoy the food and each other. She had traveled to Deborah and Jim Stoner's near Fredrick for their regular Christmas Day feast.

Kay and Jim Nevil and daughter KT picked up son/brother Josh in Jacksonville, Florida and traveled to visit David and Ruth Charles Christmas Eve and Christmas Day. Mom Ruth and Dad David fed them well and enjoyed their visit. After a visit with sister Kathy

## Michigan Report

Aurine Moore

The month of December began with some very mild, almost Spring-like weather and ended with well, a rainy Christmas and lots of other snowy and blowy days. Charlie and I had the privilege of starting off the month visiting church members and friends 'out east' - Rip and Norma Ripley, Debbie and Jim Stoner, Dorothy Layton, Karen Dorsey, and Pam and Walter Layton. It was a wonderful visit for us and a time of refreshment and fellowship. Thanks for your hospitality and friendship!

While we were gone, Tim Begeman ably filled the pulpit preaching on Should we have faith in the bible?, in addition to all the other tasks he and wife Diane routinely take care of for worship, from creating beautiful power point slides that help people focus on the week's scripture and sermon and doing the church bulletins.

Ringling the bell for the Salvation Army proved to be a daunting prospect for those who signed up this year. The assigned work station was outside the movie theatre at the mall and the wind chill that evening was well below zero. Members drove to the mall suited up for Arctic conditions. To our surprise and immense relief, permission was granted to the bell ringers to ring the bell in an enclosed alcove. All volunteers did a great job and some even brought friends to help.

Marcia Moore had been in the hospital since September. She never recovered from surgery and passed away in December. Many, many church members had visited her during her illness, called, wrote cards, and enjoyed her company, even while she was sick. Many had the privilege during this month of meeting her mother Hazel Harvey and daughter Debra Thornton. They flew in from New York to visit with Marcia, not knowing how very ill Marcia would become before the end of their visit. We will miss Marcia and continue to

pray for her family. At the memorial service Kathy Smeltzer sang a variation of "I'll Be Home for Christmas", with lyrics by Kay Nevil, which was greatly appreciated.

Visitors to the hospital while Marcia was in the hospital in Monroe had the unique experience of stopping by to watch another of our church members, Pat Conley, orchestrate activities and serve in her position at the nursing station at our local Mercy Hospital. She was 'out of commission' for a time in December as she had to have surgery for what she describes as 'a minor problem'. She is quite impressive to watch as she helps coordinate floor nursing services, answer family calls for information, and promote team work and morale on the unit. Stay well, Pat!

It was a joy and a relief to have our Christmas Eve service this year. Readers may recall last year's program was cancelled due to a flu outbreak. This year's program was a reprise of the program we planned to have last year and it was special, both because of the program itself and the company that gathered to commemorate the birth of Jesus Christ. The prelude music for the program by Kathy Smeltzer on piano and Carrie DeHaan on flute was lovely. There were special songs from Kathy Smeltzer, Jeff Begeman and me, Aurine and skits called "How Nick Became a Saint" and "The Great Church Robbery". It wouldn't be Christmas without young thespians, and this year we enjoyed the talents of Shay Pinhey, Sydney Begeman, Gabe and Riley Vargas. Tim Begeman, Erin Gill, Chelsey Connor, Melinda Begeman, and Charlie Moore filled the adult roles ably, as well. It was a delight to share snacks and fellowship with visitors new and familiar from near and far. Until next month, may you be aware of God's abounding presence, wherever you walk this month!

## Cyberspace News continued

Smeltzer and family they traveled home to about 22 inches of snow to start the new year at school! We are still thankful for only an inch or so at a time so far this year.

That concludes my visits around the country. Please let me hear from you this month. I am going to try to put pictures of our outlying folks on the picture page in the next newsletter, so I am looking for you to write and send pictures!

Many folks at our church wrote their philosophy of life in seven words and I am amazed at the beautiful sentiments. Please send me your seven words to live by and I will try to get them altogether and mail them next month. Example: Dave Fedor—Always do your best and be satisfied. Nate Valentine—Captains and kings depart, ancient sacrifice stands!

I send you love and best wishes for 2010!

**CHURCH OF THE  
LORD OUR  
RIGHTEOUSNESS**

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## **Best Puns of the Year**

A couple months ago, I entered a contest and ended up winning a few acres of swamp land below the flood plane in Mississippi. Before I knew it, right after that I won a \$250,000 house, so naturally I built it on my new land. Last week, I won enough money in the lottery to quit my job and move down there for good. And just last night, as I sat on my new porch watching the rain and listening to the thunder, it all started to sink in.

The patient is adamant. "Doc, I need a liver transplant, a kidney transplant, a heart transplant, a cornea transplant, a spleen transplant, a pancreas trans..." "What makes you think you need all these?" " Well," replied the patient, "My boss said if I wanted to keep my job I needed to get reorganized."

This guy is walking with his friend. He says to this friend, "You know, Benny's a walking economy." His friend replies, "How so?" "His hair line is in recession, his stomach is a victim of inflation, and both of these together are putting him into a deep depression."

I noticed the neighbor down the street was home every day, so after a few weeks I asked him what was going on. He replied, "I left my job because of illness and fatigue." A few weeks later, his wife gave me the real truth of what happened. Turns out my neighbor's boss got sick and tired of him.

# Christmas Eve at COLOR Church 2009



Kathy Smeltzer



Carrie DeHaan



Tim Begeman &  
Erin Gill



Aurine Moore



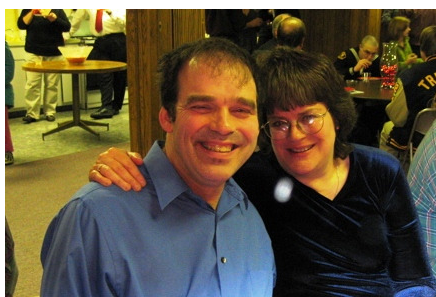
Kane & Jennie Begeman from Arizona



Gabe Vargas  
& Santa



Sydney Begeman  
& Santa



Darran Chapman came home. With



Some Johnson Family members



Steve Chapman participated in  
Operation Christmas Child



Riley Vargas



Charlie Moore as the "Grinch"



Chelsey Connor