

# Entwined Together with God

By Daniel Yordy - August 1, 2010  
PDF Version for printing and distribution

"And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, who are the called according to His purpose." Romans 8:28

I read a brother once who pointed out that the original Greek in this verse is not best-served by the prevailing translation. He proposed that a more accurate translation of these words would be more like what follows. (This is my own paraphrase.)

"And we know that those who love God and who are called according to His purpose work together with God and God with them to make all things good."

Jesus said, "Abide in me and I in you." In the past we focused on our part - our need to abide in Him, but we may never have thought much about His need to abide in us. Part of "abide" means "to conform." We have no problem hearing a teaching that says that we "need to conform to Him." But what about the reverse? That He needs to conform to us?

God did not create us, redeem us, birth us anew, in order to set us on a shelf. Neither did He save us so that we would be "happy" or a "specimen of His glory."

The first thing God did with Adam was to involve him directly in God's creative work of forming the animals. God worked together with Adam and Adam worked together with God to name the animals. This is much more than coming up with a particular spoken sound to address each species. Rather it was an impartation of nature to each type of creature coming to Adam. God and Adam together made each species of animal what they are.

We have come to understand that there is no separation from God within our being. We know that He fills us with Himself. That every part of our humanity is filled with His presence at all times. We know that He carries every part of ourselves inside Himself, including our flesh and our sins. We are never apart from Him in any conceivable way. If I am not seen, He cannot be seen. If I "get out of the way," He is by definition "out of the way."

But only now am I beginning to consider what it means to move that understanding into how we see our actions.

When I reach out and touch something, God is reaching out and touching that same thing at the same time through my arm.

If I pace back and forth, God is pacing back and forth in me. If I sit down to continue typing, God is sitting down to continue typing. My body is the temple of the Holy Spirit. What my body is doing, the Holy Spirit is doing.

Let's look at David. I've been thinking a lot about David lately (by lately, I mean the last 30 or so years.)

David came into the camp of Israel and saw the giant defying God. He looked around and saw King Saul, the army of Israel, and his brothers doing nothing about it.

What is most important next is what David did not do. David did not ask God what he should do. He did not say, "Father, show me Your will." He did not get advice (actually he did, he just refused to follow it). He did not ask anyone to "cover" him or to check out his leading. He did not seek visions. Now, understand that later, in different circumstances, David did many of these things, but not here.

David was always breaking the law given by Moses. In fact, I don't see anywhere where he personally set himself to make sure he was following Moses' directions. Other kings did that and they are known as godly

rulers, but not David. (And remember that it was on this exact point about David that Jesus nailed the Pharisees and they could not answer.)

Now, before going any further, it is clear that other kings tried doing what David did and God brought judgment upon them. David entered the Holy of Holies, placing his hands upon the cherubs covering the mercy seat and God blessed him (men had died previously doing similar things). Later on, Uzziah, David's heir, tried something similar and God struck him with leprosy.

There are always religious pretenders who seize upon boldness before God as a way of magnifying themselves. Not a good idea. And there was a time in our lives when we may have moved in similar ways, but God covered us, knocked us around a bit, and led us on.

So what was different about David?

His heart.

To David, God was everything. God filled his heart with joy. He wanted to be with God more than life itself. God had come upon David in the sweet gentleness of the evenings around the campfire, just David and his sheep. And David had sung his heart out to God, and God had filled him with such a sweetness of joy that David had fallen head over heels in love with God.

And so David was just too busy dancing before the Lord to take much time to consider the laws and regulations laid down by Moses.

Let's look at another incident before coming back to David and Goliath. This is found in both 1 Kings 6 and 1 Chronicles 13-16. I will use mostly 1 Kings 6. You can read the story yourself.

David is newly king. He's all excited about God's goodness. He sees that the Ark of God's presence is wandering around the countryside and not in its place. So, without asking God, he gets the idea that he should pitch a tent outside his house and bring God's presence into that tent so that he could sing before the Ark of the Covenant anytime he wanted to. Now, understand that wherever the Ark of the Covenant is, that is the Holy of Holies where no man can enter but the High Priest once a year with blood.

So David goes dancing down to where the Ark of the Covenant was temporarily kept and tells his men to put the Ark into a cart and bring it back to David's new city.

Here is the record of what happens.

1. One of David's men touches the Ark to keep it from hitting the dirt.
2. God strikes the man dead.
3. David gets mad at God.
4. David puts the Ark into the nearest house and goes off in a huff, kind of scared because God has never done such a thing towards him before.
5. Three months later, David hears that the guy who has the Ark in his house is being mightily blessed of God.
6. David is jealous of that blessing, so he checks out what Moses actually said about carrying the Ark. (No repentance, no soul-searching, and no weeping "I have sinned.")
7. David takes a whole bunch of people down to bring the Ark up to his tent. This time he has them do it the way God said.
8. David leads everyone in joy and singing and dancing and loud music.
9. David, in his exuberance ends up not having much of anything on his body. As he enters Jerusalem, he is dancing and twirling like a drunken fool, "naked" for all the ladies to see.
10. His wife, Mical, looks out the window and despises this crazy guy she married.
11. She tells David that he made a fool of himself.
12. God sides with David. **Of all things, God sides with David** and closes Mical's womb so that she never is able to bear a child.

Now look at this. There is not one ounce of proper Christian decorum and careful "obedience" to God's directions in anything David does. And his whole purpose is to put the Presence of God into a big, drafty, ugly tent, just outside his house so he can run out and sing before God anytime he feels like it and with room to surround himself with hundreds of others, all singing and shouting inside the Holy of Holies.

And yet God sides with this happy fool and against his wife who is offended because of her own sense of importance.

Now, let me get specific. In recent years, many people have experienced an outpouring of the Holy Spirit in their churches that so fills them with the "unspeakable joy, full of glory" that Peter talks about, that they can't help themselves from bursting out into joyous and hilarious laughter - in church!

And all these religious keepers of the faith look at this foolish laughter and despise it. "Laughing hilariously in church cannot be anything God would do. Only demons would fill people's hearts with joyous laughter. Only demons would cause people to dance with all their might before the Lord in church."

So where is God found? Is He found with those grumpy, pessimistic, "holy," keepers of the faith who are convinced that God is found only in putting down the flesh and thinking appropriately humiliating thoughts of one's self?

Or is He found amongst these happy fools who don't know any better than to laugh hilariously and joyously and without seeming reason - IN CHURCH? (The terrible thing is that if these same people had been laughing at a funny movie, no one would complain!)

David never treated God the same way almost everyone else treats Him. David never approached God in the stand-offish religious-decorum attitude that too many think is appropriate. This was the only time, I believe, that David was a bit frightened of God. Even later on, when God is about to kill him for messing up - again - he doesn't seem overly concerned, he simply said, "God, I'm in Your hands, don't put me in anyone else's hands." So when David comes back to the Ark three months later, there is no sense in him that He could possibly displease God with any exuberance he might display.

David told his wife, "You think I made a fool of myself today? Just you wait; I'll embarrass you even more tomorrow."

Does the Holy Spirit fill yielded hearts with unspeakable, joyous, hilarious laughter, without apparent reason, so that they can't help themselves, but burst out with joyous and sometimes foolish laughter in the presence of the Lord?

Or does God side with those who put their hand to the Ark of His Presence to make sure it never, ever falls into the dirt of human folly? Does God side with those who know that only a demon would cause someone to act so foolishly before God and His people?

I want to bear and bring forth the child God has planted in my womb. If I am surrounded by something that I am not comfortable with, that does not witness to my spirit, then I will quietly go my way. But I will never speak in judgment against those who belong to Jesus. And that, in the end, is everyone.

Because people think so highly of themselves, they are convinced that their own definitions and experience with God is all God could ever be or do in anyone else. So when they see a people experiencing God in power and joy in ways far outside of their own small, limited, and tiny definitions of God, they despise those people. "Hey, it's either me or them!"

And that way of thinking is completely demonic.

Let's get back to David and Goliath.

God and David were one. David was with God, God was with David. What David did, God did. What God did, David did. They didn't talk about it; they just did all things together in joyous, heart-filled communion. David picked up five stones; God picked up five stones. David ran towards Goliath; God ran towards Goliath. David swung the sling and released the stone; God swung the sling and released the stone. David brought Goliath down; God brought Goliath down. David chopped off Goliath's head; God chopped off Goliath's head.

That's how it works.

That is how Jesus walked with God; and we are just like Jesus, as we begin, more and more, to see Him as He really is.

Read carefully through the following excerpts from the gospel of John. Consider what Jesus is saying in the light that He definitely (in John 14 & 15) transfers to us this same working together with God that He Himself enjoyed.

"But Jesus answered them, "My Father has been working until now, and I have been working."  
. . . "Most assuredly, I say to you, the Son can do nothing of Himself, but what He sees the Father do; for whatever He does, the Son also does in like manner. For the Father loves the Son, and shows Him all things that He Himself does; and He will show Him greater works than these, that you may marvel. For as the Father raises the dead and gives life to *them*, even so the Son gives life to whom He will." John 5:17-21

"If you had known Me, you would have known My Father also; and from now on you know Him and have seen Him." Philip said to Him, "Lord, show us the Father, and it is sufficient for us."  
Jesus said to him, "Have I been with you so long, and yet you have not known Me, Philip? He who has seen Me has seen the Father; so how can you say, 'Show us the Father'? Do you not believe that I am in the Father, and the Father in Me? The words that I speak to you I do not speak on *My own authority*; but the Father who dwells in Me does the works. Believe Me that I *am* in the Father and the Father in Me, or else believe Me for the sake of the works themselves. Most assuredly, I say to you, he who believes in Me, the works that I do he will do also; and greater *works* than these he will do, because I go to My Father . . .

"At that day you will know that I *am* in My Father, and you in Me, and I in you. He who has My commandments and keeps them, it is he who loves Me. And he who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and manifest Myself to him . . . If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our home with him. He who does not love Me does not keep My words; and the word which you hear is not Mine but the Father's who sent Me." John 14:7-24

Let's take these words of Jesus "and you in Me, and I in you" and transfer them from referring just to our present state or condition into the larger expanse of how we look at our actions.

In the exact same way that Jesus and the Father did everything together, so Jesus and I (you) do everything together.

But obviously there is a condition, a condition that Jesus spells out very clearly in John 14-15 and that Paul raises with these words (I paraphrase, but my paraphrase is probably closer to what Paul was saying than the sanitized Bible words that go in one ear and out the other), "If I, the temple of the Holy Spirit, have sex with a prostitute, is God having sex with a prostitute?"

Paul addresses this problem in both Galatians 2 and 1 Corinthians 6, and in both cases he answers with, "God forbid!"

So what, exactly, is the difference between David's heart and Uzziah's heart (2 Chronicles 26)? Notice, though, in 2 Kings 15:34 that after Uzziah passed on, his testimony before God was that he had walked with God and done that which was right. This is not a "bad" king, here.

Why did God honor David's reckless extravagance, but did not honor Uzziah's?

It is all a question of heart.

Jesus said that those who love Him will do His commandments. He was not talking about external obedience, about hearing something or reading something outside of ourselves and trying to do what we think God wants as best we can. He was talking about this oneness of action between God and us.

Now, please understand this, dear reader. I do not write out of knowing anything already myself. Although it blesses me with great reward when dear ones write to me to share how God is speaking to them through what I write, I must confess a more "selfish" purpose for writing. Yes, when I write, I hear Him sing. But I also write because I so much want to know Him more deeply than I do now, and I do long to see these things that sometimes flow out of my fingers when I'm not looking. By writing, I can somehow gather things together where I can see them more clearly and by doing so, I am myself tucked more deeply into the glorious unfolding of His glory inside of us.

If God also tucks you more deeply into that same glorious unfolding of Christ inside of you, than what reward I possess!

What is the difference between presumption that offends God and boldness that pleases Him? Sometimes they can look awfully similar.

Ananias and Saphira were born again and filled with the Holy Spirit. They spoke in tongues. They lived entirely inside the present age of grace. Yet God was offended by their presumption and He struck them dead. We cannot claim that we are in a different relationship with God than they were; we are not.

All I can do is share some thoughts.

The one who is presumptuous does not care.

The one who is afraid of being presumptuous is too timid to please God.

The one who is bold cannot live anywhere except in God. Anything other than all of God in all of him is inconceivable to him, he cannot accept it. And so he presses on until God opens his eyes and he sees that which is holy.

Somewhere along the line there is a decision of the heart, a "Yes, Lord," that God seizes and seals and never listens to any complaint afterwards. Then you wake up one day and it dawns on you that there is no decision to be made. Everything you are, everything you have, belongs to Him and you withhold nothing.

In the dark places, He was there. In the lonely hours, He lifted you up. When you were humiliated and embarrassed, He hid your shame and treated you so gently. In all the days and months and years of pain and confusion, He showed Himself always faithful and true.

Where else do we go? To whom else do we turn?

There really isn't a choice, not anymore. Long years ago the choice was made, to follow after Him.

Possibly the most precious, tear-provoking passage in all the Bible to me is in John Chapter 1 (I must confess to many tears, even as I write these words). A couple of teen-age boys, barely 16, named Andrew and John, had heard a rumor that God was moving once again among His people. They had no idea what God might do, or whether God would include them or not, all they knew is that they had to go. Whatever was God and holy and true in this world, they had to know, to be a part of, somehow.

And so these two teenage boys, close friends, left their homes by themselves, and went off to get near this man, John the Baptist, who seemed to be near to God.

But somehow, John the Baptist, observing these two boys, knew that something in their hearts longed to know the living God as man had never known Him before. He knew that those hearts did not belong to him.

One day, John the Baptist took the two boys aside. He put one arm around them and with the other he pointed across the river. "Boys," he said, "Do you see that Man? You - follow Him."

To have been one of those two boys, in that moment, that would have been greater than all the kingdoms of the world.

The two friends came up behind Jesus. He turned and said kindly and gently, "What do you want?" They asked, "Where are you staying," probably hoping they might be allowed to tag along. He answered them with the three most glorious words in the entire universe. "Come and see."

Seventy years later, one of those two penned these words, "That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, concerning the Word of life - the life was manifested, and we have seen, and bear witness, and declare to you that eternal life which was with the Father and was manifested to us . . ."

It is heart that knows the Father. It is heart that strides with all confidence into the presence of God, into the Holy of Holies. It is the heart of David, the heart of God. It is heart broken and molded by God. It is heart that will not be denied, that will not be silenced, that will not be kept out.

How can such a thing be described? It can only be known.

Let's get back to our original premise.

"And we know that those who love God and who are called according to His purpose work together with God and God with them to make all things good."

What an incredible commission we are sent by God into the earth to fulfill!

Indeed, this is the Great Commission, much larger than the one in Matthew 28 and easily carrying that smaller commission inside itself.

Let me give an example. My younger son, on occasion, has practiced untruthfulness. Recent such occurrences provided some embarrassment to us outside the home. My wife was rightly concerned. But when she shared her concern with me, I could not see it. All I could see was God, surrounding my son, filling him with Himself, working in his heart to bring him to understand truth and truthfulness. I shared my view with my wife in a way that she was encouraged in the Lord. Then, I had a chance to speak to the boy that my sons are honest and truthful, both in word and in deed.

He wanted to take his MP3 player to camp; his mother said, "No, you will not." He snuck it into his suitcase anyway; she did not know. As they arrived at the drop off point, my son insisted on opening his suitcase. He dug around, pulled out the MP3 player and gave it to his mother without saying anything about it. Then he went off to have a blast at camp.

Somehow, God working together with me, and I working together with God, in oneness of purpose and heart and seeing, worked in my son's heart to cause truthfulness to become his own.

It may be a simple thing, but it is in the simple things that God shows His glory.

I will not fall into a false humility and say "It was all God, I had nothing to do with it." In just the same way, I have no connection with the other false thing that would say, "Well, see, I just know how to handle my son."

Contrary to both, I worked together with God, God worked together with me, and together we made all things good. And of course, my son will continue to grow in the Lord, but my full and unwavering expectation is that God and he will continue to work together all the days of his life.

Truth is not found in definitions or in doctrinal exegesis. I cannot explain these things either to you or to myself. Truth is a Person, and that Person lives in my heart. And that is why story, our story, is, in the end, the best and only way that truth is unveiled to us.

"That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled."

Christ is that which is always personal in us.

To wait upon the Lord is to be entwined together with God, not just in person, but in all that we say and do. Not by our effort to please Him, but by the confident expectation that He fills us with His favor at all times.

Blessings in Christ, Daniel Yordy