

## **This world is not my home, I'm just passing through**

Sometimes I get emotionally overwhelmed when I contemplate the evil in this world. It helps me to understand that this so-called physical world is not real, nor is it our real home. Although there is no actual physical substance to this world, our experience of it is very real indeed. Those of us who take seriously our "baptism" into Christ, understand that our real home is in Heaven with Christ, and with all those who have preceded us in death. When our physical bodies die, it is not our real selves that die, but our sinful, fleshly bodies. All those who are saved by Christ now, or ever will be saved in the future, have already been "*crucified with Christ*" before the foundation of the world (see Eph. 2:4-6; Rev. 13:8; and 1 Pet. 1:20). We were all "*seated with Christ in the heavenly places*" before we were born into this world. When we die and shed these mortal bodies, we will wake up from this "dream" of our earthly existence and find ourselves at home with Christ.

If we all end up in Heaven with Christ after we die, what point is there in living a Godly life during our Earthly existence? Well, the Christian Gospel message is this. Those of us who receive the Spirit of Christ into our lives now can experience spiritual life and fellowship with Christ in this age, as well as the age to come. Eternal life in Christ is not something that we experience only after we die. It has nothing to do with living forever. It is all about experiencing life before we die, during this current evil age, in our fleshly bodies. The Greek word "*aionias*," which is mistranslated as "*eternal*" in the New Testament, actually means "*age-during*" or "*belonging to the current age*" in which we now live. It refers to "spiritual life" in the here and now.

Why would a loving God subject us to the evil in this world, evil so great that we are revolted by it every time we turn on the news? For many, existence in this world is full of sorrow, hardship and misery. It helps me to remember that this Earthly existence is only a temporary condition, and that all of us are not only loved by God, but we are actually at home with Christ in the "*heavenly places*" as we speak. We just have not all been made aware of this, and thus are not able to experience it in the here and now. That is what the Gospel of Christ is all about. It is the Good News that Christ died for all and paid the price of our redemption. When we receive the Spirit of Christ into our hearts and minds, we can experience in the here and now much of the life to come. God gives us the strength and ability to overcome our fleshly nature and find release from many destructive habits. He gives us a new perspective on life and enables us to see our Earthly existence from the perspective of a pilgrim just passing through on our way to a much better place. When we make sacrifices for the benefit of others, we are able to see this as a "win win" situation. As we help others, we also "*lay up treasures for ourselves in Heaven.*" Instead of shaking our fist at God for putting us in this world of sin and sorrow, we can love and praise Him for what He has done for all of us. When contrasted with the joys of Heaven, the difficulties of our present circumstances seem very small indeed.