

Is Jesus Company to Impress or Family to Enjoy?

By: Katie M. Reid

For years I lived like I was still a slave in Egypt. Deliverance from the bondage of sin had occurred, yet I did not walk in the fullness of spiritual freedom. I had been released from the shackles of sin, yet I did not live like it was true.

I strove and spun to swirl up a cyclone of blessings, as if my behavior could lasso God's gaze or control His hand.

But after forty years, my wandering encountered the Promised Land. It had been there all along yet my eyes had not clearly seen it; this land of Grace. Its name was familiar yet its reality was foreign, until a dusty revelation in my living room revealed what I'd been striving to grasp.

It's like I was frantically picking up clutter before company arrives. Trying to make myself presentable through a dizzying display of tidying up. And then suddenly I came to—the brain fog cleared as I turned around to see the reality I had overlooked. Right there in my living room, with the orange shag carpet, was Jesus. There He sat, in a recliner, as if He lived there. And then I remembered, He did live there! His residency was the home of my heart.

I had invited Jesus in years ago, but in my misguided theology, that I needed to earn (and keep) Him happy through works, I had buried this important truth: Jesus wasn't company I needed to impress, He was family to enjoy.

For decades I had been trying to pretty up—trying to make myself worthy of belonging. I wore myself out in an effort to be enough, not fully comprehending that Christ had already done enough on the Cross. But through faith in Jesus, I was already cleansed and in right standing with God. I didn't need to dose myself in the bleach of good works to gain His love.

Works are important, but they aren't the means to His love, they are a response to already being loved by Him.

Jesus is sitting down at the right hand of God and also living in my heart—not because I do all the right things, but because *He* did. He doesn't have to be flagged down, convinced to take notice, or wooed by a pious display of discipline. He is already present. I just need to remember it (and I need His help to do even that).

All that is required to rest within is to believe who Jesus is and receive who we are in light of who He is. It's that simple, and that sacred.

He, our Father, we His daughters. He, our Redeemer, we the believers. He, the Giver, we the receivers. He, our Guide, therefore, we reside in the unmerited favor of God, because Jesus lives *in* us.

*Christ **in** you, the hope of glory (Colossians 1:27b, NIV, emphasis added).*

Or put another way: *And this is the secret: Christ lives **in** you. This gives you assurance of sharing His glory (Colossians 1:27b, NLT, emphasis added).*

Jesus isn't someone to journey to, He is our constant, attentive, all-wise traveling companion.

By faith, the Spirit dwells within the home of all hearts who believe in and receive Him. And one day we will be at home at last, with Jesus...because of grace.

There are no strings attached to this free gift of grace. No fancy bows needed to beautify that which is resplendent in and of itself. If we insist on adding to grace, we trip on the trappings and trimmings of peripheral rules. If we make light of grace, and overlook the holy weight of it, we spit in the face of the Savior, who was already spit upon, slashed, and sacrificed in order to hand-deliver this gift to our hardened hearts.

On this side of the crucifixion, resurrection, and ascension, Jesus resides both with God (and is God) and is *within* us. Immanuel. What weight! What freedom! What hope for the doer's heart!

We don't have to physically sit at Jesus's feet to catch His gaze. Even as we "do" we carry Him with us. Even if we don't "do", His pleasure remains. Our position is settled in His heart and He is settled within ours. We are adopted into God's family, and autographed with Jesus's blood. We are family, and He is at home in us.

Ephesians 3:14-19 (ESV)

For this reason I bow my knees before the Father, from whom every family in heaven and on earth is named, that according to the riches of his glory he may grant you to be strengthened with power through his Spirit in your inner being, so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith—that you, being rooted and grounded in love, may have strength to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.

Do you tend to treat Jesus like company to impress or family to enjoy?

Katie M. Reid is a wife, mom to five, and a fan of cut-to-the-chase conversations over iced tea. Katie is also a speaker, bible study facilitator, and author of *Made Like Martha: Good News for the Woman Who Gets Things Done* (which includes a 5-week bible study for individuals and groups). She encourages others to find grace in the unraveling of life at katiemreid.com Subscribe to Katie's site to receive free resources to help you breathe deeply and walk freely.

Purchase Katie's wonderful book, *Made Like Martha: Good News for the Woman Who Gets Things Done*.