

“Who We (the Believers) Really Are”

*For us to enjoy the life of freedom that Jesus Christ has provided for every believer, we must understand what it means to be “**a new creature in Christ.**”*

2 Cor 5:17 Therefore if any man be in Christ, **he is a new creature:**
old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.

We learn how to avoid the traps of poor self-image and self-condemnation as we begin to view ourselves from God’s perspective rather than from man’s.

As we grow in understanding of what God has provided for us ‘in Christ,’ we will have more assurance and more confidence. Hopefully, consistency will characterize our daily lives.

Now, what does it mean to be a new creature and just what impact does this have on our lives?

The verse we just read described us being a new creature ‘in Christ.’ Let’s consider that phrase ‘in Christ.’

It is used once in the book of Acts. (Acts 24:24)

It is used 75 times in Paul’s epistles.

It is used twice in Peter’s first epistle. (1 Pet. 3:16; 5:14)

Dispensationally, although the term ‘in Christ’ is not specifically used but twice outside the dispensation of grace it is possible to be “in Christ” either according to the prophetic program or according to the mystery program.

For example, God made a covenant with Abraham when He began a nation with Abraham. That covenant included blessing for Abraham’s family, and it extended to the rest of the world as well. We’ll look at God’s ‘original’ call to Abraham:

Gen. 12:1-2 Now the LORD had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will shew thee:

2 And I will make of thee a great nation, and **I will bless thee**, and make thy name great; and **thou shalt be a blessing**:

Hold your place here in Gen. 12 because we’ll come right back to it. Those same promises can be found repeatedly in the scriptures. Here is one of them:

Isa 45:25 In the LORD shall all the seed of Israel be justified, and shall glory.

God's promise was to justify ALL of Abraham's seed 'in the Lord.' We NOW know that 'in the Lord' is 'in Christ' because it was the blood of Christ that atoned for the sins of mankind.

That shows us that Abraham's family is blessed 'in Christ.' Now let's go back to Gen. 12 for the rest of the promises that spread out to all people:

Gen 12:3 And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed.

So we see that it is 'in Abraham's seed' that ALL families will be blessed. How is that? The apostle Paul explains it to us in his epistle to the Galatians:

Gal. 3:16 Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ.

Matt 1:1 The book of the generation of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham.

Jesus is called Abraham's son his seed. It is because Christ is the One who died to pay for the sins of the whole world that we get our blessing and Jesus was born in Abraham's family. We can read the promise again in:

Gen 22:18 And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because thou hast obeyed my voice.

So, although the phrase 'in Christ' is not USED there, we can clearly see that the place that we receive our blessing is 'in Christ'.

Actually, the term 'in Christ' is a redemptive term.

Being 'in Christ' is conflicted with being 'in Adam.' It is demonstrated in:

1 Cor 15:22 For as in Adam all die,
even so in Christ shall all be made alive.

So, in this light, every person SINCE Adam is either 'IN Adam or IN Christ.' It's one or the other! 'In Adam' you get death but 'in Christ' you get life!

Under grace today, when one trusts the Lord Jesus Christ as their Saviour, the Holy Spirit INSTANTLY baptizes them 'into Christ' that is, into His Body:

1 Cor 12:13 For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit.

Our being 'placed into Christ's Body' is often referred to as 'positional truth' because it identifies our position as believers.

That 'baptism' has all the mechanics of positional truth:

Eph 4:4-6 There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling;

5 One Lord, one faith, one baptism,

6 One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.

We get this one baptism the very moment that an individual believes the gospel that Christ died for our sins, was buried, and rose again the 3rd day.

At that instant, we are totally identified as being 'in Christ' where we find everything we need:

'In Him' is where we find ALL of our blessings:

Eph 1:3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places (**"WHERE?"**) **in Christ:**

"In Christ" is where we are made 'perfect' and 'mature':

Col 2:10 And ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power:

When we are 'in Christ' we have HIS righteousness:

2 Cor 5:21 For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God **IN HIM.**

The righteousness is not our own to be sure it is HIS --- given to us because of CHRIST's faithness in being the sacrifice on the cross for our sins:

Phil. 3:9 And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith:

By grace, we are to glorify God's name 'in Christ':

2 Thess. 1:12 That the name of our Lord Jesus Christ may be glorified in you, and **ye in him**, according to the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ.

We were saved 'by grace' and that is also how we are supposed to live as we 'walk in Christ':

Col. 2:6 As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye **IN HIM**:

We are firmly FIXED secure and encouraged there 'in Christ':

Col 2:7 Rooted and built up **IN HIM**, and stablished in the faith, as ye have been taught, abounding therein with thanksgiving.

What blessings we have 'in Christ'! We who are saved are no longer 'in Adam' but now we are 'in Christ'!

By faith, when we 'stepped OUT of Adam' we not only stepped 'into Christ' but HE stepped INTO US, and now we are a 'new creature.'

We are not only 'in Him', but He is in us, as well:

Gal 2:20 I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but **Christ liveth in me**: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.

.... AND we are one Body 'in Him':

Rom 12:5 So we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another.

We are also a 'NEW MAN':

Eph 2:15 Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make **IN HIMSELF** of twain one new man, so making peace;

We need to 'live like WHO WE ARE' act like 'who God made us in Christ':

Eph 4:24 And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.

Col 3:9-10 Lie not one to another, seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds;

10 And have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him:

In order to get a really good, clear understanding of our new identity as new creatures 'in Christ' we should also look at a picture of the 'old man' which we were once a part of. Even though Adam initially brought death in we're guilty ourselves because we sin of our own free will:

Rom 5:12-14 Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned:

13 (For until the law sin was in the world: but sin is not imputed when there is no law.

14 Nevertheless death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression, who is the figure of him that was to come.

It's easy to see what went wrong with the 'old creature'. The first man sinned.

Paul stresses this point through the next few verses:

In Rom 5:15 it says through the offence of one many be dead,

In Rom 5:16 it says it was by one that sinned, for the judgment was by one to condemnation,

In Rom 5:17 it says by one man's offence death reigned by one;

In Rom 5:18 it says by the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation;

In Rom 5:19 it says by one man's disobedience many were made sinners,

Now, listen Every person born into this world is 'in Adam'.

Every person was effected by Adam's sin we will ALL die.

Did you notice at least 3 results that we have all inherited from Adam? These are some of our first 'birthday gifts':

1. *We get condemnation (that is, judgment).*
2. *We are made sinners.*
3. *We get death.*

Happy birthday, huh? We are born with the same nature and destiny that Adam possessed after his fall into sin.

Old Adam gave us some legacy. By his sin, we are all made sinners.

.... and it is because we are sinners that we sin. It is our nature to do so.

In Rom 5:21 it says that sin reigned unto death,

That tells us that sin was our MASTER and we were sin's SLAVE:

Rom 6:16 Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?

Sin came in gripping us in the penalty of death and holding us so tightly that it RUNS the 'old man'

- Selfishness
- Self-centeredness
- Malice
- Evil thoughts
- Anger
- Lust
- Bitterness
- Pride
- Lying
- Stealing
- Greed
- and the list goes on & on.

Those things are done on such a regular basis, and at different degrees, so that sometimes you feel as if you aren't even doing them at all.

They become habits of every-day life, so that you don't even stop to think about what you're doing or how you are responding.

Since we just saw our PROBLEM now let's go back and look again at God's SOLUTION for us.

Thank God, 'in Christ' He provided us a remedy for our condition:

Rom 6:17 But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but **ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you.**

As a 'new creature in Christ' we can experience deliverance from the slavery of sin:

Rom 6:18 Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness.

By God's grace, we are rescued from sin's power. Sin's control over us is broken:

Rom 6:14 For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace.

*--- In the 'old man' we were identified as being 'in Adam'
with his way of thinking*

*--- but in the 'new creature' we move 'into Christ'
where we can now choose to have HIS mind:*

Phil. 2:5 Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus:

With our position of being 'in Christ' God is at work 'in us':

Gal 4:19 My little children, of whom I travail in birth again until Christ be formed in you,

Phil. 1:6 Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ:

Phil. 2:13 For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure.

After all, now we have our very existence 'in Him':

Acts 17:28 For **IN HIM** we live, and move, and have our being; as certain also of your own poets have said, For we are also his offspring.

Yes, we are 'in Him' and He is 'in us':

Col 1:27 To whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is **Christ in you**, the hope of glory:

Hopefully, we have realized that when 'we are in Him' and 'He is in us' then we will 'put on' His attitudes and His actions.

Now, in the place of Adam's condemnation we have Christ's righteousness:

1 Cor 1:30 But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption:

Now, in the place of Adam's slavery to sin we have freedom in Christ:

Phil. 4:1 Therefore, my brethren dearly beloved and longed for, my joy and crown, so stand fast in the Lord, my dearly beloved.

'Standing fast in the Lord' means to be stabilized in the freedom He won for us at Calvary:

Gal 5:1 Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage.

'In Christ' we are triumphant over death, sin, and the law:

1 Cor 15:56-57 The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law.
57 But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Now, in place of Adam's death we have eternal life in Christ:

Rom 6:23 For the wages of sin is death;
but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

As a 'new creature' we can walk in a 'new way':

Rom 6:4 Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.

It is only as we recognize 'who we are in Christ' that our behavior will be changed. We must understand our 'new identity.' That is the 'key' to living like 'who we are.' The life of Christ has been placed 'in us' so that He can live 'through us.' Reading, memorizing, and studying the scriptures enable us to think of ourselves and our circumstances of life from GOD's point of view:

Rom 12:2 And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.

<i>The 'old things' of</i>	• <i>condemnation</i>	• <i>judgment by the law</i>
	• <i>slavery to sin</i>	• <i>death</i> <i>have passed away!</i>
<i>They have been replaced with 'new things' of</i>		
• <i>righteousness</i>	• <i>freedom</i>	• <i>life</i> <i>and it's all 'in Christ'!</i>

*With 'who we are in Christ' in mind it gives us great cause to be **HAPPY**:*

Phil. 4:4 Rejoice in the Lord alway: and again I say, Rejoice.

This is David Dowell, saying "Think about it!"