**Grace Conference**

**In Christ**

Q: What is the most common expression in the New Testament to describe a saved person? Christian? Disciple? Saved? No. It is “in Christ.”

In Christ, In Him, In the Lord 164 times in Paul alone.

My class involves helping you to see all that we have in Christ.

Theme of Philippians: Life in Christ.

Outline of Philippians:

**Phil 1:1-30 To Live is Christ**

**Phil 2:1-18 Living Like Christ**

**Phil 3:1-21 Put Your Confidence in Christ**

**Phil 4:1-23 Practical Living in Christ**

Theme verse of Colossians: Christ in You, the Hope of Glory.

Actually, there are two parallel themes here (especially in Gal, Eph, Phil, Col):

Christ in You

You in Christ.

Consider all that we have in Christ:

Philippians 1:1 Saints/Holy people in Christ Jesus “To all God’s holy people (saints) **in Christ** Jesus at Philippi”

Phil 4:7 peace of God “And the **peace** of God, which transcends all understanding will guard your hearts and minds **in Christ Jesus**.”

Philippians2:1 **Encouragement** in Christ. “If you have any encouragement in Christ” Q: Where is our encouragement found? In Christ!

Gal 3:26 So in Christ, we are all **children of God** through faith.

Coll 1:13-14 For he has rescued us from the dominion of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of the Son he lives, in whom we have **redemption**, the forgiveness of sins.

(Eph 1:7 In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of hsins, in accordance with the riches of his grace)

You have been redeemed. You have been bought back. Dictionary: “To gain or regain possession of something in exchange for payment.”

Colossians 2:10 **fullness** “In Christ you have been brought to fullness.” (note the prior verse Coll 2:9 In Christ the fullness of deity dwells in bodily form.

Coll 2:11-12 Pu**t off the flesh** “In him you were also **circumcised**, with a circumcision not performed by human hands. Your whole self ruled by the flesh was put off when you were circumcised by Christ.”

Ephesians 1:3 **every spiritual blessing** “Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in the heavenly realms with **every spiritual blessing in Christ**. (Phil 4:19 all your needs met) There is not a single spiritual blessing to be found outside of Christ, but in Christ we have every blessing.

Ephesians 1:4, 11 **chosen** “For he has chosen us in Him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight.”

1 Corinthians 15:22 we will be **made alive**/resurrected “For as in Adam all die, so in Christ all will be made alive.”

2 Corinthians 5:21 the **righteousness** of God “God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.”

Romans 6:23 have eternal life in Christ Jesus “The gift of God is **eternal life in Christ Jesus.**

Romans 8:38-39 **secure love of God** “For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation will be able to separate us from **the love of God that is in Christ Jesu**s our Lord.

Q: Where is the love of God found? In Christ Jesus.

2 Timothy 1:9 grace “He saved us and called us… because of his grace. This **grace was given us in Christ Jesus.**

2 Corinthians 5:17 a new creation “If anyone is in Christ, they are a new creation. Behold, the old has gone, the new has come.

Q: Are you in Christ? Then you are a new creation.

2 Corinthians 1:20 all God’s promises fulfilled “For no matter how many **promises** God has made, they **are “Yes” in Christ**.

To that we say….

Romans 8:1 no condemnation. “Therefore, there is now **no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus**.

The mystery of the ages is found in Christ. Coll 1:27 To them God has chosen to make known among the Gentiles the glorious riches of this mystery, which is Christ in you the Hope of Glory. Coll 2:3 “..so that they may know the mystery of God, namely, **Christ, in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.**”

Coll 2:17 These (new moons, Sabbaths…) are a shadow of the things that were to coe, **the reality, however is found in Christ**.

Outside of Christ, we have none of these things. In Christ we have all these things.

Some of the things we are in Christ are really what we are becoming.

We were saved, we are being saved and we will be saved.

We were resurrected, we are being made alive and we will be resurrected.

We were made holy. We are being made holy and we will be holy.

We were given fullness. We are becoming full and we will be made full.

We put off the flesh, we are putting off the flesh and the flesh will be put off.

Paul describes us as what we are becoming in Christ.

God sees us as the final result.

Phil 3:7-10 (if time) What is the worth of being in Christ (v. 9 to be found in him) To Paul everything the world has to offer was garbage by comparison. It was worth nothing. In fact, it was worth less than nothing (a loss compared to knowing Christ)

So how do we get into Christ?

Gal 3:26-27, Rom 6:3-4

Do we believe into Christ? Do you pray into Christ? Do we confess into Christ? Do we repent into Christ?

Analogy of a house, where inside the house represents being in Christ. Maybe believing is the driveway to the house, confessing is the walkway to the door and repenting is opening the lock to the door. But baptism is when we go through the door.

Let’s talk about the freedom we have in Christ.

Gal 4:21-31

Outside of Christ we were under Law. Colossians 2:13-15 describes this state. The Law that stood opposed to us. But Christ nailed the law (the obligation) to the cross, so we are not under law.

We were Ishmael, now we are Isaac.

We were children of Hagar, now we are children of Sarah.

We were slaves, now we are free in Christ.

Gal 5:1 (start in 4:31)

What was it like to be a child of the slave woman?

Gal 5:1 Free from what? (not sin in this context) Free from the obligation to serve God. Free to serve God because you want to.

Slavery: I have to.

Freedom: I want to.

Free at last, free at last; Thank the Lord I am free at last.

Gal 5:6 In Christ Jesus (There’s that phrase again) neither circumcision nor uncircumcision matters. The only thing that matters is faith, expressing itself in love.

We express our faith in Jesus by the things we do out of love.

Q: What are you doing out of love for Jesus?

Why do you pray…..

Gal 5:13-16? What are we to do with our freedom?

Willingly give it up!!! Why, because we want to.

In Christ we can do this, because of all the things we have.

There is so much more joy and fulfillment in Christ than outside of Christ.

1 Cor 9:1,2 9:15-23

Rhetorical Question: Am I not free?

Answer: Yes, of course you are.

What did Paul do with his rights? He gave them up to serve God and to serve the church.

v. 12 “We did not use our rights.” Why? Because in giving up our rights to serve we gain the blessing of God.

v. 15 I would rather die… This was his greatest pleasure. He wanted to make something of his life.

Paul: preached out of obligation: no blessings from that.

We have stolen people’s blessing

Put it out there out there: Greatest joy in life: truly pouring your life voluntarily into something and watching God bear fruit through it.

Q: Greatest human? Nelson Mandella, Albert Schweitzer, Gandhi, Paul, Mother Theresa. All willingly gave up their freedom to become slaves to a worthy cause.

The key is vs. 23 I do this so that I may share in its blessing.

Why do I do what I do?

We have freedom. No rules. Yippeeeee!!!! Now comes the test. How are your QTs. How are you using your money? Now we really find about your heart.

Ephesians 2:8-10.

Praise God we are not saved by works. We are saved by grace.

We are not saved BY works, but we are saved FOR works.

Your work: Turn your gift into a ministry.

We have so much freedom in Christ. So what do we do with our freedoms? We willingly give them up for the sake of Christ. We make ourselves the slave of all. We can afford to do this because we are in Christ.

Freedom to do the work he prepared for us, which is to use the gift he has given us. Eph 2:10-11. Work because we are saved not in order to be saved. Isn’t that more satisfying? Oh yeah!