**In Christ**

**Part II**

Review:

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.

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?

Consider all that we have in Christ:

**I. We are redeemed in Christ.**

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)

**II. We are Holy/Saints/Sanctified in Christ**

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

1 Cor 1:2 sanctified in Christ Jesus.

**III Already but not yet.**

Some of the things we are in Christ are also what we are becoming and what we will ultimately be.

It is “Already, but not yet.”

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

We have been redeemed. We are being redeemed. We will be redeemed.

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.

Paul describes us as what we are becoming in Christ.

God sees us as the final result.

**IV You Are Righteous in Christ**

My experience: Most people want to be good.

Even Mafia dons want to be liked for being “good” to their people.

My experience in Buena Vista prison.

On campus: “I’m good.”

The problem is that we are not good.

Mark 10:17-19 No one is good.

Romans 3:9-12 No one is righteous; not even one.

Merrian Webster: “free from guilt or sin : morally right or justified.”

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

God imparts to us righteousness

*What is more, I consider everything a loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whose sake I have lost all things. I consider them garbage, that I may gain Christ and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ—the righteousness that comes from God on the basis of faith.* (Philippians 3:8–9)

Outside of Christ you were not good.

What would you pay to be “good?”

Well, guess what, the price is paid.

Challenge: If God has made us righteous, If God has declared us righteous, then let us become what he has made us. Let us hate sin and life for righteousness.

**V. You Are Alive in Christ**

Eph 2:1-4 You were dead in your sins, but God made you alive.

We were dead.

Q: What are dead people like?

Our spiritual respiration rate was zero.

Our spiritual pulse was flatlined.

We were unresponsive to spiritual stimulus.

We were dead men (or women) walking.

*Now if we died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him. For we know that since Christ was raised from the dead, he cannot die again; death no longer has mastery over him. The death he died, he died to sin once for all; but the life he lives, he lives to God.*

*In the same way, count yourselves dead to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus.* (Romans 6:8–11)

We die with Christ, but we are resurrected with him.

We move from being spiritually dead to being spiritually alive.

Which would you prefer, to be spiritually dead, or to be spiritually alive?

*But Christ has indeed been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep. For since death came through a man, the resurrection of the dead comes through a man. For as in Adam all die, so in Christ all will be made alive.* (1 Corinthians 15:20–22)

If you are in Christ, then you have been given a second chance. What are you going to do with this second chance?

**VI You Are a New Creation in Christ**

Have you done something you deeply regret?

Someone you betrayed. A hateful word you said. Did you steal the innocence from someone? Do you wish you could take it back?

If only we could start over….

If only we could get a “mulligan”

*Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation; old things have passed away and look, new things have come. Everything is from God, who reconciled us to Himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation: That is, in Christ, God was reconciling to the world to Himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and He has committed the message of reconciliation to us.* (2 Corinthians 5:17–19 HCSB)

The lies: gone!

The lost innocence: gone!

It is already, but not yet.

We have been made new

We are being made new

We will be made new. We will be given a new body.

*“For I will take you out of the nations; I will gather you from all the countries and bring you back into your own land. I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you will be clean; I will cleanse you from all your impurities and from all your idols. I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit in you; I will remove from you your heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh.”* (Ezekiel 36:24–26)

*“Forget the former things;*

*do not dwell on the past.*

*See, I am doing a new thing!*

*Now it springs up; do you not perceive it?*

*I am making a way in the wilderness*

*and streams in the wasteland.”* (Isaiah 43:18–19)

You have been given a second chance.

We have heard about people who were miraculously saved from death. They are motivated to do something different.

Challenge: What will you do with your new life? Do not let it go to waste.

*Put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness.* (Ephesians 4:22–24)

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

**VII There is No Condemnation for those who are in Christ**

What would it be like living on death row? Not a good place. No hope. Nothing to live for. Waiting for death. That is the worst part.

Why? Because the wages of sin are death (Romans 6:23)

*Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus, because through Christ Jesus the law of the Spirit who gives life has set you free from the law of sin and death*. (Romans 8:1–2)

The law of sin and death is pretty straightforward.

Out spiritual death sentence has been commuted.

People released from death row are not bitter or vengeful, they are joyful at their new-found freedom.

We have not been found “innocent” for lack of sufficient evidence. No!!!

You have been exonerated.

An illustration:

*Then he showed me Joshua the high priest standing before the angel of the Lord, and Satan standing at his right side to accuse him. The Lord said to Satan, “The Lord rebuke you, Satan! The Lord, who has chosen Jerusalem, rebuke you! Is not this man a burning stick snatched from the fire?”*

*Now Joshua was dressed in filthy clothes as he stood before the angel The angel said to those who were standing before him, “Take off his filthy clothes.”*

*Then he said to Joshua, “See, I have taken away your sin, and I will put fine garments on you.”*

*Then I said, “Put a clean turban on his head.” So they put a clean turban on his head and clothed him, while the angel of the Lord stood by.* (Zechariah 3:1–5)

God says about us “Take off his/her filthy clothes.

*“Come now, let us settle the matter,”*

*says the Lord.*

*“Though your sins are like scarlet,*

*they shall be white as snow;*

*though they are red with crimson,*

*they shall be like wool.”* (Isaiah 1:18)

Challenge: Now that you have been exonerated, what will you do with the new life you have regained?RE

Let us say it again, and let us shout it from the rooftops: There is no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. No condemnation. Zero, zip, nada. The verdict is in. Not guilty.

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.

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)

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!