**In Christ**

**Part IV**

Review:

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

Consider all that we have in Christ:

**I. We are redeemed in Christ. Coll 1:13-14. Eph 1:7**

**II. We are Holy/Saints/Sanctified in Christ Phil 1:1, 1 Cor 1:2**

**III. You Are Righteous in Christ 2 Cor 5:21**

*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)

**IV. You Are Alive in Christ**

**V. You Are a New Creation in Christ**

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.*

**VI. There is No Condemnation for those who are in Christ**

**VII In Christ You Are Chosen by God**

In him we were also chosen, having been predestined according to the plan of him who works out everything in conformity with the purpose of his will, in order that we, who were the first to put our hope in Christ, might be for the praise of his glory. And you were also included in Christ when you heard the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation. (Ephesians 1:11-13)

God wants you on his team. You are his MVP

God looked out on the dance floor and picked you.

**VIII We Are All Children of God in Christ**

So in Christ Jesus you are all children of God through faith, for all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. (Galatians 3:26)

For he chose us in him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight. In love, he predestined us for adoption to sonship through Jesus Christ, in accordance with his pleasure and will—to the praise of his glorious grace, which he has freely given us in the One he loves. (Ephesians 1:4-6)

**IX You Have Secure Love in Christ**

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 Jesus our Lord. (Romans 8:38-39)

Where is the love of God found? It is found in Christ.

**X We have eternal life in Christ Jesus**

We were dead in our sins and in the uncircumcision of our flesh (Coll 2:13)

*But now that you have been set free from sin and have become slaves of God, the benefit you reap leads to holiness, and the result is eternal life. For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.* (Romans 6:22–23)

Where is this gift of eternal life found? In Christ.

1 John 5:11-12 *And this is the testimony: God has given us eternal life, and this life is in his Son.*

This is something we possess right now!

[If time: 1 Cor 15:50-57]

John 10:7-10 Jesus came that we might have life, and have it to the full

Eternal life is a good example of “already, but not yet.”

What is this full life we have like?

Fruitful labor and service to God (Philippians 1:21-22). There is also fulfilling work as an ambassador for Christ—as a minister of reconciliation (2 Corinthians 5:18-20), helping people to have the abundant life that we have found.

Those who are in Christ have a hundredfold blessing to replace the things that we gave up to come to Christ (Mark 10:29–30).

But what will eternal life in Christ be like?

Rev 21:3 “Look! God’s dwelling place is now among the people, and he will dwell with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God” (Revelation 21:3).

Rev 22:1-5 No more curse, no more night.

Challenge: Let us embrace the full life we have now as a foreshadow of the eternal life we will have in heaven.

Let us do so by embracing the “fruitful labor and service” and acting as a minister of reconciliation.

**XI Peace With God in Christ Jesus**

*Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.* (Philippians 4:6–7)

What is the peace that we have in Christ like? Paul puts it this way in Philippians 4:7: his peace “transcends all understanding.”

It is mind-blowing.

Where do we find peace with God? In Christ!!!!

v. 6 It comes with prayer. It comes because we can present prayers and petitions. God hears you!!!!

Our peace comes from knowing that we have the ear of the one who created the universe and who cares about us personally.

“Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ” (Romans 5:1).

Justified = aligned. If our car is out of alignment, friction ensues. (my car last week) In Christ we are aligned with God and things run smoothly. We are not constantly generating friction and sparks. To be justified with a thing is to be perfectly aligned with that thing. If our car is out of alignment much friction ensues. When our car is in alignment, everything runs smoothly. In Christ we are aligned with God. We are not constantly generating friction and sparks in our relationship with him.

We are home. We are where we belong.

Peace = lack of conflict

*The wolf will live with the lamb,*

*the leopard will lie down with the goat,*

*the calf and the lion and the yearling together;*

*and a little child will lead them.*

*The cow will feed with the bear,*

*their young will lie down together,*

*and the lion will eat straw like the ox.*

*The infant will play near the cobra’s den,*

*and the young child will put its hand into the viper’s nest.*

*They will neither harm nor destroy*

*on all my holy mountain,*

*for the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the Lord*

*as the waters cover the sea.* (Isaiah 11:6–9)

In Christ, the Samaritan will be friend with the Jew.

The old will be friends with the young.

The political conservative will have peace with the progressive.

How? Because we have the most important thing in common.

Peace = lack of fear.

Jesus said, “Do not worry about your life” (Matthew 6:25). A more literal translation of this scripture would be, “Do not give a single thought to your life.”

Worry is like a negative feedback loop.

In Christ we can have peace, because he has already overcome the only adversaries that had any power over us. He also said,

“Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.” (John 14:27)

This peace we have in Christ is a good example of “already but not yet.”

It is something we have, but something we grow into.

In heaven we will have peace because of where we find ourselves.

In this life we have peace in spite of where we find ourselves.

But “take heart, for I have overcome the world.”

Challenge: Let us embrace the peace of God by prayer and by “not giving a thought to our lives.”

**XII Fullness of God in Christ Jesus**

For in Christ all the fullness of deity lives in bodily form, and in Christ you have been brought to fullness. (Colossians 2:9–10)

Point #1 in this passage is that Christ is the fullness of deity. He is God-in-the-flesh.

Point #2 of this passage: In Christ were are made Christ-like. We are brought to fullness.

What do you see yourself becoming?

What is the best version of “you” that you can imagine in your wildest dreams?

As children we were idealists.

We were a beautiful princess, carried off by the handsome prince.

We were going to join the peace corps.

We were going to hit the game-winning home run.

We were the veterinarian, making all the animals happy.

But then reality hit…..

The world forced us to be realists.

We are actually pretty “normal.”

What is the best version of “you” you can imagine?

What about becoming like God?

This beats riding the fire engine in and saving the day (like Bella)

Western Christianity talks about salvation.

Eastern Christianity talks about deification. Christianity is a process of becoming what God is making us—god-like!

If you think about it, this idea of becoming like God was introduced very early in the Bible. “God said, let us make mankind in our image, in our likeness… So God made mankind in his own image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them” (Genesis 1:26–27).

*God is love, and the one who remains in love remains in God, and God remains in him. In this, love is made complete with us so that we may have confidence in the day of judgment, because as he is, so also are we in this world.* (1 John 4:16–17 CSB)

Theresa of Avila (1515–1582) put it:

Christ has no body now but yours,

No hands, no feet on earth but yours.

Yours are the eyes through which He looks

Compassion on this world.

Yours are the feet with which He walks to do good.

Yours are the hands through which He blesses all the world.

Yours are the hands, yours are the feet,

Yours are the eyes, you are His body.

Christ has no body now on earth but yours.

For we are to God the pleasing aroma of Christ among those who are being saved and those who are perishing. (2 Corinthians 2:15)

You show that you are a letter from Christ, the result of our ministry, written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God, not on tablets of stone, but on tablets of human hearts. (2 Corinthians 3:3)

We always carry around in our body the death of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be revealed in our body. For we who are alive are always being given over to death for Jesus’ sake, so that his life may also be revealed in our mortal body. (2 Corinthians 4:10–11)

Therefore we do not lose heart. Though outwardly we are wasting away, yet inwardly we are being renewed day by day. (2 Corinthians 4:16)

And my favorite:

Therefore, since we have such a hope, we are very bold. We are not like Moses, who would put a veil over his face to prevent the Israelites from seeing the end of what was passing away… But whenever anyone turns to the Lord, the veil is taken away. Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom. And we all, who with unveiled faces reflect the Lord’s glory, are being transformed into his image with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit. (2 Corinthians 3:12–13, 16–18)

This is the fullness we gain in Christ. We become like Christ and therefore we begin to “smell” like Christ. Our very lives are the tablets on which Christ is revealed as we are made into his image. In other words, the life of Christ is publicized in our lives. We are renewed over time, but also day by day. This is a good reason for us not to lose heart.

Who, me?

Yes, you.

Challenge. Let us present our bodies as living sacrifices so that God can transform us by the renewing of our mind.