**In Christ**

**Part V**

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)

**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**

*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)

**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)

**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)

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

What about becoming like God?

**XIII We Have Surpassing Worth in Christ**

The world can make us feel insignificant.

You are 0.0000000012% of all humanity 1/eight billion

Science: you are worth about $3.50

1972 Ford Pinto $200,000/life

What is valuable? What is the value of things?

What would they have to pay you to take your right arm? What about your left arm?

What would they have to pay you to rob a bank? To steal a pack of gum?

“What good is it for someone to gain the whole world, and yet lose or forfeit their very self?” (Luke 9:25).

What is your child worth to you? David gave a kidney for his son, but would not sell it for ten billion $.

Phil 3:5-11 The worth of being in Christ Jesus.

*But whatever were gains to me I now consider loss for the sake of Christ. 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*

Paul “had it made.” Right pedigree Cream of the crop.

Right “life”

What was it worth compared to being in Christ?

Less than nothing. “a loss”

What did he gain to replace these things? Phillips translation: “overwhelming gain”

Lotte Tower 123 stories. tall, but not “overwhelmingly tall”

The world is like “garbage” by comparison.

Your house? Garbage Your degree? Garbage. Less than nothing in comparison.

Your “goodness” (religiousness) a dung-heap.

Not only is life in Christ of great worth, we gain great worth in Christ.

Christ’s ambassadors 2 Cor 5:20

We inherit all things in Christ Rev 21:7

We will judge angels 1 Cor 6:3

We have great worth for others as well, as we offer them salvation.

Most valuable of all: We become precious to God.

Isaiah 49:16 See, I have engraved you on the palms of my hands.

Exodus 19:5 Now, if you obey me fully and keep my covenant, then out of all the nations you will be my treasured possession. The whole earth is mine.

Jesus said concerning those who belong to him:

Matthew 10:29-31

*“Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? Yet not one of them will fall to the ground outside your Father’s care. And even the very hairs of your head are all numbered. So don’t be afraid; you are worth more than many sparrows.”*

1 John 3:1

John says about those who are in Christ, “See what great love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God! And that is what we are!”

Challenge:

Let us treat our bodies, our time, our energy, our purity, etc. as being of surpassing worth.

**XIV We Are All One in Christ**

With technology, social media and globalization, one would think the world would become more united.

Talk to anyone in a microsecond.

Get anywhere in 1-2 days

Form a relationship with a person in Mumbai, Melbourne or Minneapolis

But divisions have increased:

Black vs white

Conservative vs liberal

Young vs old

Male vs female

Poor vs wealthy

Environmentalist vs business interests

Sunni vs Shia

Global South vs Global North

Outside of Christ division is an incurable human disease.

But this is different in Christ

Gal 3:26-29

*So in Christ you are all children of God through faith, for all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. There is neither Jew or Gentile, neither slave nor free, nor is there male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus. If you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham’s seed, and heirs together according to the promise.*

In Christ the dividing lines are erased in an instant.

Rich and poor equal

Male and female equal

Black, white, brown equal

Even republican and democrat does not matter.

We talked about this in James. No favoritism!!!!!!

My paper: 42% latino/Hispanic 40% white 13% African American/black 4% Asian

Census: 50% latino/Hispanic 31% White 7% African American/black 7% Asian 3% other/mixed race

Age 20% 20-30 43% 30-50 37% 50 and up.

And we have a ton of teens, but we need to get them baptized!

How can we have this unity?

Because we have one overwhelming thing in common: Christ!

In the US sports have created a surprising unity.

Why? Same goal and same uniform.

Us: We have the same goal and the same “uniform”

We have “clothed ourselves with Christ.”

Blaine and I have relatively little in common….

Josh and I have little in common….

Joelle and Dar and Jan have little in common….

But we have Christ in common!!!!!

“What the world needs now, is love, sweet love.”

But of course, this is “already but not yet.”

God has declared it true—null and void—and it is our responsibility to make it true.

Ex: young vs old. We are DETERMINED to put campus students into families!!!

We are DETERMINED to let Latino/Hispanic voices be heard around here.

We are DETERMINED to listen to the voices of our women!

We are going to celebrate and embrace our cultural differences.

(and we are going to stay out of politics. No posting strong political opinions on facebook!)

What Paul declared in Gal 3:28 actually happened in the NT church.

Slave = free

Male = female (Pricilla Lydia etc….)

Jesus associated with women… It was a scandal!!!

Jew = Gentile = Barbarian = Roman

And they even married one another.

(and it was not without some struggle Acts 6 Galatians…)

This was remarkable. It was astounding

And the “world” did not always appreciate this, although they marveled at it.

The wealthy and privileged especially….

Matthew 5:14-16 We are a city on a hill.

All this was prophesied. Micah 4:1-3

*In the last days*

*the mountain of the Lord’s temple will be established*

*as the highest of the mountains;*

*it will be exalted above the hills,*

*and peoples will stream to it.*

*Many nations will come and say,*

*“Come, let us go up to the mountain of the Lord,*

*to the temple of the God of Jacob.*

*He will teach us his ways,*

*so that we may walk in his paths.”*

*The law will go out from Zion,*

*the word of the Lord from Jerusalem.*

*He will judge between many peoples*

*and will settle disputes for strong nations far and wide.*

*They will beat their swords into plowshares*

*and their spears into pruning hooks.*

*Nation will not take up sword against nation,*

*nor will they train for war anymore.* (Micah 4:1–3)

This “Mountain” is the Church of Christ.

Zechariah 8:23 “This is what the Lord Almighty says: ‘In those days ten people from all languages and nations will take firm hold of one Jew by the hem of his robe and say, ‘Let us go with you, because we have heard that God is with you’” (Zechariah 8:23).

I have experienced this:

Russians and Latvians

Ukranians and Russians

Whites and Blacks in South Africa

Lack of anti-American feeling in Viet Nam. Ex Quoc Hung’s hospital.

Peggy and John Hurkman

Psalm 133

How good and pleasing it is when God’s people live together in unity!

This was Jesus’ prayer:

John 17:23 “I in them and you in me—may they be brought to complete unity. Then the world will know that you sent me and have loved them, even as you have loved me.

But remember, it is “already but not yet.” This must be maintained and built upon.

But there are people not represented well among us.

South Asians

Middle Easterners

What are we going to do about this?

The poor (and the rich!) need to feel welcomed among us.

1 Cor 12:21-26 Those the world would not honor must be specially honored among us.

Challenge:

Let us celebrate and build on the unity of culture, race and age we have.

Let us build stronger bridges between generations and welcome those cultures we have not yet reached for Christ.

**XV All the Promises of God Find Their ‘Yes’ in Christ**

“Abraham believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness” (Romans 4:3; Genesis 15:6). What was it that Abraham believed? If we go to the Genesis passage, we will find the answer. Abraham believed that God would fulfill his promise to give him a son in his old age. He believed that through his son, he would have descendants like the stars in the sky. Abraham was justified and made righteous because he believed that God would do what he had promised to do. Abraham believed God’s promises. It is that simple.

Yet, in his lifetime, Abraham saw only a tiny fraction of God’s promises to him actually fulfilled. God promised him, “To your offspring I will give this land” (Genesis 12:7). God told Abraham to “go, walk through the length and breadth of the land, for I am giving it to you” (Genesis 13:17). He also said to him, “To your descendants I give this land, from the Wadi of Egypt to the great river, the Euphrates—the land of the Kenites, Kennizites, Kadmonites, Hittites, Perizzites, Rephaites, Amorites, Canaanites, Girgashites and Jebusites” (Genesis 15:18–21). But during his lifetime, Abraham received only a single field in Machpelah (Genesis 23:7–20) as a burial ground for his family. For him, the field was a tiny down payment on a future inheritance. During his lifetime he did not receive the promises. Instead, “he was looking forward to the city with foundations, whose architect and builder is God” (Hebrews 11:10). As the Hebrew writer reminds us, “All these people were still living by faith when they died. They did not receive the things promised; they only saw them and welcomed them from a distance” (Hebrews 11:13).

In Christ we have so much more than Abraham or any of the patriarchs had. What they only gazed at from a distance, we have right in our laps in Jesus. In Christ we have received all the promises of God right now, whereas they were only dimly seen, off in the distant future, by our forebears.

*But as surely as God is faithful, our message to you is not “Yes” and “No.” For the Son of God, Jesus Christ, who was preached among you by us—by me and Silas and Timothy—was not “Yes” and “No,” but in him it has always been “Yes.” For no matter how many promises God has made, they are “Yes” in Christ.* (2 Corinthians 1:18–20a)

There you have it. Every single one of God’s promises, including those he gave to Noah, to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, as well as those he made to David, are fulfilled for those who are in Christ. Where are God’s promises fulfilled? In Christ.

Similarly, Peter tells us,

*His divine power has given us everything we need for a godly life through our knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness. Through these he has given us his very great and precious promises, so that through them you may participate in the divine nature, having escaped the corruption in the world caused by evil desires.* (2 Peter 1:3–4)

His divine power causes all God’s promises to be fulfilled in and through Christ, allowing us to live the life God intended us to live, so that we can experience the fullness of God.

Try for just a moment to take in the breadth and depth of this fact. We are talking about a lot of promises, and some of those promises have huge implications for our lives. Every single one of God’s promises is fulfilled for us the moment we come into Christ. Let us consider just a few of them. “You will be for me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation” (Exodus 19:6). Checkmark on that one! “I will be their God, and they will be my people” (Jeremiah 31:33). Got that one covered. “I will forgive their wickedness and will remember their sins no more” (Jeremiah 31:34). That one is good to go as well. “I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you will be clean... I will put my Spirit in you and move you to follow my decrees and be careful to keep my laws” (Ezekiel 36:25–27). These promises are fulfilled when we are baptized into Christ (Acts 2:38–39).

Outside of Christ we had none of those things—not a single one—yet all are “Yes” in Christ. Please take a moment right now to add to this list. What are some of the promises of God you can think of that are made “Yes” in Christ? It will include a great number of promises found in the New as well as in the Old Testament.

Here are a few more:

*“Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you.”* (Hebrews 13:5; Deuteronomy 31:6)

*Surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.* (Matthew 28:20)

*“I am the resurrection and the life. The one who believes in me will live, even though they die; and whoever lives by believing in me will never die.”* (John 11:25–26)

*“Though the mountains be shaken*

*and the hills be removed,*

*yet my unfailing love for you will not be shaken*

*nor my covenant of peace be removed.”* (Isaiah 54:10)

*If any of you lacks wisdom, you should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to you.* (James 1:5)

*And my God will meet all your needs according to the riches of his glory in Christ Jesus.* (Philippians 4:19)

*“Therefore I tell you, whatever you ask for in prayer, believe that you have received it and it will be yours.”* (Mark 11:24)

Abraham believed God’s promises. To us who believe in Christ, all of God’s promises are “Yes” in him. The way Paul put it concerning Abraham’s faith:

*Against all hope, Abraham in hope believed and so became the father of many nations, just as it had been said to him, “So shall your offspring be.” Without weakening in his faith, he faced the fact that his body was as good as dead—since he was about a hundred years old—and that Sarah’s womb was also dead. Yet he did not waver through unbelief regarding the promise of God, but was strengthened in his faith and gave glory to God, being fully persuaded that God had power to do what he had promised. This is why “it was credited to him as righteousness.”* (Romans 4:18–22)

Those of us who inherit the faith of Abraham also receive all the promises given to Abraham. Not only that, but in Christ we are granted all the promises God gave to his people through the prophets, through Jesus and through his apostles. We can claim these promises with confidence.

All of God’s promises are assured in Christ, but bear in mind that to some extent these promises are received already, but not yet. When Christ comes to bring in the kingdom of God, the promises will be perfectly realized. In this life, the extent to which we experience the “Yes” of God’s promises will depend on how fully we, like Abraham, live without weakening in our faith. God will be enabled to fulfill his promises to the fullest possible measure as we are “fully persuaded” that God will do what he promised to do. Paul said,

*It is written, “I believed; therefore I have spoken.” With that same spirit of faith, we also believe and therefore speak, because we know that the one who raised the Lord Jesus from the dead will also raise us with Jesus and present us with you to himself.* (2 Corinthians 4:13–14)

So, let us not waver in our faith. Let us believe and speak, and let us watch God fulfill all his promises in Christ.

**XVI You Have Every Spiritual Blessing in Christ**

**XVII The Mystery of God Is Revealed in Christ**