

Who We Are In Christ

Part 1

Introduction

"Nobody likes me."

"I keep making the same mistakes over and over again."

"I'm a lousy mother, housekeeper, friend, ... (you fill in the blank)."

"If people knew what I'm really like, they wouldn't have anything to do with me."

"I never do anything right."

Do you ever berate yourself like this? Do you spend minutes, even hours, feeling guilty about things you've done or haven't done, words you've spoken, or thoughts you think are unworthy of a decent person? As members of a fallen race, we are quick to judge ourselves and declare a guilty verdict.

The Bible, however, gives us an entirely different picture of those who are in Christ. It is this picture that we must understand, believe, and stand on. Only then will we truly understand what Jesus did for us when He died on the cross, and live the victorious life He planned for us.

Our Study

Before we accept Jesus Christ as our Lord and Savior, we live in Satan's kingdom and are completely under His authority. But when we come to the Lord, a series of dramatic changes occur in our life.

The Scripture: Colossians 1:13, 14

"For He has rescued us from the dominion of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of the Son He loves, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins."

1. What has God done for us? _____

It helps to think of this as a physical move. When we accept the Lord, we are transported from one place - the dominion of darkness - into the kingdom of Jesus.

2. What else do we receive? _____

When we redeem something, we buy it back. Before Adam and Eve sinned, they belonged to God. With their sin, they sold themselves and all future generations to Satan. But when God redeems us, He forgives all our sins. He even goes one step further.

The Scripture: Hebrews 10:17

"Their sins and lawless acts I will remember no more."

3. What does this scripture tell us about God's attitude toward our forgiven sins? _____

The Scripture: Ephesians 1:7

"In Him [Christ] we have redemption through His blood the forgiveness of sins."

4. What was the price God paid to redeem us? _____

That isn't all God has done for us. He gives us...

Righteousness

The Scripture: Romans 3:21, 22

"But now a righteousness from God...has been made known... This righteousness from God comes through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe."

Righteousness means right standing with God.

5. How do we receive God's righteousness? _____

Justification

The Scripture: Romans 5:1

"Since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ."

6. What else have we received through faith? _____

To be justified means God has freed us from the guilt and penalty of sin. It's as though we'd been on trial and then were acquitted. Here's how one Bible teacher explains it. Before we were saved, we owed the Bank of Heaven a big debt (of sin). When Jesus saved us, that debt was canceled. Although we no longer owed anything, we were still penniless, spiritually. Then God put all of Jesus' righteousness into our account, making us spiritual millionaires.

Holiness

The Scripture: Ephesians 1:4

"For He chose us in Him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight."

7. How does God see us? _____

8. When did God choose us? _____

God chose us to be holy and blameless before He ever created the world. We are no Johnny-come-lately in God's scheme of things. We were planned for before He created anything else.

God's Fullness

The Scripture: Colossians 2:9

"For in Christ all the fullness of the Deity lives in bodily form, and you have been given fullness in Christ."

9. What do we have within us? _____

The fullness of the Deity! Father, Son, and Holy Spirit all come to live within us when we come to the Lord.

Peace with God

The Scripture: John 14:27

"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."

10. What does Jesus promise His disciples? _____

11. What is different about His peace? _____

The Scripture: Philippians 4:7

"The peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus."

12. How does Paul describe the peace of God? _____

13. What will it do? _____

Anyone who experiences God's peace knows how accurate Paul's description is. In the midst of confusion and turmoil, those who are in Christ can experience the Lord's peace.

God's Love

But there is much more for those who are in Christ. Although God loved us before we were saved, we now experience that love in an entirely different way.

The Scripture: 1 John 4:10

"In this is love: not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation (the atoning sacrifice) for our sins." (TAB)

14. How do we know God loves us? _____

"Atoning" means making amends or reconciling. By His sacrifice, Jesus paid the penalty for our sins and reconciled us to God.

The Scripture: Romans 8:38, 39

In a time of great struggle and suffering, Paul declared: *"I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, 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."*

15. What are some of the things Paul said cannot separate us from the love of God? _____

The Scripture: Isaiah 49:15, 16

"Can a mother forget the baby at her breast and have no compassion on the child she has borne? Though she may forget, I will not forget you! See I have engraved you on the palms of my hands."

16. What is God's promise to those He loves? _____

We Are Part of God's Family

When we are saved, we become part of God's own family.

The Scripture: Ephesians 1:5

"In love He predestined us to be adopted as His sons through Jesus Christ."

17. What did God predestine? _____

The Scripture: Romans 8:15

"You received the Spirit of son ship. And by Him we cry 'Abba, Father.'"

18. What did we receive? _____

19. What can we now call the Father? _____

The people of Jesus' time did not dare to even pronounce God's name. Now Jesus is telling us to call Him "Abba," which is equivalent to our word, "daddy."

The Scripture: Ephesians 2:18

"For through Him [Jesus] we have access to the Father by one Spirit."

20. To whom do we have access? _____

The God we worship is not some distant, unapproachable God. Through Jesus, we have access to Him. He is our "daddy," and any time we want to talk to Him, He is available to us.

The Scripture: Romans 8:16

"If we are children, then we are heirs - heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ, if indeed we share in His sufferings in order that we may also share in His glory."

21. What does Paul say we are? _____

Think what this means. Someday we will share in the inheritance that Jesus receives as the Son of God.

The Scripture: Matthew 12:50

"Whoever does the will of my Father in heaven is my brother and sister and mother."

22. What is our relationship to Jesus? _____

The Scripture: Ephesians 2:6

"And God raised us up with Christ and seated us with Him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus."

23. What has God done for us according to this scripture? _____

Because we are His children, God has given us a (seat) position of honor in heaven.

It is almost too much for us to comprehend. When we come to Jesus, we become part of His family. Not only does God adopt us, letting us call Him "daddy," He makes us co-heirs with our elder brother, Jesus.

Eternal Life

The Scripture: Romans 6:23

"For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord."

24. Finally, what has God given to those who are in Christ? _____

In the second half of this study, we will look at many of the other benefits God gives to those who are in Christ.

The Answers

1. Rescued us from the dominion of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of the Son
2. Redemption, the forgiveness of sins
3. He remembers them no more
4. His [Jesus] blood
5. Through faith in Jesus Christ
6. We have been justified.
7. As holy and blameless
8. Before the creation of the world
9. The fullness of the Deity
10. His peace
11. It is not the world's peace
12. It transcends all understanding
13. Guard our hearts and minds in Christ Jesus
14. He sent His Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins.
15. Death, life, angels, demons, the present, the future, powers, height, depth, anything else in all creation
16. He will never forget us
17. That we should be adopted as His sons through Jesus Christ
18. The Spirit of son ship
19. Abba
20. The Father
21. Heirs of God, co-heirs with Christ
22. He is our brother
23. Raised us up with Christ and seated us with Him in the heavenly realms
24. Eternal life

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