

In the New Testament, the phrase "in Christ" (and its various forms) occurs about 175 times! This idea is at the very heart of the gospel and New Covenant teaching. In the next few months we'll look at being "in Christ" from various angles. Receive the following as a personal letter - I think every newly baptized believer should receive something similar!

"Welcome to God's forever and fulfilling two word enterprise in which everything is put together and summed up - "in Christ." In Christ we find our life and our breath - we discover who we are, whose we are, and even why we are. In Christ we find ourselves saved and safe. In Christ we lay hold of everything God has purposed for us even before our creation. It is in Christ and in Christ alone that we find ourselves at the center of all that God our Creator and Re-Creator has done, is doing, and will ever do.

The moment you put your faith in Christ, my dear one, you were made alive together with Him, seated together with Him in the very company of God - where all the action is! In Christ you were freely handed all you will ever need to be and do everything you were ever created to be and do. Since God in Christ tore down every wall of separation - between you and Him as well as between you and us - we are in this thing together, a new kind of humanity sharing a Life in common that is far from common. In Him we share the same Spirit, each with equal access to all things God. We now have our home in Christ and God has His home in us.

In the days to come you will discover that you have a glorious inner strength, one fueled by the immeasurable dimensions of our Father's love. Filled with His fullness of love and life, you are free now to go anywhere on the roads that He travels. Fully and perfectly alive in Christ, you are promised a God-fashioned singularity, a one-of-a-kindness that is being formed from the inside out. In Christ you are distinctively gifted, individually skilled in servant work, personally talented in displaying His good deeds as God Himself matchlessly reproduces His character in you.

So I am urging you, my always being loved one, to make your home in His love, His extravagant love, His extravagantly self-giving love. Learn to think and choose in the presence of God's perfect love in Christ. It will keep the fears at bay that so easily cause us to be all wrapped up in ourselves instead of in Christ. Stay current in your daily lessons in the language of God's kingdom - the language of praise. Remember that "thank you" is the password into all that God is doing behind the scenes. Worship Him in the "all things" of life, never losing your own localized and grateful dialect. Realize more every day that self-service gets us nowhere, yet, serving others can take us everywhere in Christ. Whether you serve your family, your friends, or even your foes, you are actually serving the Master in all things.

And finally, my precious child of God, take your own stand in everything the devil throws at you by standing in Christ, Who is more than enough for that fallen angel! For in Christ, our Source and Resource for everything pertaining to life and godliness, you will find grace upon grace - pure and powerful and personal Grace... Who is adequate for all and for all things!"

Your Family in Christ and His Church.

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👋 GREETINGS 👋

September has been like "Mr. Toad's Wild Ride" for our family. I'm trying NOT to remember all of it, but here are the "headlines". Our water pump for our well failed, our TV died, our dryer stopped drying, our roof is loosing shingles as fast as I'm losing hair. Ella's mother passed away September 13th. Upon returning home after 2 trips to Knoxville in 7 days, we were greeted at the door with news that our handicapped son Gabe had fallen. We spent that evening and part of the next day in the E.R. where one test suggested a broken hip, but another did not confirm. (We are still waiting to confirm his exact injuries.) The morning after I had a (hopefully) pre-cancerous bump taken off my scalp (awaiting biopsy report.). We've welcomed approximately 30 new church members (big Freshmen and graduate student classes). Did I mention that I leave next week for a men's retreat in Colorado?

Now, why tell you all of that? For one, I know you care and you will pray for and encourage us ("you have not because you ask not"). But more importantly, to provide the context for what is on the other side of this page that we believe so strongly. It may sound like we are in chaos - and that is temporarily true. Yet more so, we are in Christ! Fueled by His love, filled with His strength, finding ourselves supplied with all we need in Him, we learn in periods like these to thank Him in and for all things... not because we feel like it, not because we have to, not because He will then change it all... but because He is our source and supply for everything pertaining to godliness. Because He alone is worthy! Thank God - for no matter what is going on around us, we are in Him!

✍️ CALENDAR ✍️

SEPTEMBER	
25 - OCT 2	Durango, CO
OCTOBER	
4,18,25	CCF
13	Alachua Study
8-11	Binghamton, NY
23-24	Sebring, FL
27	Ocala Study
NOVEMBER	
14-15	Orlando, FL

♥️ PRAISE and PRAYER ✝️

- ♥️ For all things
- ♥️ For our home in Christ
- ✝️ For our national leaders
- ✝️ For our church families

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