

"In Christ" - II Corinthians 5:17 (The Inclusive Nature of Salvation)

To be "in Christ" is to receive His relationship to all things. To be "in Christ", in other words, is to be included in "Who" He is and "What" He has achieved. Membership (as in a wealthy family or exclusive club) does have its benefits! We have entered into an entirely new and different world.

To begin with, faith in Christ renders us "children of God" and all the "rights" that come with being in God's family (John 1:12) belong to us. We immediately receive "of His fullness" (John 1:16). Note the little word "all" in that verse - this is the confession of the entire family! We start "complete" (Col 2:10) - nothing pertaining to life or godliness needs to be added (II Pet 1:3). Which, being interpreted, means "in Christ" we have a corresponding supply of His life for every contingency... every temptation... every command. (The Divine purpose can only be achieved by Divine provision - Eph 1:4.)

Because of this new condition (not merely our "position"), our standing relative to God is changed. We are already justified, sanctified, and glorified. As "three links in an unbreakable chain" (D. M. Lloyd Jones), these results of being "in Christ" are not sequentially, but simultaneously graced to us in Him. Now the Justifier, the Sanctifier, the Glorifier abides in us.

We were justified (Ro 3:24,26; 5:18; 8:33; Ga 2:16) upon receiving the Righteous One. Both an objective imputation and subjective impartation of righteousness were freely given to us "in Christ". We need nothing more - not works, not death, not heaven - to be made so. We were sanctified (Ro 6:22; I Cor 1:2,30; 6:11; Col 1:22; Heb 2:11; 3:1; I Pet 1:16) upon receiving the Holy One. Holiness is never "worked up", but always "sent down". We need nothing more than His Holy nature abiding in us to be sanctified. We were glorified (Ro 8:30; II Thess 1:11-12; I Pet 5:10) when the Glory of God Himself took up residence in us. Not in our original birth condition (Ro 3:23), but at our new birth in Christ, we received what we were created for - the very radiant and personal brilliance of God's nature into our human spirits. (The full consumation of this awaits the receptivity of our glorified bodies - a subject for another day!) Nevertheless, in Christ we need nothing more to be glorified.

Why is this so important? "In Christ" the heavy, impossible burden of justifying, sanctifying and glorifying ourselves is lifted. We may now rest, relax, and even enjoy the easy burden of pleasing God (Matt 11:28-30).

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GREETINGS

We realize we make mistakes from time to time in our newsletter - spelling slip-ups, grammatical gaffes, calendar clinkers. We try doubly hard to avoid theological errors, but last month printed a real howler. A typo, to be sure, yet to suggest we are in a love affair with "Father, SIN, and Holy Spirit" was a bit much! Hopefully, it was so obvious, you self-corrected even as you read it. Please forgive us all our miscues, and thank God with us for grace.

Speaking of grace, does it get any better than God's gift of "peace on earth good will toward men"? Men who are at war with Him? Men who intend ill will to God and one another? Men who are not seeking God but want to be their own gods? Men who are in no way good, not even one of them?

And to these undeserving men God brings His very best! He voluntarily steps into their hostility, their indifference, their arrogance - to be and do for them what they could never do for themselves. To rescue them from their deadly distance to Him. To reconcile them to their loving Creator. To rectify them to His intentional design of eternal oneness. To resupply them with everything pertaining to life and godliness.

Do we need any other reasons than these to celebrate the Christmas gift of Immanuel - God for us who comes in Person to be God with us forever?

Have a Merry and Joyful Christmas "in Christ"!

CALENDAR

DECEMBER

1 Ocala Study - **Note change**
6,13,20 CCF
****Dec 27**** ****NO CCF MEETING****
8 Alachua Study

JANUARY

29-31 San Antonio, TX (210-478-0618)

FEBRUARY

12-14 Florida Retreat

PRAISE and PRAYER

♥ For life "in Christ"
♥ For forgiving grace
✚ Gracious hearts for one another
✚ Peace on earth, good will toward men

Florida Retreat

"Centered in Christ"

February 12 - 14, 2016

\$50 deposit Due January 30th, 2016

\$290 Couple - (meals and room)

\$160 Single - 2 to room (meals and room)

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