

In Christ

"Objective fact"

1. **Ephesians 2:10** "For we are His workmanship - created in Christ"
2. **II Corinthians 1:21** "Now He who establishes us with you in Christ and anointed us is...God."
3. **1 Corinthians 1:30** "But of Him...are you in Christ Jesus."
4. **II Timothy 1:9** "who has saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace which was given to us in Christ Jesus... before time began."

"Subjective"

1. **John 17:22** "And the glory which You gave Me... I have given them...that they may be one just as We are one. (vs 23) I in them and You in Me."
2. **John 14:20** "At that day... you will know that I am in my Father...and you in Me... and I in you."
3. **John 7:39** "But this He spoke...for the Holy Spirit was not (given)...because Jesus was not yet glorified."
4. **John 20:17** "Jesus said to her...do not cling to Me for I have not yet...ascended to My Father.."
5. **John 20:19** "Then, that same day at evening, (vs 22) He breathed on them...'receive the Holy Spirit.' "

Note: Not until after the resurrection and ascension the Lord was glorified. Returning that same day in the evening...He breathed on them the Holy Spirit... This is the indwelling. Fifty days later the Holy Spirit descended upon ...them for power to be witnesses of Him.

6. **Ephesians 3:16** "...that He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might through His...Spirit...in the inner man, (vs 17) that Christ may...dwell in your heart."
7. **1 John 4:13** "By this we know we abide in Him...and He...in us...because He has given us of His Spirit."

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Do you see the oneness in human life? Our life comes from Adam. If your great-grandfather had died at the age of three, where would you be? You would have died in him! Your experience is bound up with his. And in just the same way, the experience of every one of us is bound up with that of Adam. None can say, 'I have not been in Eden,' for potentially we all were there when Adam yielded to the serpent's words. So we are all involved in Adam's sin, and by being born 'in Adam' we receive from him all that he became as a result of his sin - that is to say, the Adam-nature which is the nature of a sinner. We derive our existence from him, and because his life became a sinful life, a sinful nature, therefore the nature which we derive from him is also sinful. So, as we have said, the trouble is in our heredity, not in our behaviour. Unless we can change our parentage there is no deliverance for us.

But it is in this very direction that we shall find the solution of our problem, for that is exactly how God has dealt with it.

AS IN ADAM SO IN CHRIST

In Romans 5:12-21 we are not only told something about Adam; we are told also something about the Lord Jesus. 'As through the one man's disobedience the many were made sinners, even so through the **obedience of the one shall the many be made righteous**!'. In Adam we receive everything that is of Adam; in Christ we receive everything that is of Christ.

The terms 'in Adam' and 'in Christ' are too little understood by Christians, and, at the risk of repetition, I wish again to emphasize by means of an illustration the hereditary and racial significance of the term 'in Christ'. This illustration is to be found in the letter to the Hebrews. Do you remember that in the earlier part of that letter the writer is trying to show that Melchizedek is greater than Levi? You recall that the point to be proved is that the priesthood of Christ is greater than the priesthood of Aaron who was of the tribe of Levi. Now, in order to prove that, he has first to prove that the priesthood of Melchizedek is greater than the priesthood of Levi, for the simple reason that the priesthood of Christ is 'after the order of Melchizedek' (Hebrews 7:14-17), while that of Aaron is, of course, after the order of Levi. If the writer can demonstrate to us that in the eyes of God Melchizedek is greater than Levi, then he has made his point. That is the issue, and he proves it in a remarkable way.

He tells us in Hebrews chapter 7 that one day Abraham, returning from the battle of the kings (Genesis 14), offered a tithe of his spoils to Melchizedek and received from him a blessing. In as much as Abraham did so, Levi is therefore of less account than Melchizedek. Why? Because the fact that Abraham offered tithes to Melchizedek means that Isaac 'in Abraham' offered to Melchizedek. But if that is true, then Jacob also 'in Abraham' offered to Melchizedek, which in turn means that Levi 'in Abraham' offered to Melchizedek. It is evident that the lesser offers to the greater (Hebrews 7:7). So Levi is less in standing than Melchizedek, and therefore the priesthood of Aaron is inferior to that of the Lord Jesus. Levi at the time of the battle of the

kings was not yet even thought of. Yet he was 'in the loins of his father' Abraham, and, 'so to say, through Abraham', he offered (Hebrews 7:9,10).

Now this is the exact meaning of 'in Christ'. Abraham, as the head of the family of faith, includes the whole family in himself. When he offered to Melchizedek, the whole family offered in him.

THE DIVINE WAY OF DELIVERANCE

God clearly intends that this consideration should lead to our practical deliverance from sin. Paul makes this quite plain when he opens chapter 6 of his letter with the question: 'Shall we continue in sin?' His whole being recoils at the suggestion. 'God forbid!' he exclaims. How could a holy God be satisfied to have unholy, sin-fettered children? And so 'how shall we any longer live therein?' (Romans 6:1,2) God has surely therefore made adequate provision that we should be set free from sin's dominion.

But here is our problem. We were born sinners; how then can we cut off our sinful heredity? Seeing that we were born in Adam, how can we get out of Adam? Let me say at once, the Blood cannot take us out of Adam. There is only one way. Since we came in by birth we must go out by death. To do away with our sinfulness we must do away with our life. Bondage to sin came by birth; deliverance from sin come by death - and it is just this way of escape that God has provided. Death is the secret of emancipation. 'We...died to sin' (Romans 6:2).

But how can we die? Some of us tried very hard to get rid of this sinful life, but we have found it most tenacious. What is the way out? It is not by trying to kill ourselves, but by recognizing that *God has dealt with us in Christ*. This is summed up in the apostle's next statement: 'All we who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death' (Romans 6:3).

But if God has dealt with us 'in Christ Jesus' then we have got to *be* in Him for this to become effective, and that now seems just as big a problem. How are we to 'get into' Christ? Here again God comes to our help. We have in fact no way of getting in, but, what is more important, we need not try to get in, for we *are* in. What we could not do for ourselves, God has done for us. *He has put us into Christ*. Let me remind you of 1Corinthians 1:30. I think that is one of the best verses of the whole New Testament: 'Ye are in Christ.' How? 'Of Him (that is, 'of God') are ye in Christ.' Praise God! it is not left to us either to devise a way of entry or to work it out. We need not plan how to get in, God has planned it; and He has not only planned it but He has also performed it. 'Of *him* are ye in Christ Jesus.' We are in; therefore we need not try to get in. It is a divine act, and it is accomplished.

Now if this is true, certain things follow. In the illustration from Hebrews 7 which we considered above we saw that 'in Abraham' all Israel - and therefore Levi who was not yet born - offered tithes to Melchizedek. They did not offer separately and individually, but they were in Abraham when he offered, and his offering included all his seed. This, then, is a true figure of ourselves 'in Christ'. When the Lord Jesus was on the Cross all of us died - not individually, for we had not yet been born - but, being in Him, we died in Him. 'One died for all, therefore 'all died' (2 Corinthians 5:14). When He was crucified all of us were crucified there with Him.

'Of Him are ye in Christ Jesus'. The Lord God Himself has put us in Christ, and in His dealing with Christ, God has dealt with the whole race. Our destiny is bound up with His. What He has

gone through we have gone through, for to be 'in Christ' is to have been identified with Him in both His death and resurrection. He was crucified: then what about us? Must we ask God to crucify us? Never! When Christ was crucified we were crucified; and His crucifixion is past, therefore ours cannot be future. I challenge you to find one text in the New Testament telling us that our crucifixion is in the future. All the references to it are in the Greek aorist, which is the 'once-for-all' tense, the 'eternally past' tense. (See Romans 6:6, Galatians 2:20; 5:24; 6:14.) And just as no man could ever commit suicide by crucifixion, for it were a physical impossibility to do so, so also, in spiritual terms, God does not require us to crucify ourselves. We were crucified when Christ was crucified, for God put us there in Him. That we have died in Christ is not merely a doctrinal position, it is an eternal and indisputable fact.

The Normal Christian Life
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