

THE JOY OF BEING IN CHRIST

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Ephesians 1:11-14

In our text reading, we have now come to the end of Paul's hymn of praise. Up to this point, Paul has been speaking to all but the chosen in general. Now he is speaking to the Jews and Gentiles. Paul is celebrating the union of salvation. **Ephesians 2:1-11** The Jews were the first chosen people of God. They were chosen to be His treasured possession. It was exclusively through them, the Savior would come. When he came, many put their trust in him. The Gentiles were the second class citizens. To the Jews, the Gentiles were pagans and uncircumcised because they had not been a part of the covenant. There was a huge wall of hostility between the Jews and Gentiles. We, too, know how it is to be looked at as second class citizens. You need to be clear that race still matters. Race still matters whether you are running in the Olympics or for the Presidency. Race still matters whether you ride a bus or drive a BMW. Race still matters no matter how smart you are. What did it take to bring the two opinions together?

At the root of salvation, is the key of being in Christ. Being in Christ is the most important point of theology. When one is saved or born again one is considered to be in Christ. When you are in Christ there is a great transformation in your life. **2 Corinthians 5:17** All the old stuff is gone; the old habits, the old attitude, the old behavior, and the old relationships. Some of you wonder why you are still dealing with the same old issues. It is because you are dealing with residue. You have to make up in your mind that you are completely renewed. You aren't what you used to be but you are not what want to be.

Being in Christ means that you are fully alive. In our sin, we thought we had it going on. We didn't begin to live until we were in Christ. **John 1:4** Have you noticed how fish live in water? As long as they are in that water they are happy and content. If you remove them from the water, they die. We are the same with Christ. We cannot make it without him. When you are in Christ, you are content with what you have. You are radically re-oriented which means your thinking is totally different. "There is something on the inside working on the outside..." We tend to use the word Christian to describe ourselves. The word, "Christian," can be open to ambiguous interpretation nowadays. Some people consider themselves Christian because they were raised in the church but they live any way they want. To be a Christian is to be in Christ and to have Christ in you. **Philippians 1:21** To be a Christian is not to just be in the church.

We are totally in Christ. We are one with God. We are members of the body of Christ, intimately connected to people we didn't even like in the world. **I Corinthians 12:12, Galatians 3:26-27** Have you noticed how some people like hearing bad news about others? Some people even like being the bearer of bad news. However, love never fails. We need one another. We ought to serve

one another. Instead of talking about and judging others, we ought to ask them, “What can I do for you?” There are people who just need someone to reach out to them. If a person can’t come to church and find unconditional love, where do they go? A Christian relationship surpasses all the others. It is understanding, commitment, and comfort. The world that Christ came to was divided. He came and changed that.

Being in Christ also brings deep satisfaction; a radical satisfaction. **Isaiah 55:1** It is only through Christ that we are filled and satisfied. **Psalm 63, John 6:35** Some of us don’t plan to fast because eating is the only way we feel that we are filled. **John 37:39** Overflow happens when you are saturated. Overflow is when you get filled to the brim. That’s what happens when you are in Christ. When you are drinking, eating, and resting in him, you have a perpetual overflow.

How does one get in Christ? The way to get in Christ is to believe. As sinners we heard the word of truth. We then believed in Christ. The Holy Spirit places us in Christ and Christ in us. The Holy Spirit is our glue. God has sealed us. He has tagged us. The Holy Spirit in us is a guarantee that whatever God promised will come to pass. Remember how you were when the Lord told you He was coming through on your behalf. Remember how He rescued you. Remember how He loves you. God has revealed to you by His Spirit that He will give you everything that He promised. You will receive it through the glory of your praise. So praise Him in the morning and even at night. Praise Him when you are happy and even when you are sad. God is worthy of all glory. We are in Him; and it doesn’t matter what is going on in our world. We are in Him which means we are safe and secure from all alarm. If you believe that, you have to act like it. You have to worship God. The joy of being in Christ is that you don’t have to worry about what’s going on in the world because He has it all under control.

Peace.

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