

The background of the entire image is a dense, vibrant field of azalea flowers. The colors range from light pink to deep red, with some flowers showing a mix of these hues. The flowers are in full bloom, creating a textured and colorful pattern that fills the entire frame.

The Grace of God in Christ

**Sixty Days Of Enjoying Jesus Christ
And God's All-satisfying, Joy-producing
Riches Of Grace In Christ**

John Crozier

“John’s carefully calibrated study of the believer’s blessings in Christ is superbly done! It breathes Scripture – exalts Christ – is most practical and adaptable. These truths are much needed in our time. Highly recommended.”

Dr. David Larsen, Trinity Evangelical Divinity School

“I love being reminded daily of who I am in Christ and of all that Christ has done for me. John’s study has helped me to live a more joyous and victorious life. We are indeed *rich* in Christ.”

Bob Arnold, SIM International, former Director of SIM Benin

“As we train missionaries at MTI Korea, the skills and experiences our veteran missionaries share are important, but secondary. Above all, God calls us to give the nations the true Jesus in his saving fullness. *The Grace of God in Christ* leads our students to Jesus on a deeper level. Again and again, my own heart has found new freedom to relax in my Lord and Savior, even though I am busy with many things. Wonderful!”

Mihyang Choi, Director, Missionary Training Institute, Yeosu, Korea

“As I read John’s study, I found myself being blessed by the truths being presented, and incorporated them into my own devotional life. I shared the list of the riches with my study group and we spent time each week reflecting on each truth. I commend the study of God’s riches of grace by those who desire to move to the next level of their maturing in Christ.”

Dr. Gene Swanstrom, Trinity Evangelical Divinity School

“Before John’s class at MTI, I didn’t know about the riches of grace even though I’m a seminary grad and a Pastor for ten years. Now I’m excited about God’s grace in Christ, and preaching Christ’s riches. Because the Korean church in general does not preach the riches of grace, it makes church members weak and religious. Now when I teach, God’s people are surprised by God’s wonderful grace and the amazing love of Jesus.”

Pastor Jin Woo Lee, MTI, missionary candidate with AIM

John Crozier received wonderful new life from the Lord Jesus Christ at the age of twenty-one. After leading John to even deeper repentance in order to more consistently live in Christ in the Spirit in God’s Word, the Lord called John to serve in pastoral ministry. Beginning with internship in 1975, John has enjoyed serving the Lord and God’s people as a Pastor. In 2009-2016, John and his wife, Marg, were tent-making missionaries teaching English in South Korea. John served as the Pastor of the English Service at Bundang Central Church in metro Seoul, with 10,000 attending the Korean services, and at Yeosu Eun Pha Church with 3,000 Korean members. They helped train Korean missionaries at MTI, the Missionary Training Institute. Now they serve with AIM, Advancing Indigenous Missions (www.aimi.ca), encouraging and supporting indigenous church leaders in various countries in Asia reaching the unreached.

John’s Bachelor of Theology is from Heritage College, Cambridge ON. Master of Divinity - Trinity Western University, Langley BC. Doctor of Ministry - Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, Deerfield, Illinois. This study was part of John’s doctoral project.

John’s goal in ministry is to help as many people as possible become joyfully satisfied in God’s fullness and love in Christ, and this is his desire for you.

Do you want to improve your English?

Here's how.

“English comes to stay when put to use each day.”

There is one short reading each day.

Read it *outloud* in the morning and at night.

Repeat any difficult phrases.

Think about the truth in each reading, then thank the LORD in English for what the reading says he has done for us.

The Grace of God in Christ helps students improve their general vocabulary. It also introduces students to common Christian terms in English.

Did you miss a day? Just get going again. If it is the 4th of the month, do the reading for Day 4. If it is the 16th of the month, read the article for Day 16.

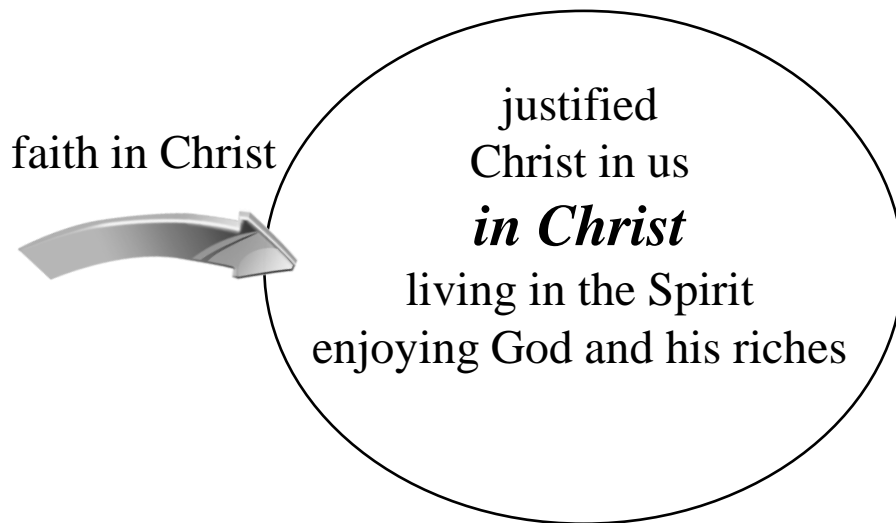
Do you want to improve your English more? Enjoy “God’s Riches of Grace in Christ” again and again.

I enjoy my Lord with a few minutes of *The Grace of God in Christ* every day. Some days I do not read the whole article; instead I just read the Bible verses and praise the Lord for his love gift while thinking about the main points.

The Grace of God in Christ

Sixty Days Of Enjoying Jesus Christ And God's All-satisfying, Joy-producing Riches of Grace In Christ

English Standard Version Edition



by John Crozier

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Cover photo by John Crozier in Yeosu, South Korea. God plans for us to blossom with the abundant, beautiful riches of Christ and God's grace to the glory of God. The Lord does not intend us to have just a few blossoms of grace. He desires us to be full of the riches of the grace of God in Christ.

In the clip art of the Dove and Bible on pages xxvi, 58, 62, 75, 76, 77, 91, 92, and 149, both the Dove and the Bible are from Microsoft clip art © 2013, Microsoft Corporation.

April 21, 2021 edition.

A super-helpful and encouraging PPT of the Grace of God in Christ is available for free at www.GraceGodChrist.com. See further info on page 185. Two page summaries of the "In Christ" diagram and the riches with Bible references are also available in English, French, and Korean. They are very good for handing out to friends or sending to missionaries. Let's spread the good news of what Christ has done for us! Get free e-copy from www.GraceGodChrist.com.

Helpful comments or questions? Email John at: johncrozieris@gmail.com

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Dedication

with great appreciation to

Dr. Grant C. Richison

Pastor, Expositor, Visionary, Leader of leaders, Pastor to Pastors

You introduced me to the concept of the “inner and outer circle” in Christ.
You encouraged me as I added specific riches of grace to develop the “in Christ” circle.
One of the great privileges in my life has been to be under your visionary leadership
and Bible exposition at Grant Memorial Baptist Church.

For great insights into specific texts, go to
www.versebyversecommentary.com

“Verse-by-Verse Commentary with Dr. Grant C. Richison exposes the mind of God
to the mind of man by expounding individual books of God’s Word verse-by-verse.”

“Each study **expounds** a passage, forms a **principle** out of that passage,
and shows how to **apply** that principle to your life.”

I also highly recommend his award winning book
Certainty: A Place to Stand



Jesus Christ
God’s Love Gift

Acknowledgements

I am indebted to Dr. Erwin Lutzer of Moody Church in Chicago, who in 1988 directed me to the chapter on “Riches of Divine Grace” in Lewis Sperry Chafer’s *Systematic Theology* Volume 3. This is the only English Systematic text I know of in the world that devotes a separate chapter to study all that God provides in Christ at the moment of salvation. My satisfaction, security, and joy in Christ has been significantly greater ever since reading Chafer and resting more completely in God’s riches given in Christ. My writing is a way of building on Chafer’s great work, and passing on these wonderful truths to another generation.

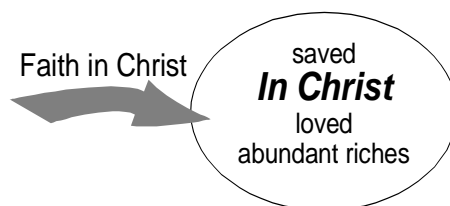
I thank the Lord for the great privilege of learning from Dr. Grant Richison as he pastored Grant Memorial Baptist Church in Winnipeg. Dr. Richison used a diagram “The Inner and Outer Circle” which planted the seeds for my “in Christ” diagram on pages xvi, xx, and 151.

I am also indebted to Dr. Larry Perkins of the Association of Canadian Theological Schools at Trinity Western University for his helpful insight as I further developed the “in Christ” diagram.

The optional 60 day adventure format that churches can go through as a group (suggested on the next page) is modeled after the fifty-day adventures of David Mains of “The Chapel of the Air Ministries.” Their adventures have taught me the major principles of adventuring with daily readings tied in with sermons and small group discussions.

Much thanks to Dr. David Larsen and Dr. Gene Swanstrom at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, for their critique and helpful spirit as the articles were written.

My much-loved daughter, Allison Fontaine, did the initial work of translating the “in Christ” diagram into French and selecting the appropriate French Bible versions. I have deep appreciation for Dr. Sylvio Janelle, who painstakingly translated the 2007 edition into French, with many insightful English improvements! Sylvio serves the Lord as a Pastor and chiropractor in St. Georges, Quebec. Thank you to Yun In Su for translating the “in Christ” diagram into Korean and to Choi Mihyang, Director at the Missionary Training Institute, for further translation, as well as Yun Juhwan and Han Younghun.



Different ways to use this book

The Grace of God in Christ is organized into sixty days of articles. It's designed as a discipleship book to use over and over in addition to other daily devotional materials. If each day was more than one page of reflection and one page of key Bible verses, people would read it and be done with it. However, I believe we need to reflect on God's grace in Christ until our mind is disciplined in it. There is great benefit in focusing our mind for a few moments each day on God's grace in Christ so it becomes a regular part of our thinking. When used as intended, this book is a *study* of a particular aspect of God's truth and a *method* of disciplining our minds in it until they continuously live in this truth in Christ.

I like to start on the first day of the month, so the readings correspond to the day of the month; if it is the 5th day of the month, I read day 5.

If a day is missed, simply get going again. Enjoy!

As I read and meditate, it is extremely helpful to *praise the Lord* for his beauty and riches revealed. *Faith-filled praise* is like drinking the riches into our soul. God's *Word* should produce *worship*. *Promises* → *faith* → *praise!*

It is very helpful to choose a verse from the reading to review in our mind throughout the day. Many verses may be familiar and we can "remember" them.

For those already using other material for daily meditation, this book is meant to be a brief time of looking for one good truth for which to praise the Lord.

The reflection questions can be used for a Bible study group. The blanks help me meditate on key words. I don't fill them in with a pen, so I use them over and over.

The book can also be part of family times by reading one of the verses with your family and making the topic part of your family discussions.

This is a very helpful book for new Christians to ground them in what Christ has done for them in his death and resurrection.

A 60 Day Small Group or Church Adventure

The Grace of God in Christ can be used as a 60 day Adventure for a small group or a whole church. Small groups can meet to share insights, highlights, and further applications from each week of daily readings. Sermons on God's riches can add great blessing.

The Grace of God in Christ can be a wonderful heart preparation in the 60 days leading up to Easter, or at any other time in the year.

Other Possible Uses

The following titles suggest several other possible uses for the book:

"One hundred reasons for joy in God more than joy in anything else."

"One hundred ways to 'the expulsive power of a new affection'" (Thomas Chalmers)

"One hundred descriptions of God's love and Christ's power flowing from the cross."

"One hundred ways to replace low self-esteem with high Christ-esteem."

"One hundred reasons to feel worthwhile, accepted, and clean no matter what our past."

"One hundred ways Christ frees us from our habits and addictions."

"A joyful ESL way to learn and practise English Christian vocabulary."

After reflecting on each day's truths, I urge you to make time praising the Lord for his wonderful riches in Christ to be at least as important as not skipping your favorite dessert. Praise moves God's truth from the head to the heart. Praise transforms study into meeting God. Faith-filled praise based on God's promises in Christ is like drinking God's grace. Since God is different and better than all else, enjoying God with praise, love and doing his will gives different and better joy than all else. Please take time to meaningfully praise the Lord for each of his riches in Christ. You won't regret it! Promises → faith → praise!

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Why study the grace of God in Christ?

**Forget not all his benefits (Psalm 103:2). Love the Lord your God (Matt 22:37).
Be strong in the Lord . . . Put on the whole armor of God (Eph 6:10-11).**

1. In order to know Christ and all he provides through his death and resurrection! Can you list 100 blessings flowing from Christ's cross which the Lord gives us the moment we believe on the Lord Jesus Christ? This study will thrill you with a bigger Savior!
2. In order to love and enjoy God more. The more we know God's character *and* his riches of grace in Christ, the more we love and enjoy God. This study increases our love for God's grace in Christ. My eBook, "Know Your God," increases our love for God's character.
3. In order to better rejoice in God as God rejoices in God and his grace in Christ!
4. In order to lessen the war of counterfeits in our soul. The more we drink of the true riches of grace in Christ, the less the tug will be to drink sin's counterfeit poisons. The most powerful cravings of sin are only overcome by far more desirable pleasures in Christ.
5. In order to be freed from fleshly selfishness into God's *agape* love. Only when our needs are met in Christ are we truly free to give in sincere *agape* to others rather than selfishly manipulating others to get them to meet our needs. Otherwise, all our relationships are greedy grasping to get others to fill our cup, self-centered efforts to get rather than give.
6. In order to increase our faith in Christ. The more we understand what Scripture says Christ has accomplished for us through his death and resurrection, the more we can stand by faith on the word of God to trust Christ and his finished work.
7. In order to keep connecting Christ's cross with all God does for us. All the riches of the grace of God in Christ flow from the cross. Many believers are disconnecting the cross from God's grace, as if the Lord graciously helps them with no connection to Christ's death. Disconnecting the cross from grace makes Christ a crossless Christ.
8. In order to battle the drift towards works and a performance-based relationship which the flesh constantly promotes. The flesh loves self-effort and self-glory. God's grace in Christ keeps promoting repentance from self and glorying in Christ and his finished work.
9. In order to live in God's fullness in Christ. If we mainly think of Jesus in terms of a few graces like forgiveness and eternal life, limiting Christ to this is like always eating chicken and rice while ignoring the fullness of God's banquet of nourishing food in Christ.
10. In order to not respond to the sinful things done to us with a sinful reaction. The *agape* love of Jesus responded to multitudes of sinful acts toward him out of fullness in God and not with any sense that people were depriving him of his needs being met. Until we live in Christ's fullness, our response to sinful things done to us will not likely be *agape* in the Spirit, but rather a sinful flesh reaction due to a sense of people not meeting our needs.
11. In order to be stronger and more stable when times of great trial and disappointment occur. Minds focused on Christ and his riches is very important for this.
12. In order to put on all the armor of God in Christ.
13. In order to overcome an unintended deficiency in most Systematic Theologies, which Pastors often repeat. Major systematic theology texts contain many riches Christ purchased for us by his death, but in separate chapters on justification, sanctification and glorification. Pastors then do as they were taught, and don't pull together for God's people all God's riches of grace in Christ. But we should, as gifts attached to Christ's cross.¹

¹ Only Chafer's *Systematic Theology* has a separate chapter, "Riches of Divine Grace," summarizing all the riches of God's grace in Christ. Building on Chafer's original work, this study organizes God's riches of grace in Christ into one hundred gifts of grace in sixty readings. A list of 100 riches is on page xxiv. Chafer's list is on page 157. Lewis Sperry Chafer, "Riches of Divine Grace," *Systematic Theology*. (Dallas: Dallas Seminary Press, 1948) Vol.3, 225 -266. Also in Walvoord, John F., ed. *Lewis Sperry Chafer Systematic Theology Abridged Edition* (Wheaton: Victor, 1988) Vol. 2, 131-149.

14. In order to help all, including those who grew up in hurtful homes, to define ourselves by who the Lord has made us in Christ, and no longer define ourselves by our past. As we drink deeply from the Lord and his grace, God heals abused souls with low self-esteem by developing high Christ-esteem, grasping how great he is and the grace he gives in Christ.

15. In order to defeat the world's powerful lies about what meets our needs. The world trains us to think fulfillment and happiness is found in beauty, fame in music or movies, victory in sports, success in business, cars, booze, money, homes, family, romance and sex. However, God gives the true riches that satisfy through the death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ! As we learn to drink from the Lord and his constantly flowing spring of living water in Christ, we stop being deceived into digging the world's cracked wells that can't satisfy our deepest thirsts (Jer 2:13).

16. In order to overcome the lust and pornography addictions sweeping the world, destroying people and our children in ways most have not yet understood. Lust and other strong addictions are only defeated by a stronger desire for something better. We stop drinking slime when we discover pure water to drink. As the LORD is different and far better than all else, so joy in the LORD is different and far better than all else. I believe we desperately need to discover how walking in Christ with faith-filled praise for God's character and grace in Christ gives joy in the LORD that is different and far better than else.

17. In order to die to self on the deepest level. Self-denial to walk in the Spirit in God's holiness and *agape* love is essential in the daily war of the flesh against the Spirit. However, the deepest victory over the self-life is when we so soak our hearts in the holy, infinite magnificence of the Lord and the exceeding, immeasurable riches of his glorious grace that our thoughts are not on ourselves but on our God of glory as we praise and adore him. There are no mirrors in heaven. The glory of our Lord captivates and preoccupies all. John Piper says, "Do you want heaven to be a hall of mirrors? Or would you like for all mirrors to be gone and you to be able to behold God in all his glory forever?"²

18. In order to learn to praise the Lord using his Word in response to his grace in Christ. Woven into this study are the principles that: Praise moves God's truth from the head to the heart. Praise transforms study into meeting God. Faith-filled praise based on God's promises in Christ is like drinking God's grace. Praise completes our joy in God; to be thankful and say so completes our joy vs. being thankful but not saying so.³ Since God is different and better than all else, enjoying God with praise, love and doing his will gives different and better joy than all else. Developing this skill brings great blessing over and over!

Years ago, Erwin Lutzer wrote in one of his books how important it was to keep in mind all God's blessings given us in Christ. I'd been to Bible School (as in point 13 above), but I wasn't sure what all the blessings were. I wrote to Dr. Lutzer who kindly directed me to "Riches of Divine Grace" in Chafer's *Systematic Theology*.

Since that time the riches of Christ have become a central part of my relating to the Lord. Now I see myself to be like a multi-billionaire with vast resources in Christ. Now I approach life with a confidence that in any difficulties I can go to the Lord's bank and withdraw whatever I need to do the Lord's will. It is finished; God's riches are given in Christ!

The eighteen benefits given above have become a solid part of my life in Christ. God's riches in Christ are totally superior to drinking the world's substitute counterfeits. For years now, I've used this study to reflect on some of God's riches in Christ each day. It's trained me to enjoy Jesus and God's all-satisfying, joy-producing riches of grace in Christ!

² John Piper in a sermon entitled "The God-Centeredness of God" Apr. 30, 2009. Available at desiringgod.org

³ C.S. Lewis said, "I think we delight to praise what we enjoy because the praise not merely expresses but completes the enjoyment; it is its appointed consummation. It is not out of compliment that lovers keep on telling one another how beautiful they are; the delight is incomplete till it is expressed."

C. S. Lewis, *Reflections on the Psalms* (New York: Harcourt, Brace and World, 1958), 95.

**AN INTRODUCTION: FIVE FOUNDATIONS IN LIFE
FOR ENJOYING THE GRACE OF GOD IN CHRIST**

**An overview of five key principles
in becoming joyfully satisfied
in God's fullness and love in Christ**

1. Value and enjoy the Lord as your greatest treasure and joy

2. Be reconciled to God through faith in Jesus Christ

**3. Rest in Christ's finished work
to freely provide all God's riches of grace**

**4. Walk with Christ in the Spirit and the Word
enjoying God and his grace**

5. Let Christ and his riches produce God's *agape* love

1. Value and enjoy the Lord as your greatest treasure and joy



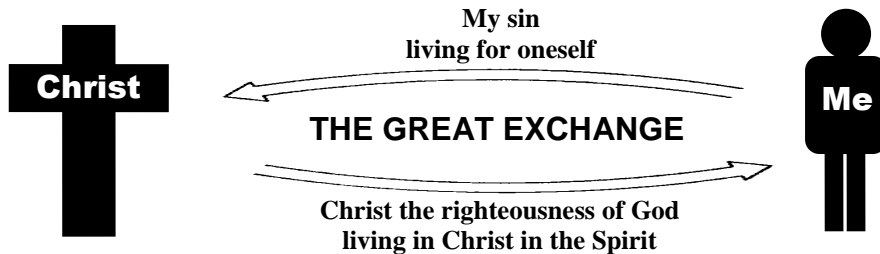
Because the holy Lord is infinitely superior to everything else, God's highest value and greatest joy is God himself! God created us in his image to supremely value and enjoy what God supremely values and enjoys. God created us to find deepest joy, delight, satisfaction, fulfillment, pleasure and treasure in God in Christ. God in Christ is like a treasure chest overflowing with gold. We find true joy in supremely treasuring God in Christ.

Since God is different and superior to all else, joy in God is different and better than all other joys. Jesus had the greatest joy ever because he lived obediently in joy in God more than all others. Jesus didn't seek joy in temporary, earthly things like money and homes. His joy in God was different and better than all else. Greatest joy comes as we value, seek, meditate on, and delight in God in Christ with Word-filled praise, and walk in harmony with his character.

The most intimate and joyful love, communion, and cooperation in the universe exists between the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Jesus died to immerse us into God's joy-filled love relationships within himself (Matt 28:19; 2 Cor 13:14), like sharing at their table of fellowship! Communion with our glorious Lord as we do his will is our highest joy in heaven - and now! As we drink Christ's living water, we are far less tempted to drink sin's fake muddy puddles.

(The center of the diagram seeks to reflect something of the LORD's fullness of joy in himself as the Father, Son and Spirit delight in each other's infinite perfections and their all-satisfying relationships of oneness, love, fellowship and cooperation. The LORD is completely different from a non-triune God who by nature is all alone without personal love relationships in eternity past before creating anyone else.)

2. Be reconciled to God through faith in Jesus Christ



“He died for all, that those who live might no longer live for themselves but for him . . . Be reconciled to God. For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God” (2 Cor 5:15, 21-22).

The Lord designed us to enjoy love relationship with him in deepest communion and cooperation. However, by going our own self-serving ways that do not seek what’s best for God and others, we are contaminated with sin and have lost intimate connection with God.

God is holy. He will not join himself to what is dirty, unclean, defiled, and unrighteous. He only connects himself with what he makes perfectly righteous in Christ. Christ’s sacrificial death provides the forgiveness we desperately need. His perfect obedience provides the righteousness of God we desperately need.

When we repent and trust Jesus the crucified and reigning Christ to save us from our sin, the Lord *credits* to us Christ’s perfect obedience; He *counts* us righteous in Christ the righteousness of God. Romans 4 uses the Greek verb *logizomai* (Latin *imputata*) eleven times to stress how God *counts, credits, reckons* God’s righteousness in Christ to us *by faith* (Rom 4:3,4,5,6,9,10,11, 22,23,24) and doesn’t *count* our sins against us (Rom 4:8).

When we receive Christ the righteousness of God, Christ indwells by the Holy Spirit. Christ frees us from our selfishness to glorify God as we walk with him in the Spirit in God’s purity, love for others, and delight in God. We exchange our sin for Christ’s righteousness and exchange our self-directed life for the Christ-directed life of living in the Spirit in *agape* love.

We can make the great exchange that includes the great connection with God the Father, Son, and Spirit in their relationships of holiness, joy, fellowship, love and cooperation!

We can express repentance toward God and faith in Christ in prayer something like this –

“Holy Lord of all, you made my spirit with the capacity to be united with you spirit to spirit in intimate fellowship, cooperation and love. But I’ve cut off relationship with you many times by doing what I want rather than what you designed me to do. I am unrighteous and contaminated with sin. I deserve to stay cut off from your beauty and glory forever.”

“I believe you sent Jesus to die for all my breaking relationship and disobedience. He took all the judgment and hell I deserve. Please take my sin from me and give me Christ and his righteousness in exchange. I want to be united with you spirit to spirit in intimate fellowship, cooperation and love.

“I turn from my self-serving ways. I want to exchange my self-directed life for the Christ-directed life. I want Jesus Christ, the risen and reigning Lord, to live in me by the Holy Spirit to lead me in your way of purity and doing what is best for others. I want to honor and enjoy you, and follow Jesus as my King and Savior from now on.”

If we make the great exchange, God forgives our sins, declares us righteous in Jesus, places us in Christ in the Spirit, and gives us all his riches of salvation in Christ! Christ becomes our life; we live in him and he in us in holy, intimate, love relationship in the Spirit, awaiting God’s glory with flawless fellowship and holiness in God’s presence forever!

3. Rest in Christ's finished work to freely provide all God's riches of grace

Repentance toward God and  faith in our Lord Jesus Christ



All God's riches of grace were purchased for us by Christ dying on our behalf. God freely gives us all his grace on the basis of the finished work of Christ, not our efforts.

“So then, there remains a Sabbath rest for the people of God, for whoever has entered God's rest has also rested from his works as God did from his” (Heb 4:9-10).

When we stop self-effort in trying to be accepted by God as righteous, and we rest by faith upon Christ and his death as our once-for-all sacrifice for sin, we exchange our sin for Christ the righteousness of God, we receive all God's riches in Christ, and we enter God's rest.

Since all God's riches are given based on Christ's death, we not only rest in Christ's finished work for salvation and stop self-effort, but we also rest in Christ our High Priest by coming continuously to his throne of grace to receive whatever grace we need (Heb 4:14-16). As we rest in Christ for all, we earnestly work out what he graciously works in (Phil 2:12-13).

Every moment we can rest in the GRACE of God in Christ to freely provide all we need, like branches in his vine. Joy and peace flow in each situation as we rest in Christ's finished work, draw on our riches with praise and thanks, and yield to walk in *agape* love. Jesus is all we need! In Christ, we are filled with all God's grace, complete in him!

Hebrews calls us to enter God's rest in Christ by resting from our own works (Heb 4:9-10). This involves faith that obeys in contrast to a hard heart of unbelief and disobedience (Heb 4:2-3, 6-7). This kind of faith rests in our sympathetic great high priest and his finished work on the cross, so we confidently go to God's throne of grace to find grace to help in every need (Heb 4:14-16). We confidently enter the Most Holy Place by the blood of Jesus to draw near to God for each need (Heb 10:19-22).

Christ's death is the foundation for rest in God. He has permanently cleansed us from all sin by his once-for-all sacrifice for sin (Heb 7:27, 9:26,28, 10:10,14). He permanently entered the Most Holy Place in heaven once for all (Heb 9:12) to appear for us in God's presence (Heb 9:24) as our great high priest (Heb 4:14-15, 10:12,21). His *finished* work makes him *seated* at God's right hand (Heb 1:3, 8:1, 10:12, 12:2).

Old Testament believers needed repeated sacrifices to be offered for their sins by high priests repeatedly entering the Most Holy Place with the atoning blood. Their consciences were never able to be assured that they had been cleansed once for all and forever reconciled to God; they still felt guilty for their sins (Heb 10:1-2).

Real rest comes when our *consciences* feel totally forgiven with no guilt because we are sure God has forever cleansed us by the permanent once-for-all sacrifice of the blood of Jesus (Heb 9:14, 10:22). Jesus, our great high priest, is able to save completely forever those who come to God through him, because he always lives to intercede for them (Heb 7:25). The conscience finds rest when it rests in Christ.

I am saved and loved through the cross of Christ! The cross is the center of God's love and salvation, the source from which flows all God's riches in Christ, all given freely on the basis of the finished work of Christ on the cross. Everything about our relationship with God is based on his grace in Christ being a gift. God freely supplies everything we need spiritually through faith in Jesus Christ's finished work and not through our efforts - through faith in Christ's perfections not our performance.

As believers we are not trying to get more united with Christ, we are united in Christ. We are not trying to become led by the Spirit, in Christ the Spirit has come to lead us. All God's riches of grace in Christ are given on the basis of the already-accomplished death and resurrection of Christ. There can be profound rest in God when we grasp this.

When Jesus cried out, "It is finished," all the work of atonement for sin was accomplished, and all the love gifts of grace we need throughout life and into eternity were all purchased for us. It is done. It is given. The cross provides everything else we need. God is for us. All we need is found in our crucified and reigning Savior!

Instead of thinking, "I have an errand to run, I have a friend to see," we can rest in Christ. "*Christ in me* wants to run this errand. Christ *lives* in me. Lord, *you* want to make this friend. I love you and rely on your riches of grace flowing from the cross to energize me in your *agape* love and be all I need. It is finished. I rest in you."

Instead of thinking, "I have to be patient" and trying to be patient, we can rest with, "Lord, I can not produce patience myself; it is a fruit of the Spirit. Based on Christ's death and intercession, I trust *you* to produce *your* patience in me now."

We were beggars in unrepayable debt. Jesus paid off all our sin debts for us. He also purchased all God's blessings we will ever need. Billions are in our heavenly bank account. The King marries the commoner, supplying all need with the royal treasury opened by Christ's death. We rest in his love and bounty. All is freely given based on the cross. When we rest on Christ and his cross, we rest in God.

The Grace of God in Christ

Riches Providing a Firm Foundation

The Lord justifies us in Christ the righteousness of God. Rom 3:20-24; Acts 13:38-39; Gal 2:16
The Lord ransoms and redeems us. Eph 1:7; 1 Pet 1:18-19; Matt 20:28; Titus 2:14
Christ's propitiation atones for sin and turns away God's wrath. Rom 3:25; Heb 2:17; 1 John 4:10
The Lord forgives us. Eph 1:7; 1 John 1:9; Acts 5:31, 13:38
The Lord is at peace with us. Rom 5:1; Acts 10:36; John 16:33
The Lord reconciles us and makes us his ambassadors. Rom 5:10; 2 Cor 5:17-20
The Lord gives us eternal life. John 3:16; 3:36; 10:28; 17:3; 1 John 5:11-12
The Lord adopts us as sons, with the Spirit of his Son in his children. Gal 4:4-7; Rom 8:15-16
The Lord welcomes and accepts us. Rom 14:3; 15:7
The Lord fills and completes us in Christ in whom the fullness of God dwells. Col 2:9-10
The Lord blesses us with every spiritual blessing. Eph 1:3; Rom 8:32
Christ is our wisdom from God, righteousness, sanctification and redemption. 1 Cor 1:30
The Lord delivers us from the domain of darkness and transfers us to the light of the kingdom of the Son. Col 1:13; Col 2:15; Acts 26:17-18; 1 Pet 2:9

Trinity Riches

Christ dwells in us and we are in Christ. Eph 1:13; Col 1:2; 1 Thess 1:1; 1 Pet 5:14;
Rev 3:20, Rom 8:10; Col 1:27; Eph 3:17; Gal 2:20
The Spirit dwells in us and we are in the Spirit, God's temple. Rom 8:9; 1 Cor 3:16; 6:19; Gal 3:3
God the Father dwells in us and we are in the Father. John 14:23; Rom 8:9-11; 1 Thess 1:1
The Lord immerses us in the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Mat 28:19
Father, Son and Spirit fellowship with us and we with them. 1 Cor 1:9; 2 Cor 13:14; 1 John 1:3

Life at the Throne Riches

The Lord gives us access to God and his grace. Eph 2:18; 3:12; Heb 10:19-22; Rom 5:2
The Lord answers prayer in Jesus' name. John 16:24; Luke 11:9-10
The Lord gives us mercy, grace, and help at his throne of grace. Heb 4:14-16
The Lord supplies every need. Phil 4:13, 19
The Spirit prays for us and helps us pray in the Spirit. Rom 8:26-27; Eph 6:18; Jude 20-21
Christ our High Priest intercedes for us as our one mediator and ransom. Rom 8:34; Heb 7:24-27
Christ our High Priest advocates his propitiation for our sins in our defense. 1 Jn 2:1-2; Rom 8:34

Set Free from Sin Riches

The Lord immerses us into Christ and unites us with Christ in death with Christ and resurrection with Christ. Rom 6:3-10; 1 Cor 6:17; Gal 3:27
The Lord crucifies and buries the old self in Adam in death with Christ.
Rom 6:6-7; Gal 2:20; Eph 4:22; Col 2:12; 3:3,9; 2 Cor 5:17
The Lord raises a new self in Christ, raised and alive with Christ in resurrection with Christ in newness of life. Rom 6:4-5,8-11; Eph 2:4-6; 4:24; Col 2:12; Col 3:1,3,10; 2 Cor 5:17
The Lord sets us free from sin. Rom 6:6-7, 11, 18, 22; 8:2; Rev 1:5
The Lord makes our body members his instruments for righteousness. Rom 6:12-14, 19
The Lord puts us under Christ and his abundant grace as slaves of Christ for righteousness. Rom 6:14,16,18,22; Eph 1:6-8; 2 Cor 9:8; Gal 1:10; Col 4:12; Jude 1
The Lord makes us joined to Christ, one with Christ, seated with Christ, hidden with Christ in God. Eph 2:6; 5:32; 1 Cor 6:17; Col 3:3
The Lord releases us from the law to be married to Christ in the Spirit.
Rom 7:4,6; 9:30-32; 10:3-4; Gal 2:19
The law of the Spirit of life sets us free in Christ from the law of sin and death. Rom 8:2-4; Gal 5:16
Set free from sin also Days 32-44 life in the Spirit, especially Days 37,38,40,41,44

Holy Spirit Riches

The law of the Spirit of life sets us free in Christ from the law of sin and death. Rom 8:2-4; Gal 5:16
The Lord pours out his Spirit and his love into our hearts. Acts 2:17-18; Rom 5:5; Titus 3:4-7
The Lord gives us rivers of living water of the Spirit. John 7:37-39
The Lord immerses us in his Spirit. Mark 1:8; Acts 11:16; 1 Cor 12:13
The Lord makes us born again of the Spirit, born of God. John 3:3-8; 1 John 3:9; 4:7; 5:4
The Lord gives us his Spirit; we receive the Holy Spirit and have the Spirit,
Rom 5:5; 1 John 4:13; 1 Cor 12:13; Rom 8:9, 23; Acts 2:38; John 7:39
The Spirit comes on us and falls on us. Acts 1:8; 11:15; John 16:7, 8, 13
The Lord anoints and seals us with his Spirit, guaranteeing glory. 2 Cor 1:21-22; Eph 1:13; 4:30
The Spirit of truth helps and teaches us. John 14:16-18, 26; 15:26; 16:7-15
The Spirit leads and sanctifies us. Rom 8:14; 15:16; Gal 5:18; 2 Thess 2:13; 1 Peter 1:1-2
The Spirit empowers us as ambassadors for Christ. Acts 1:8; 2 Cor 5:17-21
The Spirit gifts us for service. Rom 12:6-8; 1 Pet 4:10; 1 Cor 12:7
The Spirit fills us to do the Lord's will. Eph 5:18; Acts 2:4; 4:31; 13:52
The Lord circumcises us in Christ, set apart to God in the Spirit. Col 2:11-12; Rom 2:29; 8:9
The Lord gives us his immeasurably great power. Eph 1:19; 3:20; Acts 1:8; 2 Cor 4:7
The Lord makes us his workmanship. Eph 2:10; Phil 2:13
The Lord leads us in triumphal procession and niki victory. 2 Cor 2:14; 1 Cor 15:57
also Day 14 in the Spirit and the Spirit in us, Temples of the Holy Spirit
Day 15 immersed in the Father, Son and Spirit Day 16 Fellowship with the Spirit
Day 17 includes access to the Father through Christ in one Spirit (Eph 2:18)
Day 20 the Spirit prays for us and helps us pray in the Spirit

Body of Christ Riches

The Lord makes us members of Christ's body, brothers and sisters. 1 Cor 12:27; Eph 5:29-32; 6:23
The Lord makes us branches united with Christ our vine. John 15:5
The Lord makes us a chosen race, royal priesthood, holy nation, God's possession, God's people
1 Pet 2:9-10
The Lord makes us fellow citizens with the saints, members of God's household Eph 2:13, 18-20
also Day 14 God's Temple Day 39 includes sons of God, children of God
Day 48 includes God's family, the Church Day 24, 30, 55 the Bride of Christ

Riches of Future Glory

The Lord gives us citizenship in heaven. Phil 3:20; Heb 12:23
The Lord gives us the hope of glory. Rom 5:2; 15:13; Col 1:27
The Lord gives us an inheritance as heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ.
Rom 8:17; 1 Pet 1:4; Mt 25:34; Acts 20:32; Eph 1:14, 18; Col 1:12; Heb 9:15
The Lord will ensure we are with Christ when we die. Phil 1:23; 2 Cor 5:6-8
The Lord will make us perfect in his presence. Heb 12:23; 10:14
The Lord will glorify us to be like Jesus. 1 John 3:2-3; Rom 8:29-30
The Lord will bring us safely into his heavenly kingdom. 2 Tim 4:18
The Lord will bring us into the joy of the Lord. Matt 25:21, 23; Zeph 3:17
The Lord will deliver us from the wrath to come. 1 Thess 1:10
The Lord will bring to completion his good work begun. Phil 1:6
The Lord will glorify us with a resurrection body like Jesus. Phil 3:21; 1 Cor 15:35-57
The Lord will marry us eternally to the Lamb as his Bride. Rev 19:7, 9
The Lord will wipe away every tear. Rev 7:17; 21:4
The Lord will let us see his face. Rev 22:3-4
The Lord will let us reign with him for ever and ever. Rev 3:21; 22:5

Three Concluding Riches that Involve All the Other Riches

The Lord loves us. 1 John 4:8-10; Rom 5:8
The Lord saves us. Matt 1:21; Acts 16:31; Heb 7:25
The Lord makes his New Covenant with us. Luke 22:20; Heb 9:14-15

4. Walk with Christ in the Spirit and the Word
enjoying God and his riches of grace

Repentance toward God and  faith in our Lord Jesus Christ

IN CHRIST

justified in Christ the righteousness of God

ransomed, redeemed propitiation, sin atoned, wrath turned
 forgiven peace with God reconciled eternal life adopted sons
 welcomed, accepted filled, complete blessed with every blessing
 Christ our wisdom from God, righteousness and sanctification and redemption
 delivered from domain of darkness into the light of the kingdom of the beloved Son
 in Christ and Christ in us in the Spirit and the Spirit in us, made God's temple
 in God the Father and the Father in us immersed in Father, Son, and Spirit
 Father, Son, and Spirit fellowship with us access to God and his grace answered prayer
 grace at the throne of grace every need supplied the Spirit prays for us, helps us pray
 Christ our High Priest intercedes as mediator Christ our High Priest advocates in our defense
 immersed into Christ and his death and resurrection united with Christ in death and resurrection
 old self in Adam crucified and buried with Christ new self in Christ raised and alive with Christ
 set free from sin instrument for righteousness
 under Christ, abundant grace slaves of Christ not sin
 joined to Christ one with Christ
 seated with Christ hidden with Christ in God
 released from law, married to Christ under law of the Spirit
 Spirit and God's love poured out rivers of living water of Spirit
 immersed in the Spirit born of the Spirit
 given, receive, have Spirit Spirit comes on, falls on us
 anointed with the Spirit sealed with the Spirit
 guarantee of the Spirit Spirit of truth helps, teaches
 Spirit leads Spirit sanctifies
 Spirit power to be ambassadors Spirit gifts for service
 Spirit fills circumcised, set apart in the Spirit
 immeasurably great power God's workmanship led in triumph, victory
 members of Christ's body brothers and sisters branches in Christ's vine
 chosen race, royal priesthood, holy nation, God's possession, God's people
 fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God
 citizenship in heaven hope of glory inheritance, heir, fellow heir
 with Christ at death made perfect glorified to be like Jesus
 into heavenly kingdom enter joy of Lord delivered from wrath
 God's good work completed resurrection body like Jesus
 married to the Lamb every tear wiped away
 see God's face reign forever

**WALKING WITH CHRIST
 IN THE SPIRIT AND THE WORD
 ENJOYING GOD AND HIS GRACE**

**seeking, treasuring and praising the Lord
 trusting God's grace in Christ for all need
 serving others in *agape* love, witness, prayer
 confessing and forsaking all sin**

**loved and saved
 in New Covenant**

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The moment we trust in our crucified and risen King Jesus, God declares us righteous, places us "in Christ" in the Spirit, lavishes upon us the riches Christ purchased for us by his death and resurrection, and empowers us to walk with Christ in the Spirit in *agape* love, enjoying God and his riches of grace. All the Lord's grace in Christ is a gift; He freely supplies all we need spiritually by faith in Christ's finished work and not by our efforts.

Like beggars given billions, we can joyfully withdraw our riches at the bank of the Lord's throne of grace as each new need arises. We can rest in Christ rather than struggle in self-effort. Joy and peace flow when we know how rich we are in Christ and we keep going to the bank with faith and praise in order to live in Christ in the Spirit in *agape* love.

Enjoying the Lord and all he provides in Christ

The Lord designed us to walk together with him in a love relationship filled with communion, cooperation and joy. However, by going our own self-serving ways that do not seek what's best for God and others, we've lost intimate connection with God. Only Jesus lived a life of perfect love with the Lord. He died for us to restore us to the love relationship God desires to share with us as we walk in the riches of his grace!

Placed in Christ

by faith not our efforts

The moment we turn from going our own way and surrender to Christ to go God's way, the Lord forgives us and places us "in Christ." He declares us righteous in his sight by giving us Christ's perfect obedience as our own righteousness before God. He lavishes upon us all the riches of grace Jesus purchased for us on the cross. He empowers us to walk with Christ in the Spirit and God's Word, enjoying God and his riches. We begin to enjoy a love relationship that flows with delight and teamwork.

Believers are no longer "in sin" or "in Adam" but are "*in Christ*." This major truth is emphasized more than 160 times in the New Testament. We are also "in God," "in God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ," not "in the flesh" but "in the Spirit." Christ is in us. The Spirit of God is in us. We are in Christ, in the Spirit, in God, enfolded into the love relationships of communion, cooperation and joy of the Trinity!

Grace freely given

by faith not our efforts

In Christ the riches of God's grace are lavished on us (Eph 1:7-8). God meets all our needs according to his glorious riches in Christ (Phil 4:19). In Christ God gives us himself and his riches of grace! G-R-A-C-E is truly God's Riches At Christ's Expense.

All God's forgiveness, right standing, and many riches "in Christ" are free gifts. God gives us everything in Christ on the basis of Christ's finished work on the cross, not in response to our efforts to please God. All is given on the basis of Christ's perfections, not our performance. Christ purchased all for us by his death. It is finished.

As each need arises, a way to unwrap the gifts from the cross is to commune with the Lord in praise for what he gives in Christ. We drink in strength as we rejoice in his promises. Then in teamwork with the Lord, we let his grace overflow to others.

When we know who we are in Christ, we keep going to God's "throne of grace" (Heb 4:16), like going to the banker at his bank, trusting Jesus our crucified and risen Savior and compassionate High Priest to be everything we need at all times.

Walking with Christ

by faith not our efforts

The Lord wants relationship not "religion." The Lord desires us to walk with Christ in the Spirit and the Word, enjoying God and his riches of grace in Christ. Four skills help us do this. They open up this other world available to us, the world of God, Christ, the Holy Spirit, God's riches in Christ, and God's Word. These four skills are:

1. Seeking, treasuring and praising the Lord.
2. Trusting God's grace in Christ for all need.
3. Serving others in *agape* love, witness, and prayer.
4. Confessing and forsaking all sin.

These are the ways to love God, to walk with Christ, to walk in the Spirit, to be revived, to experience God's victory, and to enjoy God and his riches to the max! This is love filled with communion, cooperation and joy!

God has replaced being religious with resting in Christ for everything, so we walk with Christ in the Spirit and the Word, enjoying God and his riches of grace.

Let's enjoy expanding on these principles on the next two pages.

Look again at the important truths in the center of the “in Christ” diagram:

**WALKING WITH CHRIST
IN THE SPIRIT AND THE WORD
ENJOYING GOD AND HIS GRACE**

**seeking, treasuring and praising the Lord
trusting God’s grace in Christ for all need
serving others in *agape* love, witness, and prayer
confessing and forsaking all sin**

The Lord wants us to walk in loving fellowship with Christ in the Spirit, by faith in his Word, enjoying God and his riches to the maximum. The Lord wants us to live in the center of the “in Christ” diagram, to live in the other world Christ has opened for us - the world of God, Christ, the Spirit, the Word, and God’s riches of grace.

To succeed in this most important goal in life, the Lord wants to enable us:

1. To continually seek, treasure and praise him. 2. To trust God’s grace in Christ for every need; to turn from trying to meet our needs our own way. 3. To serve others in *agape* love, witness, and prayer; to repent of seeking our own interests rather than the interests of others (Phil 2:4). 4. To confess and forsake all known sin.

As we turn from self, 1-2 is the direction of heart to God, 3 is the direction of heart to others, and 4 is the direction of heart against the enemy, sin. Deep repentance and surrender in these areas are steps to revival. They are the ways to love God, to walk with Christ, to walk in the Spirit, and to enjoy God and his riches to the max!

If Christ and his riches are like the tire, rim and spokes in a bicycle wheel, the center of the “in Christ” circle is like a hub that completes a good-working wheel.

Walking with Christ in the Spirit and the Word, Enjoying God and His Grace

The Lord’s purpose for each believer is an intimate love relationship with himself as we walk with Christ in the Spirit and the Word, enjoying God and his riches of grace in Christ.

To walk with Christ is to walk in the Spirit in the Word. Walking in the Spirit is no different than walking with Jesus, for the Spirit is the Spirit of Christ (Rom 8:9; 1 Pet 1:11).

To walk with Christ in the Spirit means we walk together in cooperation, like disciples who follow their mentor everywhere and put his instructions into practice (Matt 7:24). We keep in step (Gal 5:25), like mountain climbers with their guide.

Christ and the Holy Spirit constantly use God’s Word to teach us and lead us. Power is unleashed whenever we turn to the Word, because it is alive, active and enduring (Heb 4:12; 1 Pet 2:23). We live by the Word, not just by food (Matt 4:4).

Jesus walked in the Spirit in the Word, enjoying God and his grace, and we walk in Christ our fullness from God, overflowing with thanksgiving (Col 2:6-10). Since God’s supreme joy is in himself, in all his infinitely superior qualities and grace in Christ, we are made in his image to enjoy God and his grace as supremely superior and satisfying above all.

See the “ABCDE” principles below for more on walking with Christ in the Spirit.

Four key skills

Four disciplines or skills empower us to walk with Christ in the Spirit and the Word, enjoying God and his riches to the max! Like the components of a computer, if one or two components aren’t working, it will seriously affect the whole.

Seeking, Treasuring and Praising the Lord

When believers *seek* the Lord in his Word, we see his glory, resulting in *treasuring, praising* and more *seeking*, but Satan blinds unbelievers from seeing the glory of Christ (2 Cor 4:4). When the Lord is our *treasure* above all else (Foundation 1, page xiv), it is automatic to *seek* and *praise* him. If there is treasure, we automatically seek it, as do kids! If we find treasure, we automatically rejoice, as do kids! We seek what we treasure, and when we find it, we take pleasure in our treasure. With joy we give up all else in order to have God's true treasure (Matt 13:44). Where our treasure is, there our heart is (Matt 6:21).

Constant praise and thanks indicate that we are truly seeking and finding the Lord and his riches of grace in Christ to be our supreme joy, delight, pleasure and treasure. Praise is a clear indicator of walking in the Spirit (Eph 5:18-20), finding all in Christ (Col 2:2-7) and walking in the Word (Col 3:16-17). If we are not praising, God is not in proper focus.

The Father seeks those who truly worship him in spirit and truth, constantly enjoying him with all their heart (John 4:23). Using Scripture to rejoice in the Lord for his infinite perfections and all he provides in Christ is a great way to seek, treasure and praise him.

Trusting God's Grace in Christ for All Need

Faith and getting our needs met in God are essential ingredients of walking with Christ in the Spirit. We need to trust and rest in specific promises. "Thank you, Lord, that you have said you will supply all my needs" (Phil 4:19). It is impossible to walk with the Lord without truly believing his promises (2 Cor 5:7; Heb 4:2, 11:6).

Although the Lord's riches are given freely the moment we trust Christ with saving faith, we need to draw on them by faith in each situation of need (Heb 4:16). If we don't trust the Lord's riches for all needs, we will look to the wrong things to meet our needs! We end up drinking Satan's counterfeits instead of Christ's living water.

The flesh constantly pulls towards immorality, sensuality, hate, anger, conflict, jealousy, selfishness, and being under the influence of drugs and booze (Gal 5:19-21). Christ leads us by his Spirit in his paths of love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control (Gal 5:22-23). I find the "ABCDE" principles to be helpful in trusting Christ for victory over the flesh:

- A Admit our own powerlessness to kill flesh desires
- B Believe Christ died to free us from sin's dominance into life in Christ in the Spirit
- C Call upon the LORD with faith in his Word and surrender; yield and really mean it!
- D Depend on the Spirit to produce Christ and his desires in us
- E Energize faith by praising the Lord for his promises of victory through Christ

Serving Others in *agape* Love, Witness, and Prayer

This summarizes how we relate to others. To walk with Christ in *agape* love means that rather than seeking our own interests, we serve others with a constant attitude of, "What can I do to serve, to help, to encourage?" Trusting the Lord to meet our needs frees us to serve others, rather than manipulating others to meet our needs.

When we walk in love, we share Christ with as many as possible. The Spirit leads us to witness (Acts 1:8) and obey the great commission (Matt 28:18-20).

We also serve others in love by praying for them. "Keep alert . . . making supplication for all the saints" (Eph 6:18). (For more on *agape*, see pages xxviii-xxxii.)

Confessing and Forsaking All Sin

If we are truly seeking to walk with Christ, we will confess and forsake everything that goes against walking with Christ. Confessing and forsaking all sin we become aware of is clear evidence that we love the Lord and are surrendering to him in true repentance. We also confess and seek reconciliation with those we sin against.

Will you develop your four key skills? Will you walk with Christ and enjoy God?

Rest in Christ and walk in Christ with daily thanksgiving!

Lord, I thank you that in Christ:

I am justified in Christ my righteousness

I am ransomed and redeemed

Christ's propitiation atones for my sins
and turns away God's wrath from me

I am forgiven

I have peace with God

I am reconciled to God

I have eternal life

I am adopted as his son, his child

I am welcomed and accepted by God

I am filled, complete in Christ the fullness of God

I am blessed with every spiritual blessing

Christ is to me wisdom from God

Christ is to me righteousness

Christ is to me sanctification, I am a saint

Christ is to me redemption

I am delivered from Satan's darkness

I am transferred to Christ's kingdom of light

I am in Christ and Christ dwells in me

I am in the Spirit and the Spirit dwells in me,
making me God's temple

I am in God the Father and the Father in me

I am immersed in the Father, Son and Spirit

The Father, Son and Spirit fellowship with me

I have access to God and his grace

I have prayer answered through Christ

I am given grace at the throne of grace

I have every need supplied

The Spirit prays for me and helps me pray

Christ Jesus intercedes for me as mediator

Christ advocates his propitiation in my defense

I am immersed and united with Christ in death
and resurrection

My old self in Adam is crucified and buried
with Christ

My new self in Christ is raised and alive with
Christ; I am a new creation

I am set free from sin, dead to sin

I am God's instrument for righteousness

I am under Christ and his abundant grace

I am a slave of Christ for righteousness, not sin

I am joined with Christ and one with Christ

I am seated with Christ

I am hidden with Christ in God

I am released from the law, married to Christ

I am under the law of the Spirit of life in Christ

The Spirit and God's love is poured into me

Rivers of living water of the Spirit flow from me

I am immersed in the Holy Spirit

I am born again of the Spirit, born of God

I am given the Spirit, I've received the Spirit

I have the Holy Spirit

The Holy Spirit comes on me and falls on me

I am anointed with the Spirit

I am sealed with the Spirit, guaranteed inheritance

The Spirit of truth helps and teaches me

The Holy Spirit leads me

The Holy Spirit sanctifies me

I have Spirit power as an ambassador for Christ

The Holy Spirit gifts me for service

The Holy Spirit fills me to do the Lord's will

I am circumcised, set apart to God in the Spirit

I have immeasurably great power

I am God's workmanship

I am led in Christ's triumph and nike victory

I am a member of Christ's body

with brothers and sisters in Christ

I am a branch in Christ's vine

I am in a chosen race

I am part of God's royal priesthood

I am in a holy nation

I am God's possession

I am one of God's people

I am a fellow citizen of the saints

I am a member of God's household

I have citizenship in heaven

I have the hope of glory

I have an inheritance as an heir, fellow heir

I will be with Christ when I die

I will be made perfect in his presence

I will be glorified to be like Jesus

I will be in God's heavenly kingdom

I will enter the joy of the Lord

I will be delivered from the wrath to come

The Lord will complete his good work in me

I will be given a resurrection body like Jesus'

I will be married eternally to the Lamb

I will have every tear wiped away

I will see the Lord's face

I will reign with the Lord for ever

I am loved

I am saved from sin, Satan, death and hell

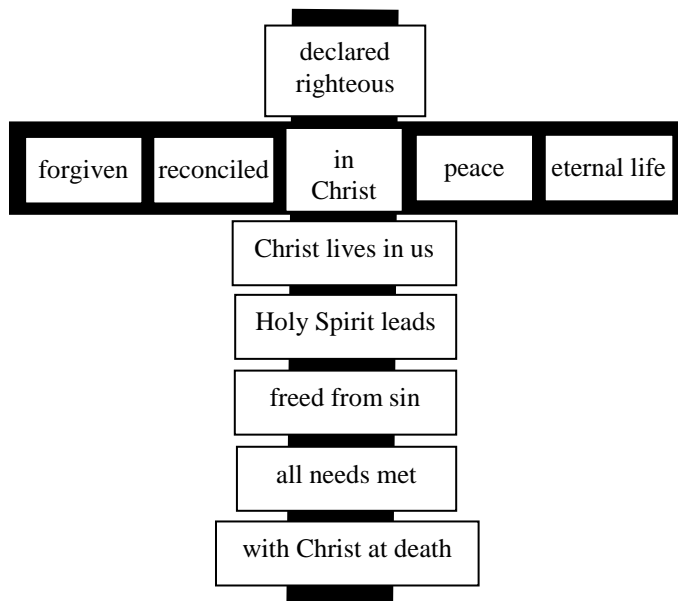
I am in the New Covenant

When the old music plays, eject it

and play the Lord's new music in Christ!

Rest in Christ and walk in Christ by seeing all his riches as gifts attached to his cross

Most Christians can easily envision our sins as nailed to the cross. However, we find more rest in Christ when we also see all Christ's riches as gifts attached to his cross. When in need, we go to the Lord for his grace that meets my need. Our Lord Jesus is reigning on the throne with all power and authority. But all he does for us and all he gives to us is based on his finished work on the cross. It is finished. Christ has purchased all for us. All is ours in Christ. We open his gifts through praise and thanks, as we recall a verse where the LORD promises them.



When in need, I do not work things out with my own self-effort. I rest in Christ. I go to the crucified and risen King with all authority. I thank him for dying to provide all the grace we need for every situation.

If I am lonely, I go to Jesus to drink in the love, acceptance, and fellowship Christ purchased for me by his death. I praise the Lord for not being alone; “Lord, you say I am united with Christ, hidden with Christ in God. Praise you that Jesus revealed, “I am in my Father, you are in me, and I in you” (John 14:20).”

If I am tempted, I praise Jesus that by his death and resurrection he has set me free from sin's power to dominate me. “Lord, you say I am crucified with Christ and freed from sin. Instead of giving in to this temptation, I thank you for empowering me by your Spirit to walk in your *agape* love.” (Also see the picture on the next page.)

If I stumble into sin, I confess it, turn from it, and praise the Lord. “Lord, you say that by the death and resurrection of Christ I am forgiven, declared righteous, and in full fellowship with you. Praise you that Christ's blood keeps on cleansing.”

Rest in Christ and walk in Christ for victory over sinful urges



“How can we who died to sin still live in it? Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized (immersed) into Christ Jesus were baptized (immersed) into his death? We were buried therefore with him by baptism (immersion) into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life” (Rom 6:2-4; to baptize means to immerse, like John baptized Jesus).

When Jesus died, he did not die just to forgive us and cleanse us of our sins. He died and rose that we might be immersed into his death and resurrection, freed from the power of sin to dominate us, and empowered by his Spirit to walk in *agape* love. He rose that he might create in us a new self, raised to new life in Christ, in the Spirit, under his authority, no longer under the authority of sin. Our old self that was a slave to sin was crucified and put to death with him (Rom 6:6-7). If we are believers in Christ, we are not trying to get the LORD to crucify us with Christ. We are crucified. We are raised and united.

The diagram above pictures these truths. Can you see yourself there with Jesus?

The foolish cravings of the flesh within believers constantly war against the ways of the Spirit of Christ (Galatians 5:16-17). The root problem of many Christians is walking in the flesh in selfishness rather than walking in Christ in the Spirit in *agape* love.

We are under Christ’s authority, dead to sin, freed from sin. Sins such as anger, selfishness, lust and impure thoughts have no right to boss us around. We can walk in Christ in the Spirit in *agape* love when tempted to selfishness. This is victory and rest in the war.

Romans 6-8 gives very helpful direction on what to do when tempted:

Consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus (Rom 6:11)

Let not sin reign in you to make you obey its passions; don’t obey flesh impulses (Rom 6:12)

Do not present / offer your members to sin as instruments for unrighteousness (Rom 6:13)

Present /offer yourselves to God as those brought from death to life and your members as instruments for righteousness, for you are under grace not sin and law (6:13-14)

Present / offer yourselves as slaves to obedience, righteousness and God (6:16, 19, 22)

Die to the law by death with Christ to belong to Christ and serve God in the Spirit (Rom 7:4,6)

Walk / live according to the Spirit, not according to the flesh (Rom 8:4)

Set your minds on the things of the Spirit, not the things of the flesh (Rom 8:5)

By the Spirit put to death the body’s sinful deeds; kill flesh by walking in the Spirit (Rom 8:13)

Follow the leading of the Spirit (Rom 8:14)

(For more on this, see Days 11, 22-31, 59.)

Some examples of resting and walking in Christ in victory over sin

Seven-year-old Nancy is in quite an unhappy uncooperative mood. Mother Karen's flesh reaction is to angrily tell Nancy off and force her to cooperate. But she realizes that the flesh is tempting her to be selfish and not walk in the Spirit in agape love that is patient and kind (1 Cor 13:4). Karen prays, "Lord Jesus, thank you that you are here to lead me in God's love poured into my heart by the Holy Spirit (Rom 5:5). Thank you that in Christ I am freed from sin's power to dominate me and I am under your authority to be infused with your love in all situations. You have compassion and firm love for Nancy. I can not produce this myself (Rom 7:18). I turn from the flesh. I yield to you right now to produce in me your agape love as I speak kindly to Nancy, try to cheer her up, and firmly but lovingly call her to cooperate. If she continues to disobey, I trust you for calmness to simply apply the consequences established for willful disobedience listed in the bedroom and not get in a power struggle."

Dave's flesh is aroused by a pretty coworker named Sue who smiles as she sifts through files before asking him a question. Dave quickly thinks, "Lord you have nothing but pure agape love for all women. You say and do only what builds others up and gives grace (Eph 4:29). The flesh seeks to take from others. You seek to give to others. You meet all my needs in Christ. Sue is holy to the Lord. She can never satisfy my deepest longings, but walking with you in purity brings deepest joy and satisfaction. I want you more than anything in life, Lord. What can I say to care for her in a pure way as Jesus would? Make me a holy vessel of your love, Lord."

Elaine has just made an innocent mistake, but Bill has ripped into her about it. Elaine's flesh pulls strongly at her to defend herself and resent Bill's callousness. She prays, "Lord, your agape love seeks to do good to those who do not do good to you (Matt 5:43-48; Luke 6:26-28). Your agape love does not retaliate when others hurt you and treat you unjustly (1 Pet 2:23). On the basis of Christ's death and intercession kill this flesh reaction in me by replacing it with your *agape* reaction that treats people far more kindly than deserved. Produce in me a soft answer (Prov 15:1) that seeks peace (Matt 5:9). I can not produce this myself. Help me to take responsibility and say I'm sorry for my mistake and leave Bill's hurtful words to you. I believe you are in me to enable me to minister to his needs rather than put my needs first."

Linda and Gail have just been introduced to each other. Linda thinks, "I wonder what Gail will think of me. What can I say to make her like me?" Gail thinks differently because she wants to walk with Christ enjoying God and his riches. Gail prays, "Lord, thank you that you are here wanting to minister. Thank you for meeting all my needs out of your glorious riches of grace in Christ. You dearly love Linda. What can I say to make her feel that someone cares? What do you want to do here?"

Whenever Karen, Dave, Tracy or Gail realize they have chosen to walk in the flesh rather than with Christ, they quickly ask for cleansing, praise God for the all-sufficient power of the cross of Christ to cleanse and restore, and surrender again to walk in Christ in the Spirit in God's agape love.

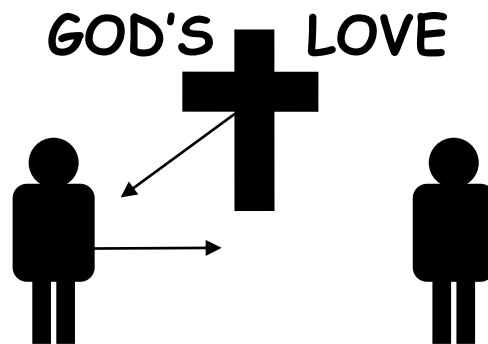
5. Let Christ and his riches produce God's *agape* love

The Lord brings healing for our fractured souls through salvation in Christ. Instead of depending on others to meet our needs, we get our needs met by depending on Christ and his riches. Instead of hurting others, we walk in the *agape* love of God.

Many people have grown up in unhealthy homes where hurt people hurt people. Perhaps it was extremely unhealthy, with a family member denying their problem with alcohol, drugs, sex, or gambling. Perhaps there was physical, emotional, or sexual abuse. Perhaps the unhealthiness was less extreme, but it was still hurtful, unnourishing, and neglectful. Our parents' example may have trained us in denial, blameshifting, not taking responsibility, anger, manipulation, controlling, neglect, selfishness, invasion of personal boundaries, and lack of forgiveness. This may have produced in us shame, guilt, fear, low self-worth, anger, resentment, withdrawal, anxiety, codependency and numbed emotions.

No matter what hurt we may have, God's healing is the same. 1. Get your needs met by depending on Christ and his riches. 2. Walk in the *agape* love of God.

What is a healthy person like?



Healthy people have connection with the Lord of love. They love the Lord and how he meets their needs through his riches in Christ. They let the riches of the love of God flow into their hearts, then they let God's love flow out to others.

They reject the unhealthy ways of living for oneself where the constant concern in their relationships is "What is in this for me? How can this other person serve me and encourage me?" They want to experience the love of God flowing through them. Their attitude is "Lord, thank you for your love and riches that meet my needs. How can I encourage, serve, and do good to this person with your love?"

Jesus is the great example of the deepest health and wholeness. He did what was best for those others rejected and neglected. He did many amazing miracles of kindness and love. Even when cruelly hated and tortured, he depended on the Father to meet his needs and he let the love of God determine his attitudes and actions. "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do" (Luke 23:34). Christ died to rescue selfish, sinful rebels from the hell we deserve. He had the highest health and love.

Healthy people walk in love with Jesus. The Spirit of Jesus produces in them "love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control" (Gal 5:22-23). Walking with Christ in the Spirit is the way of true health.

Whenever they find themselves off track in the unhealthy ways of selfishly wanting to get from people rather than give, they once again depend on Christ and his riches to meet their needs and they walk again in *agape* love. They don't let their hearts get clogged up with junk like anger, arguing, crabbiness, unkindness, selfishness, and blocked compassion.

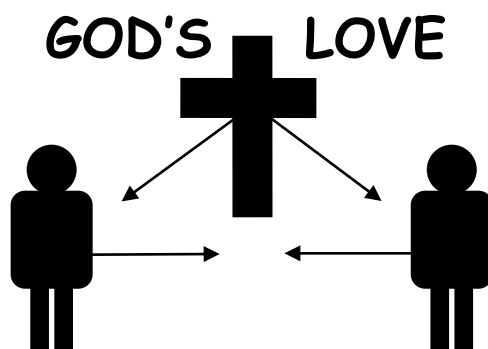
They recognize what is not the love of Christ and turn from it. “Lord, fill my heart with your riches so I walk in your love, whether others around me walk in your love or not.”

God’s solution for people with hurtful pasts is the same as for all sinners. Get your needs met by depending on Christ and his riches. Walk in the *agape* love of God.

What is it in us that often prevents an *agape* response to the sins and failures of others? Pride! Pride responds with frustration and sinful reaction. “Don’t give me problems! Stop being so selfish! That’s not right! Do what I want!” Pride demands things go its way; it doesn’t accept that our plans and comfort should be affected by the failures of others. Pride responds to evil with an evil response of pride; pride returns evil for evil.

In contrast, *agape humbly* accepts the sinful actions of others as trials sent from the Lord to refine them. *Agape* doesn’t fight against every little slight and problem people give them; Jesus had long days with sinful people, and he was not busy taking offense and being side-tracked from *agape*! *Agape* leaves judgment to God the Judge, accepts suffering in the will of God, abides in God’s fullness rather than in neediness, bears the hurt and lets the hurter go free by responding in grace to do what is in the other’s best interests!

What is a healthy relationship like?



When two people daily open their hearts to God and his riches in Christ, wanting the love of Christ to flow through them to the other, they are definitely going to experience giving and receiving genuine, healthy, unselfish love.

When they are together they are not thinking, “How can I get what I want from this person? How can I get my needs met?” They are thinking, “What can I say or do that is for the best of this person? How can I love them with God’s love?”

Healthy people realize that they must constantly deal with fleshly selfishness that constantly seeks to disrupt a loving relationship (Gal 5:16-23). When the flesh and selfishness invades their love relationship, their main focus is to take responsibility for *their own* unloving actions and reactions and let God fix *their own* clogged heart. They see this as God’s priority for *them*. Their attitude is one of “Lord, deal with me about me. I leave it up to you to deal with them about them.”

Unhealthy people focus on what they see as the *other’s* failure and selfishness. They don’t deal with *their own* sin.

God wants us to experience the power of his love making us kind and good to those who are not loving to us. Of course, we also want others to take responsibility and take their clogged hearts to the Lord to fix. And so does God. But as soon as just one turns to walking in love, God has a powerful influence on others to turn to his ways of love and peace. In healthy relationships, everyone is letting the love of God flow into their hearts, then letting the love of God flow out of their hearts towards others.

What is God's "Agape" Love Like?

God's love revealed by Christ dying for us is so radically different from other loves like *phileo* brotherly love that a new word for love is used in the New Testament – *agape*.⁴

Agape is not at all like "*eros*" love which has passionate physical desire for another with a desire to possess for oneself and please oneself, for God's *agape* does not spring from graspingness or neediness; God gives out of his fullness in himself.

God's *agape* is humble; a proud God would never stoop to becoming man and being crucified by hate-filled sinners, but would retaliate in revenge. Human pride reacts to the sins of others with frustration, anger, and judgment; pride prevents *agape* in the Spirit.

Agape goes way beyond doing good to those who do good to you, loving those who love you, or giving at some cost to yourself if you consider the other worthy.

God's *agape* love in Christ humbly and compassionately gave at great cost to himself as the Son of God bore our sins in order to lavish God's very best, the unsearchable riches of his grace in Christ, on both believing Jew and Gentile deserving wrath, sharing himself in an eternal love relationship of oneness, with joy and satisfaction in God beyond comprehension. "In this is *agape*, not that we have loved (*agape*) God but that he loved (*agape*) us and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins. . . . that we might live through him." (1 John 4:10, 9).

Agape sends his Son to die for sinners (Rom 5:8; 1 John 3:16, 4:10) in order to share himself in an eternal union of love relationship (Eph 5:25-32).

Agape humbly bears unjust treatment, leaves judgment to God, forgives and seeks to reconcile rather than angrily criticize, retaliate or withdraw (1 Pet 2:21-25; Luke 23:34).

Agape has compassion that deeply cares for all with empathy and genuine concern for their welfare (Matthew 9:36). *Agape* loves even hurtful enemies (Rom 5:8; Matt 5:43-48; Luke 6:27-36). *Agape* feeds the hungry, gives drink to the thirsty, welcomes in the stranger, clothes the naked, looks after the sick, and visits the imprisoned (Matt 25:35-39).

Agape sacrifices at great cost to oneself (1 John 3:16) - Christ gave up all, even fellowship with the Father, to suffer and die for us.

Agape seeks the best of others, not the things of self (Phil 2:3-5, 20-21; 1 Cor 13:5); *agape* seeks to serve, not be served (Matt 20:28).

Agape lavishes riches of grace in Christ, all secured by Christ's sacrifice (Eph 1:6-8, 2:7; Rom 8:32; see the riches of grace in the "in Christ" diagram on page xvi).

Agape gives grace freely, without strings, unconditionally; it is not earned or deserved (Rom 3:24; 1 Cor 2:12; Eph 2:8-9; for more on *agape*, see Day 58).

I love how Jesus expressed God's oneness-forever love resulting from his death and resurrection. "In that day you will know that I am in my Father, and you in me and I in you" (John 14:20). God shares himself in personal fellowship with us as we live in him and he in us!

"By this we know *agape* love, that he laid down his life for us, and we ought to lay down our lives for the brothers" (1 John 3:16, italicized word added).

To love (*agape*) God by making personal sacrifices to seek his best interests, and to love (*agape*) all people are how the Lord intends us to put his riches of grace to use.

Do I love as God *agape* loves? Evil is the absence of God and his love.

Do people say I lavish love on them in a way they clearly do not deserve?

The death of our Lord Jesus Christ is the fountain of God's *agape* love.

⁴ "'Agape' is not a classical word at all; it is doubtful if there is any classical instance of it. . . . We can only find scattered and rare occurrences of the word 'agape,' which is to become the very key word of NT ethics." William Barclay, New Testament Words (London: SCM Press, 1964), 18, 19.

The death of Jesus lavishes the love of God upon us as we respond in repentance and faith.

If Jesus Christ had not died for us, we wouldn't have any riches of grace from God.
Every gift of love and grace we receive flows from and is connected with the cross of Christ.

justified, declared righteous ransomed, redeemed
 propitiation, sin atoned, wrath turned away
 forgiven peace with God reconciled eternal life
 adopted sons welcomed, accepted filled, complete
 blessed with every blessing
 Christ is our wisdom from God, righteousness
 and sanctification and redemption
 delivered from the domain of darkness into
 the light of the kingdom of the beloved Son
 in Christ and Christ in us in the Spirit and the Spirit in us, God's temple in God the Father and Father in us
 immersed in the Father, Son and Holy Spirit Father, Son and Holy Spirit fellowship with us
 access to God and his grace answered prayer grace at the throne of grace
 every need supplied the Spirit prays for us, helps us pray
 Christ intercedes for us as our one mediator Christ advocates his propitiation in our defense
 immersed into Christ in death and resurrection united with Christ in death and resurrection
 old self in Adam crucified and buried with Christ new self in Christ raised and alive with Christ
 set free from sin body members instruments for righteousness under Christ and his abundant grace
 slaves of Christ for righteousness joined to Christ one with Christ seated with Christ
 hidden with Christ in God released from the law to be married to Christ
 under the law of the Spirit of life in Christ the Spirit and God's love poured in
 rivers of living water of the Spirit flow out of us immersed in the Spirit
 born of the Spirit given the Spirit receive the Spirit
 have the Spirit the Spirit comes on us, falls on us
 anointed with the Spirit sealed with Spirit, guaranteed inheritance
 the Spirit of truth helps and teaches us
 the Spirit leads and sanctifies us
 empowered by the Spirit as ambassadors for Christ
 the Spirit gifts for service the Spirit fills us
 circumcised, set apart to God in the Spirit
 immeasurably great power God's workmanship
 led in triumphal procession and nuke victory
 members of Christ's body brothers and sisters
 branches in Christ's vine
 Chosen race, royal priesthood, holy nation,
 God's possession, God's people
 fellow citizens with the saints members of God's household
 citizenship in heaven hope of glory
 inheritance, heir, fellow heir with Christ at death
 made perfect in his presence glorified to be like Jesus
 into heavenly kingdom enter the joy of the Lord
 delivered from wrath to come God's good work completed
 resurrection body like Jesus married to the Lamb every tear wiped away
 see God's face reign forever loved and saved in the New Covenant

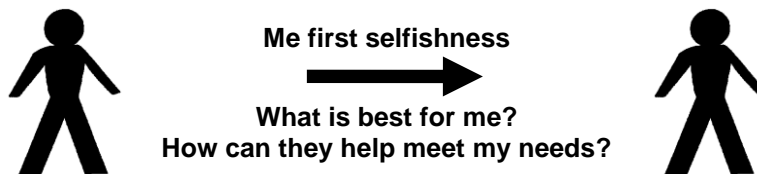
johncrozieris@gmail.com © 2021

Spirit-led People Have an *Agape* Mind-set in All Relationships

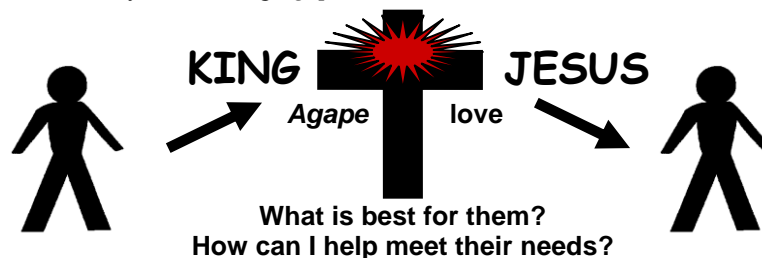
The Spirit of Christ in us is leading us to make *agape* love our way of living in every situation. “The term “agape principle” means that the virtue of *agape* becomes the basic fundamental rule of life that governs thoughts, attitudes and actions.”⁵

Earnest followers of Jesus, from the Apostle John on, have emphasized that Spirit-led people walk in *agape* love. “If we *agape* love one another, God lives in us and his love is made complete in us. . . . God is *agape* love. Whoever lives in *agape* love lives in God, and God in him” (1 John 4:12, 16, italicized words added).

Many relate to others only from their own selfish perspective. “How can I get this person to like me and accept me? What can I say or do that will make this person serve me and do good to me? How can this interchange best serve my interests? How can I avoid being hurt by this person?” As Larry Crabb says, when we look to others to meet our needs, we are like a tic on a deer. In many interchanges and relationships, there are two tics and no deer! And God says serving self is sin.



But those who walk with Christ in *agape* love have a mind-set that puts the interests and needs of others ahead of themselves. “Father, you meet all my needs in my Lord Jesus. What can I do to help and encourage this person? What is their need right now? How can I love them with your amazing *agape* love? What would Jesus do?”



Agape love constantly views others from Christ’s perspective. “God loves them. Christ died for them. The Lord wants to do what is best for them. Christ lives in me. I am his instrument of *agape* in this world. I do not have a right to do anything self-seeking or hurtful, but only what is for the good of the other.”

God’s way to the deepest health and wholeness is 1. Get your needs met by depending on Christ and his riches. 2. Walk with Christ in the Spirit in God’s *agape* love.

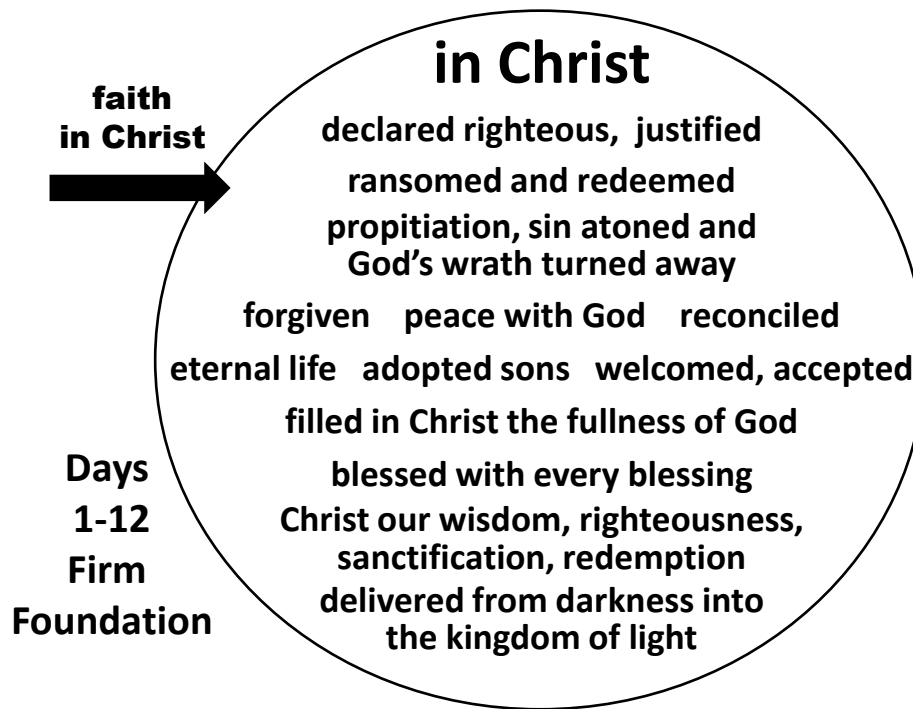
Now let’s enjoy learning from the rest of the book how God’s riches in Christ meet all our needs. Then with our needs met, we are freed from selfishness to walk in love.

⁵ Doug Harris, “Theology of Relationship Renewal,” Transitional Pastoral Ministries Workshop (Cambridge, ON: Outreach Canada, Oct. 6-8 2003), SN 9.

Let's start our sixty day adventure in

THE GRACE OF GOD IN CHRIST

Sixty days of meditations
that can completely change our lives
and make us joyfully satisfied
in God's fullness and love in Christ



Because we are depending on Christ who died for our sins and rose:

Gift # 1

Day 1 The Lord justifies us in Christ the righteousness of God

²⁰ For by works of the law no human being will be *justified* in his sight, . . . ²¹ But now the *righteousness* of God has been manifested apart from the law, although the Law and the Prophets bear witness to it -- ²² the *righteousness* of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all who believe. For there is no distinction: ²³ for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, ²⁴ and are *justified* by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. (Rom 3:20-24; italics added) (see also Gal 2:16)

When we cry out to the crucified and risen Jesus to save us from our sins and the hell we deserve, the infinitely holy God declares us righteous in Christ, justified, “just as if I’d” not sinned, “just as if I’d” obeyed all. We are not just forgiven of our wrongs. Christ’s perfect obedience to God becomes our righteousness, our right standing with God. Christ’s death provides forgiveness. Christ’s holy life of perfect obedience provides righteousness.

God’s justification in Christ makes us “holy and blameless before him” (Eph 1:4)!

The Lord is holy and only fellowships with those made as righteous as he is. Like doctors avoid contamination and deadly viruses, God doesn’t join himself to one germ of sin. We are thoroughly unrighteous, sinful rebels against God, unable to do one truly righteous act. Our just Judge must declare us guilty of breaking his holy laws. If we are not justified in Christ, the Holy One must separate himself from us now, and forever on the day of judgment.

We can exchange our sin for Christ’s righteousness! As written around 180 A.D., “O the sweet exchange . . . that the wickedness of many should be hidden in one righteous Man and the righteousness of the One should justify many wicked!”⁶

Satan’s grip on us due to our sin is broken when God justifies us in Christ.

In Romans 3:20-24 above, note the great Reformation truths of justification by *sola Christus* – Christ alone (22, 24), *sola fide* – faith alone (22), and *sola gratia* – grace alone (24).

Q. 33. What is justification? Westminster Shorter Catechism

“Justification is an act of God’s free grace, wherein he pardons all our sins, and accepts us as righteous in his sight, only for the righteousness of Christ imputed to us, and received by faith alone.” (imputed = Greek *logizomai* = counted, credited, used 11 times in Romans 4)

God is also justified in justifying us because 1. Christ’s death is the just punishment for our sin and 2. we now have Christ the righteousness of God. God’s justice is satisfied. Jesus is the one “whom God put forward as a propitiation . . . to show God’s righteousness . . . that he might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus” (Rom 3:25-26).

The moment we are justified, God places us in Christ and lavishes upon us all his riches of grace! We go from rags to riches, from judgment to overflowing grace in Christ!

Receive Christ and his righteousness = receive all God’s riches of grace in Christ.

Reject Christ and his righteousness = reject all God’s riches of grace in Christ.

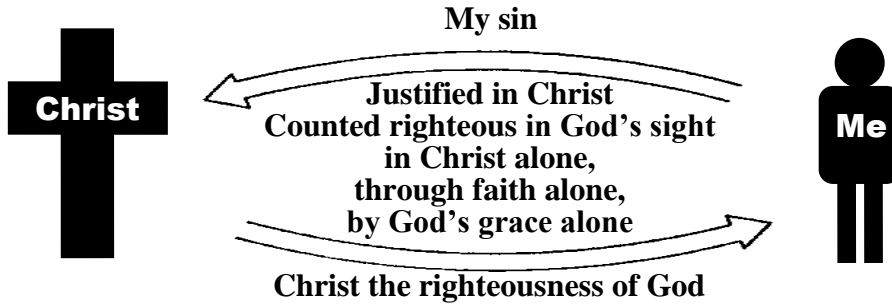
If forgiveness is like having all our financial debts cancelled, receiving Christ and his righteousness is like having billions put in our account. Beggars become rich in Christ!

When you sin, will you stay stuck in guilt, or will you turn from sin to the Lord, confess your failure, trust him for his righteousness provided in Christ, and by faith *praise* the Lord for the righteous Son of God who makes us as righteous before God as he is?

Affirm your faith--Lord, praise you that by Christ’s death and resurrection you declare me righteous in Christ! Jesus is my righteousness, my justification!

⁶ The Epistle To Diognetus, IX 5, *Early Christian Writings*, trans. Maxwell Staniforth (Harmondsworth, Middx.: Penguin Books, 1968).

The Lord justifies us, declares us righteous



“We know that a person is not justified by works of the law but through faith in Jesus Christ, so we also have believed in Christ Jesus, in order to be justified by faith in Christ and not by works of the law, because by works of the law no one will be justified” (Gal 2:16).

(Connect this diagram with the Great Exchange diagram on page xv)

Reflection questions

In Romans 3:20, in what ways will no human being be justified in God's sight?

By _____ of the _____

In Romans 3:22, in what way can sinners be counted as righteous in God's sight?

The righteousness of God is through _____ in Jesus Christ for _____ who _____.

In Romans 3:23-24, why is there no distinction in how Jew and Gentile are justified in God's sight?

Because _____ have _____ and fall _____ of the _____ of God (and his righteousness)

Because all are _____ by his _____ as a _____, through the _____

that is _____ Christ Jesus.

In Galatians 2:16 above, how is a person justified?

We know that a person is not justified by _____ of the _____ but through _____

in _____, so we also have _____ in Christ Jesus, in order to

be justified by _____ in _____ and not by _____ of the _____,

because by _____ of the _____ will be justified.

Can you draw and explain the “Justified in Christ” diagram in order to share it with a friend?

Day 2 The Lord ransoms and redeems us

Gift # 2

¹⁸ You were ransomed . . . not with perishable things such as silver or gold, ¹⁹ but with the precious blood of Christ, like that of a lamb without blemish or spot. (1 Pet 1:18-19)

The Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many. (Matt 20:28)

Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us" (Gal 3:13).

¹³ Waiting for our blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ, ¹⁴ who gave himself for us to redeem us from all lawlessness and to purify for himself a people for his own possession who are zealous for good works. (Titus 2:13-14)

Striking illustrations of being redeemed came from the Sudan in the 1990's. Many were abducted from southern Sudan and sold into slavery in the north. Organizations like Christian Solidarity *redeemed* many slaves by paying a *ransom* price of money to free the slaves to go back to their homes and families.⁷ Likewise, in more recent years some countries have paid a *ransom* to Somali pirates to free their sailors and ships taken hostage.

Redemption and ransom go together. Christ is our Redeemer and Ransom. He redeems us by paying the ransom payment required to free us. The ransom payment is extremely costly and valuable. All the money in the world is not enough to ransom us, for money is perishable, but we are redeemed with the imperishable and righteous Savior, "with the precious blood of Christ, like that of a lamb without blemish" (1 Pet 1:18-19 above). The infinitely valuable Son of Man gave his life as the ransom payment (Matt 20:28).

Redemption is both *from* and *to*, as when the Lord redeemed his people *from* slavery in Egypt *into* covenant relationship with himself in the promised land (such as in Ex 6:6-8). Through the ransom payment of his Son, God delivers us *from* slavery to sin, death, and Satan *to* freedom, prosperity and fullness of life hidden with Christ in God in the Spirit.

"Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us" (Gal 3:13). The law curses and condemns all who disobey its commands (Gal 3:10) so that "no one is justified before God by the law" (Gal 3:11). Christ bore the curse and judgment of God as if he were a cursed law breaker, so his death redeems (frees, looses) us *from* the curse of sinning against God's commands *into* the overflowing favor of *justification by faith in Christ, receiving the Spirit, and adoption as sons who are heirs of God* (Gal 3:8,14; 4:4-6).

Christ's redemption frees us *from* the power of sin and Satan *to* walk in the Spirit in righteousness. Jesus gave himself "to redeem us from all lawlessness and to purify for himself a people for his own possession who are zealous for good works" (Titus 2:14 above). At his return is "our adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies" (Rom 8:23), with deliverance from all oppression as God's enemies are judged (also in Ex 6:6-8 above).

Redemption in the Old Testament also has the idea of being "bought back" as when property or people were sold to pay debts then "redeemed" (Lev 25:25-28, 48-52). We are bought to belong to God, "obtained with his own blood" (Acts 20:28).

Do you struggle with inferiority, shame, or guilt? Do sinful habits dominate you? Picture the Lord saying to you, "I have redeemed you with the blood of my Son! You are holy and pure in my sight. My Spirit frees you from all wickedness, slavery, defeat, and oppression into my purity, liberty, prosperity, and blessing in Christ. Refuse bondage."

Will you give in to sin's temptations or will you let Christ's cross free you as God provides in redemption in Christ? Stand firm in Christ your Redeemer and Ransom.

Affirm who you are in Christ--Praise you, Lord, that in Christ you redeem and ransom me! Jesus is my redemption and ransom! I am bought to belong to God!

⁷ Mark O'Keefe, "Enslavement in Sudan," The Vancouver Sun, (Vancouver, B.C.), 18 Dec. 1998, 21(A).

Reflection questions

In 1 Peter 1:18, what can not redeem our souls?

_____ things such as _____ or _____

In 1 Peter 1:18-19, what has Christ done? How?

What? You were _____. How? With the precious _____ of _____, like that of a _____ without _____ or _____.

Christ is imperishable, the one and only eternal Son of God, whose blood is of infinite value!

In Matthew 20:28, what did Jesus come to the earth to do?

The Son of Man came not to be _____ but to _____ and to _____ his _____ as a _____ for many.

In Titus 2:14, why did our great God and Savior Jesus Christ give himself for us?

He gave himself for us to _____ us from all _____ and to _____ for himself a people for his own _____ who are _____ for _____ works.

Is redemption only about forgiveness of sin? What does Christ redeem us from and to ? (para 3 and 5)

Through the _____ payment of his _____, God redeems us *from* _____ to _____, _____ and _____ *to* _____ and _____ in _____, *to* _____ of _____ in _____.

Christ's redemption _____ us from the power of _____ and _____ to walk in the _____ in _____.

At his return will be "our adoption as sons, the _____ of our _____"

Praise you, Lord, that in Christ you redeem and ransom us! You do more than forgive us; you also free us from slavery to sin into fullness of life hidden with Christ in God in the Spirit! You unite us with yourself to know you in your eternal fellowship and glory in Christ! Jesus is the tremendous price paid as our ransom! How terrible our sin must be. How great our debts to you must be, that only the ransom of the infinitely valuable Son of God is sufficient a price to redeem us. We are bought to belong to you!

Day 3 Christ's propitiation atones for sin and turns away God's wrath

Gift # 3

²⁴ Christ Jesus, ²⁵ whom God put forward as a propitiation (atoning sacrifice, NIV) by his blood, to be received by faith. This was to show God's righteousness, because in his divine forbearance he had passed over former sins. (Rom 3:24-25)

Therefore he had to be made like his brothers in every respect, so that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in the service of God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people. (Heb 2:17)

Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us-- (Gal 3:13)

Some people's parents were always very angry with them whenever they did something wrong. As believers, they think God is this way. However, Jesus is the atoning sacrifice, the propitiation, that has turned God's wrath away from believers. When believers sin, God has zealous love and may discipline us, but his anger is turned away in Christ.

The atonement cover or mercy seat (*kipper* in Hebrew, meaning lid or cover) was the lid covering the Ark of the Covenant in the Most Holy Place (Exod 25:17-22). Once a year, on the Day of Atonement (*Yom Kipper* in Hebrew), the high priest went behind the curtain to sprinkle the blood of the sacrifice on the cover to make atonement for Israel's sins and turn away God's wrath (e.g. Num 16:46-47). Note how atonement covered the covenant.

In the New Covenant, the blood of Jesus is presented to God as the propitiation for sin. Christ's death demonstrates God's righteousness in punishing sin, for before Jesus died God had left the sins of his people in heaven unpunished, such as with Abraham, Moses, Daniel and the rest enjoying God in his glory (Rom 3:24-25). Christ bore God's wrath in judgment for our sins instead of us; he became cursed for us (Gal 3:10,13). Because Christ's sacrifice propitiates (appeases) God's wrath, Christ's propitiation turns away God's wrath from us.

The Lord's wrath is his holy and just response to sin, like surgery and chemo treatments are a Doctor's strong response to cancer. Christ's death demonstrates God's justice.

Although some think atonement simply means "covering" our sins, as great as this is, emphasis should be that Christ's propitiation bears God's punishment and wrath for our sin, satisfies God's justice, appeases God and turns away his wrath on the basis of his substitute sin sacrifice, thus delivering us from sin, punishment, wrath, death and hell.

Christ our *Passover* sacrifice (1 Cor 5:7) also turns away God's judgment. "When I see the blood, I will pass over you. No destructive plague will touch you" (Exod 12:13).

Whereas Romans 3:25 emphasizes God's righteousness, 1 John 4:10 points out how Christ's propitiation manifests God's love. "God is love. . . . In this the love of God was made manifest . . . he loved us and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins" (1 John 4:8, 9, 10).

Hebrews 2:17 not only points out how Jesus had to be human to be the merciful and faithful high priest representing humans to God, but Jesus also had to become human in order to be the true substitutionary propitiation, bearing God's wrath upon humans.

Christ's propitiation is once for all, thus opening a new way of access to God, as seen in God tearing the curtain in the Most Holy Place (Matt 27:50-51; Heb 9:12). Christ's atonement also results in "at-one-ment," making us one with God through faith in Jesus.

When you sin, quickly confess it, forsake it, and with praise truly trust Christ's atoning sacrifice to have satisfied God's justice in punishment for sin, forever turning away God's wrath. Don't fear punishment, but truly repent. If God disciplines, be trained by it.

Praise you, Lord, that Christ's atoning sacrifice is your substitute punishment for my sin that satisfies your justice and delivers me from being punished with your wrath in hell.

Reflection questions

In Romans 3:25, what has God put forward Jesus to be for us?

a _____ by his _____

In Romans 3:25, how must we respond to Christ's propitiation for it to be effective in us?

To be received by _____ in Christ's blood as the propitiation for our sins

In Romans 3:25, what does Christ's propitiation show about God?

This was to show God's _____, because in his divine _____

he had passed over former sins of those already in heaven; now those sins are punished.

In Hebrews 2:17, for what two reasons did Jesus need to be made like us in every respect?

Therefore he had to be made like his brothers in every respect, so that he might

become a _____ and _____ _____ in the service of God,

to make _____ for the _____ of the _____.

In Galatians 3:13, from what does Christ redeem us, and how?

Christ redeemed us from the _____ of the _____ by becoming a _____ for _____

In 1 John 4:10, how has God shown his love for us?

God loved us and _____ his Son to be the _____ for our _____.

What does Christ's atoning sacrifice do for those who believe? (paragraph 5)

Christ's propitiation bears God's _____ and _____ for our _____,

_____ God's _____, _____ God and _____

his _____ on the basis of his _____ sin _____, thus _____ us

from _____, _____, _____, _____ and _____.

Can you explain Christ's atonement to a non-Christian using the illustration of the Day of Atonement in the Old Testament?

Day 4 The Lord forgives us

Gift # 4

Blessed are those whose lawless deeds are forgiven (*aphiemi*, sent away), and whose sins are covered. Blessed is the man against whom the Lord will not count (*logizomai*) his sin. (Rom 4:7-8)

In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses. (Eph 1:7)

Consider some of the beautiful pictures of what forgiveness is in Christ.

To send away. When God forgives, he *sends away* our sins like sending away the scapegoat into the wilderness (Lev 16:21-22). In Rom 4:7 above, to forgive is the Greek verb *aphiemi*, to *send away* (also Matt 6:12; 18:27,32; 1 John 1:9). In Eph 1:7 above, forgiveness is *aphesis*, the noun form of *aphiemi* (also Matt 26:28; Luke 24:47; Acts 2:38; 5:31; 13:38).

To cover. Blessed are those whose sins God covers (Romans 4:7 above).

To not count against. Romans 4:8 above. Note the Greek verb *logizomai* (“imputata” in Latin) is also used ten other times in Romans 4 to stress how God *counts*, *credits*, *reckons* God’s righteousness to us in Christ by faith! (Rom 4:3,4,5,6,9,10,11,22,23,24)

To cancel the debt. “Forgive us (*aphiemi*, send away) our *debts*, as we also have forgiven our *debtors*” (Matt 6:12; italics added). See also Matthew 18:21-35; Luke 7:41-48.

To remember no more. “I am he who blots out your transgressions for my own sake, and I will not remember your sins” (Isa 43:25; remember = to mark down, to record, similar to not count against. Also note the blotting out of our sins.)

To blot out, to wipe out. “Repent therefore, and turn again, that your sins may be blotted out” (Acts 3:19; also Isa 43:25 above). Our sins are erased and gone from our record.

To lift off. NASA in the U.S. space program is the Hebrew word “nasa” meaning “lift off.” When God forgives, he “lifts off” our sins from us. “Please forgive (nasa) the transgression of your brothers and their sin” (Gen 50:17). Join God’s NASA program!

To remove. “As far as the east is from the west, so far does he remove our transgressions from us” (Psa 103:12).

To free, to loose, to release. “Jesus Christ . . . has freed us from our sins by his blood” (Rev 1:5; loosed ASV, released NASB).

To wash. “They have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb” (Rev 7:14). “But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit” (1 Cor 6:11).

To cleanse, to make clean. Washing leads to cleansing. In Leviticus, when we go against God’s holiness we are *unclean*, unable to draw near to worship, needing *cleansing* through a sin sacrifice to make us *clean*. “How much more will the blood of Christ . . . purify (cleanse NIV, NKJV, NASV) our conscience” (Heb 9:14). “Enter the holy places by the blood of Jesus . . . with our hearts sprinkled clean” (Heb 10:19, 22). “If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness (1 John 1:9).

To cast behind the back. “You have cast all my sins behind your back” (Isa 38:17).

To tread underfoot, to cast into the depths of the sea. “He will tread our iniquities underfoot. You will cast all our sins into the depths of the sea” (Micah 7:19).

Do you still feel dirty from your past? Increase faith in God’s forgiveness by quoting promises in God’s Word and praising him. Let the power of Christ’s cross win the battle.

Are there sinful things you still do that rob you of the sense of being washed, being clean, and having no debts or contamination? Arrest the robbers. Turn from unbelief and sin.

Lord, thank you that through Christ’s death you completely forgive me! You send my sins away, cover them and not count them against me. You cancel my debt and do not remember them. You blot out, lift off, and remove my sins. You free, wash and cleanse me, cast my sins behind your back into the depths of the sea, and tread my sins underfoot!

Reflection questions

In Romans 4:7-8, what are three beautiful pictures of forgiveness in Christ?

Blessed are those whose lawless deeds are _____ (*aphiemi*, sent away), and whose sins are _____. Blessed is the man against whom the Lord will _____ his sin.

In Ephesians 1:7, what do we have in Christ?

We have _____ through his _____, the _____ of our _____

In Matthew 6:12, what does God do with our sins through Christ?

He forgives (*aphiemi*, sends away) our _____.

In Isaiah 43:25, what does God do with our sins?

He _____ our transgressions and will not _____ our sins.

In Acts 3:19, what does God do if we repent and turn to God in faith that Jesus is the Christ?

God _____ our _____.

In Genesis 50:17, what does God's forgiveness do with our sins? *nasa* = lift off

God _____ our sins from us.

In Psalm 103:2, how far has God removed our transgressions from us?

As far as the _____ is from the _____. (completely, totally removed; all gone)

In Revelation 1:5, what has Christ done for us and how?

Jesus Christ has _____ us from our _____ by his _____.

In Revelation 7:14, what have believers done and how?

They have _____ their _____ and made them _____ in the _____ of the Lamb.

In 1 John 1:9, what will God do if we confess our sins?

He is faithful and just to _____ us our sins and to _____ us from all unrighteousness.

In Isaiah 38:17, what does God do with our sins?

He _____ all our sins _____ his _____.

In Micah 7:19, what does God do with our sins?

He will _____ our iniquities _____ and _____ all our sins into the depths of the _____.

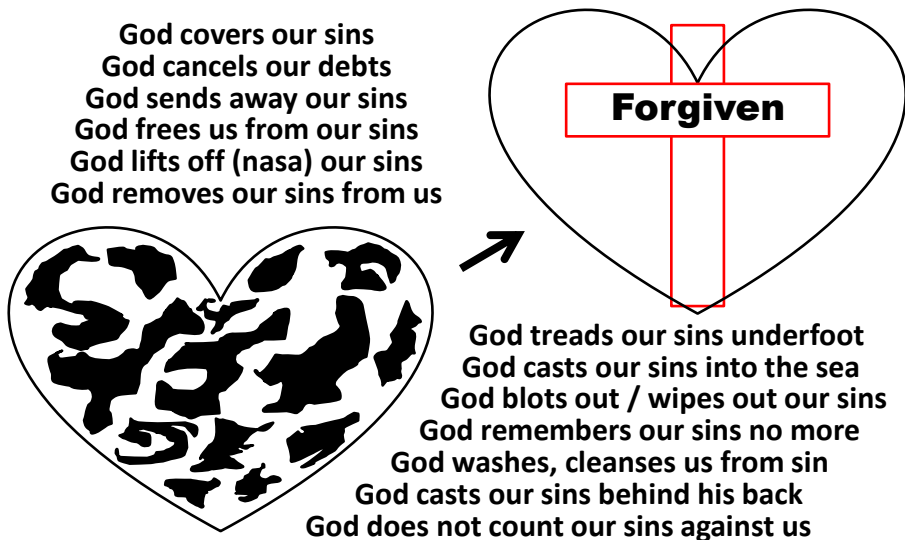
An important application from Days 1-4

In different religions around the world, people do many different things in an effort to find relief from guilt.

For instance, millions seek forgiveness by bathing in the Ganges River.

Jesus Christ died to provide justification, redemption, forgiveness and propitiation that turns away God's wrath.

Jesus Christ died to make us perfectly clean in God's sight.



God covers our sins
God cancels our debts
God sends away our sins
God frees us from our sins
God lifts off (nasa) our sins
God removes our sins from us

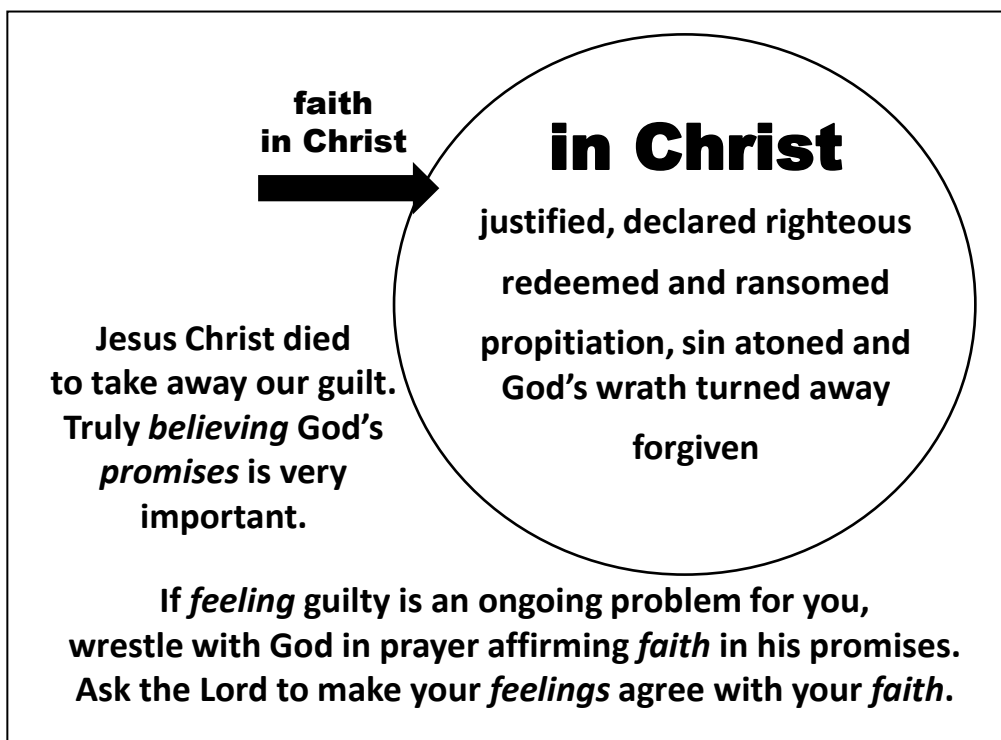
God treads our sins underfoot
God casts our sins into the sea
God blots out / wipes out our sins
God remembers our sins no more
God washes, cleanses us from sin
God casts our sins behind his back
God does not count our sins against us

**“In him we have redemption through his blood,
the forgiveness of our trespasses” Eph 1:7**

**No matter what hurt, sin, abuse or inferiority is in your past,
will you stop being chained to it?**

**Will you define yourself by who you are in Christ and the complete cleansing and
righteousness you have in Christ?**

Free PPTs with graphics like the one above and on the next page are available for each day of the riches of grace at www.GraceGodChrist.com



A helpful prayer

Lord, we praise you for the complete relief from guilt that you provide through the death and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ. We were unrighteous, deserving hell. However, in Christ you count us as righteous with Christ's righteousness, as righteous before you as Christ, as righteous as you yourself, Holy God! Thank you! Amazing!

Praise to you that in total forgiveness you no longer count our sins against us. They are all gone from your sight forever, never remembered against us again.

Faith in Christ's atoning sacrifice results in our being made holy and blameless in your sight; your wrath is turned away forever.

Christ's death is the ransom payment that redeems us from slavery to sin, Satan, death and hell, freeing us from sin's penalty and power.

You justify us, redeem us, forgive us and turn away your wrath from us based on Christ's finished work and not our efforts! All your amazing grace to us is based on Christ's perfections and not our performance!

Nothing else takes away our guilt. Jesus does for us what no one else can do! Thank you!

Day 5 The Lord is at peace with us

Gift # 5

Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. (Rom 5:1)

Preaching good news of peace through Jesus Christ (he is Lord of all). (Acts 10:36)

I have said these things to you, that in me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation. But take heart; I have overcome the world. (John 16:33)

Peace with God results from being justified by faith (Rom 5:1). Jesus, the righteousness of God, died as the ransom that redeems (Rom 3:24) and the propitiation that turns away God's wrath (Rom 3:25) so that unrighteous sinners (Rom 3:10, 23) under God's just judgment and wrath (Rom 2:5) are justified by faith in Christ (Rom 3:22, 24, 26) into peace with God. Enemies of God are forgiven (Rom 4:7-8), reconciled to God (Rom 5:10) and receive God's abundance of grace and the free gift of righteousness so eternal life in God reigns in them instead of death (Rom 5:17, 21).

Jesus is our peace with God and each other as by faith both Jew and Gentile are reconciled to God through the cross of Christ, thus ending the hostility caused by the law, being made one new man in Christ, both with access in one Spirit to the Father (Eph 2:14-18).

In Hebrew thinking, a land with "shalom" peace not only has no war but also the fullness of God's favor to his people in abundance of crops and prosperity. When God counts us righteous in Christ, his "shalom" peace in Christ includes his overflowing favor, blessing, wholeness, prosperity, fullness, and riches of God's grace in Christ. Trusting God's righteousness and peace in Christ gives us "shalom" calmness of soul in the midst of turmoil.

In the future, peace includes freedom from oppression by evil as God defeats and crushes Satan. "The God of peace will soon crush Satan under your feet" (Rom 16:20). Peace is having Satan and all evil enemies under our feet with no more concern of possible threats.

To Gentiles whose many religions sought peace from many gods, Peter declared that peace from God comes through Jesus the Messiah who is Lord of all (Acts 10:36).

In John 16:33 above, peace is in Jesus and is not the absence of trouble. In the world – tribulation. In Jesus – peace. By his death and resurrection, Jesus has overcome (*niked*) the sin and evil forces of the world. In John 14-16, peace involves knowing Jesus is the Christ who reigns with the Father and abides with us through the Spirit, who helps us and strengthens us so we keep the Lord's commandments and also overcome the world's opposition to us. (For more on the use of *nike* in the New Testament, see pages 171-172.)

Peace with God is having God for us, graciously giving us his Son and all things with him, so no one can condemn us or separate us from God's love in Christ (Rom 8:31-39).

We have "peace by the blood of his cross" (Col 1:20). Messiah is the "Prince of Peace" (Isa 9:6). After his resurrection, Jesus stressed to the disciples, "Peace be with you" (John 20:19, 21). A common greeting in the early church is, "Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ" (1 Cor 1:3).

The Lord is not against us or unhappy with us because of past failure; He is at peace with us through Jesus. But our conscience will lack peace over sins we know we are doing.

When you lack a sense of peace, repent of any sin you are committing and any unbelief that is robbing you of God's peace. Spend time drinking in God's peace provided in Christ based on his death on the cross. Claim the promises. It is finished. Peace is purchased.

Blessed are the peacemakers (Matt 5:9) who promote forgiving rather than holding grudges, reconciling rather than separating, and resolving conflict without war.

Lord Jesus, thank you for being my righteousness from God, my peace with God, and my fullness of God's favor.

Reflection questions

In Romans 5:1, what two riches of grace does God give us in Christ?

We have been _____ by _____.

We have _____ with _____ through our _____.

In Acts 10:36, what is the message God has given us to preach?

The _____ of _____ through _____, the _____ of _____.

In John 16:33, where do we find peace?

In _____ you may have _____. In the _____ you will have _____.

In John 16:33, why should we take heart when we have tribulation in the world?

In this world we will have tribulation, but Jesus has _____ the _____.

In Romans 16:20, what will the God of peace do?

The God of _____ will soon _____ under _____ feet.

According to Colossians 1:20, how has God provided peace?

By the _____ of his _____.

What is included in God's "shalom" peace? (paragraph 3)

When God counts us _____ in Christ, his "shalom" peace in Christ includes his _____, blessing, wholeness, _____, fullness, and _____ of God's _____ in Christ.

What should we do when we lack peace? (paragraph 10)

In addition to justification, which riches of grace thus far are cures for guilt?

Day 6 The Lord reconciles us to himself

Gift # 6

⁸ While we were still sinners, Christ died for us. . . . ⁹ we have now been justified by his blood, . . .
¹⁰ while we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son. (Rom 5:8-10)

¹⁷ Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold the new has come. ¹⁸ All this is from God, who through Christ reconciled us to himself and gave us the ministry of reconciliation; ¹⁹ that is, in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting to us the message of reconciliation.

²⁰ Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, God making his appeal through us. We implore you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God. (2 Cor 5:17-20)

Many married couples divorce rather than seek reconciliation. In contrast, God seeks reconciliation by sending Christ to die for the sin and rebellion of his enemies. When God's enemies repent and are justified by Christ's blood (Rom 5:9), they are reconciled to God; all alienation from God is ended. Christ dwells in us and we are in Christ (Day 13). The Holy Spirit dwells in us, making us God's temple, and we are in the Spirit (Day 14). The Father dwells in us and we are in the Father, immersed in the Father, Son and Spirit (Day 15). The Father, Son and Spirit fellowship with us (Day 16). Wow! Reconciliation with God!

That's not all! When God reconciles with us through the death of God the Son, we are immersed into Christ, united with Christ, crucified with Christ, buried with Christ, raised with Christ, alive with Christ, joined to Christ, one with Christ, seated with Christ, and hidden with Christ in God (Days 22-24)! Wow! Reconciled = personal connection forever!

That's not all! When God reconciles with his enemies, he pours out his Spirit on us, immersing us in his Spirit. Out of our hearts flow rivers of living water of the Spirit. The Lord gives us his Spirit. He anoints and seals us with his Spirit. The Spirit of truth helps and teaches us. We are born of the Spirit, led and sanctified by the Spirit, gifted by the Spirit, and filled with the Spirit to do the Lord's will, blessed with all the other riches of grace in the Spirit (Days 31-44)! Wow! That's reconciliation!

That's not all! When God reconciles with us, he gives us all his other riches in Christ!

In some marriages, only one partner seeks reconciliation while the other will not change from their hurtful ways. Attempts at reconciliation do not work. But in the Lord's reconciling us, he also gives us a new heart to love God and his holy ways of love. The reconciliation can truly work because the heart of an enemy is made the heart of an admirer.

Are you deeply thankful for the complete reconciliation Christ accomplished for you?

Will you help others be reconciled to God like you help others be reconciled in their marriages and friendships? God commits the message of reconciliation to all he reconciles (2 Cor 5 above). We go to others as ambassadors speaking on Christ's behalf. We appeal to others to accept God's reconciliation provided through Christ's death and be reconciled to God.

Live like a billionaire in Christ by confidently going to the bank of the throne of grace to receive all the benefits of the complete reconciliation Christ's death purchased for us!

Lord, thank you that through Christ's death and resurrection you reconcile me to yourself. As Christ's ambassador, use me to help others be reconciled to God.

"Since thou art thus forgiven freely for Christ's sake, go and tell to others the joyful news of pardoning mercy. Be not contented with this unspeakable blessing for thyself alone, but publish abroad the story of the cross. . . . *Cheerful holiness* is the most forcible of all sermons, but the Lord must give it. Seek it this morning before you go out into the world."⁸ (italics added)

⁸ Spurgeon's Daily Devotional, August 14 a.m., Electronic Database. PC Study Bible Reference Library Plus Version 4.2B, Seattle: BibleSoft, copyright © 1998-2004.

Reflection questions

In Romans 5:8-10, when were we reconciled to God, and how?

⁸ While we were still _____, Christ _____ for us. . . . ⁹ we have now been _____ by his _____, . . . ¹⁰ while we were _____ we were _____ to God by the _____ of his _____.

According to 2 Corinthians 5:18-19, what has God done for us through Christ?

¹⁸ God, who through Christ _____ us to _____

¹⁹ In Christ God was _____ the _____ to _____, not _____ their trespasses _____ them.

How is reconciliation with God like reconciliation in human marriage? How is it different?

Praise the Lord for who he has made us to be in Christ: Lord, how gracious you are! Praise you for what you have accomplished through the death and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ. In Christ, we are justified, credited with the righteousness of Christ, as righteous before God as Christ! We are ransomed and redeemed in Christ! We have atonement for our sins and your wrath is turned away! We are totally forgiven, cleansed and washed of all sin! We have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ! We are completely reconciled to you, Father, Son and Spirit! All praise to you, wonderful Lord of salvation!

Day 7 The Lord gives us eternal life

Gift # 7

For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. (John 3:16)

Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life; whoever does not obey the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God remains on him. (John 3:36)

I give them eternal life, and they will never perish, and no one will snatch them out of my hand. (John 10:28)

And this is eternal life, that they know you the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent. (John 17:3)

¹¹ And this is the testimony, that God gave us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. ¹² Whoever has the Son has life; whoever does not have the Son of God does not have life. (1 John 5:11-12)

¹⁷ For this slight momentary affliction is preparing for us an eternal weight of glory beyond all comparison, ¹⁸ as we look not to the things that are seen but to the things that are unseen. For . . . the things that are unseen are eternal. (2 Cor 4:17-18)

After a serious car accident the bottom line question is, “Will they live or die?” This is also a question for all of us as we face God. Will we live or die?

To not have eternal life is to be dead spiritually because of sin, under God’s wrath, to perish eternally in hell. To have eternal life is to be made alive spiritually with Christ our righteousness from God, totally reconciled to know and enjoy the Lord intimately in personal relationship as we continually receive spiritual life in Christ, in God, in the Spirit forever!

Eternal life includes living forever with the Lord after death, enfolded into the perfect communion, delight, and cooperation which the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit enjoy with each other! This communion is ours now, but perfect then and face to face!

Many fear death. Many do not know what lies beyond the grave. Many say you can’t know for sure if you have eternal life or not. But as Christians we rest in the death and resurrection of Christ to make our eternal destiny settled. Christ is our life (Col 3:4). God has given us eternal life, and this life is in his Son (1 John 5:11).

Try to picture eternity. “When we’ve been there ten thousand years bright shining as the sun, we’ve no less days to sing God’s praise than when we’ve first begun.”⁹ Praise the eternal God for giving us eternal life through Jesus Christ!

Be encouraged in trials knowing your perseverance in doing God’s will is achieving an eternal glory that far outweighs all you are going through.

Because eternal life in Christ is our true treasure, worth more than gaining all the material wealth in all the world, should we not choose to live more simply without so many extras, so that we are free to give more to missions and the world’s poor?

Live with eternal values in view. Don’t spend time playing with toys like an infant. Rescue the perishing. Fix your eyes on what is unseen and eternal.

Affirm who you are in Christ--Through Christ’s death and resurrection I have eternal life to know and enjoy my eternal Lord. Thank you, Lord! Jesus is my eternal life!

Lord, I surrender to you that your *agape* love flow through me to serve others not myself, to bear with selfish treatment and lavish *agape* kindness in return.

⁹ From the hymn “Amazing Grace” by John Newton

Reflection questions

In John 3:16, what two things happen to whoever believes in God's one and only Son?

Whoever believes in him should not _____ but have _____ .

In John 3:36, what is the contrast between the two people mentioned?

Whoever _____ in the _____ has _____ .

Whoever does not _____ the _____ shall not see _____, but the _____ of God _____ on him. (God's wrath is no longer on whoever believes in the Son.)

In John 10:28, what does Jesus do for his sheep?

He gives them _____, and they will never _____, and no one will _____ them _____ of his _____.

In John 17:3, what is eternal life?

And this is eternal life, that they _____ the only true _____, and _____ whom you have sent.

In 1 John 5:11-12, what is the testimony that God has given?

God _____ us _____, and this life is _____ his _____.

Whoever has the Son has _____; whoever does not have the Son does not have _____

In 2 Corinthians 4:17, how does the affliction we have now compare to eternal life with Christ?

Our affliction is _____ and _____, beyond all comparison to _____ glory.

In 2 Corinthians 4:18, what should those who have eternal life in Christ do? Why?

We _____ not to the things that are _____ but to the things that are _____.

Why? For the things that are _____ are _____ .

Spend some time praising the Lord for who he has made us to be in Christ: Lord, how gracious you are! In Christ, we are justified, credited with the righteousness of God, ransomed and redeemed from sin! Christ's propitiation has atoned for our sin and turned away your wrath! We are totally forgiven, at peace with you, reconciled to you with eternal life in Christ! All praise to you, our Lord!

Day 8 The Lord adopts us as sons, sending the Spirit of his Son into his children Gift # 8

¹⁵ You have received the Spirit of adoption as sons, by whom we cry, "Abba! Father!"

¹⁶ The Spirit himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God. (Rom 8:15-16)

²⁶ For in Christ Jesus you are all sons of God, through faith. . . . ⁴ God sent forth his Son . . . ⁵ to redeem . . . so that we might receive adoption as sons. ⁶ And because you are sons, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, "Abba! Father!" (Gal 3:26, 4:4-6)

Roman "adoption to sonship" made an adopted *son* a full legal heir. In Christ, God adopts both sons *and daughters* (2 Cor 6:18) into his family as full legal heirs. Christ's death is like adoption papers offered to us. When we depend on Christ's death to reconcile us to God, he completes the adoption process. God makes us sons, full legal heirs, his children. He sends the Spirit of his Son into his sons and daughters. The Spirit assures us we are God's children, so as secure children we intimately call God, "Abba, Father, Daddy."

God will also conform his sons to the image of his Son so Jesus has many brothers (Rom 8:29, Heb 2:11)! What love, that the Father calls us "children of God; . . . Beloved, we are God's children now, and what we will be has not yet appeared; but we know that when he appears we shall be like him, because we shall see him as he is" (1 John 3:1-2).

Adoption stresses our new love relationship with the Lord, who lovingly cares for us and fellowships with us as his children forever. Adoption includes the gift to full legal heirs of an eternal inheritance as heirs of God and fellow heirs with God's Son (Rom 8:17)!

Do you obey the wise direction of your Father as sons who love him as he loves you?

Lord, thank you for adoption as your child, with the Spirit of your Son, a full legal heir!

Day 8 The Lord welcomes and accepts us Gift # 9

God has welcomed him. . . . Therefore welcome one another as Christ has welcomed you, for the glory of God. (Rom 14:3; 15:7)

("welcomed" in ESV, RSV is "accepted" in NIV, NAS and "received" in KJV, ASV)

As we grow up, many of us deeply want to be accepted by our friends. As adults, many people long for a partner that will completely accept them and love them just as they are, with all their weaknesses and failures, without any rejection.

We may try to gain acceptance in various ways. A teen may think, "I want acceptance with my friends. If they swear, I'll swear. If they smoke, I'll smoke. If they drink, I'll drink. If they do pot, I'll do pot. I want acceptance." Some try to gain acceptance by sports achievements, some by excellent marks, some by expensive clothes.

Some adults work extremely hard at their job in order to get acceptance. Many put great value on their appearance as a way of acceptance, and those who do not like their appearance struggle with self-acceptance. Some women give in to pressure from their dating partner in the hope that by giving him what he wants, they will get the acceptance they want.

The Lord totally welcomes and accepts us in Christ the moment we turn to Christ. His welcome is not earned or deserved; we don't have to do good, or look good, or try hard. God's welcome is freely given as he pours out upon us all his riches of grace in Christ!

When we deeply embrace the truth that the King of kings accepts us, we have the acceptance we've always wanted, and we are freed from needing to do the junk others do.

Will you accept yourself as God does? Will you drink deeply of God's welcome and acceptance when you are down on yourself or are criticized by others?

If Christ accepts a fellow believer, will you accept and love them with God's *agape* love, even if you disagree on secondary issues where there may be different convictions (Rom 14:1-15:13)? Or will you go around criticizing them on disputable matters?

Lord, thank you that in Christ I am welcomed and accepted in your presence continually!

Reflection questions

In Romans 8:15-16, what have we received? What does the Spirit do for us?

You received the _____ of _____ as sons, by whom we cry, “_____, _____.”

The Spirit himself _____ with our _____ that we are _____ of God.

In Galatians 3:26, what does the Lord do for his people and how?

For _____ you are all _____ of _____, through _____

In Galatians 4:6, why does God send his Spirit into our hearts, and how is the Holy Spirit described?

Because you are _____, God has sent the _____ of his _____ into our hearts.

In Romans 15:7, how and why does Christ relate to us?

How? Christ has _____ us.

Why? For the _____ of _____ .

From Romans 15:7, for what two reasons should we accept and welcome one another?

Because _____ has welcomed us and other believers.

Because it brings _____ to _____ .

Consider how these riches help us trust the LORD as our Father who adopts us and welcomes us:
Righteous in Christ (Day 1) a Dad who sees us as perfectly righteous with Christ's righteousness
Wrath turned away (Day 3) a Dad who is not upset and angry with us when we fail
In the Father and the Father in us (Day 15) a Dad who is present with us in the deepest way
Access (Day 17) a Dad who is wanting to spend time with us and connect with us
Grace at the throne of grace (Day 19) a Dad who gives us all we need as we come to him
Defended (Day 21) a Dad who always protects, defends and helps us
Triumph (Day 44) a Dad who is strong, for us not against us, who leads us in victory

Take time to praise the Lord for his wonderful riches in Christ! Praise moves God's truth from the head to the heart. Praise transforms study into meeting God. Praise is a key way to drink in God's grace. Praise changes everything! Please take time to meaningfully praise the Lord for his riches. You won't regret it!

Day 9 The Lord fills and completes us in Christ in whom the fullness of God dwells

Gift # 10

⁹ For in him the whole fullness of deity dwells bodily, ¹⁰ and you have been filled in him, who is the head of all rule and authority. (Col 2:9-10)

People thought the many Roman/Greek gods had different powers. Jupiter/Zeus influenced other gods like a board chair, and Mercury/Hermes spoke for the gods (Acts 14:12). Romans appealed to the god Mars (Ares in Greek) for victory in battle (Mars Hill, Areopagus - Acts 17:19, 22). Diana/Artemis had jurisdiction over hunting and fertility (Acts 19:28). Sailors relied on Castor and Pollux to guard them (Acts 28:11). All the gods made up the “godhead” or “deity.” The total power of all gods was called “fullness” (*pleroma*).

Colossians says all the fullness of all the powers of all that is God (the deity or godhead) dwells in the Lord Jesus Christ! “For in him all *the fullness of God* was pleased to dwell” (Col 1:19). Jesus is “*full of grace and truth*” (John 1:14). Jesus is fully God! Forget the false gods. Christ Jesus, “the head of all rule and authority” (Col 2:10), rules over all! Forget about worshipping angels (Col 2:18). Christ is head and Lord of all. Go to the top!

Another staggering truth - believers have been “filled” in Christ (verb *pleroo*). “You have been brought to fullness” (NIV 2011). “You are complete in Him” (NKJV). False teachers in Colossians taught there was something more to DO to be “filled,” some other “knowing” other than by faith alone in what Christ has DONE; Christ is not enough and faith is not enough. No! We are filled and complete in God’s fullness if we are in Christ in whom the fullness of God dwells! Don’t seek blessing and grace anywhere else to fill and complete you. Don’t DO anything else for more grace to be more full, complete or spiritual. Fullness is in Christ, and fullness is by faith! Christ is our life (Col 3:4). Christ is all (Col 3:11).

The Greek/Roman religious view of “fullness” led people to try to persuade as many gods as possible to always use all their powers for their good. In Christ we are “filled in him” the fullness of God, complete, whole and fully blessed with every blessing (Day 10). God is totally “for” us; along with Christ we are graciously given all (Rom 8:28, 31, 32). “For from his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace” (John 1:16)!

Colossians strongly rejects trying to achieve fullness by religious rituals and rules such as those based on the Law, like not eating certain foods, or observing sacred festivals and days like Passover, Pentecost, or the Sabbath (Col 2:16-23). “These are a shadow of the things that were to come; the reality, however, is found in Christ” (Col 2:17, NIV). Christ is all we need! Jesus is our fullness! Fullness is by *faith in Christ*, not by being religious!

“Therefore, as you received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in him, rooted and built up in him and established in the faith, just as you were taught, abounding in thanksgiving” (Col 2:6-7). False teachers in Colossae said receiving Christ and walking in Christ was not enough. Paul disagrees! *With faith-filled prayers of thanksgiving based on his Word*, rejoice in, rest in, and drink in God’s fullness already given believers in Christ, the fullness of God!

Our hearts are like cups longing to be filled (diagram page 153). We can stop relying on others, our achievements or possessions to meet our needs and fill our cups. There is one God, whose holy, infinite perfections fully dwell in Christ (diagram page xiv)! *All God’s riches of grace in Christ are part of God’s fullness in Christ meeting all our needs!*

Don’t go through life feeling inadequate. Rest in and rejoice in Christ as your fullness! Stop searching for anything else to make you more complete, whole, and full. *By faith in his Word with praise*, drink deeply of Jesus as all you need. Then walk in him rejoicing, trusting, and doing all out of love for the Lord who loves you and completes you.

Thank you, Lord, that through the death and resurrection of Christ, the fullness of God, you fill me and complete with all the grace of God available. It is finished! Christ is all!

Reflection questions

In Colossians 2:9, what does Christ have?

The whole _____ of _____ dwells bodily (dwells in Christ's human body)

In Colossians 2:10, what do we have in Christ?

We have been _____ in him

In Colossians 2:10, what rule and authority does Christ have?

He is the _____ of _____ rule and authority.

What did "fullness" mean to Greeks and Romans? (last sentence, paragraph 1)

The _____ of all _____ was called _____.

In John 1:16, what does Christ do for his people?

For from his _____ we have all _____, _____ upon _____.

Think of things some people do to be more filled with grace and complete in God - baptism, confirmation, church membership, church attendance, communion, mass Is there anything believers can do to be more filled in God? How is Colossians 2:9-10 a statement that "Jesus is the end of religion"? (Note the last sentence in paragraph 5, "Fullness is by *faith in Christ*, not by being religious!")

Fullness is by _____ in _____, not by being _____!

If our hearts are like cups longing to be filled, how do we fill our hearts? (paragraphs 7-8)

What difference should it make in missions, if Jesus has the fullness of God and no one else does?

Stop working to be declared righteous. Stop trying to earn acceptance. Stop *doing* something to be more whole and complete. Stop searching to be filled in other ways. Start drinking in God's fullness in Christ by *faith* in his Word with prayers of thanks. It is finished. All is given based on Christ's finished work (pages xvi-xvii). Rest in Christ to freely provide all his riches every moment. Rely on God in Christ for everything.

Tell friends about Christ's riches as if they have cancer and you know the cure. You know the source of fullness and completeness.

Day 10 The Lord blesses us with every spiritual blessing

Gift # 11

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places. (Eph 1:3)

Jesus Christ is everything we need to be fully blessed, complete, whole, and full. There is no blessing, fullness, or favor from God that is not given out of the love of God found in Christ Jesus our Lord. We cannot be more blessed than “blessed in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places.” Jesus is “full of grace and truth. . . . For from his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace” (John 1:14, 16).

All Christ’s riches in this booklet are blessings with which God blesses us, purchased for us by the death and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ. Ephesians 1:3-7 goes on to highlight the blessings in Christ of being holy and blameless in his sight, loved, adopted, freely given glorious grace, redeemed, and forgiven!

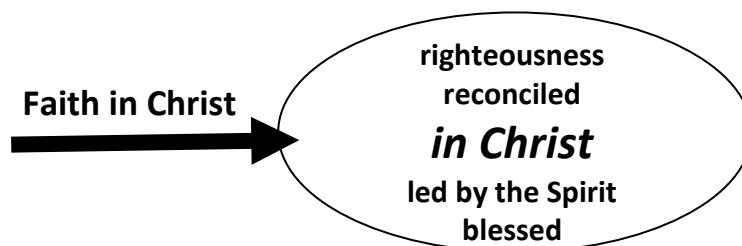
“If God is for us, who can be against us? He who did not spare his own Son, but gave him up for us all, how will he not also *with him* graciously give us all things?” (Rom 8:31-32, italics added). God graciously gives us all blessing, all we need, *with* the supreme blessing of his Son! If we receive God’s Son, then *with him* we receive all God’s blessing. God is totally for us in Christ. All God’s blessing is in Christ.

If we stayed overnight at a first-class hotel, how might we react if we thought we were charged far too much for juice at our first breakfast? If we had won an all-expenses-paid contest, we could look at the bill and say, “No problem! It’s paid for!” When we deeply grasp what Christ’s death and resurrection provides, we can respond so differently to trials and difficulties. “No problem! It’s paid for by my crucified and risen Savior. Lord, I come to your bank to receive riches you provide for this need.”

What blessing do you need today? Do you need forgiveness? Do you need power over anger? Do you need purity of mind regarding the opposite sex? Do you need compassion and love for a porcupine person in your life? Jesus Christ can bless you with every blessing from the Lord.

Will you trust the Lord each moment to bless you in Christ with whatever spiritual blessing you need? Will you avoid the mistake of trying to be blessed by any other means than through the Lord Jesus Christ? Rest and receive! Trust and obey!

Affirm your riches in Christ--Praise you, Lord, that because of Christ’s death and resurrection I am in Christ, blessed with every spiritual blessing, graciously given all things in Christ!



Lord, you bless us that we might be a blessing. As one who is fully blessed in Christ, may your *agape* love flow through me to make me a blessing to others. I praise you that Jesus Christ is the one in whom all peoples on earth can be blessed (Gen 12:3).

Reflection questions

In Ephesians 1:3, with what has God blessed us? In whom has God blessed us? If we are not in Christ, does God give his blessings some other way?

The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ has _____ us in _____
with _____ _____ _____ in the _____ places.

In John 1:16, how does John describe the source and content of God's blessing in his Son?

For from his _____ we have all _____, _____ upon _____.

In Romans 8:32, if God gave up his own Son for us all, what else will God give us in Christ?

God will also _____ _____, _____ give us _____ _____.

Can you explain the analogy of "No problem, it's paid for!"? (paragraph 4)
What situation are you facing where you need more of this attitude?

What blessing do you need today? Will you trust the Lord each moment to bless you in Christ with whatever spiritual blessing you need?

If we have all these riches in Christ, why are many not more satisfied?
What seems to be preventing more satisfaction, fulfillment, joy and power?

Of the riches in Christ you have studied so far, which three in particular would you draw on and encourage others to draw on to combat:

Anger
Going through
many trials

Day 11 Christ is our wisdom from God, righteousness, sanctification and redemption

Gift # 12

And because of him you are in Christ Jesus, who became to us wisdom from God, righteousness and sanctification and redemption. (1 Cor 1:30)

Unbelievers may think it is foolishness to believe that all God's riches of grace are freely provided through the Son of God dying for our sins. However, "we preach Christ crucified, a stumbling block to Jews and folly to Gentiles, but to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God" (1 Cor 1:23-24). Christ is our power and wisdom from God. Christ is all we need, for he is to us righteousness, sanctification and redemption! What more can we need or want? Total salvation is in Christ!

Think of what God's wisdom does through Christ's death and resurrection. Evil, rebellious addicts to sin who repent are declared perfectly righteous in God's sight, continuously sanctified into God's holy ways by the Spirit of Christ in them, and at death are redeemed into Christ's presence (Phil 1:23) as righteous spirits made perfect (Heb 12:23), with the redemption of their bodies at Christ's return (Rom 8:23). This is true wisdom!

We can be smart intellectually but very unwise in heart, such as a Ph.D. being unfaithful to their spouse. God's wisdom goes beyond what any degree can do.

Jesus *saves* from sin (Matt 1:21). The three major aspects of Christ's *salvation* in 1 Corinthians 1:30 are righteousness (justification), sanctification, and redemption (glorification). They cover all God's riches in Christ (diagram page 151). Passages like Romans 1-8 expand on their meaning.

- Justification - declared perfectly righteous in Christ, "just as if I'd" never sinned. In addition to justification, note how Romans 3-5 speaks of Christ also being to us redemption, propitiation, forgiveness, peace, reconciliation and eternal life (Days 1-7).
- Sanctification – set apart in Christ in the Spirit in a process of being made holy in conduct. Romans 6-8 teaches that sanctification involves being immersed into Christ and his death and resurrection, united with Christ in a death and resurrection like his, crucified and buried with Christ, raised and alive with Christ, set free from sin's (and Satan's) domination and addictions, made instruments for righteousness, under Christ's authority and his abundant grace, released from the law to be married to Christ and serve in the Spirit, under the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus so we can fulfill God's righteousness as we walk in the Spirit not the flesh, setting our minds on the Spirit not the flesh (Days 22-31). (Spirit riches 31-44.) In Christ we are saints, set apart ones--sanctified, made holy and being made holy, in the Spirit. We are often perfected through suffering similar to Jesus who learned to obey in all (Heb 5:8-9).
- Glorification - present with the Lord, made 100% righteous as God in thought and action, redeemed from every aspect of sin and Satan, perfectly conformed to Christ. Days 49-57 further describe glorification: we are citizens of heaven, in God's glory, heirs of God, fellow heirs with Christ, with Christ at death, made perfect, glorified to be like Jesus. We enter the joy of the Lord in the heavenly kingdom. God's good work is completed. We are delivered from the wrath to come and given a glorious resurrection body like Jesus. We are married to the Lamb. Every tear is wiped away. We see God's face and reign forever!

Will you rejoice in God's wisdom today? Will you rest in his righteousness, walk in his sanctification, and be confident of redemption into his glorious holiness and presence?

"Let us cleanse ourselves from every defilement of body and spirit, bringing holiness to completion in the fear of God" (2 Cor 7:1).

Praise you, Lord, that through Christ's death and resurrection Jesus is my wisdom from God; my righteousness, sanctification, and redemption! There is no other wisdom like yours! No other religion has what we have in Christ. Jesus is everything!

Reflection questions

In 1 Corinthians 1:30, if they believe on Christ, what has God in his wisdom provided for totally unrighteous slaves of sin who deserve hell forever?

He is the source of your life _____, whom God made our _____.

Christ Jesus is our _____; the totally unrighteous are made righteous in God's sight, as righteous as Christ.

Christ Jesus is our _____; slaves of sin are freed to walk with Christ in the Spirit in *agape* love, witness and prayer.

Christ Jesus is our _____; those who deserved hell forever are redeemed from every aspect of sin and glorified in God's presence forever.

In 1 Cor 1:23-24, what is Christ crucified to those who don't believe, in contrast to those who believe?

"We preach Christ crucified, a _____ to Jews and _____ to Gentiles, but to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, _____ the _____ of _____ and the _____ of _____.

How would you briefly explain justification to someone?

How would you briefly explain sanctification to someone?

How would you briefly explain glorification to someone?

Day 12 The Lord delivers us from darkness into the light of the kingdom of the Son

Gifts # 13,14

¹² Giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified you to share in the inheritance of the saints in light. ¹³ He has delivered us from the domain of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved Son, ¹⁴ in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins. (Col 1:12-14)

Picture a desperately poor country full of disease, crime, unemployment, and harsh corrupt leadership. Next door is a kingdom of incomparable riches, jobs, health care, education, security, and upright leadership for the good of the people.

Through Christ's redemption by the forgiveness of our sins, our Father sets us apart as his holy ones in Christ, saints, now qualified to share in the inheritance of the kingdom of light, for our Father has delivered us from the domain of darkness of Satan and sin and transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved Son (Col 1:12-14 above). Some people long for a job transfer, but God transfers us from the domain of Satan to the kingdom of Christ!

Whereas God is light and in him is no darkness (1 John 1:5), Satan is all darkness and loves to hold people captive in sin's darkness such as lying, lust on the internet, sexual immorality, greed, anger, discord, jealousy, selfishness, and drunkenness (see list on page 154). He is "the spirit who is now at work in the sons of disobedience" (Eph 2:2). He blinds "the minds of the unbelievers, to keep them from *seeing* . . . the glory of Christ" (2 Cor 4:4), but God shines his light in our hearts so we *see* and *know* the glory of God in Christ (2 Cor 4:6).

Satan knows that the Holy Lord brings judgment, death and hell upon those who sin. The deceiver's strategy is to entice people to sin to bring God's consequences for sin on them.

Satan knew in the garden God's law - the soul that sins dies. Sin brings four deaths. 1. We die spiritually by becoming separated from God and under his judgment. 2. Our spirit dies in the sense of it being constantly inclined to evil (Gen 8:21), a slave to sin, no longer a pure spirit alive in God's Spirit as was Adam's spirit at first. 3. We die physically; our soul separates from our body. 4. We die eternally in hell in permanent separation from God.

Christ's death and resurrection breaks Satan's power over us by justification, sanctification, and glorification in Christ delivering us from the four deaths caused by sin! God frees us from Satan's grasp by rescuing us from sin, death and hell and placing us in Christ! All God's riches of grace in Christ overturn the four deaths of the wages of sin!

Satan's hold is broken when sin's hold is broken, as in Colossians 2. "And you, who were dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made alive together with him, having forgiven us all our trespasses, by cancelling the record of debt . . . nailing it to the cross. He disarmed the rulers and authorities and put them to open shame, by triumphing over them in him" (Col 2:13-15). By Christ's death accomplishing our forgiveness leading to union with Christ, all evil powers are defeated and disarmed as defeated soldiers taken captive, stripped of their weapons, chained, and put to open shame in the triumphal procession of our victorious army general. Christ's defeat of our sin also publicly demonstrates the defeat of Satan and all evil powers!

Reject sin when it first knocks at your door to entice you. Stand firm! You are under the authority and liberty of the Lord Jesus Christ, a citizen of God's kingdom of light.

When the light of God's Word says a fleshly habit is SIN, confess it as SIN and turn from the ways of darkness to walk in Christ in the Spirit in his victory (see page 154).

See Christ's glory each day in God's Word, for *seeing* leads to treasuring and joy.

Recognize how God is sending you to others so they turn from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God (Acts 26:17-18). Proclaim to others the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvellous light (1 Pet 2:9).

Thank you, Lord, that in Christ you've delivered me from Satan's power and darkness and transferred me into your Son's kingdom and light!

Reflection questions

In Colossians 1:12-14, what are three reasons to joyfully give thanks to the Father?

Because he has _____ you to _____ in the _____ of the _____ in _____

Because he has _____ us from the _____ of _____ and _____ us to the _____ of his _____

Because in his beloved Son we have _____ and the _____ of _____

In Colossians 2:13, what is our spiritual condition without Christ?

We are _____ in our _____ and the _____ of our _____.

In Colossians 2:13-15, what did God accomplish through the cross of Christ?

God made us _____ with him (Christ), having _____ us all our _____, by _____ the record of _____ . . . nailing it to the _____.

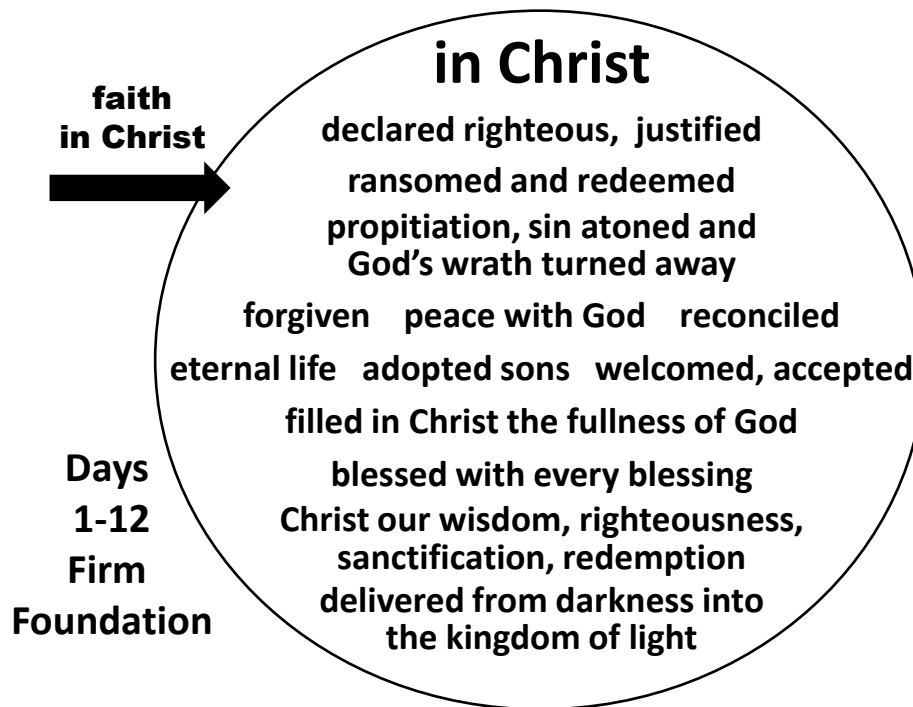
He _____ the rulers and authorities and put them to _____, by _____ over them in him (Christ).

In Acts 26:17-18 and 1 Peter 2:9, what is God sending us to do for people? (last paragraph)

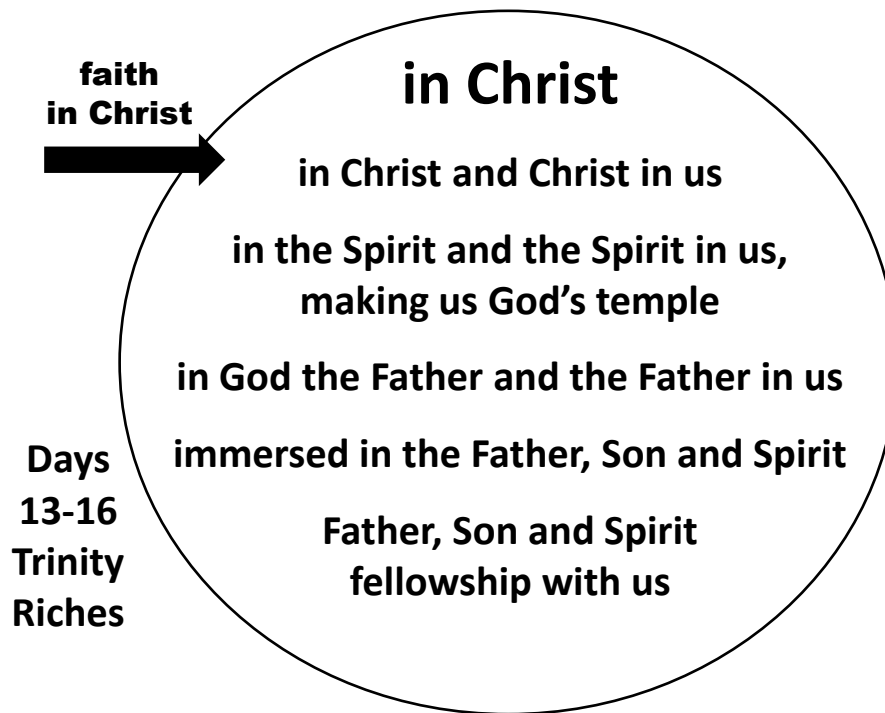
God is sending us to others so they _____ from _____ to _____, and from the _____ of _____ to God (Acts 26:17-18).

We proclaim to others the _____ of him who _____ us out of _____ into his _____ (1 Pet 2:9).

What are some of Satan's ways of darkness from which the Lord rescued you?



**What wonderful grace that unites us with the Lord in order to know him
in his eternal fellowship and glory in Christ!**



**What wonderful grace that unites us with the Lord in order to know him
in his eternal fellowship and glory in Christ!**

To the saints and faithful brothers in Christ at Colossae. (Col 1:2)

Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and eat with him, and he with me. (Rev 3:20)

I have been crucified with Christ. It is . . . Christ who lives in me. (Gal 2:20)

The moment we turn from going our own way in sin and we surrender in faith to follow Jesus our Savior, the Lord justifies, ransoms and redeems us. Christ's propitiation atones for our sin and turns away God's wrath from us. The Lord forgives us. God the Father, Son and Spirit are at peace with us and reconciled with us unto eternal life (Day 1-7). We are in Christ and Christ is in us. We are in the Father and the Father is in us. We are in the Spirit and the Spirit is in us! What a complete reconciliation Christ has provided in his death for those once dead in sin and under God's wrath!

We are not only in Christ, but Christ also dwells in us! The Lord Jesus Christ makes his home in us; he lives in us; he abides in us; he is in us. When we open the door, he comes in to us and eats with us and we with him (Rev 3:20). "Christ is in you" (Rom 8:10). Paul prayed, "that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith" (Eph 3:17).

Part of the mystery of Christ once concealed now revealed is "how great among the Gentiles are the riches of the glory of the mystery, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory" (Col 1:27). No one in the Old Covenant clearly understood that when Messiah comes, he dwells in his people by the Holy Spirit. And Messiah will dwell in Gentiles by faith? No!

Being "in Christ" is a very important truth emphasized in the New Testament more than 160 times. Paul yearned to be in Christ. He considered all human merit and effort loss and "rubbish, in order that I may gain Christ and be *found in him*, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which comes through faith in Christ, the righteousness from God that depends on faith" (Phil 3:8-9, italics added).

"To be "found in Christ" means that what water is for fish and air is for birds and the forest is for the living creature, so Christ is the essential environment for the child of God. Christ surrounds us, engulfs us, and inundates us. He is the vital element in which we exist. No longer are we "in Adam" with all the debilitating and death-producing effects of that enslavement. Our home is now Jesus Christ."¹⁰

The moment God counts us as righteous in Christ, he places us in Christ and gives us all the blessings and riches of his grace in Christ which Christ purchased for us, so that Paul shouts in worship, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places" (Eph 1:3).

Picture a new bride the first morning after being married. She does not feel united with her husband, so she wants to repeat the ceremony. A wise husband would say God has been faithful to join them together as one as he declares in his Word (Matt 19:5; Eph 5:31). Rather than repeat the ceremony, they should believe God and enjoy loving one another.

Some Christians are like insecure brides that constantly question their union with Christ. They keep taking their vows again hoping this will make them feel united. The better solution is to spend more time reflecting on Christ's faithfulness to keep his promises such as Revelation 3:20 above. If we open the door, he is faithful to come in as he promises.

In every situation, Jesus is present in full power and grace to meet all our needs and lead us to walk with him in the Spirit, walking in God's Word, faith, praise, prayer, *agape* love, righteousness and witness, to the glory of the Lord! (See the "star" diagram, page 152.)

Praise you, Lord, that we are in Christ and Christ is in us! Christ dwells and lives in us. We are his dwelling place. We are his abode where he abides!

¹⁰ David L. Larsen, *Biblical Spirituality* (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2001), 178.

Reflection questions

In Colossians 1:2, what grace has God given those who believe in Jesus Christ?

We are _____

In Revelation 3:20, what is Christ doing? What does he promise to do?

I stand at the _____ and _____. If _____ my voice and _____
the door, I will _____ to him and _____ with him, and he with _____.

In Galatians 2:20, what has God done for believers?

We are _____ with _____. Christ _____ in us.

In Romans 8:10, Ephesians 3:17, and Colossians 1:27, what does Christ do for believers?

Rom 8:10 Christ is _____ you.

Eph 3:17 That Christ may _____ in your _____ through _____.

Col 1:27 _____ you, the _____ of _____.

In Philippians 3:8-9, what is Paul's great desire?

That I may _____ and be found _____, not having a
_____ of my _____ that comes from the law, but that which comes through
_____ in Christ, the _____ from God that depends on _____.

(As we counsel some who question whether they are saved or not, they may need to "repeat their vows" because they may not be saved. They may have taken their vows with their head and not their heart. They may not have been truly repentant from the heart; they may not have truly surrendered to Jesus as Lord over all their actions and decisions. This is especially true with children. "Repeating the vows" may be helpful for them because they may now be saying them with new understanding and sincerity. However, once they know they have sincerely entered into covenant with Christ, they must move beyond "repeating the vows" to strengthening their faith and cooperating with Christ as suggested in the article.)

Praise changes everything as we study. Praise moves the Word from head to heart!
Praise based on God's promises is like drinking God's riches of grace!

Day 14 The Holy Spirit dwells in us, making us God's temple, and we are in the Spirit

Gifts # 17-19

Do you not know that you are God's temple and that God's Spirit dwells in you? (1 Cor 3:16)

¹⁸ Flee from sexual immorality. . . . ¹⁹ Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, whom you have from God? You are not your own, ²⁰ for you were bought with a price. So glorify God in your body. (1 Cor 6:18-20)

You, however, are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if in fact the Spirit of God dwells in you. Anyone who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him. (Rom 8:9)

“God is Spirit” (John 4:24). We are reconciled to God who is Spirit through the death of his Son (Rom 5:10). Romans 8:9-11 describes our reconciled relationship to God the Father, Son and Spirit: We are in the Spirit; the Spirit of God dwells in us; we have the Spirit of Christ; Christ is in us; the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in us and his Spirit dwells in us. Amazing!

The Old Testament temple was the earthly dwelling place of God where he manifested his presence. Now the Spirit of God dwells in us, making us God's temple where God dwells and manifests his presence (1 Cor 3:16; 6:19 above). 1 Corinthians 6:18-20 is an appeal to flee from immoral use of our bodies because our bodies are holy temples of the Holy Spirit; the Holy Spirit is within us; we have the Holy Spirit from God; our bodies are not our own to do with as we please, for we have been bought to belong to God with the great price of Christ's blood; our body is to be used to glorify God and is not for immorality.

“With Christ Jesus himself being the chief cornerstone” of the temple, Jew and Gentile believers are joined together “into a holy temple in the Lord . . . a dwelling place for God by the Spirit” (Eph 2:20-22, cf. 1 Pet 2:4-6). The Spirit fills God's temple with God's presence. We respond with repentance, worship, thanksgiving, love, and obedient service.

We are no longer “in the flesh” as non-believers are, with only the weak and sinful resources of the flesh or sinful nature at our disposal. If the Spirit dwells in us, we are “in the Spirit” (Rom 8:9 above), with all the Spirit's resources at our disposal. We can walk in the Spirit rather than follow the sinful desires of the flesh (Gal 5:16).

The main ministry of the Holy Spirit to believers is *to mediate* the presence of the reigning Christ and *to make known* through God's Word the Lord's glorious presence and truth in order *to lead and sanctify* us in continuous fellowship, assurance, and transformation in Christ.¹¹ Transformation includes worship, holiness, *agape* love, witness, and gifts of service. The presence of Jesus is at the center of life in the Spirit. (The Spirit's main ministry to unbelievers is one of conviction-repentance-faith.)

One of the most common acts of the Holy Spirit is to use God's Word to make believers freshly aware of their Savior's kingship and presence so they enjoy further fellowship, assurance, and transformation. Do you recognize his quiet voice and “whispers”? Do you recognize his intervention and reverently say, “The living God touched me”?

Will you give in to the flesh today or will you choose to walk in the Spirit?

Will you believe in every situation that the Spirit of the Lord is right here, in full power and grace, to meet all your needs and lead you to walk with Christ in the Word, faith, praise, prayer, *agape* love, righteousness and witness, to the glory of the Lord?!!

As God fills his temple with his presence, will you fill God's temple with worship, thanksgiving, love, repentance and obedient service?

**Thank you, Lord, that in Christ the Holy Spirit dwells in us, making us your temple!
I am also in God in the Spirit! Amazing!**

¹¹ adapted from J. I. Packer, Keep In Step With The Spirit (Old Tappan: Revell, 1984), 49.

Reflection questions

In 1 Corinthians 3:16, what two things go together?

You are God's _____ and God's _____ in you.

According to 1 Corinthians 6:19, what is the body of a Christian? What does this mean?

Our body is a _____ of the _____.

In 1 Corinthians 6:19, how is the Holy Spirit described?

The _____ Spirit _____ you, whom you _____ from _____.

In 1 Corinthians 6:20, how is the Spirit connected with Christ's death?

You were _____ with a _____.

In Romans 8:9, what are the three descriptions of our relationship with the Holy Spirit?

You are _____ the Spirit, he _____ in you, you _____ the Spirit of Christ

In Romans 8:9, what are the two phrases describing who the Holy Spirit is?

The Spirit of _____, the Spirit of _____

In Romans 8:9, if we do not have the Spirit, what does this mean about our relationship to Christ?

We do not _____ to Christ

In Eph 2:20-22, what three things go together?

Christ Jesus himself being the chief _____. Jew and Gentile believers are joined together into a _____ in the Lord . . . a _____ for God by the _____

The Holy Spirit has made us into a temple for the worship of the LORD. Take time to worship now!

Day 15 God the Father dwells in us and we are in the Father

Gifts # 20,21

Jesus answered him, “If anyone loves me, he will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him.” (John 14:23)

⁹the Spirit of God dwells in you . . . the Spirit of Christ . . . ¹⁰But if Christ is in you . . . ¹¹If the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you . . . his Spirit who dwells in you. (Rom 8:9-11)

To the church of the Thessalonians in God the Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ. (1 Thess 1:1)

Although the Bible speaks more of Christ and the Spirit dwelling in us, it is a precious truth that the Father dwells in us. Christ’s death completely reconciles us to God, to all that God is, God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit.

Jesus said that he and the Father make their home in anyone who loves him and keeps his word (John 14:23 above). Jesus and the Father want to make their abode, their dwelling, in us. They want to abide and remain in us as we abide and remain in Christ and his word.

In Matthew 10:20, when we are arrested for Christ and brought before officials to bear witness, “it is not you who speak, but the Spirit of your Father speaking through you.”

In Romans 8:9-11, why should we not walk according to the flesh, but live according to the Spirit? Because we are not in the flesh, but *in* the Spirit. The Spirit of God dwells in us (we have the Spirit of Christ; we belong to Christ), Christ is in us, and the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead (the Father) dwells in us! Therefore, we are not in debt to the flesh to live according to it (Rom 8:12). God the Father, Christ and the Spirit dwell in us!

We are also “*in* God the Father *and* the Lord Jesus Christ” (1 Thess 1:1 above; 2 Thess 1:1; *italics* added). Our lives are “hidden with Christ *in* God” (Col 3:3).

We are not closer to Christ and farther away from the Father. “I and the Father are one” (John 10:30). The Lord our God is one Lord (Deut 6:4). Jesus said, “I am in my Father, and you in me, and I in you” (John 14:20). If we are in Christ and he in us, then we are in the Father and the Father is in us, for Jesus is in the Father, and the Father is in Jesus.

Enter into loving harmony, intimacy, and cooperation with the Father as an obedient child who loves their all-powerful, all-gracious Father!

Lord, I praise you that I am in God the Father and the Father dwells in me! I yield to do whatever my Father wants me to do. I want to be your loving and obedient child.

Day 15 The Lord immerses us in the Father, Son and Holy Spirit

Gift # 22

Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. (Mat 28:19-20)

As we have just seen, Christ dwells in us and we are in Christ, the Spirit dwells in us and we are in the Spirit, and the Father dwells in us and we are in the Father. It is no surprise, then, that Jesus commands that baptism be in the name of the Father, Son and Spirit because baptism in water is a picture of the Lord immersing us spiritually in God the Father, Son, and Spirit! (For more on immersion in Christ and the Spirit, see Day 22 and Day 33.)

In every situation, those in Christ can affirm that God the Father, Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit are right here with us in full power and grace to meet all our needs and lead us in God’s Word in faith, prayer, *agape* love, righteousness and witness, to the Lord’s glory!

There is no more intimate, delightful, respectful, and joyful relationship of oneness, communion, and cooperation than exists between the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. In Christ, we are immersed and enveloped in the love relationships of the Father, Son and Spirit!

Lord, thank you for immersing me into yourself - Father, Son and Spirit! Amazing!

Reflection questions

In John 14:23, who comes and makes their home in those who love and obey Jesus?

_____ and the _____

In Matthew 10:20, who speaks through us when we are arrested for Christ and brought before officials?

The _____ of our _____

In Romans 8:9-11, what are the three phrases describing who the Holy Spirit is? Note the Trinity.

The Spirit of _____ dwells in you, the Spirit of _____, the Spirit of _____ who raised Jesus

In Romans 8:11, if we use one word instead of "him who raised Jesus from the dead," we would say,

the Spirit of the _____

In Romans 8:9 -11, note the phrase "dwells in you" three times, and "in you" one time.

⁹ The Spirit of God _____ in you.

¹⁰ But if Christ is _____ you.

¹¹ If the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead _____ in you,
his Spirit who _____ in you.

In 1 Thessalonians 1:1 and 2 Thessalonians 1:1, what is the relationship of believers to God?

We are ___ God the _____ and the _____

In Colossians 3:3, what is the relationship to God of those raised with Christ?

Our lives are _____ with _____

In Matthew 28:19, in whom are we immersed?

The _____, the _____, and the _____

Affirm your faith – Lord, thank you that because Jesus died and rose, Christ dwells in us, the Holy Spirit dwells in us, and the Father dwells in us! We are in God the Father and in Christ, and we are in the Spirit! We are immersed in the Father, the Son and the Spirit! This is love that surpasses knowledge and relationship beyond our full grasp! You allow us to share in the intimate fellowship you share with each other and the delight you have for each other. Praise you, Lord, the one and only God.

Our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ. (1 John 1:3)

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all. (2 Cor 13:14, "koinonia" of the Spirit is also in Phil 2:1)

Children want parents to be with them in loving relationship, friendship, companionship, and fellowship. They don't want fighting, rejection, or withdrawal.

God completely reconciles with us in full fellowship the moment he declares us righteous through faith in Jesus and places us in Christ. Our sin caused disconnection. God the Father, Son, and Spirit now relates to us in fullest friendship, companionship, fellowship and partnership, as in the two passages above. God calls us "into the fellowship of his Son" (1 Cor 1:9). We are spiritually immersed into the Father, Son and Holy Spirit (Matt 28:19). We are in God the Father, Son and Spirit and they in us in fullest fellowship (Days 13-15).

The word for fellowship is "koinonia," meaning partnership, communion, sharing, participation, social intercourse, and fellowship. Koinonia "expresses the blending of two wills into one common cause."¹² We share in common with each other. Another word "metochos" includes sharing in, partnership, and partaking. We "share" in Christ (Heb 3:14) and in the Holy Spirit (Heb 6:4); we are "partakers" of Christ and the Spirit (NKJV, NAS).

We may have visited in homes where everyone is serious, or formal, or unhappy, or even fighting. We need to grasp that the Father, Son and Holy Spirit are so deeply in love with each other, and so totally delight in each other, that in their home there is supreme joy, delight, laughter, oneness and friendly communion! In their interactions with each other, there could not possibly be more love and respect for each other, more delight and taking pleasure in each other, and more happiness and satisfaction with each other.

In Christ, it's as if we are sitting at the Trinity's table of grace, love, and fellowship (2 Cor 13:14 above)! There is more than reverence between them! Join in the joyous worship, fellowship, cooperation and love. Jesus has also come into our home to eat with us (Rev 3:20)!

The Lord himself is our greatest treasure. Our highest privilege of fellowship in heaven is, "They will see his face" (Rev 22:4). Some children sit on Santa's knee and only think of gifts they want from him. They don't say, "I only want you Santa." But our greatest satisfaction is God providing fullest fellowship with himself.

From God's perspective, he is not in and out of fellowship with us based on our actions, like a parent who is warm sometimes and cool, remote, or ticked off at other times. God is always in full fellowship with us based on Christ's perfections not our performance. In one sense, nothing believers do makes the Lord one inch closer or farther away, since God fellowships with us based on Christ's righteousness not ours; when we sin, God is not one inch farther away, for in Christ we are justified, reconciled, and God's wrath is turned away. In another sense, the holy One has no fellowship with darkness like lust or harming others.

From our perspective, all we do increases or decreases our *enjoyment* of the full fellowship God provides in Christ. God may be in full fellowship with us, but we may not be fully fellowshiping with him. One marriage partner may be offering full fellowship, but the other may not be responding to such love with fullest fellowship, friendship, and cooperation. We may be seated at the table of the kindest, friendliest family, but be unhappy and distant.

Sin matters. It robs our fellowship. It hurts others. It grieves God who desires better for us. Jesus rebukes and disciplines those he loves (Rev 3:19). Full fellowship in Christ is enjoyed best through faith-filled, Word-filled worship, prayer and obedient cooperation.

Affirm who you are in Christ--Praise you, God the Father, Son, and Spirit, that I am in Christ and you are in full fellowship with me! You are my greatest treasure.

¹² Fritz Reinecker, Cleon Rogers, Linguistic Key to the Greek New Testament (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1982), 386.

Reflection questions

In 2 Corinthians 13:14, with whom do we enjoy fellowship?

The fellowship of the _____ be with you all.

In 1 John 1:3, with whom do we enjoy fellowship?

Our fellowship is with the _____ and with his _____ .

In 1 Corinthians 1:9, to what has God called us?

God called us into the _____ of his _____.

In Revelation 22:4, what is our great privilege?

They will _____ his _____.

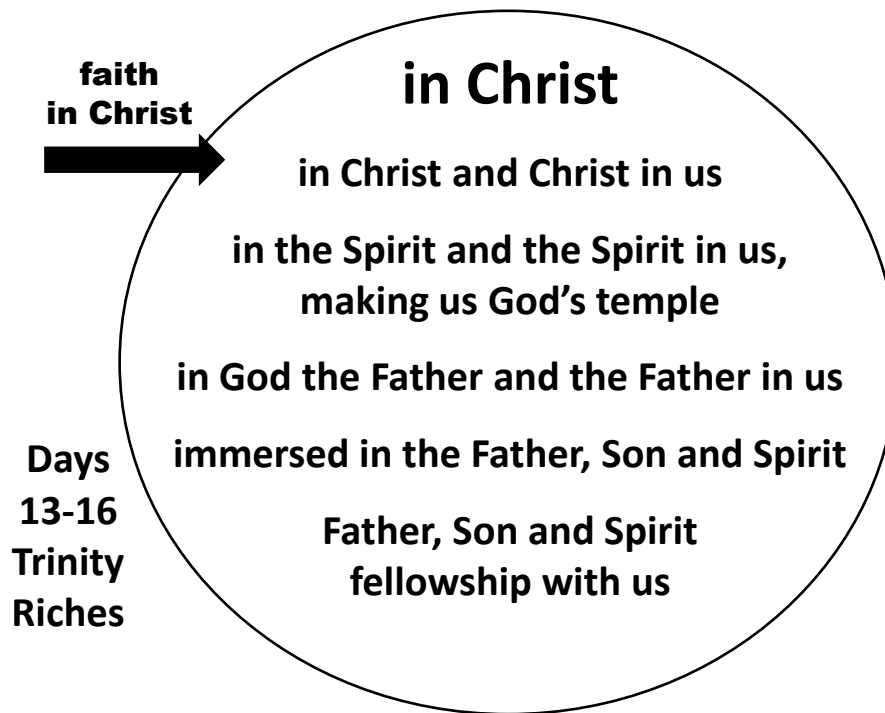
Does the fact that you are united with God the Father, Son and Spirit in spiritual oneness (Days 13-15) motivate you to fervently fellowship with the Father, Son and Spirit? Shouldn't oneness lead to increased fellowship? Shouldn't fellowship flow from oneness?

Consider how great Old Testament saints like Daniel fervently sought fellowship with God because of the beauty and glory and superiority of the Lord over all else. They depended on God graciously extending fellowship based on the Covenant. They did not have a grasp of the spiritual oneness the Lord would reveal in the New Covenant such as Christ dwells in us and we are in Christ, the Holy Spirit dwells in us and we are in the Spirit, and God the Father dwells in us and we are in the Father, immersed into the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. However, if saints like Daniel had known of spiritual oneness with the Lord like we enjoy in Christ, would not this oneness have made them overjoyed with holy awe, and greatly increase their pursuit of fellowship with this God with whom they were one?

Our oneness should greatly motivate us to fellowship with the Father, Son and Spirit with whom we are one, and who desire to fellowship with us.

In addition to justification, which riches of grace thus far are cures for loneliness?

Praise the Lord! Praise changes everything as we study. Praise moves the Word from head to heart! Praise means we join in the joyous fellowship, worship, and love at the table of the Trinity rather than sit quietly and unresponsive! Faith-filled praise based on God's promises is like drinking God's riches of grace!



**What wonderful grace that unites us with the Lord in order to know him
in his eternal fellowship and glory in Christ!**



Seven glorious graces in Christ connected with the throne of God

**What wonderful grace that unites us with the Lord in order to know him
in his eternal fellowship and glory in Christ!**

Day 17 The Lord gives us access to God and his grace

Gift # 24

For through him (Jesus) we both have access in one Spirit to the Father. (Eph 2:18)

Christ Jesus our Lord, in whom we have boldness and access with confidence through our faith in him. (Eph 3:12)

Through him we have also obtained access by faith into this grace in which we stand. (Rom 5:2)

¹⁹ Since we have confidence to enter the holy places by the blood of Jesus, ²⁰ by the new and living way that he opened for us through the curtain, that is, through his flesh, ²¹ and since we have a great priest over the house of God, ²² let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, with our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water. (Heb 10:19-22)

The Lord is our omnipotent king reigning on his throne. Access to the king is not automatic. It is of the highest privilege in all of life. Even Queen Esther could die for approaching her husband, King Xerxes, without being summoned (Esther 4:11, 16).

Note what Matthew points out at Christ's death. "And Jesus cried out again with a loud voice and yielded up his spirit. And behold, the curtain of the temple was torn in two, from top to bottom" (Matt 27:50-51). God accepted Christ's sacrifice for sin. The moment God forgives sin by faith in Christ's blood, the way of access to God completely changes.

Picture a guard standing behind the locked doors of a bank. When at the appointed time he smiles and opens the doors, it means we can come in! The curtain is torn. Come in!

Before Christ's death, only the High Priest had access into God's presence in the Most Holy Place. Access was only once a year on the Day of Atonement, when he sprinkled the atoning blood on the Mercy Seat (Atonement Cover). Now, by faith in the blood of Jesus, anyone, both Jew and Gentile, has continual access in one Spirit to the Father (Eph 2:18, also riches in the Spirit) with boldness based on confidence in the supreme effectiveness of Christ's blood and ministry as high priest (Eph 3:12; Heb 10:19-22). Access to God includes access to all God's grace in Christ, grace in which we now stand continually (Rom 5:2).

Christ's atoning sacrifice for sin ended the religious system of the Temple! His once-for-all sacrifice and ever-living priesthood ended the need for priests and sacrifices. Faith in Jesus and his redeeming blood is the new way of access. Believers now go directly to the LORD for every need. His throne is now a throne of grace where we come confidently to receive grace to help in times of need (Heb 4:16). Jesus is the "end" of religion!¹³ He is the source of all God's grace, the end to which Old Testament religion pointed.

Jesus is our access. Jesus is our door of access (John 10:7, 9). Our greatest privilege is to meet with the LORD in his Holy Place, and face to face forever in heaven.

Some take access to God for granted. But by ourselves alone, we are sinful, helpless, and denied access. We must acknowledge that our access to the Father is only made possible by Christ's death. Prayer in Jesus' name is the only way of access.

When we pray "in Jesus' name," we come to God in prayer as in Hebrews 4:14-16, 10:19-22. We *trust* Jesus as God's sacrifice for our sins, our righteousness, our high priest who mediates for us, and our way of access. We *acknowledge* that apart from Christ we are unrighteous and denied access. We *ask* according to the Lord's will and for his glory.

Days 17-21 are glorious graces in Christ connected in particular with life at the throne of God. Through Christ, we can live at the throne, in worship, prayer, and intercession!

Praise you, Lord, that Christ is my access to you, and I can always come into your presence on the basis of the shed blood of Jesus. The doors are open to come in!

¹³ I recommend reading - Bruxy Cavey, The End of Religion, (Colorado Springs: NavPress, 2007)

Reflection questions

In Ephesians 2:18, how can both Jews and Gentiles experience God the Father, Son and Spirit?

Through _____ (Jesus) both have _____ in one _____ to the _____.

In Ephesians 3:12, what do we have in Christ through our faith in him?

We have _____ and _____ with _____

In Romans 5:2, if we have been justified by faith in Christ (Rom 5:1), what else do we have?

Through him we have also obtained _____ by faith into this _____ in which we stand.

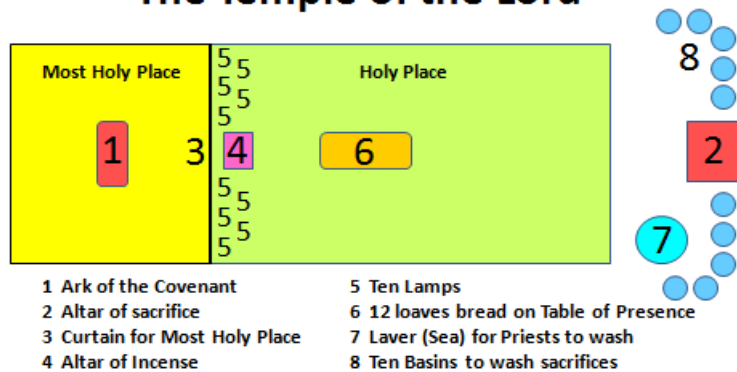
In Hebrews 10:19-22, why should we draw near to God with a true heart in full assurance of faith?

Since we have _____ to enter the _____ places by the _____ of Jesus,
by the _____ and _____ way that he opened for us through his _____.

Since we have a _____ over the house of God.

Because by the blood of Jesus our hearts are _____ from an evil
conscience and our bodies are _____ with pure water.

The Temple of the Lord



“Therefore, brothers, since we have confidence to enter the holy places (especially 1) by the blood of Jesus (2), by the new and living way that he opened for us through the curtain (3), that is, through his flesh, and since we have a great priest over the house of God, let us draw near (4) with a true heart in full assurance of faith, with our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience (2) and our bodies washed with pure water (7)” (Hebrews 10:19-22; numbers and comments in brackets added).

Because we have confidence in Christ’s blood shed as the once-for-all sacrifice for sin (2) and confidence in Jesus living forever as our high priest to mediate for God’s people, we have confidence to enter God’s presence (1), like priests who have been sprinkled (2) and washed (7), and confidence to keep on drawing near to God in prayer as those at the incense altar in heaven (4) with the curtain removed (3).

Day 18 The Lord answers prayer in Jesus' name

Gift # 25

Until now you have asked nothing in my name. Ask, and you will receive, that your joy may be full. (John 16:24)

⁹ And I tell you, ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. ¹⁰ For everyone who asks receives, and the one who seeks finds, and to the one who knocks it will be opened. (Luke 11:9-10)

Through Christ's death, God flung open the doors of access to God and his grace (Day 17). We now pray in Jesus' name, believing Christ's death provides access. We come to God in prayer as in Hebrews 4:14-16, 10:19-22. We have *bold confidence in Jesus* as God's sacrifice for our sins, our righteousness, our high priest who mediates for us, and our way of access. We *acknowledge* that apart from Christ we are unrighteous and denied access. We *ask* according to the Lord's will and for his glory, as Jesus would ask. Praying in Jesus' name also involves asking what he would ask, just as doing something in Jesus' name involves doing what he would do.

We are to pray in the Spirit (Eph 6:18; Jude 20). As we will see on Day 20, the Holy Spirit is the Helper, the Spirit of truth, who helps us pray using the sword of the Spirit, the word of God, with bold confidence in Jesus, and persevering prayer for others.

By the Spirit the Lord infuses his people with continuous praise and prayer in the Spirit in the name of Jesus. The Lord leads us to not just pray for ourselves, but for others, the church, and world missions. He leads us to not just ask God for things, but to worship and thank the Lord for who he is and what he does. He leads us to not just go through the motions in prayer, but to bring ourselves into the Lord's holy presence and believe his promises. He leads us to not just pray in private, but to pray out loud with others.

Our prayers should not be all requests, like self-centered children would do with their parents. "Rejoice in the Lord always" (Phil 4:4). "Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances" (1 Thes 5:16-18). "Through him (Jesus) let us continually offer up a sacrifice of praise to God" (Heb 13:15).

The conditions for answered prayer can be summarized in the word OFAITH meaning *obedient faith*, faith that lovingly obeys (not zero faith!).

O	Obedience	1 John 3:22
F	Faith	Heb 11:6; Mark 11:24
	For God's glory	John 14:13, 15:8
A	Abiding in Jesus	John 15:7
	According to his will	1 John 5:14
I	In Jesus' name	John 16:24
	In the Spirit	Eph 6:18; Jude 20
T	Thanksgiving	Phil 4:6
	Total dependence	2 Chron 16:7-9, 14:11
H	Humility	1 Peter 5:5, 7; 2 Chron 7:14

Pray with "obedient faith"! Praise and thank the Lord as much as you ask!

Lord, thank you that you answer prayer as we come to you through the access provided by the Lord Jesus Christ to ask what Jesus would ask!

Live like a billionaire because of your riches in Christ! Constantly go to the bank of his throne of grace to receive all you need.

Reflection questions

In John 16:24, what does Jesus promise?

_____, and you will _____, when you ask in my _____

In Luke 11:9-10, what does Jesus promise?

_____, and it will be _____ to you; _____, and you will _____;
_____, and it will be _____ to you. For _____ who _____
receives, and the one who _____ finds; and to the one who _____ it will be
_____.

What are three things we should be doing when we ask in Jesus' name? (paragraph 1)

We have _____ in Jesus as God's _____ for our _____,
our _____, our _____ who mediates for us, and our way of
_____.

We _____ that apart from Christ we are _____ and _____ access.

We _____ according to the Lord's _____ and for his _____, as Jesus would ask.

How does the Spirit help us as we pray in the Spirit? (paragraph 2)

The Holy Spirit is the _____, the Spirit of _____, who helps us pray
using the _____ of the _____, the _____ of _____,
with _____ in _____, and _____ prayer for _____.

Which riches of grace thus far are best at contributing to healthy self-acceptance?

Praise the Lord! Praise changes everything as we study. Praise brings glory to the Lord!
Faith-filled praise based on God's promises is like drinking God's riches of grace!

¹⁴ Since then we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus, the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. ¹⁵ For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin. ¹⁶ Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need. (Heb 4:14-16)

Why can we confidently approach the Lord on his throne and receive mercy and grace to help in times of need? How can his throne be one of grace, not judgment? Because our great high priest is God's Son, who offered in God's presence the perfect, once-for-all sacrifice for sin, and who ever lives in God's presence to intercede for us and to sympathize with us (Heb 4:14-16 above, also Heb 7:25-27, 9:24)!

Hebrews 5:1-2 expands on three of the high priest's roles, which Jesus, the Son of God, now fulfills as our great high priest. He *acts on our behalf* in relation to God. He has *offered* the once-for-all sacrifice for sin. He *deals gently* with the ignorant and wayward, for he sympathizes with us in our weaknesses, having been tempted as we are (Heb 4:15).

"In the OT the Mercy Seat in the Holy of Holies could be made a place of propitiation by sacrifice (Heb 9:5). Now, however, the blood-sprinkled body of Christ on the cross has become the Mercy Seat for sinners once and for all. The Mercy Seat is thus a continual throne of grace. What otherwise would be an awful judgment throne becomes an altar of infinite mercy."¹⁴

Picture the Lord on his heavenly throne. Picture a compassionate, sinless, sympathetic Savior who gave himself on the cross to be your great high priest. Picture the Lord holding out to you a gift of mercy and grace for your present need. Will you confidently go to his throne and gratefully receive his gift? Will you now see yourself as extremely rich in Christ, like a billionaire with billions in the bank to draw on as needed? Or will you still view yourself as poor and without resources available?

When we are tempted or stumble, our great high priest reaches out to us to empathize not criticize, to help not scalp, and to sanctify not crucify. When others sin, do we respond like our Lord does, or do we criticize, scalp, and crucify?

Hebrews 4:14-16 ends the chapter that calls us to enter God's rest and cease from our own labors (4:9-10). Resting in Christ includes coming confidently to the throne of grace for all our needs! Repent and believe (4:2, 14). Rest and receive.

God has replaced being religious with resting in Christ for everything as we live in the Spirit! Note how Hebrews speaks of the throne of grace and the Spirit of grace (Heb 4:16; 10:29)!

Enjoy the full fellowship God provides in Christ. Constantly come into his presence in prayer in the name of Jesus. When we come to the bank to draw on our riches, we do not come to an impersonal banking machine, we come to the banker! The gracious bank owner is the one we need. The Lord himself is the one who helps us. The Lord himself is the riches of grace we need. Come to him now.

Affirm who you are in Christ--Lord, thank you that in Christ I can always approach your throne of grace to receive your mercy, grace, and help!

Live like a billionaire because of your riches in Christ! Constantly go to the bank of his throne of grace to receive all you need.

¹⁴ "Propitiation" in the New Unger's Bible Dictionary 1988 in Biblesoft's PC Study Bible software.

Reflection questions

In Hebrews 4:14, what three ways is Jesus described?

He is our _____

He has passed _____ the _____ (not through the earthly curtain)

He is the _____ of _____ (the greatest person possible to have as high priest)

In Hebrews 4:14, how should we respond to Jesus our great high priest?

Let us _____ our _____.

In Hebrews 4:15, what four ways is Jesus described?

He is our _____

He is not unable to _____ with our _____

He has been _____ as we are in _____

He was _____ sin. (He is our sinless, perfect high priest, yet he sympathizes with us)

In Hebrews 4:16, how should we respond to Jesus as our sympathetic high priest?

Let us then with _____ to the _____ of _____

In Hebrews 4:16, what does the Lord do for us if we come to Jesus as our high priest who sympathizes with us in our weakness and temptations?

We receive _____ and find _____ to _____ in time of _____.

How has God replaced being religious? (paragraph 7)

Day 20 The Lord supplies every need

Gift # 27

And my God will supply every need of yours according to his riches in glory in Christ Jesus. (Phil 4:19)

In Christ we have access to the presence of God and his grace (Day 17) where the Lord answers prayer in Jesus' name (Day 18). The throne of God and the Lamb has become for us a throne of grace where we can go with confidence in Jesus, our High Priest, to receive mercy and find grace to help us in any time of need (Day 19). We also go with confidence that God will supply every need of ours according to his riches in glory in Christ Jesus!

In Philippians 4:19, the word "supply" (Greek *pleroo*) is also translated as "meet" as in "God will meet all your needs" (NIV). The word can be used for "filling" a net with fish and "leveling" a hollow. When a ship was prepared for a long voyage it could leave once it was fully "supplied" with all the supplies needed for the trip. When Paul received the gifts from the Philippians, he says he is "well supplied" (*pleroo*; Phil 4:18). When we are in Christ, we are like ships fully supplied for the journey with all that is needed!

God meets all our needs "according to his riches in glory in Christ Jesus." In Christ there is a storehouse of riches provided to us through the death and resurrection of Christ. Whenever we have a need, God supplies us with riches from the storehouse, like Joseph supplied people with food from the storehouses of grain (Gen 41:56). Unlike the people who had to pay Pharaoh for the food, all God's riches in Christ are supplied freely! Christ died to pay for and purchase all the riches of grace stored up for us in glory.

Some parents give according to how they are feeling at the moment. Others give according to what they have in their pocket. Our Lord, however, gives according to his glorious *riches* in Christ. We once were in debt millions and could never repay. *In Christ* we are forgiven all debts and given a heavenly bank account of grace. We are now like billionaires who go to the bank at the Lord's throne of grace in Christ for every need.

All God's riches of grace in Christ are ways God supplies all our needs.

Lord, thank you that you supply all our needs according to your glorious riches in Christ!

Day 20 The Spirit prays for us and helps us pray in the Spirit using God's word Gifts # 28,29

²⁶ Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness. For we do not know what to pray for as we ought, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us . . . ²⁷ the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of God. (Rom 8:26-27)

In our weakness, we do not know what to pray for as we ought, but the Holy Spirit is always praying for us according to God's will. Because Christ's interceding includes all his priestly mediating ministry for us as well as praying for us (as we will see on Day 21), I find it helpful to say the Spirit *prays* for us and Christ *intercedes* for us.

When in turmoil and hardly know how to pray, take comfort knowing that Jesus and the Holy Spirit know exactly how to pray and are praying for you before the Father.

The Spirit also helps us pray. "Building yourselves up in your most holy faith and *praying in the Holy Spirit*, keep yourselves in the love of God" (Jude 20-21). "Take . . . the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God, *praying* at all times *in the Spirit*, with all prayer and supplication. To that end keep alert with all perseverance . . . for all the saints" (Eph 6:17-18). In prayer in the Spirit, the Spirit helps us use God's truth to pray for all saints with perseverance. In Eph 5:18-21, in prayer in the Spirit, the Spirit helps us use God's truth to joyfully praise God in singing and thanksgiving (more on 175-178). Also, "in one Spirit" both Jew and Gentile "have boldness and access with confidence" in Christ (Eph 2:18; 3:12).

Thank you, Lord, that the Spirit of truth, the Paraclete, the Helper, is the Spirit of prayer, who prays for us, and helps us pray in the Spirit using your word to worship, pray and intercede for others with perseverance and bold confidence in Christ!

Reflection questions

In Philippians 4:19, what does God promise his people?

God promises to _____ need

In Philippians 4:19, on what basis does God meet our needs?

According to his _____ in _____ in _____

If we truly live out the truth of being blessed with every blessing in Christ (Day 10), with access to the throne of grace (Day 19) where every need is supplied from God's riches in glory in Christ (Day 20), what will we do whenever we have a need? What should we no longer do?

In Romans 8:26-27, what are two things the Spirit does for us?

He _____ us in our weakness. He _____ for us.

In Jude 20-21, how do we keep ourselves in the love of God?

_____ yourselves _____ in your most _____ and
_____ in the _____, keep yourselves in the love of God.

In Ephesias 6:17-18, how does the Spirit help us pray?

Take . . . the _____ of the _____, which is the _____ of _____, praying
at _____ times in the Spirit, with all _____ and _____. To that end _____
_____ with all _____ . . . for _____ the saints.



Lord, we praise you for supplying every need through Jesus Christ, through the grace that flows like a fountain from Christ's death and resurrection. Thank you that you do not supply our needs according to our obedience, or efforts to please you, but according to your riches in glory in Christ Jesus. Thank you that the Spirit of truth is the Spirit of prayer, the Helper who prays for us and helps us pray, intercede for others and worship the Lord, using the word of God with persevering, bold confidence in Christ!

Day 21 Christ our High Priest intercedes for us as our one mediator and ransom Gift # 30

Who is to condemn? Christ Jesus is the one who died--more than that, who was raised—who is at the right hand of God, who indeed is interceding for us. (Rom 8:34)

For there is one God, and there is one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, who gave himself as a ransom for all. (1 Tim 2:5-6).

Jesus is at the right hand of God as our permanent, ever-living, *ever-interceding*, ever-mediating high priest. *Christ's interceding for us is far more than praying for us.* Interceding includes the whole ministry of Jesus as our go-between, mediator high priest. Our Lord Jesus can intercede for us extremely well because as our High Priest he is also our once-for-all atoning sacrifice for sin, our righteousness, our representative before God, our advocate who defends us when we sin, our priestly counselor who teaches us God's way, our mediator of the New Covenant (Heb 9:15, 12:24), and the one who prays for us.

He sympathizes with us in our weakness because he has been tempted as we are, yet without sin (Heb 4:15). He gives mercy, grace and help to those who draw near to his throne of grace in their time of need (Heb 4:16). He deals gently with the ignorant and wayward (Heb 5:2). He is able to save to the uttermost those who draw near to God through him, since he always lives to make intercession for them (Heb 7:25).

With Christ as the one who died for us, was raised, and who is interceding for us at the right hand of God, no one can charge us and condemn us and win their case in God's court (Rom 8:33-34). There is only one mediator between God and men, and Jesus is the only ransom and High Priest we need.

When in turmoil, take comfort knowing that Jesus prays for you exactly as you need, and is interceding for you in far greater ways than prayer alone.

Lord, thank you that Jesus intercedes for me as the one mediator I need before you!

Day 21 Christ our High Priest advocates his propitiation for our sins in our defense Gift # 31

¹ My little children, I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin. But if anyone does sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous. ² He is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the sins of the whole world. (1 John 2:1-2)

As a result of his propitiation, Jesus our high priest advocates for us before the Father like a defense lawyer would represent us, defend us, and advocate for us in court. When we sin, Jesus "speaks to the Father in our defense" (1 John 2:1, NIV). "We have an advocate with the Father" (1 John 2:1, ESV). The word "advocate" is "paraclete," the one called alongside to help, also used for the Spirit in John 14-16 as he comes alongside to teach us God's word (Day 37). Christ our advocate with the Father defends us by advocating his propitiation on our behalf. This is the kind of help we need from a paraclete when we sin.

To those with a lawyer mindset, we can say that the Bible calls to all of us, "Hire Jesus as your defense lawyer for your final court appearance on judgment day."

Our advocate can defend us perfectly because he is our ever-living priest whose once-for-all propitiation turns God's wrath from us. Without atonement for sin, there would be no paraclete to defend us and advocate for us. We would be defenseless and indefensible.

Do not allow guilt to beat you up and depress you when you sin. Quickly repent and confess your sin. Believe Jesus is your propitiation and advocate who secures a full acquittal in God's court. It is very helpful to end our confession with praise that the Jesus' blood keeps cleansing and Christ keeps advocating.

Lord, thank you that Christ is my propitiation and advocate who defends me!

Reflection questions

In Romans 8:34, what are four reasons why nobody can condemn us and win?
Note how this also connects with Christ defending us as our advocate.

Christ Jesus is the one who _____ -- more than that, who was _____ -- who is
at the _____ of God, who indeed is _____ for us.

In 1 Timothy 2:5-6, what three things are said of Jesus that are not said of any other religious leader or anyone else?

For there is one God, and there is _____ between God and men, the man
_____ Jesus, who gave _____ as a _____ for _____

What is involved in Christ's interceding for us that is far more than praying for us? (paragraph 1)

In 1 John 2:1-2, what does Jesus do when Christians sin, and why can he do this?

What - But if anyone does sin, we have an _____ with the Father, _____
_____ the righteous. Why - He is the _____ for our _____.

In 1 John 2:2, why can Jesus defend *anyone* who depends on him as their defense lawyer?

He is the propitiation for the _____ of the _____.

How is Christ like a defense lawyer? (paragraph 1)

Jesus our high priest _____ for us before the _____ like a defense lawyer
would _____ us, _____ us, and _____ for us in court.

When we sin, or we feel guilty and unclean, what should we do?

Take time to praise the Lord for his riches in Christ! Praise that personally applies God's Word moves God's truth from head to the heart. Praise changes study into fellowship with God. Faith-filled praise based on God's promises in Christ is like drinking God's grace. Since God is different and better than all else, enjoying God with praise, love and doing his will gives different and better joy than all else.

**An important application from Days 1-21 for all of us
and especially those suffering from one of the greatest evils of our times.**

Many people, especially women, have suffered different kinds of abuse. They feel dirty, damaged, unclean, defiled, and messed up compared to others. They feel guilty (as in the application from Days 1-4) as if they were responsible for what happened (although they are not.)

Lord Jesus, you suffered severe physical abuse by hate-filled people, being whipped worse than a black man in the wicked days of slavery.

You suffered horrible abuse in being crucified. You were beaten and slapped around over and over by many abusers.

People abused you mentally with their mocking and hate-filled jeers and guilt-trips. Your being stripped naked and exposed publicly to the crowds with no ability to cover up was a form of sexual abuse, humiliation and shame.

Lord Jesus, you have been abused!

Despite the abuse, you are the Holy and Righteous One, who suffered the abuse and died in order to make me holy and righteous in your sight, justified, “just-as-if-I’d” never been abused and “just-as-if-I’d” never sinned.

Although at times I feel totally black from abuse, you see me as blazing white in your sight with the righteousness of God in Christ!

**I have a new life in you! I’m in your powerful,
loving arms right this moment, and your grace
determines who I am, not my past.**



**Your cross stands between me and the past.
Help me live today with you in the present!**

**“If we do not rely on Christ for wholeness,
all our relationships are an attempt
to complete ourselves.”**

adapted from Drs. Les and Leslie Parrott

Lord, I want you to be my wholeness.
I am filled and complete in Christ the fullness of God.
I have all the riches of your grace in Christ.
In Christ I have all I need.
Thank you, thank you, Lord!

More important applications for Days 1-21

No matter what hurt, sin, or inferiority is in your past, will you stop being chained to it?

Will you define yourself by who you are in Christ and what are freely given in Christ?

Can you picture that if Christ were to appear to you, he could spread out his arms and say,
“My cross stands between you and your past. Come walk with me in the present.”

If you find yourself listening to the old music of doubt, unbelief, and low self-esteem, will
you press the eject button and play the new music of Christ-esteem and who you really are in
the Lord Jesus Christ?

Whenever you have a need, will you affirm who Christ is and who you are in Christ?

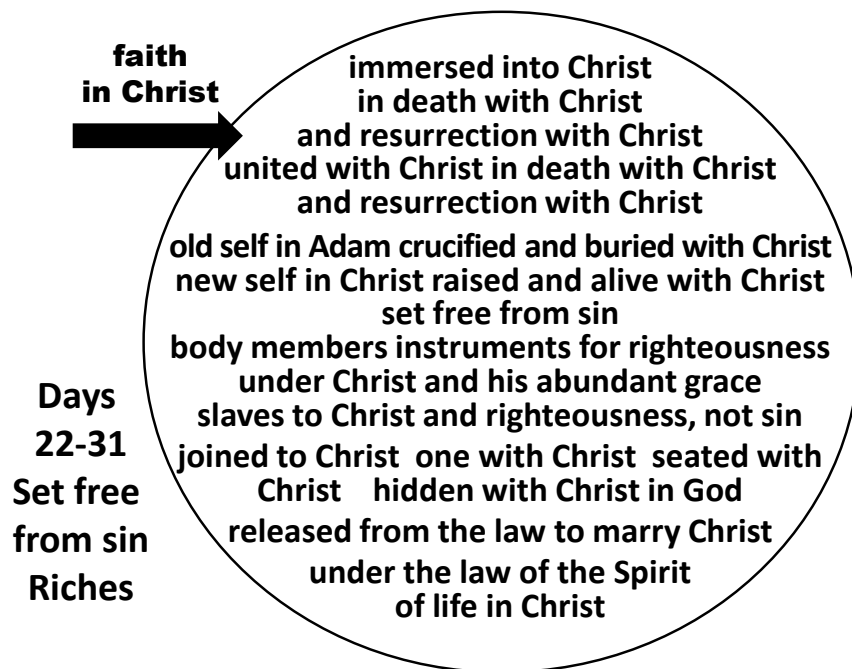
Will you confidently draw on the Lord’s riches in Christ at his bank of grace?

Will you use God’s grace in Christ in order to know the Lord more and more in his eternal
fellowship and glory in Christ?



The LORD is different than all else.
 The LORD is better than all else.
 There is a joy in the LORD that is different
 and better than joy in anything else.

Stopping to praise and thank the LORD for the LORD
 and his grace in Christ gives us joy in the LORD
 that is different and better than joy in anything else.



All except “joined, one, seated and hidden with Christ” may be found in Romans 6-8.

Why did Jesus have the greatest joy of anyone?
 Because he had the greatest joy in God.

Jesus had joy in God that was different and better than joy in anything else.
 Jesus sought and had none of the joys of the world like a nice home and money, but he was the happiest person ever on earth because more than all others, he had the greatest joy in God.

When we stop seeking joy in earthly, temporary things,
 to seek joy in the eternal God who’s better than all else,
 we will find joy and satisfaction in Christ
 that is different and better than joy in anything else.

Jesus died “that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be full. . . . that they may have my joy fulfilled in themselves” (John 15:11; 17:13).

Joy and satisfaction in Christ is a great influence in overcoming temptation.
 When we are happily satisfied drinking Christ’s living water, we will be far less drawn to drink sin’s mud and slime.

Day 22 The Lord immerses us into Christ and his death and resurrection

Gift # 32

Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized (*immersed*) into Christ Jesus were baptized (*immersed*) into his death? We were buried therefore with him by baptism (*immersion*) into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life. (Rom 6:3,4 italics added; baptize means immerse, like John the Baptizer)

²⁷ For as many of you as were baptized (*immersed*) into Christ have put on Christ. . . . ²⁸ you are all one in Christ Jesus. (Gal 3:27-28; italics added)

Picture yourself lost in the desert with all water gone. As you keep crying to the Lord, suddenly you are miraculously transported and immersed into a river of fresh water. It soaks into your dry pores. You drink in all you want. Likewise, the Lord spiritually immerses believers into Christ! We are in Christ and Christ is in us - united, immersed!

Immersion into Christ involves union with Christ, like cloth immersed in dye. ("Bapto" and "baptizo" both can refer to the dyeing process.) Consider the following:.

In Romans 6, when Paul sets forth immersion in water (baptism) as a picture of immersion into Christ and his death and resurrection (3-4), he immediately also describes it as being *united* with Christ in a death and resurrection like his (5). Then the next verses unpack what immersion and union in death with Christ and resurrection with Christ means! Death - our old self in Adam is crucified and buried with Christ in death with Christ. Resurrection - our new self in Christ is raised with Christ and alive with Christ to walk with Christ in newness of life, dead to sin and alive to God in Christ (in the Spirit, Rom 8); set free from slavery to sin as our master; body members yielded as instruments for righteousness under our new Master and his grace, no longer under law and sin, obedient slaves of Christ and God for righteousness unto sanctification and the free gift of eternal life! (Days 23-28 further explain these great truths! Also enjoy the helpful Romans 6 picture on Day 23!)

In Matthew 28:19, baptism not only pictures our immersion into the Son, but also our immersion into the Father and the Holy Spirit (Day 15)! If we are in Christ and Christ is in us, we also are in the Father and the Spirit and the Father and the Spirit are in us (Days 13-15). We take part in the Father, Son and Spirit and they become part of us, like cloth immersed in dye!

In 1 Corinthians 12:13, baptism not only pictures immersion in the Spirit, but also immersion into Christ's body; all who are immersed into Christ and his death and resurrection are immersed in the Spirit into the body of Christ, Jew or Gentile!

In Acts 22:16, immersion in water pictures the washing away of sins for all who call upon the name of Christ and are thus immersed into Christ.

In Colossians 2:12, immersion in water is a picture of being buried with Christ and raised with Christ by faith. (More about Col 2:11-12 is on Day 41).

In Galatians 3:27 (above), to be immersed into Christ is to be clothed with Christ. By faith in Christ not by works of law, Jew or Gentile, slave or free, male or female are all justified, made sons of God, immersed into Christ, clothed with Christ, one in Christ, and heirs of God's promise to Abraham of blessing for all nations (Gal 3:24-29)!

How wonderful it is when believers understand the various spiritual truths that immersion in water pictures! How wonderful it is to be in Christ and immersed into Christ!

Will you believe what you cannot see? Will you believe Jesus Christ is powerfully, abundantly present in you with all his saving power this very moment?

Lord, thank you for immersing me and uniting me with the Lord Jesus in death and resurrection! Thank you that you did heart surgery at the deepest level in that the old me is crucified and buried with Christ and a new me is raised and alive with Christ to walk in Christ in righteousness, set free from slavery to sin, now under Christ and his grace to obey as we walk together in your ways of righteousness! Wonderful Lord!

Reflection questions

In Romans 6:3-4, what has God done for those in Christ?

We are _____ into _____ and we are _____ into his _____
We are _____ therefore with _____ by baptism (*immersion*) into _____, in order that,
just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, _____ too might walk in
_____ of _____.

In Galatians 3:27-28, what has God done for those in Christ?

We are _____ into _____, we have _____ Christ, and we are all
_____ in Christ Jesus

Matthew 28:19

We are _____ into the _____, _____, and _____

1 Corinthians 12:13

We are _____ into Christ in the _____ into Christ's _____

Acts 22:16

Through immersion into Christ and his death, our sins are _____

Colossians 2:11-12

Through immersion into Christ by faith, we _____ the old life of living in the
_____ by being _____ with Christ and _____ with Christ.

Galatians 3:27

We are _____ into Christ and _____ with Christ

³ Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? ⁴ We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life. ⁵ For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we shall certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his. ⁶ We know that our old self was crucified with him . . . so that we would no longer be enslaved to sin. ⁷ For one who has died has been set free from sin. ⁸ Now if we have died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him. . . . ¹¹ So you also must consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus. (Rom 6:3-7,11)

In Romans 6, as soon as Paul introduces the concept that being immersed into Christ involves being immersed into his death and resurrection, Paul drives the same point home by restating it in slightly different words. “For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we shall certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his.” Paul then further unpacks what both immersion with Christ and being united with Christ mean. Our old self in Adam is crucified with Christ and buried with Christ in death with Christ. Our new self in Christ is raised with Christ and alive with Christ in resurrection with Christ to walk in newness of life, alive to God in Christ. We are set free from sin, to be instruments of righteousness under Christ and his grace, slaves of Christ, God, obedience and righteousness.

In Romans 6:3-8,11, what is the believer’s relationship to the Lord?

3 immersed (baptized) into Christ Jesus 3 immersed (baptized) into Christ's death
4 buried with Christ into death 4 raised with Christ to walk in newness of life
5 united with Christ in a death like his and united with him in a resurrection like his
6 our old self was crucified with Christ so we are no longer enslaved to sin
7, 8 we died with Christ and live with Christ 11 we are alive to God in Christ Jesus

In Romans 6:2-7,11, what is the believer's relationship to sin?

2 we died to sin 4 we walk in newness of life
6 we are no longer enslaved to sin (14 sin has no dominion over us as our Master)
7 we have been set free from sin (18 set free from sin; 22 set free from sin)
11 we are dead to sin

Therefore, what does Romans 6:11-13,19 command believers to do to fight sin?

11 “So you also must consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus.”
12 “Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, to make you obey its passions.”
13 “Do not present (yield, offer) your members to sin as instruments for unrighteousness, but present (yield, offer) yourselves to God as those who have been brought from death to life, and (present, yield, offer) your members to God as instruments for righteousness.”
19 “Present your members as slaves to righteousness leading to sanctification.”

The Lord Jesus is in us, infusing us with his pure thoughts, his delight in his Father, his *agape* love for others, and his longing to tell others of his saving power. Die to live.

1. Say “No!” to sin (Titus 2:12; Rom 6:12-13). Reject sin’s urges, refusing to stay stuck on the ground in the flesh when we can fly with Christ’s power overcoming sin (more on Day 31). Don’t let sin molest you; fight sin based on the victory Christ has won for us.

2. Say “Yes!” to Christ as he leads us by his Spirit in God’s Word, freed from sin, able to fly overcoming the downward pull of sin by the power of the risen Christ and his Spirit.

All praise to you, Lord, for immersing us into Christ and his death and resurrection, united with Christ in a death like his and united with Christ in a resurrection like his, crucified and buried with Christ, raised and alive with Christ, dead to sin to live in God!

Reflection questions

In Romans 6:3-6,8, what is the believer's relationship to Christ?

All of us who have been _____ (*immersed*) into _____ were _____ (*immersed*) into his death. ⁴ We were _____ therefore with _____ by baptism (*immersion*) into _____ in order that . . . we too might walk in _____ of _____.
⁵ For if we have been _____ with _____ in a death like his, we shall certainly be _____ with _____ in a resurrection like his. ⁶ . . . our old self was _____ with _____ . . . so that we would no longer be _____ to _____.
⁸ Now if we have _____ with _____, we believe that we will also _____ with _____.

In Romans 6:6-7, what is the believer's relationship to sin?

We know that our old self was crucified with him . . . so that we would _____ be _____ to _____. ⁷ For one who has _____ has been _____ from _____.

In Romans 6:11, what is the believer's relationship to sin, to God, and to Christ?

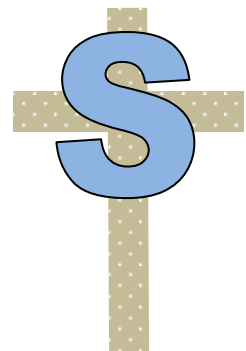
So you also must consider yourselves _____ to _____ and _____ to _____ God _____.

Romans 6:11 is the first command in Romans 6:11. What does God command us to do?

So you also _____ yourselves _____ to _____ and _____ to _____.



What truths from Days 22-23 are displayed in these two diagrams?



Day 24 The Lord makes our old self in Adam crucified and buried with Christ Gift # 34-35

⁶ We know that our old self was crucified with him in order that the body of sin might be brought to nothing, so that we would no longer be enslaved to sin. ⁷ For one who has died has been set free from sin. (Rom 6:6-7)

I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. (Gal 2:20)

Having been introduced to death and resurrection with Christ in Day 23-24, let's drink in more of the great impact death with Christ has on overcoming temptation and sin.

Romans 6:3-5 sets forth that immersion into Christ involves being immersed and united with Christ in death and resurrection. Not only has Christ died and been buried, but the believer also has died and been buried with Christ in death. And as Christ was raised to new life, the believer also lives a new life. Paul is arguing against continuing in sin (6:1).

Death with Christ is explained further in Romans 6:6-7 (verses above). Our old self in Adam (which Paul has just talked about in Rom 5:12-21) is *crucified* (and *buried*) with Christ in death with Christ. Paul is drawing a lesson from the death of a slave under Roman law, and applying it to the death of a slave to sin. Picture a Roman slave owner dragging a dead slave into court, demanding that the judge command the slave to serve him. A Roman judge would declare that "one who has died has been set free" from slavery. At death, all obligations to the master cease. All the authority of the owner over the slave ends.

The burial of Christ demonstrates that Christ truly died; he was not merely in a swoon or coma. Likewise, being *buried* with Christ emphasizes that the old self I was in Adam has truly died. Going on sinning is not God's plan. We are truly new creations in Christ the second Adam. We have died to sin to live a new life in Christ in the Spirit in love.

God crucified our old self with Christ in order to put an end to sin using us and our body members as its instruments for unrighteousness. The body in which sin had its way is "brought to nothing." We are no longer enslaved to sin. Since we have died, we are set free from the authority of sin to reign over us (Rom 6:12) and have dominion over us (Rom 6:14). We are now new selves under the authority of Christ and our body members are now Christ's instruments for righteousness, no longer instruments for unrighteousness (Rom 6:13).

When sin knocks at our door, God's first command in Romans 6 is, "Consider (*logizomai*) yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus" (Rom 6:11). Count on the fact that in Christ the new you is freed from sin's domination. Consider, count and reckon that what God says is true! Second, don't yield to sin, but present yourself and your members as instruments for righteousness (Rom 6:13)! (In Romans 4, *logizomai* is used eleven times for how God credits / counts righteousness to us and does not count our sins against us!)

Before immersion into Christ and his death and resurrection, my desires were constantly evil (Gen 8:21). Now the old me is crucified. I am not who I once was. At the deepest part of my being I am a new creation, a new me, born of God, born of the Spirit. The Spirit uses God's word to create new desires to love the Lord and walk in his righteous ways.

My mind still has thinking patterns, attitudes, and values that need changing. I still have a "flesh" part of me that is very weak, foolish, and easily deceived into sinning, whose desires are against the Spirit (Gal 5:17), but at the core of my being I am not my old self and sin is not my boss. I am now alive to God, in the Spirit, infused with Christ's power to do his will.

Some believers say they are trying to get crucified with Christ, or they are asking God to crucify their old self. But the truth is that we are crucified with Christ the moment we first believe on Jesus, whether we feel like it or not. The Lord says so! Yet in another sense, we need to die daily to self-will, self-effort and self-glory and refuse to walk in the flesh in order to walk with Christ in the Spirit for God's glory; this is repentance.

**Thank you, Lord, that through Christ's death you crucify the old me to free me from sin!
As one brought from death to new life, I give myself to you to live in Christ in the Spirit.**

Reflection questions

In Romans 6:6-7, what does the Lord do with the old person we were before union with Christ, and with what three results?

Our old self was _____ with _____ in order that the _____ of _____
might be brought to _____, so that we would no longer be _____ to _____.
For one who has _____ has been _____ _____ from _____.

From Romans 6:7 and paragraph 3 of the article, can you explain the analogy of a Roman slave's change of relationship to their Master when the slave dies?

In Galatians 2:20, what are two changes that result from being crucified with Christ?

It is no longer ___ who _____, but _____ who _____ in _____.
And the life I now live in the flesh I _____ by _____ in the _____ of _____

How are Romans 6:6-7 and Galatians 2:20 represented in this diagram from page xxvi?

What does God command us to do in Romans 6:11?

_____ yourselves _____ to _____ and _____ to _____ in _____ Jesus



Do you earnestly want to be crucified with Christ, to stop obeying sin, serving self, and trying to meet your needs sin's way?
Is your one desire to be united with Christ in his death to sin and in his resurrection in victory over sin and its power to rule you?
Do you want to only live in Christ and for Christ to God's glory?

Day 25 The Lord creates in us a new self raised and alive with Christ, a new creation Gifts # 36-37

²¹ You have heard about him and were taught in him, as the truth is in Jesus, ²² to put off your old self, which belongs to your former manner of life and is corrupt through deceitful desires, ²³ and to be renewed in the spirit of your minds, ²⁴ and to put on the new self, created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness. (Eph 4:21-24)

⁹ Do not lie to one another, seeing that you have put off the old self with its practices ¹⁰ and have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge after the image of its creator. (Col 3:9-10)

Christ makes us new inside. **“Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come” (2 Cor 5:17, italics added).** At the deepest core of our beings, we are born of God, new creations, new spirits, new selves. This is who we really are. We are not the old selves we were before Christ. We are something like used cars with new engines, appearing the same but new under the hood!

Paul uses the analogy of taking off dirty clothes and putting on clean clothes. He taught that turning to Christ involved taking off the dirty clothes of the old self and its sinful ways, and putting on the new clothes of the new self and its ways of righteousness and holiness (Eph 4:22-24 above). He specifically calls God’s people to put off falsehood, anger, stealing, corrupt speech, bitterness and malice and put on speaking truthfully, sharing with others, kindness, compassion, forgiveness and *agape* love (Eph 4:25-5:2).

Through immersion into Christ’s death and resurrection, God crucifies and puts off the old self and creates in us a new self. We cooperate with God’s work in us by continually putting off the ways of the old life and putting on the ways of our new life in Christ. This is why the Scripture says “you *have* put off and you *have* put on” and “put off and put on.”

The new me loves to serve others with *agape* love. My new spirit loves to pray, follow Jesus, and meditate on the Word. God’s Spirit constantly energizes my new spirit. If this is so, why do we battle inside, as if our old self is still there fighting the new self?

The battle within comes from the flesh (or sinful nature) that uses old thinking patterns to create desires that war against the Spirit’s new ways in us (Gal 5:17). Ephesians 4:23 calls us “to be renewed in the spirit of your minds.” Romans 12:2 calls us to “be transformed by the renewal of your mind.” Unrenewed thinking leads us to act like our old selves. Renewing our minds with God’s Word leads us to act as our new self desires.

Picture a classic Coke bottle, crammed full of short wires for tying up plastic bags. Even if we break the bottle, the wires keep the classic Coke shape. A few straighten slightly. Imagine someone pulling apart all the wires one by one and straightening out each one.

Our thinking is a bit like the bent wires in the bottle. When we experience new birth, the bottle of our old self is broken. A few wires straighten out about who Jesus is, how he died to save us, and what he wants to do in us. However, the large majority of our thoughts need to be “straightened.” The Holy Spirit renews our mind by using God’s Word to straighten our twisted thinking topic by topic, thought by thought, so in each situation we begin to think as God thinks in his Word. Our new self needs a renewed mind to think “straight” about everything. The flesh uses old “ustraightened” thought patterns.

Fight to take captive every thought to obey Christ (2 Cor 10:5). Refuse to let old fleshly thinking dominate. By the Spirit kill (mortify) sinful urges, like lust and greed (Col 3:5). Put on Christ and his love, not providing for the flesh to gratify its desires (Rom 13:14).

Thank you, Lord, that in Christ my old self is crucified and I am born of the Spirit as a new creation with a new self who loves your ways of righteousness and holiness!

Reflection questions

In Ephesians 4:22-24, what three things were the Ephesian Christians taught to do with regard to their former way of life? (Put off - put on is the picture of putting off old clothes and putting on new clothes.)

_____ your old _____. Be _____ in the _____ of your _____.
_____ the new _____, created after the likeness of God in true righteousness.

In Ephesians 4:22-24, how is the old self contrasted with the new self?

The old self belongs to your _____ manner of life and is _____ through
_____ desires. The new self is _____ after the likeness of _____ in true
_____ and _____.

In Colossians 3:9-10, why should we not lie to one another (or do anything else sinful)?

Do not lie to one another, seeing that you have _____ the _____
with its _____ and have _____ the _____, which is
being _____ in _____ after the _____ of its _____.

In 2 Corinthians 5:17, what three things are true of anyone who is in Christ?

He is a _____. The _____ has _____. The _____ has _____!

Although the Lord crucifies our old self and creates a new self in us when we are united with Christ, what are two sources of battle inside, as if our old self is still there fighting the new? (paragraph 5)

1. The _____, or _____ nature (Gal 5:17)
2. Not being _____ in the _____ of our minds (Eph 4:23)
Not being transformed by the _____ of our minds (Rom 12:2)

How does the renewing of the mind take place? (paragraph 7)

Explain the analogy of the wires in the Coke bottle as if you are sharing with someone. (paragraph 6-7)

If we want the flesh to have less strength, what do we need to do every day? (last paragraph)

If we spend hours each day feeding our mind with the world's music, TV, and internet, how will we ever renew our minds with God's truth? If we also feed our mind with lust, how will we ever be free?

Day 26 The Lord sets us free from sin

Gift # 38

⁶ We know that our old self was crucified with him in order that the body of sin might be brought to nothing, so that we would no longer be enslaved to sin. ⁷ For one who has died has been set free from sin. . . . ¹¹ consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus. (Rom 6:6-7, 11)

¹⁸ You . . . having been set free from sin, have become slaves of righteousness. . . . ²² you have been set free from sin and have become slaves of God. (Rom 6:18, 22)

For the law of the Spirit of life has set you free in Christ Jesus from the law of sin and death. (Rom 8:2)

Before Christ saved us, sin had power over us as our master and we served it as its slaves. Now that we are crucified with Christ, we are no longer under sin's authority, just as the death of a Roman slave meant they were freed from their master. We are dead to sin, freed from sin. We are now slaves under Christ's authority as our master and king. Sins such as anger, lust, and impure thoughts have no right to boss us around. We do not have to obey sin's directives. We are free to obey Christ's directives. We are alive to God.

Picture being a slave in chains to sin. We cannot break our chains. We cry out to Jesus Christ. Just one drop of his blood, just one touch of the cross, smashes our chains and sets us free. Christ says, "Come, follow me. You are united with me, under my authority, and no longer under the authority of sin. Do not serve sin as a slave. Serve the Lord alone."

Picture a slave dying and being buried. The old you that sin owned as its slave has died, crucified with Christ. We are freed from slavery to the slave owner, for "one who has died has been set free from sin" (Rom 6:7). We also have been raised with Christ. We are freed from addiction to sin, but God commands us to keep saying "no!" to sin and offering ourselves to God (Rom 6:12-13). We are under Christ's authority and grace (Rom 6:14).

The law of the Spirit of life sets us free in Christ Jesus from the law of sin and death (Rom 8:2). Apart from Christ, we were like ostriches, unable to fly, earth-bound in sin. In Christ, we are able to "soar on wings like eagles" above the downward pull of sin and the flesh. We walk in the Spirit not the flesh, not choosing to act like ostriches stuck on the ground, held down and bound, but choosing by faith to spread our wings like eagles to rise up in Christ in the Spirit in *agape* love and righteousness against sin's downward pull.

Sanctification can be summarized as "set free from sin with Christ within."

Note God's four commands in Romans 6: consider/count, don't let sin reign, don't present/offer/yield, present/offer/yield (11-13, 19). To win against sin, we must consider it true that Christ freed us from slavery to sin to live in Christ in God. We must stop surrendering to sin, and keep giving ourselves as slaves to God (13, 22) and his righteousness (13, 18, 19).

Will you let sin boss you around when it knocks at your door to come in and party?

Will you reject sin by faith in Christ, no matter how strong sin tugs?

Will you by faith be determined that you are no longer going to let sins such as unkindness, anger, impurity, sexual immorality, or addictions wreak their destruction and death in your life and relationships? When tempted, will you turn to Christ in prayer and depend on him to lead you in his ways of *agape* love and purity? Will you enjoy your freedom in Christ and fly? Will you say "No!" to sin and "Yes!" to Christ?

**Lord, I consider it as true that in Christ you set us free from sin's domination!
I am freed from sin. I am dead to sin and alive to you. Thank you Lord.**

Reflection questions

In Romans 6:7, what two things has the Lord done for us in Christ?

We have _____. We have been _____ from _____.

In Romans 6:11, what two things are we to consider as true about who we are in Christ?

Consider yourselves _____ to _____ but _____ to _____ in Christ Jesus.

In Romans 6:18 and 22, what two things has the Lord done for us in Christ?

Having been _____ from _____, you have become _____ of _____.

You have been _____ from _____ and have become _____ of _____.

In Romans 8:2, what has the Lord done for us through Christ Jesus?

the _____ of the _____ of _____ set you _____ in Christ Jesus from the _____ of _____ and _____.

How is walking in the Spirit like flying, while walking in the flesh is like being stuck on the ground? (paragraph 4)

When tempted, will you turn to Christ in prayer and depend on him to lead you in his ways of *agape* love and purity? Will you count it as true that you are dead to sin's power and are alive in the Spirit? Will you enjoy your freedom in Christ? Will you say "No!" to sin and "Yes!" to Christ?

Praise the Lord! Praise changes everything as we study. Praise moves the Word from head to heart! Faith-filled praise based on God's promises is like drinking God's riches of grace!

Day 27 The Lord makes our body members his instruments for righteousness

Gift # 39

¹¹ So you also must consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus.

¹² Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal bodies, to make you obey their passions.

¹³ Do not present your members to sin as instruments for unrighteousness, but present yourselves to God as those who have been brought from death to life, and your members to God as instruments for righteousness. (Rom 6:12-13)

God has given us body members like our minds, eyes, mouths, hands and feet that can be used to love the LORD and accomplish his righteous purposes for us and others. People who do pornography yield their mind and eyes to sin to serve evil as its instruments for unrighteousness. People who sing worship songs yield their mind and eyes and mouth to God as his instruments for righteousness. Satan and sin are abusive and deceitful masters who demand obedience and the full use of our body members. Christ died to reclaim us for God and cleanse our body members for his use as instruments of worship and holy love.

In the fight against sin that constantly tempts us, Paul gives us two key commands in Romans 6. The first one in 6:11 is to count it to be true (*logizomai*) that we are dead to sin and alive to God in Christ as 6:3-10 explains. Believe what God says; count it to be true! The second key command is to yield, present, offer, surrender (and submit) ourselves and our members to God to serve him. "Present yourselves to God as those who have been brought from death to life, and your members to God as instruments for righteousness" (Rom 6:13).

The LORD has done his part in setting us free from sin by immersing and uniting us with Christ in his death and resurrection. If we do our part by following these two directives, we will also be fulfilling the other two commands in 6:11-13, "Let not sin reign in your mortal bodies" and "Do not present your members to sin as instruments of unrighteousness." I find this very exciting and very freeing. This is my part, and I can believe God and yield. If I do, the LORD will empower me with righteous desires and grace to love rather than sin!

By uniting us to Christ in his death and resurrection, the Lord has made us his instruments of righteousness. We are dead to sin and alive to God, freed from the authority of sin as master. We are under Christ's authority as our new master and king. We constantly report for duty, presenting ourselves to our new commanding officer as an instrument or weapon for righteousness, channels of God's *agape* love, slaves of Christ for righteousness.

Compared to Jews who think righteousness is in keeping the smallest details of the Law, Paul says righteousness before God is by faith in Christ (3:22-24, justification). God's love poured into us by the Spirit of holiness (5:5) fulfills the righteousness the Law desires as we walk in Christ in the Spirit (8:4) in *agape* love fulfilling the Law (13:8-10, sanctification).

Temptation to drink sinful "Me-first" slime loses its pull if we are enjoying drinking Christ's pure living water of overflowing "You-first-Father" grace in the Spirit. Whenever sin knocks at our door we simply count on Christ to be present in the Spirit and we offer, yield, report for duty, and present ourselves to Christ as his vessels of "You-first" love.

Picture yourself as a pure surgical instrument in the hands of the best surgeon, being used in life-saving surgery. In Christ we are the Lord's instruments of righteousness, giving life with his *agape* love. Picture a team of doctors and nurses reporting for directions from the chief of staff. You go with healing medicine to the many who are hurting and sick. You are on the Lord's team now! God's holiness and love is poured in your heart.

Count on your immersion into Christ to be like a glove on his hand, with no power of your own but infused with the Lord's power to do what his wisdom and love desires for others. Yield to be a flexible glove on the specialist's hand, not stiff and hard-hearted.

Do not give your eyes and mind to sin as instruments for porn! Yield your mouth and hands to serve others, to help, encourage and give to others, not hurt or take from others!

In Christ I and my members are God's instruments of righteousness! Yes, Lord!

Reflection questions

In Romans 6:11, what should we do?

So you also must _____ yourselves _____ to _____ and _____ to _____
_____ Jesus.

In Romans 6:12-13, what two things should we not do?

Let not _____ therefore _____ in your mortal bodies, to make you _____ their
_____. Do not _____ your members to _____, as _____ for _____.

In Romans 6:12-13, what two things should we do? What has God made us to be in Christ?

_____ yourselves to _____, as those who have been brought from _____ to _____,
and (present) your _____ to _____ as _____ for _____.

In Romans 6:12-13, what are four good reasons to present ourselves and our bodies to God?

¹² Because God does not want sin to _____ in our mortal bodies to make us
_____ their _____

¹³ Because God does not want our members to be sin's _____ for _____

¹³ Because in Christ God has brought us from _____ to _____

¹³ Because in Christ God made our members God's _____ for _____

Can you picture yourself as a pure surgical instrument in the hands of the best surgeon, being used in life-saving surgery? Can you picture yourself as a surgical glove on the head surgeon's hand? What kind of surgeries do people need around you?

Day 28 The Lord places us under Christ and his abundant grace

Gift # 40

For sin will have no dominion over you, since you are not under law but under grace. (Rom 6:14)

⁶ His glorious grace, with which he has blessed us in the Beloved. . . . ⁷ the riches of his grace, ⁸ which he lavished upon us (he made to abound toward us, NKJ). (Eph 1:6-8)

If we are under the Old Covenant law, it does not give us any strength to obey its many commands. Sin takes advantage of the law's commands to produce in us evil desires (Rom 7:8). We end up being mastered by sin. But if we are under grace, not law, Christ is in authority over us and "those who receive God's abundant provision of grace and of the gift of righteousness reign in life through the one man, Jesus Christ!" (Rom 5:17). Christ infuses us with abounding, overflowing, lavish strength in the Holy Spirit to obey God's will.

God has blessed us with his glorious grace in Christ; God has lavished spiritual riches of grace on us in Christ which abound and overflow to us (Eph 1:6-8).

In Christ, God makes all grace overflow to us so that we have all the grace we need to overflow in doing God's good will in every situation at all times (2 Cor 9:8).

Some people are dominated by patterns of anger, or worry, lust, arguing, denial, overspending, drinking, complaining, resentment, unhappiness, or not taking responsibility. Believers are under the authority of Christ and his grace, freed from sin with Christ within. When we yield to Jesus, the Spirit infuses us with the Lord's patience, love, trust, honesty, peacemaking, self-control, contentment, forgiveness, rejoicing, and taking responsibility.

Picture being under a pushy, deceitful, abusive boss named Sin. The boss is fired. You are now under Jesus. He always uses his authority to be gracious and kind, even when you don't deserve it. When the old boss tries to order you around, simply ignore him. Concentrate on doing as your new Lord directs and infuses you with his grace.

Thank you, Lord, that I am under Christ and your abundant overflowing grace in Him!

Day 28 The Lord places us under grace as slaves of Christ and God for righteousness

Gift # 41

¹⁴ For sin will have no dominion over you, since you are not under law but under grace. . . . ¹⁶ you are slaves of the one whom you obey, either of sin, which leads to death, or of obedience, which leads to righteousness . . . ¹⁸ set free from sin, have become slaves of righteousness . . . ¹⁹ as you once presented your members as slaves to impurity and to lawlessness . . . so now present your members as slaves to righteousness leading to sanctification. . . . ²² you have been set free from sin and have become slaves of God . . . eternal life (Rom 6:14,16,18,19,22)

We were slaves to sin, under the authority of sin as our cruel Master. We are now set free to be under Christ as our gracious Master, King and Lord, slaves of Christ and God for obedience and righteousness. Bibles often hide the Greek word 'doulos' by translating it 'bondservant' or 'servant,' but 'slave' was clear in the Roman world with many 'doulos.'¹⁵

Many early Christians were Roman slaves. Roman masters provided food, clothes, lodging and protection as slaves served as directed in the household, fields or vineyards. This was far better than many poor non-slaves. Being a slave of the supremely good Messiah King rather than a hell-bound slave to Satan and sin was very positive! Christ provided all, and the only concern in life was to do as he directed, while waiting for the King's return.

"Under grace"(14) is a startling, mind-blowing, positive way of saying we are slaves of Christ!

Enjoy your gracious Master by obeying! This leads to righteousness, sanctification and in the end, eternal life (6:22)! Are we free to sin because we are under grace? No!! (6:15).

Yield to be "slaves of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart" (Eph 6:6).

Lord, you are the most loving, gracious Master! Thank you for rescuing me from the most abusive, horrible tyrant of sin and Satan. I yield to joyfully serve you alone!

¹⁵ For more on 'slave' in the NT: John MacArthur, Slave (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2010)

Reflection questions

According to Romans 6:14, why should sin no longer rule as master over us?

Sin should no longer rule as master over us because we are under Christ and his _____.

In Ephesians 1:6-8, what are five characteristics of God's grace in Christ?

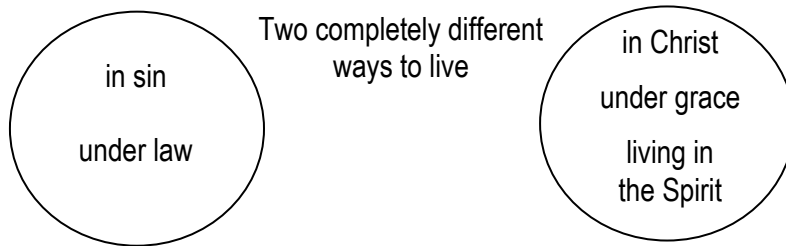
God _____ us with his _____ grace _____ (in Christ).

In Christ God _____ upon us the _____ of his grace.

And God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that having all sufficiency in all things at all times, you may abound in every good work. (2 Cor 9:8) (to abound is to overflow, to be abundant)

In 2 Corinthians 9:8, what does God want to do for those in Christ?

God is able to make _____ to you, so that having _____ in _____ at _____, you may _____ in _____.



In Roman s 6:14,16,18,22, what are the blessings of being under Christ as his slave?

¹⁴ For _____ will have no _____ over you, since you are not under law but under grace. . . . ¹⁶ you are slaves of the one whom you obey, either of _____, which leads to _____, or of _____, which leads to _____ . . .

¹⁸ set free from _____, have become slaves of _____ . . .

¹⁹ present your members as slaves to _____ leading to _____

²² you have been set free from _____ and have become slaves of _____, the fruit you get leads to sanctification and its end, _____ life

Note three other verses that use 'doulos' slave:

In Jude 1, Jude, the brother of Jesus, gladly proclaims he is a slave of Jesus Christ. "Jude, a 'doulos' of Jesus Christ and brother of James"

"Epaphras . . . a 'doulos' of Christ Jesus" (Col 4:12).

"If I were still trying to please man, I would not be a 'doulos' of Christ" (Gal 1:10).

Day 29 The Lord makes us joined to Christ, one with Christ, seated with Christ, hidden with Christ in God (these are not in Romans 6, but are like immersed and united with Christ)

But he who is joined to the Lord becomes one spirit with him. (1 Cor 6:17)

Gifts # 42-45

³¹ “The two shall become one flesh.” ³² This mystery is profound, and I am saying it refers to Christ and the church. (Eph 5:31-32)

⁴ But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, even when we were dead in our trespasses, ⁵ made us alive together with Christ . . . ⁶ and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ. (Eph 2:4-6; note the Day 23 riches)

For you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. (Col 3:3)

We are *joined* to Christ in deepest spiritual union to the point Paul says we become *one* spirit with Christ. “He who is *joined* to a prostitute becomes *one body* with her . . . But he who is *joined to* the Lord becomes *one spirit* with him” (1 Cor 6:16-17). We have been washed, sanctified, and justified in Christ and the Spirit (11). Our bodies are members of Christ (15) and temples of the Holy Spirit as the Spirit is in us (19), so “flee from sexual immorality” (18) and “glorify God in your body” (20)! 1 Corinthians 6:11-20 sees oneness with Christ as spirit to spirit union with Christ in the Spirit in whom we are justified, sanctified, members of Christ, joined to Christ, one spirit with Christ, and temples of the Spirit!

Paul says it is a profound mystery that Christ and the church become *one*, as a husband with his bride (Eph 5:31-32). This oneness is brought about by the profound love of the Messiah giving himself up for Jews and Gentiles in order to sanctify and cleanse the church and present her to himself in splendor as his holy bride (25-27; Bride, Day 55). Jesus Christ now loves, nourishes and cherishes the church as members of his body (29-30). In response to such love that makes us one, we submit to Christ our Head and Savior in everything (22-24). It is a profound new revelation from God that the Messiah becomes *one* with his people spiritually, nourishing and cherishing us as his body, through his death that sanctifies and presents both believing Jew and Gentile to himself in splendor, holy in Christ!

In Ephesians 2:1-7, being saved by the grace, mercy and love of God means those who were dead in sins, following Satan, and deserving eternal wrath are made *alive* together with Christ, *raised* up with Christ, and *seated* with Christ, assured of eternal glory with Christ.

We are *seated* with Christ. Christ is *seated reigning* on the throne at the Father’s right hand in all authority far above all, and we are *seated reigning* with him now, united with Christ, sharing in his victory, no longer under sin and Satan’s power, but members of Christ’s body, under the authority and direction of our Head (Eph 1:20-22; 2:2,6). We submit as we sit.

Christ is our great high priest *seated resting* in his one sacrifice for sin for all time, and we are *seated* with him *resting* in his finished work and victory (Heb 10:11-12), *assured* the Father is fully satisfied with Christ’s sacrifice for our sin, *resting* from our works, *drawing near* with confidence in Christ seated on his throne of grace to receive all we need (Heb 4:9-10, 16).

Christ is *seated waiting to judge* and *conquer* all enemies and *to reign forever* in the kingdom (Heb 10:13; Psa 110:1; Acts 17:31; Rev 17:14), and we are *seated* with him *waiting* to be delivered from the wrath to come and *to reign forever* with him (1 Thess 1:10; Rev 22:5), knowing those who conquer lukewarmness, false teaching, immorality and persecution *will sit* with him on his throne, as he conquered and *sat down* with his Father on his throne (Rev 3:21)!

We are *hidden* with Christ in God in unity, intimacy, and safety, wrapped up in him. Jesus is hidden in God. We are *hidden* with Christ in God. We are *in* Christ and *in* God.

We are one with Jesus Christ who is Lord of all. We are seated with the reigning Messiah of all power. We are hidden with Christ in God in the most intimate relationship possible. Die to all else, to live in Christ’s power, love, holiness, fellowship and joy in God!

Lord, how amazing to be one with Christ, seated with Christ, hidden with Christ in you!

Reflection questions

In 1 Corinthians 6:17, what has the Lord done for those in Christ?

He who is _____ to the _____ becomes _____ with _____.

In Ephesians 5:31-32, what is the profound mystery which was once concealed but now revealed?

"The _____ shall become _____ flesh." This mystery is profound, and I am saying it refers to _____ and the _____.

In Ephesians 2:4-6, what three things has the Lord done for those in Christ?

When we were _____ in our _____ God made us _____ together with _____, _____ us up with _____ and _____ us with _____

In Ephesians 2:4-6, what are two qualities of God that are mentioned?

God being _____ in _____, because of the great _____ with which he _____ us

In Ephesians 2:4-6, what condition are people in who are not in Christ?

We were _____ in our _____.

In Colossians 3:3, what two things has the Lord done for those in Christ?

You have _____, and your life is _____ with _____ in _____.

Lord, these last three days are where I want to live! Immersed into Christ. Immersed into Christ's death. Immersed into Christ's resurrection. United with Christ in a death like his. United with Christ in a resurrection like his. Old self crucified and buried with Christ. New self raised and alive with Christ to walk in newness of life in Christ in the Spirit. Joined to Christ. One with Christ. Seated with Christ. Hidden with Christ in God. I want to serve in the seen world while connected with the unseen world, the world of God, Christ, and the Holy Spirit, the world of your power rather than my flesh weakness, the world of your *agape* love for others rather than my flesh concern only for myself, the world of doing all out of love for the Lord who loves us rather than serving self, pleasing self, promoting self, trusting in self. I want to live in the world of Jesus' joy in God, delighting in you as the infinitely superior Holy One, the infinitely satisfying God of all grace in Christ, the infinitely valuable Treasure above all treasure. I want to live in the world of faith, joined to you, in Christ, in the Spirit, in God!

Day 30 The Lord releases us from the law to be married to Christ, in the Spirit Gifts # 46,47

¹⁴ You are not under law but under grace. . . . ⁴ Likewise, my brothers, you also have died to the law through the body of Christ, so that you may belong to another, to him who has been raised from the dead, in order that we may bear fruit for God. . . . ⁶ now we are released from the law, having died to that which held us captive, so that we serve not under the old written code, but in the new life of the Spirit. . . . ⁴ The righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not according to the flesh (flesh ESV, KJV, NAS; sinful nature NIV) but according to the Spirit. (Rom 6:14; 7:4, 6; 8:4)

³⁰ What shall we say then? That Gentiles who did not pursue righteousness have attained it, that is, a righteousness that is by faith; ³¹ but that Israel who pursued a law that would lead to righteousness did not succeed in reaching that law. ³² Why? Because they did not pursue it by faith, but as if it were based on works. . . . ³ For, being ignorant of the righteousness that comes from God, and seeking to establish their own, they did not submit to God's righteousness. ⁴ For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes. (Rom 9:30-32, 10:3-4)

¹⁶ So we also have believed in Christ Jesus, in order to be justified by faith in Christ and not by works of the law, because by works of the law no one will be justified. . . . ²⁰ I have been crucified with Christ. . . . ²¹ I do not nullify the grace of God, for if justification were through the law, then Christ died for no purpose. (Gal 2:16, 20, 21)

Christians are no longer under the Old Testament law. The New Covenant is far superior. Jesus Christ is totally superior. We are declared righteous through faith in Christ. We are under the grace of Christ. We are led by the Spirit. All is *by faith* in Christ (Rom 1:17.)

The sacrifice, access, justification, and grace of Jesus meet our needs in a way the law does not. The law requires repeated sacrifices for sin; Jesus is now the once-for-all sacrifice for sin. The law only provides access to God by priests offering sacrifices for us at the Temple, and only the high priest enters God's presence once a year; Jesus provides direct access anywhere 24/7 (Day 17)! No one is justified by the law, for it condemns all who break it; Christ frees us from the law's curse upon law-breakers by bearing our curse, and God justifies all who *trust* Jesus as he counts Christ's righteous obedience to the law as our own. The law doesn't provide grace to resist the power of sin and to fulfill the law; Christ frees us from sin and fulfills in us the righteous requirements of the law as *by faith* we walk in the Spirit in *agape* love.

The two pictures of freedom in Romans 6-7 are freedom from slavery to the old master, sin, and freedom from being bound to the old husband, law. In both pictures death with Christ frees us. We now belong to our new master and husband, the Lord Jesus Christ. United with Christ in the Spirit, we are empowered to keep God's law of love as Jesus did.

Rejoice in being freed from the condemnation of the law and freed from its inability to help you do God's will! Rejoice and rest in the right standing (justification) and power (sanctification) given in Christ *by faith not by works*. Rest in Christ. Enjoy love relationship with your new master and husband! Serve in the new life of the Spirit (Rom 7:6)!

Jesus brings an end to being religious with many rituals to perform and rules to keep! We rest in Christ *by faith* for all the grace we need, so we live in the new way of walking with Christ in the Spirit in *agape* love, enjoying God and serving the needs of others!

Lord, thank you that by faith Christ frees me from the law that condemns and curses to walk with Christ in the Spirit, serving others in *agape* love!

"Run, John, run, the law commands, but gives us neither feet nor hands. Far better news the gospel brings; It bids us fly and gives us wings!" ¹⁶ John Bunyan, quoted by John Piper in his sermon on 1 Peter 2:1-3 at www.desiringgod.org (audio 19940130.mp3)

Reflection questions

In Romans 6:14, what authority are we no longer under, and whose authority are we now under?

You are not under _____ but under _____ (the grace of God in Christ).

In Romans 7:4, What has happened to believers? How? For what purpose?

You also have _____ to the _____ through the _____ of _____,
so that you may belong to another (husband), to him who has been _____ from the
_____, in order that we may _____ for God.

In Romans 7:6, what two things has God done for us in Christ?

We are _____ from the _____ .

We serve not under the old written code, but in the _____ of the _____.

In Romans 8:4, what is now possible for those in Christ? What must believers do to take full advantage of what God provides in Christ?

The righteous _____ of the _____ can now be fulfilled in us.

We walk not according to the _____ but according to the _____.

In Romans 6:14, 7:4, 6, 8:4, what are the immense implications about being “religious”? People around the world in various religions sincerely do many religious rituals in hope of receiving life, grace, and favor from their God(s). In what ways is Jesus the “end” of religion?

Consider further how the sacrifice, access, justification, and grace provided by Jesus meet our needs in a way the law does not. (paragraph 2)

	<u>The Old Testament Law</u>	<u>The Lord Jesus Christ</u>
Sacrifice	Many sacrifices for sin needed	One sacrifice for all sin of all people No more sacrifices needed
Access	Access to God only through priests interceding for others at the Temple	Each believer has direct access to God's presence in heaven by the blood of Jesus
Justification	No one justified by the law Law condemns lawbreakers	Justified by faith in Christ our righteousness
Grace	No power provided by the law to obey its many commands	Empowered by Christ through the Spirit to love God and people

Day 31 The law of the Spirit of life sets us free in Christ from the law of sin and death

Gift # 48

For the law of the Spirit of life has set you free in Christ Jesus from the law of sin and death. For God . . . sending his own Son . . . for sin, he condemned sin in the flesh, . . . that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk . . . according to the Spirit. (Rom 8:2-4)

Under the righteous, holy and good Law of God, we are counted as totally unrighteous in God's sight. We are in Adam, dead in sin. We are under sin as our Master as sin seizes opportunity through the Law's commandments to lead us to disobey. The Law condemns to death all who sin. In these ways the Law is a law of sin and death!

In contrast to being under the Law, we can be in Christ, under Christ and his grace in the Spirit, counted righteous in God's sight, justified from all our sin (Rom 3-4), alive in Christ in eternal life in God (Rom 5:12-21), set free from slavery to sin, instruments of righteousness in God's hand, no longer serving sin as our Master (Rom 6), united to Christ as our new husband to live with Christ in the Spirit (Rom 7:1-6). God's law of being in Christ in the Spirit by faith is a new law operating in the spiritual world; the law of the Spirit of life sets us free in Christ from the law of sin and death!

As believers walk with Christ in the Spirit in *agape* love, the Spirit fulfills in us the righteousness the Law desired but could not produce (Rom 8:4). Jesus summarizes the righteous requirement of the Law as, "You shall love the Lord . . . and . . . You shall love your neighbor" (Matt 22:37-39). Paul says, "Love does no wrong to a neighbor; therefore love is the fulfilling of the law" (Rom 13:10). "The kingdom of God is . . . righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit. Whoever thus serves Christ is acceptable to God and approved by men" (Rom 14:17-18).

For Paul, walking in Christ in the Spirit in *agape* love fulfills the Law. Walking in Christ in *agape* love is righteousness in the Spirit in the kingdom of God. Walking in Christ in the Spirit in *agape* love is the way to serve Christ. Walking in Christ in the Spirit in *agape* love is the law of the Spirit setting us free in Christ Jesus from the law of sin and death.

Those who live according to the Spirit set their minds on the things of the Spirit, not the flesh (Rom 8:5). We are in the Spirit, not the flesh, with the Spirit of God dwelling in us; we have the Spirit of Christ; Christ is in us; we have life in the Spirit flowing from the righteousness of God we receive in Christ (Rom 8:9-10). Those who live according to the flesh die, but we put to death the deeds of the body of flesh by the Spirit and live (Rom 8:13). We are sons of God led by the Spirit of God to do the will of God, not the will of sin and the flesh (Rom 8:14)! The Spirit leads us to love God and people, which fulfills the law.

In Romans 6:7, one who has died with Christ "has been set free from sin." Now in Romans 8:2, Paul gives us the second half of being freed from sin, which is to live in Christ in the Spirit in life, not death. Dying with Christ ends sin's right to reign as master over us. Rising with Christ to live in the Spirit empowers us with life from God to love God and people.

The Spirit is the Spirit of *life* – *life* in Christ, *life* in the love of God poured into us.

Are you living under Law or in Christ and under Christ and his grace, in the Spirit?

Are you constantly repenting of "Me, Me, Me" selfishness in order to live in Christ in the Spirit in "You, You, You" *agape* love? Jesus constantly lived in the Spirit in "You, You, You" *agape* love for his Father and for people. Do you? Or would people close to you say that when it comes down to it, you are pretty much a "Me, Me, Me" kind of person? Would they say they see little self-sacrificing "You, You, You" *agape* love where you die to your preferences and comforts in order to give yourself as a servant of the needs of others?

Lord, you sent your Son "for sin" so we live in Christ in the Spirit in your *agape* love!

Reflection Questions

In Romans 8:2, what new law has God provided in Christ, and what does this law do for us?

For the _____ of the _____ of _____ has set you _____ in _____
_____ from the _____ of _____ and _____.

How does Galatians 5:16 state the truth of Romans 8:2? How is this verse like Romans 8:2?

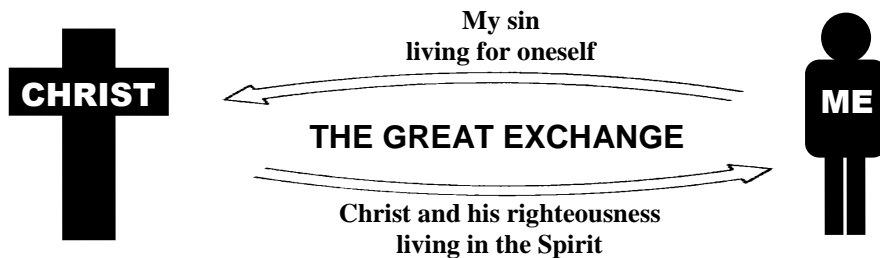
“But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh” (Gal 5:16).

But I say, _____ by the _____, and you will _____ the
_____ of the _____.

The teaching of Romans on justification by faith in Christ has been a foundation for Protestant churches since the 1500’s. It is also the foundation for receiving all the rest of God’s riches of grace in Christ.

*Receive Christ and his righteousness = receive all God’s riches of grace.
Reject Christ and his righteousness = reject all God’s riches of grace.*

As we consider the message of Romans and see how Romans 6-8 leads to life in the Spirit, I find it helpful to link together justification by faith (Day 1) and life in the Spirit, in the Great Exchange diagram (also on page xv).



“But now the righteousness of God has been manifested . . . the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all who believe. . . for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and are justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus” (Rom 3:21-24).

“For if we have been united with him in a death like his,
we shall certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his” (Rom 6:5).

“The law of the Spirit of life has set you free in Christ Jesus from the law of sin and death” (Rom 8:2).

In repentance toward God and faith in the crucified and reigning Christ, we exchange our sin for Christ’s righteousness and we exchange our self-directed life for the Christ-directed life of living in the Spirit. Justification by faith in Christ that leads to living in Christ in the Spirit are two great truths of the book of Romans and of the Christian life.

An important diagram for victory in temptation



Enjoy reflecting once more on the great truths in this diagram.

What has Christ done for us to set us free from the power of sinful temptations in order to walk hand-in-hand with Christ in the Spirit in agape love?

Does sin like lust or anger or selfishness have authority over us to boss us around?

Who is the only spiritual authority over us?

What should we think about when tempted?

What should we be setting our minds on to help lessen the amount of temptation?

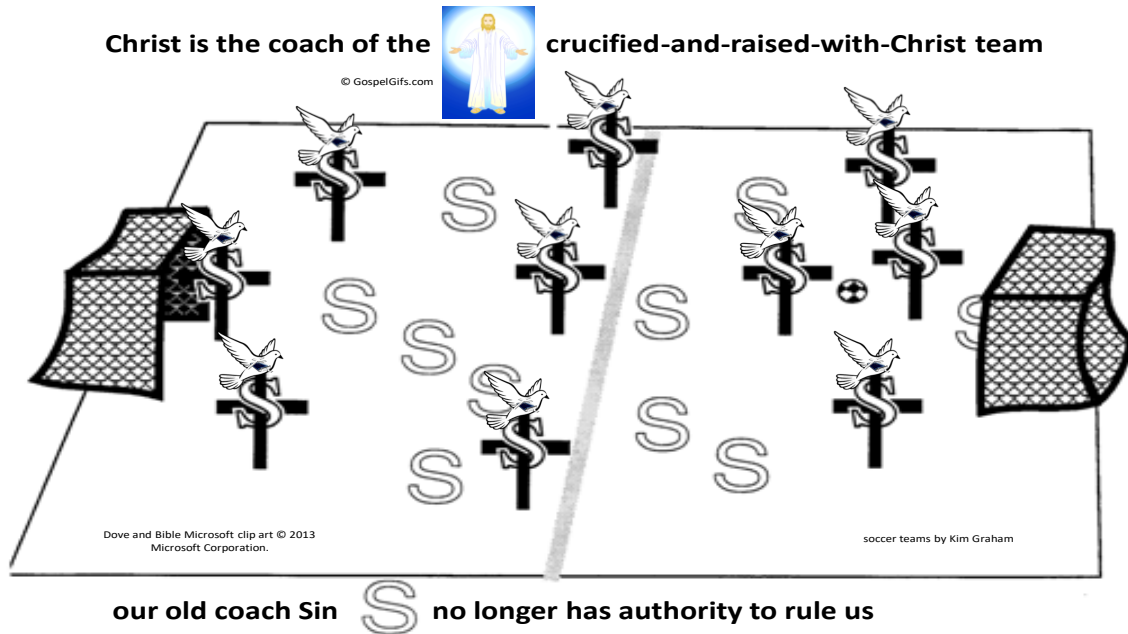
Remember from page xxiii the “ABCDE” principles trusting Christ for victory over the flesh:

- A Admit our own powerlessness to kill flesh desires
- B Believe Christ died to free us from sin’s dominance into life in Christ in the Spirit
- C Call upon the LORD in faith in his Word and surrender; pray and really mean it!
- D Depend on the Spirit to produce Christ and his desires in us
- E Energize faith by praising the Lord for his promises of victory through Christ

Free PPTs with graphics like the above are available for each day of the riches of grace at www.GraceGodChrist.com

Another important diagram for victory in temptation

The law of the Spirit of life has set us free in Christ Jesus
from the law of sin and death



Picture a soccer player being traded to a new team. He is now under the authority of the new coach. When his new team plays against his old team, the old coach yells at him to trip his own player and shoot on his own net. What should he do?

Is he under the authority of the old coach? Is he obligated to obey the old coach?

Of course not! What should he do? “Ignore and concentrate.” Ignore the old coach and concentrate on following the new coach to pass and score for the new team!

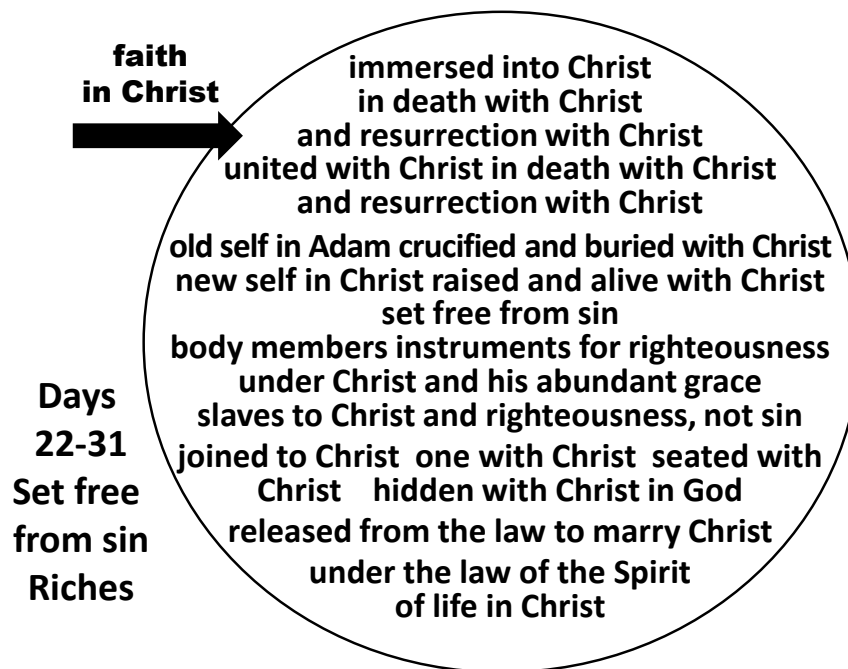
If we are bought with his blood, Jesus Christ is the only spiritual authority over us.

We have been crucified and raised with Christ, set free from sin, placed under the new law of the Spirit of life. We are set free from sin and Satan to love, serve and enjoy our Lord as we walk in the Spirit and set our mind on the Spirit.

It is wonderful that unlike soccer, when we repent and change teams, the new coach, the Lord Jesus, is not on the sidelines but lives in his players by his Spirit and empowers us with his abilities to do as he desires! Pass, shoot, score!

Or as Oliver Price says, “If you took piano lessons from an expert sitting beside you, you might get discouraged. You would know that you could never reach his or her level of skill. What a difference it would make if the spirit of the greatest pianist of all time could enter your body and impart his or her nature and skill to you!”¹⁷
(Oliver W. Price, *The Power of Praying Together*, 36).

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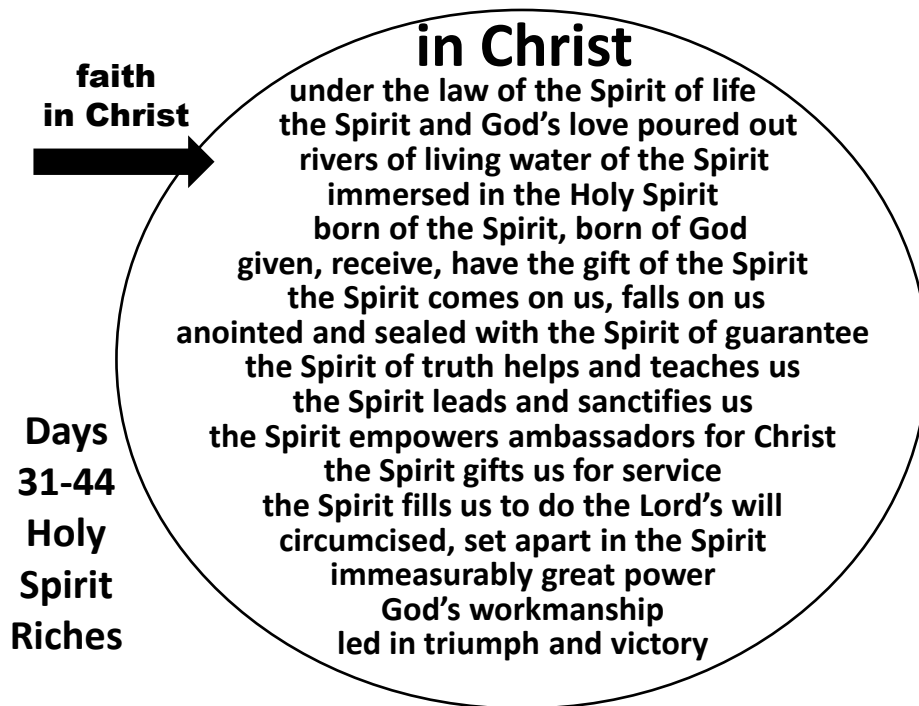
**In summary from Romans 6-8,
 to overcome temptation:**

Consider, Count 6:11
Don't let sin reign 6:12
Don't present 6:13
Present 6:13

Walk 8:4
Set your mind on 8:5
Kill 8:13
Follow 8:14

Romans contrasts two opposing systems of righteousness and power over sin.
 The system of self-righteousness by the Law is shown to be totally inadequate:

under the Law vs. in Christ under grace, in the Spirit
 dead in Adam in sin vs. alive in Christ in his righteousness, in the Spirit
 under sin as our Master vs. under Christ and his grace in the Spirit
 walk/live according to the flesh vs. walk/live according to the Spirit



in order to walk in Christ in the Spirit in *agape* love

Note how principles from Romans 6 and Days 22-31 go together with principles from Romans 8 and Days 31-44 in order to overcome temptation.

We die with Christ in order to live with Christ in the Spirit, freed from sin.

Especially note how Days 37, 38, 40, 41 and 44 also contribute to being set free from sin.

Day 37. The Holy Spirit is constantly teaching us God's word as part of freeing us from sin.

Day 38. The Holy Spirit is always leading and sanctifying us to walk with Christ and not sin.

Day 40. The Spirit fills us to do the Lord's will, not sin.

Day 41. We are circumcised by Christ to live in the Spirit and not live in the flesh and sin.

Day 44. The Lord leads us in victory over sin.

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Day 32 The Lord pours out his Spirit and his love into our hearts

Gifts # 49,50

¹⁷ In the last days it shall be, God declares, that *I will pour out my Spirit* on all flesh, and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams; ¹⁸ even on my male servants and female servants in those days *I will pour out my Spirit*, and they shall prophesy. (Acts 2:17-18; italics added; Peter quotes Joel 2:28-29 at Pentecost)

In the Old Testament, God predicts that he will “pour out” his Spirit (Joel 2:28-29; Isa 32:15, 44:3; Ezek 39:29; Zech 12:10) and “put in” his Spirit (Ezek 36:27, 37:14).

At Pentecost, God began to fulfill in Christ his predictions of pouring out his Spirit. Jesus predicted, “You will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses” (Acts 1:8). To Luke and to Jesus, the coming of the Spirit resulting in witness is the same as the pouring out of the Spirit resulting in prophecy. “I will pour out my Spirit on all flesh, and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, . . . young men . . . old men . . . servants . . . I will pour out my Spirit, and they shall prophesy” (Acts 2:17-18).

Luke also connects the filling of the Spirit with witness and prophecy, “They were all filled with the Holy Spirit and continued to speak the word of God with boldness” (Acts 4:31). Luke records how the Spirit moved upon the church so that “Those who had been scattered preached the word wherever they went” (Acts 8:4). In Acts, Joel is fulfilled as the Spirit empowers all believers to speak for God of Jesus Christ.

In Acts 10-11, we see how the apostles connect the pouring out of the Spirit (10:45) with the coming on of the Spirit (10:44, 11:15), the gift of the Spirit (10:45, 11:17), the giving/receiving of the Spirit (10:47, 11:17), and immersion (baptism) in the Spirit (11:16). All of this occurs when people believe on the Lord Jesus (11:17) and repent unto life (11:18). Luke records similar linkages in Acts 1-2 (1:4, 5, 8, 2:4, 17, 18, 33, 38).

“God’s love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit” (Rom 5:5). God’s love poured into us by the Spirit justifies, redeems, forgives, reconciles, and saves us by faith in Christ’s righteousness and sacrifice of propitiation/atonement (3:22-25; 4:7-8; 5:8-10).

Titus 3:6 says God pours out the Spirit richly in the washing of rebirth and renewal.

In the Old Testament, the Holy Spirit came upon certain people at certain times to accomplish certain purposes. But now, by the Spirit God’s love is generously poured into all the hearts of his people constantly, empowering us to love and speak for God.

The Spirit of Christ is poured out on us so we do and say what Christ desires.

Day 32 The Lord gives us rivers of living water of the Spirit

Gift # 51

³⁷ Jesus stood up and cried out, “If anyone thirsts, let him come to me and drink. ³⁸ Whoever believes in me, as the Scripture has said, ‘Out of his heart will flow rivers of living water.’”

³⁹ Now this he said about the Spirit, . . . (John 7:37-39)

In John 7:37-39, Jesus refers to the “pour out” passages when he speaks of the Holy Spirit flowing out of believers’ hearts as rivers of living water “as the Scripture has said.” When the Spirit is “poured out,” the Spirit *flows out of the hearts* of believers in rivers of living water, the water of life in God. God pours out his Spirit on us in rivers of life in God. We drink from Jesus believing he is Messiah; our thirsts are satisfied with rivers of God. Jesus wants rivers of his Spirit to flow out of us in love to others as we drink of him by faith.

Whenever you thirst, keep coming to Jesus to drink of his life in the Spirit. Live in the rivers of the Spirit poured out on you, in which you are immersed. Walk in the Spirit’s rivers of Christ’s love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control (Gal 5:22-23), and power to witness (Acts 1:8).

Lord, thank you that in Christ you generously pour out your Spirit on me in rivers of life in God, the Spirit of speaking God’s truth in Christ, the Spirit of holy *agape* love!

Reflection questions

In Acts 2:17-18, what will God do in the last days? Who will be affected and what will they do?

Regarding dreams and visions, in the Old Testament dreams and visions were given to prophets in order that they would speak for God in prophesy (see Num 12:6). Therefore, do not interpret the young men and old men in Acts 2:17-18 and Joel 2:28-29 to be doing something different than the others mentioned. All people upon whom the Spirit is poured out will speak for God. This is exactly what happened in Acts as all God's people proclaimed the gospel of Christ wherever they went (Acts 8:4), just as Jesus said in Acts 1:8 that all would be his witnesses when the Holy Spirit came upon them. When a believer declares God's New Testament revelation in Christ, they speak for God as an Old Testament prophet who received a dream or vision spoke for God, saying, "This is what the Lord says." Prophesy = speaking for God = proclaiming the gospel = witnessing to what God has done in Christ.

According to Romans 5:5, what has God done for followers of Christ?

God's _____ has been _____ into our _____ through the Holy Spirit.

Complete the following from paragraph 5:

In Acts 10-11, we see how the apostles connect the pouring out of the Spirit (10:45) with the _____ of the Spirit (10:44, 11:15), the _____ of the Spirit (10:45, 11:17), the _____ / _____ of the Spirit (10:47, 11:17), and _____ (baptism) in the Spirit (11:16). All of this occurs when people _____ on the Lord Jesus (11:17) and _____ unto life (11:18)

In John 7:37-39, what does Jesus promise to those who believe in him?

If anyone thirsts, let him _____ to me and _____. Out of his _____ will _____ of _____ water.

When the Spirit is poured out upon us, what kind of rivers flow from within us? (last paragraph)

The Spirit brings us rivers of God's _____, joy, _____, _____, kindness, goodness, _____, gentleness and self-control (Gal 5:22-23).

The Spirit brings us rivers of _____ to _____ (Acts 1:8).

⁷ After me comes he who is mightier than I . . . ⁸ I have baptized (*immersed*) you with water, but he will baptize (*immerse*) you with the Holy Spirit. (John the Baptist in Mark 1:7-8, similar in Matthew 3:11, Luke 3:16, and John 1:33; italics added)

And I remembered the word of the Lord, how he said, 'John baptized (*immersed*) with water, but you will be baptized (*immersed*) with the Holy Spirit.' (Peter in Acts 11:16 remembering Jesus' promise in Acts 1:5; italics added)

For in one Spirit we were all baptized (*immersed*) into one body . . . and all were made to drink of one Spirit. (Paul in 1 Cor 12:13; italics added)

Picture the Lord picking you up from the desert and immersing you into a flowing river of fresh water. Likewise, believers are immersed by Jesus in the Spirit of God!

In the Old Testament, God predicts that he will "pour out" his Spirit (Joel 2:28-29; Isa 32:15, 44:3; Ezek 39:29; Zech 12:10) and "put in" his Spirit (Ezek 36:27, 37:14), but the word baptize is not used. It is a new concept from John the Baptist that the Messiah will "immerse" in the Spirit. Immersion adds to the "pour out, put in" pictures by expanding our grasp of the Spirit's relationship to us of intimate union, abundance, and constant influence.

When Jesus says, "You will be immersed in the Spirit" (Acts 1:5), he is referring to all the New Covenant ministry of the Spirit to the believer – the pouring out of the Spirit, the receiving, the having, the coming on, the anointing, the sealing, the leading, the sanctifying, the gifting, and the filling of the Spirit! One word that summarizes all our relationship with the Spirit is "immersion." It is the same as Paul in Romans 8:2 using the phrase "the law of the Spirit of life in Christ" to summarize all the New covenant ministry of the Spirit.

The Messiah immerses us *in* or *with* the Spirit, as John immersed *in* or *with* water. The Spirit does not do the immersing. Some make the Spirit the baptizer in 1 Corinthians 12:13 as if it says, "*by* one Spirit," but the same word "en" is used in all seven passages. It is consistent to keep Jesus as the immerser. Jesus immerses all his people in God's one Spirit into God's one body of Christ, Jew or Gentile! All are made to drink of the one Holy Spirit!

In the Old Testament, the Holy Spirit "came upon" certain people, at certain times, to accomplish certain tasks for God. Now *all* believers are immersed in the Spirit *all* the time to do *all* Jesus desires. We live in the realm of the Spirit of Christ like fish in water.

Immersion into Christ and immersion in the Spirit go together. Can immersion into Christ take place without immersion in the Spirit? No. Can Christ and the Father live in us without immersion in the Spirit (Matt 28:19 and Day 13-15)? No. When are believers immersed in Jesus? When they first believe in Jesus. When are believers immersed in the Spirit? When they are immersed in Jesus. Romans 8:9-14 also reflects these principles.

Is Spirit baptism given differently than other riches? All God's riches in Christ are freely given the moment we receive salvation in Christ. All are free gifts of grace in Christ.

From one baptism/immersion flow many fillings as we keep yielding!

As newly married brides, our response should be to totally love and cooperate with the One with whom we are now united. We are immersed into Christ in the Spirit. The Spirit of God is leading us to walk according to the Spirit not the flesh (Rom 8:4), to set our minds on the things of the Spirit not the flesh (Rom 8:5), to walk by the Spirit not flesh desires (Gal 5:16), to keep in step with the Spirit (Gal 5:25), to not grieve the Spirit (Eph 4:30), to be filled with the Spirit (Eph 5:18), to pray in the Spirit (Eph 6:18), and to not quench the Spirit (1 Thess 5:19) so that we witness (Acts 1:8) and bear holy fruit (Gal 5:22).

Praise you, Lord, that in Christ you immerse me into your Spirit!

Reflection questions

In Mark 1:7-8 and Acts 11:16, what does Jesus do for those who believe in Him?

We are _____ with (in) the _____

In 1 Corinthians 12:13, what does God do for those immersed in Christ?

In one _____ we were all _____ into one _____

**in Christ and Christ in us
in the Spirit and the Spirit in us
adopted as sons with the Spirit of the Son
the Spirit prays for us and helps us pray
under the law of the Spirit of life in Christ
the Holy Spirit and God's love are poured out
rivers of living water of the Spirit
immersed in the Holy Spirit
born of the Spirit, born of God
given the Spirit, receive the Spirit, have the Spirit
the Spirit comes on us, falls on us
anointed and sealed with the Spirit of guarantee
the Spirit of truth helps and teaches us
the Spirit leads and sanctifies us
the Spirit empowers ambassadors for Christ
the Spirit gifts us for service
the Spirit fills us to do what the Lord wants
circumcised, set apart in the Spirit
*in order to walk with Christ
in the Spirit in agape love***

When Jesus predicted the coming of the Holy Spirit in New Covenant ministry, he used John's new picture of "immersed" in the Spirit to summarize the Holy Spirit's new relationship with believers, expanding on the "pour out" and "put in" terms used by the prophets.

In every situation in life, those in Christ in the Spirit can affirm that the Lord is right here with us in full power and grace to meet all our needs and lead us in faith, righteousness, *agape* love and witness, to the glory of the Lord!

Praise the Lord for all the ways the Spirit of God ministers to us in the New Covenant!
Praise the Lord for all the Holy Spirit does for us when Jesus immerses us in the Spirit!

(If some individuals strongly disagree that immersion in the Spirit and immersion into Christ go together at the same time, don't use up group time debating it! If necessary, the leader may discuss it some later outside the group, but eventually we must leave it with God and focus on living in the Spirit!)

³ Jesus answered him, "Truly, truly I say to you, unless one is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God." ⁴ Nicodemus said to him, "How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter a second time into his mother's womb and be born?" ⁵ Jesus answered, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God.

⁶ That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. ⁷ Do not marvel that I said to you, 'You must be born again.' The wind blows where it wishes, . . . ⁸ So it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit." (John 3:3-8)

No one born of God makes a practice of sinning, for God's seed abides in him, and he cannot keep on sinning because he has been born of God. (1 John 3:9)

Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God, and whoever loves has been born of God and knows God. (1 John 4:7)

For everyone who has been born of God overcomes the world. (1 John 5:4)

When a child is born it is quite clear that there is a new life, a new birth, a new creation. This is true in the spiritual world as well. Christ gives us life, eternal life, a new life, a new birth by the Holy Spirit. We are a new self, a new creation. We are born again, born from above, born anew, born of God, born of the Spirit, made alive together with Christ. We are regenerated with new life from the Spirit of God.

When a person is born of the Spirit, big changes take place, as if we are born new. The Lord is our new desire, new love, new motive, and new goal. Jesus says that without birth by the Spirit we cannot enter the kingdom (John 3:5). John says that anyone born of God no longer lives a life of sin and now lives a life of *agape* love (1 John 3:9; 4:7) thus overcoming the world with all its wrong desires, pride and sin (1 John 5:4; 2:15-17).

Born of the Spirit and born of God point to some amazing truths: the Lord Jesus and God the Father live in us by the Holy Spirit (Rom 8:11); we are children of God, God's sons and daughters (by being born of God and by adoption); it is now our nature to love and not sin; our bodies are now the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in us, whom we have received from God, and we are not our own (1 Cor 6:19-20).

What a blessing it is to think about being "born of the Spirit" whenever we use the phrase "born again." Jesus linked both together in John 3:3-8 (see above).

"Born of the Spirit" points to the many aspects of our relationship with the Holy Spirit--the Spirit is poured out upon us; we are immersed in the Spirit, anointed and sealed with the Spirit, indwelt, led, sanctified, convicted, strengthened, gifted, filled, and counseled by the Holy Spirit. We are blessed!

So many people wish they could have a new life, a new beginning, and a fresh start. We can! Because Jesus died for us and reigns as Savior today, anyone can turn to him and be born of his Spirit. Even Christians who stumble can also have fresh cleansing and a new start if they will only repent.

Just as being born of the Spirit is not by our effort but by the gift of God, so is walking in the Spirit. Nothing has to be done by our own effort: "Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, says the LORD of hosts" (Zech 4:6).

**Praise you, Lord, that I am born of the Spirit, born again, born of God!
You give me a new life in Christ in the Spirit, with new desires, new loves, new motives,
new goals, new joys and new power!**

Reflection questions

In John 3:5, what is a result of being born of the Spirit?

We enter the _____ of _____

Comparing John 3:7 and 3:8, to be born _____ is to be born of the _____.

In 1 John 3:9, for what two reasons should believers not continue to sin?

Because God's _____ in him; because he has been _____ of _____.

From 1 John 4:7, give three reasons why we should love one another.

Because love is from _____.

Because whoever loves has been _____ of _____.

Because whoever loves _____ God.

According to 1 John 5:4, what is the result for everyone who is born of God? (see 1 John 2:16)

Everyone who has been born of God _____ the _____.
(overcome the desires of the flesh and the desires of the eyes and pride of life (1 John 2:16))

By what two ways are we made God's children, God's sons and daughters? (paragraph 3)

We are God's children by being _____ of _____ and by _____

At what time in your life do you think you were born of the Spirit?

Thank you, Lord, that if we are in Christ, we are not trying to receive the righteousness of God, but rather It is finished; we have been justified in Christ. We are not trying to become forgiven, but it is finished; we have been forgiven in Christ. So also with your Spirit. In Christ, we are not trying to get your Spirit, but rather it is finished; we have your Spirit; you have placed us in Christ and in the Spirit! Christ lives in us! The Holy Spirit lives in us! We are not trying to become immersed into Christ and the Spirit; it is finished; you have immersed us into Christ and the Spirit! You have poured out the Spirit upon us so streams of the water of life in God flow from within us by your Spirit! The moment we enter the New Covenant in Christ, you anoint and seal us with your Spirit! We are born again of the Spirit, born of God! Thank you, Lord, for your wonderful grace in Christ in pouring your love into us by your Spirit!

Day 35 The Lord gives us his Spirit; we receive the Spirit and have the Spirit

Gifts # 54-56

Giving and receiving go together. One gives and another receives. So also with God. God *gives* and we *receive*. All God *gives* us in Christ is a *gift*. Once we *receive* what God *gives*, we *have* it. This same language is used of the Holy Spirit. The Lord gives us his Spirit. We receive the Spirit. We receive the gift of the Spirit. We have the Spirit.

Consider how Paul speaks of the Spirit in these ways in Romans. In Romans 5:5, God giving us the Spirit is linked with God pouring out his Spirit into our hearts. **“God’s love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us” (Rom 5:5).**

In Romans 8:9, being in the Spirit and the Spirit of God dwelling in us is connected with having the Spirit of Christ and belonging to him (belonging to him is literally “of him”). **“You, however, are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if in fact the Spirit of God dwells in you. Anyone who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him” (Rom 8:9).**

In Romans 8:15, receiving the Spirit is connected with adoption as sons. **“You have received the Spirit of adoption as sons, by whom we cry, ‘Abba! Father!’” (Rom 8:15).**

In Acts 2:16-18, Peter preaches that the days of God pouring out his Spirit are now fulfilled in Christ. At the end of his sermon, he promises to those who repent with faith in Jesus as the Christ, **“You will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit” (Acts 2:38).** Peter believes that in Christ, when God pours out his Spirit, we receive the gift of the Spirit. They go together.

In Acts 5:32, God has *given* the Holy Spirit to those who obey him. In Luke 11:13, God *gives* the Holy Spirit. In 1 Cor 2:12, we have *received* the Spirit who is from God.

In John 7:38, Jesus promised, **“Whoever believes in me, as the Scripture has said, ‘Out of his heart will flow rivers of living water.’”** Then John says Jesus was referring to the giving and receiving of the Spirit, **“Now this he said about the Spirit, whom those who believed in him were to receive, for as yet the Spirit had not been given, because Jesus was not yet glorified” (John 7:39, italics added).** John also says God abides in us and we in him by God *giving* us the Spirit. **“We know that we abide in him and he in us, because he has given us of his Spirit” (1 John 4:13).**

Lord, thank you for giving us the gift of the Holy Spirit to lead us to walk with Jesus in faith, righteousness, *agape* love and witness, to the glory of the Lord!

Day 35 The Spirit comes on us and falls on us

Gift # 57

In the Old Covenant, the Spirit “came upon” certain people, at certain times, to do certain tasks for God, such as with Azariah (2 Chron 15:1) and Jahaziel (2 Chron 20:14). In the New Covenant, the Holy Spirit comes on *all* believers *all* the time to do *all* Jesus desires (in the little tasks and the big). We live in the Spirit of Christ and he in us. Jesus promised, **“You will be baptized with the Holy Spirit . . . You will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you” (Acts 1:5, 8).** Jesus links immersion in the Spirit with the Spirit coming on us.

Peter makes similar linkages in Acts 11. **“As I began to speak, the Holy Spirit fell on them just as on us at the beginning. And I remembered the word of the Lord, how he said, ‘John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit.’ If then God gave the same gift to them as he gave to us when we believed in the Lord Jesus Christ, who was I that I could stand in God’s way?” (Acts 11:15-17, italics added).** “Just as on us at the beginning” refers to the pouring out of the Spirit in Acts 2. Note that Peter sees Spirit immersion as going together with the Spirit falling on us, God giving the gift of the Spirit and the pouring out of the Spirit.

Sadly, it is a great source of confusion today when people teach that immersion in the Spirit is significantly different from God giving the Spirit, receiving the Spirit, having the Spirit, the pouring out of the Spirit, and the Spirit coming upon and falling on us.

Thank you, Lord, that in the New Covenant, your Spirit comes upon each of us to do all you desire! Thank you for life in Christ in the Spirit in *agape* love!

Reflection questions

In Romans 5:5, what has God done for those he justifies in Christ?

God's _____ has been _____ our _____ through the
_____ who has been _____ to us.

In Romans 8:9, what is our relationship with the Holy Spirit?

You, however, are not in the flesh but _____ the _____, if in fact the _____ of _____
_____ you. Anyone who does not _____ the _____ of
_____ does not _____ to him" (Rom 8:9).

In Acts 2:38, what is promised to those who repent and believe that Jesus is the Christ?

You will _____ the _____ of the _____.

In 1 John 4:13, what three blessings do we have in Christ?

By this we know that we _____ him and _____ us, because he
has _____ us of his _____.

In Acts 1:8, what does Jesus promise?

You will _____ when the _____ has
_____ you.

Let's not forget that the power of the Spirit in Acts 1:8 is the power to witness to the ends of the earth that Jesus is the Christ.

In Acts 11:15-17, what are four riches of grace in the Spirit that we are given?

As I began to speak, the _____ them just as on us at
the beginning. And I remembered the word of the Lord, how he said, 'John baptized with
water, but *you will be _____ with the _____*.' If then God
_____ the same _____ to them as he _____ to us when we
believed in the Lord Jesus Christ, who was I that I could stand in God's way?

Day 36 The Lord anoints us and seals us with his Spirit, guaranteeing our inheritance

Gifts # 58-60

²¹ It is God who establishes us with you in Christ, ²² and has anointed us, and who has also put his seal on us and given us his Spirit in our hearts as a guarantee. (2 Cor 1:21-22)

¹³ In him you also, when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and believed in him, were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit, ¹⁴ who is the guarantee of our inheritance until we acquire possession of it, to the praise of his glory. (Eph 1:13-14)

And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. (Eph 4:30)

Christ is “The Anointed One,” anointed with the Holy Spirit to serve God and reign as King (Luke 4:18; Acts 4:27, 10:38; Heb 1:9). God anoints believers with the Spirit of the Anointed One. He anoints us to serve and reign with Christ. Picture the Lord anointing you with Spirit power to serve as God did with Jesus (Acts 10:38).

We are also sealed with the Spirit. In Bible times, seals of ownership were put on packages sent on a caravan. An impression made in melted wax indicated who the owner was. The seal could carry the threat of punishment for any who broke it, like the sealing of the tomb of Jesus by Pilate (Matt 27:66). Today, branding cattle is a stamp of ownership.

The Spirit living in us is God’s seal or stamp of ownership and protection. The seal indicates that God owns us and is caring for us safely through to the day of redemption.

God’s sealing with the Spirit acts as a deposit of guarantee. A deposit in Roman times was a down payment, which acted as a guarantee that the whole amount would be given in the future. The Spirit’s seal includes God’s guarantee to us that he will bring us safely to our full redemption and eternal inheritance in glory.

If we are sealed with God’s Spirit, we should not grieve him by going against what he wants to do in us. Ephesians 4:29-32 gives ways we may grieve the Spirit: by not speaking what is helpful for building others up according to their needs; by not getting rid of bitterness, wrath, anger, brawling, slander, and any form of malice; and by not being kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave us. Are you grieving the Spirit in any of these ways?

God anoints and seals believers to walk with Christ in the Spirit, and to reign with Christ in his future glory.

Respect yourself and other believers as those who are anointed and sealed with God’s stamp of ownership. Get rid of anything that grieves the Holy Spirit. Celebrate his anointing and sealing with allowing the Lord to fill you with wholesome helpful words, kindness, compassion, and forgiveness.

Affirm who you are in Christ--In Christ I am anointed and sealed with the Holy Spirit! Thank you, Lord, that by sealing me with the Holy Spirit you make me your possession under your protection and care, until you bring me into your eternal glory! How great is your eternal *agape* love!

Walk in FAITH each moment. The letters F, A, I, T, H make up the sentence Forsaking All I Trust Him. Forsake all else and rest in Christ alone to be to you all you need. Depend on the Lord for everything. Replace doubts by believing God’s promises, as in Acts 27:25, “I have faith in God that it will happen just as he told me.”

Reflection questions

In 2 Corinthians 1:21-22, what three things has God done for those in Christ?

He has _____ us, put his _____ on us,
and _____ us his Spirit in our _____ as a _____

In Ephesians 1:13-14, what has God done for those in Christ?

In him you also, when you _____ in him, were _____ with the promised
_____, who is the _____ of our _____

In Ephesians 4:30, what should be our response to the Spirit, and what has the Spirit done in us?

Do not _____ the Holy Spirit of God
by whom you were _____ for the day of _____

In what ways could we finish the following statement: "The Spirit of the Lord is on us because he has anointed us to"? (paragraph 1)

What is the significance of being sealed with the Spirit? (paragraph 2-4)

What guarantee is God making to us by sealing us with his Spirit? (paragraph 4)

It is with prayers of thanks based on God's Word that we rejoice in and rest in God's Spirit! Let's praise the Lord for his grace in Christ that gives us his Spirit:
Praise you, Lord, that Jesus died for us and rose so that when we repent and believe on Jesus as the Christ, you place us in Christ and in the Spirit! Christ lives in us! The Holy Spirit lives in us! You have immersed us into Christ and the Spirit! The Spirit fellowships with us! The Spirit prays for us and helps us pray! You place us under the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus, freed from the law of sin and death! The moment we are in Christ in the New Covenant, you pour out your Spirit on us in rivers of water of life in God flowing from within us by your Spirit! You have given us your Spirit; we receive your Spirit and have your Spirit! In Christ, the Spirit has come upon us and fallen on us! All in Christ have been anointed and sealed with your Spirit! Thank you, Lord, for the precious gift of your Spirit!

¹⁶ And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Helper, to be with you forever, ¹⁷ even the Spirit of truth . . . You know him, for he dwells with you and will be in you. . . . ¹⁸ I will come to you. ²⁶ But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he will teach you all things and bring to your remembrance all that I have said to you. (John 14:16-18, 26)

But when the Helper comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth, who proceeds from the Father, he will bear witness about me. (John 15:26)

⁷ If I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you. But if I go, I will send him to you. ⁸ And when he comes, he will convict the world concerning sin and righteousness and judgment: . . . ¹³ When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth, . . . he will declare to you the things that are to come. ¹⁴ He will glorify me, for he will take what is mine and declare it to you. ¹⁵ All that the Father has is mine. (John 16:7-8, 13-15)

The word "Helper" is the Greek word "paraclete," the one called alongside to help, which in Latin is "advocate." The Holy Spirit is "another" Helper (ESV, NAS, NKJ), Advocate (NIV 2011), Counselor (NIV 1973), and Comforter (KJV). Jesus Christ is our Helper, Advocate, Counselor and Comforter, who comes to dwell with us and be in us by the Spirit.

The Helper is the Spirit of *truth*. He completed the Scriptures, the truth of God, as he taught the Apostles all God wanted to reveal, and brought to remembrance all that Jesus said, bearing witness about Jesus to guide them into all the truth of what God had done in Christ's death and resurrection and declaring to them the things of the future. What a wonderful gift the Spirit's completing of the New Testament is for God's people. We now "contend for the faith that was once for all delivered to the saints" (Jude 1:3).

The Spirit of truth comes alongside us to help us understand and use the sword of the Spirit, the word of God, to pray in the Spirit with God's promises (Eph 6:17-18). He constantly teaches us God's Word as we continuously meditate (Psa 1:2) on the living and abiding word of God (1 Pet 1:23). He brings to remembrance what the Lord says. He bears witness to all Jesus is as Lord and Savior. He bears witness with our spirit that we are God's children (Rom 8:16). He convicts of the sin of not believing Jesus, of the righteousness of the crucified Christ now raised to the Father's right hand, and of God's judgment by the death of Christ of sin and the ruler of this world (John 16:8-11). He guides us to understand all God's truth in the word of God, including insight into all he has declared of the things to come.

The Spirit of truth bears witness to others as we bear witness (John 15:26-27, Acts 1:8). He convicts people to bring them to repentance and faith in Christ. Paul preached Christ crucified "in the demonstration of the Spirit" (1 Cor 2:4). As God's truth in Christ is declared, the Spirit of truth demonstrates or proves with convincing argument what is true. It is another term which states what John 14-16 says of the ministry of the Spirit of truth. We proclaim the gospel and the Spirit persuades that the gospel is true. ¹⁸

Every moment can be an encounter with the Holy Spirit as with his still small voice the Spirit of truth teaches and leads us with the sword of the Spirit, the Word of God. Recognize the Spirit's helpful "whispers" from his Word. Respond with obedience to the Word of God. Realize that as we are busy thinking of Jesus and praising him for his promises, the Spirit is helping, focusing and teaching us. Rely on the Spirit to persuade others as we proclaim God's truth in Christ.

Praise you, Lord, that in Christ you help and teach me by the Holy Spirit! Thank you that your Spirit is the Spirit of truth, my Helper, Advocate, Counselor and Comforter.

¹⁸ for further study of "the demonstration of the Spirit" see Grant Richison, Certainty: A Place to Stand, (Pickering: Castle Quay, 2010), 249-257.

Reflection questions

In John 14:16-18, 15:26 and 16:7, 13, what two terms does Jesus use to describe the Holy Spirit?

He is the _____. He is the _____ of _____.

In John 14:16-18, how does the Trinity relate to followers of Jesus?

¹⁶ The _____ will give you another Helper to be _____ forever.

¹⁷ The Spirit of truth dwells _____ you and will be _____ you.

¹⁸ _____ will _____ to you.

Jesus says in John 14:18, "I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you." What connection is Jesus making between himself and the Holy Spirit?

In John 14:26, what are two things the Holy Spirit does?

But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, . . . he will _____ you all things

and _____ to your _____ all that I have said to you.

In John 16:8, what will the Holy Spirit do when he comes?

When he comes, he will _____ the world concerning _____ and

_____ and _____.

In John 16:13-15, as Jesus looks ahead in particular to the writing of the New Testament by the Apostles, what will the Holy Spirit do to complete the revelation of God in Christ?

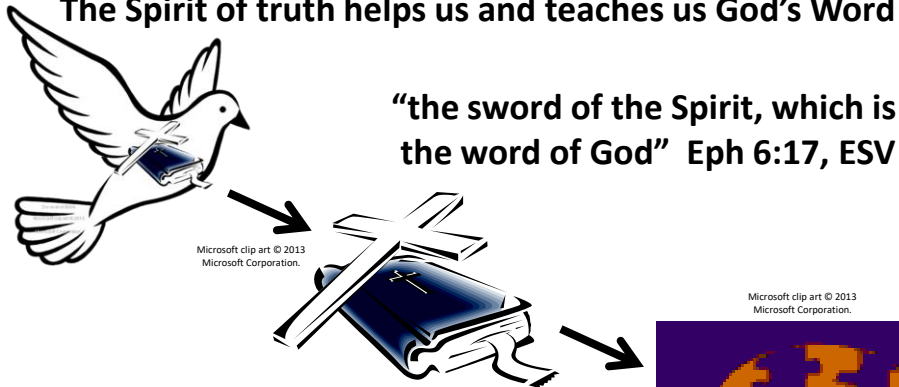
¹³ When the Spirit of truth comes, he will _____ you into all the _____, . . . he will

_____ to you the things that are to _____. ¹⁴ He will _____ me, for he

will take what is _____ and _____ it to you. ¹⁵ All that the Father has is _____.

In what way has the Spirit helped, taught and comforted you recently?

The Spirit of truth helps us and teaches us God's Word



**“the sword of the Spirit, which is
the word of God” Eph 6:17, ESV**

**“But when the Helper comes,
... the Spirit of truth ...
he will bear witness about me ...
he will teach you all things ...
he will guide you into all the truth”
John 15:26; 14:26;16:13, ESV**



Free PPTs with graphics like the above are available for each day of the riches of grace at
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Why is there a Bible and cross inside the dove?

Because of the major problem around the world
with Christians disconnecting the Holy Spirit
from the Bible and Christ crucified!

The Spirit's sword is the word of God (Eph 6:17).

The Helper, the Spirit of truth, teaches us God's Word
as he bears witness to Jesus (John 14:26; 15:26) with
the word of the cross, Christ crucified (1 Cor 1:18, 23).

This word of God and Christ crucified, breathed out by God
through the Spirit, teaches, reproves, corrects and trains us to
be complete, equipped for every good work (2 Tim 3:16-17).



Many sincere Christians disconnect the Holy Spirit from the Bible and Christ and his death!

Many regularly seek new words of revelation from God, not God's Word, and personal words focused on individuals rather than the glories of the mystery of Christ crucified.

Many regularly pray 'in the Spirit' without understanding what is said, thinking the Spirit prefers this rather than filling and edifying our minds with the truth of God's Word and the glories of Christ crucified so we worship God in spirit and truth.

Many think their practices are more "spiritual," more of the Spirit.

Which view of the Spirit of truth did Jesus have?



Dove and Bible
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For instance, did Jesus pray in the Spirit in a language he did not understand, so that the Word (the Logos) did not pray with his mind connected with the Word?

In heaven, will we praise the Lord in the Spirit in a language we don't understand, so the Spirit isn't filling and edifying our minds with God's truth in Christ?!!



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Which view of the Spirit of truth do you have?

For more on the principle of the Spirit edifying the mind with truth, see pages 173-174.

For all who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God. (Rom 8:14)

¹ To those who are elect . . . ² according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, in the sanctification of the Spirit, for obedience to Jesus Christ and for sprinkling with his blood. (1 Pet 1:1-2 ; “sanctification of/by the Spirit” also in 2 Thess 2:13)

As those in Christ abide in the word of God, the Spirit leads us like a parent leads a child by the hand, or a shepherd leads sheep to safety. The Spirit leads, we follow. The Spirit of Jesus also sanctifies us to become like Jesus, to make us holy in our actions. Whenever the Holy Spirit is leading us, he is also sanctifying us. He constantly creates in us the desire to believe God’s Word, to fellowship with the Lord in prayer, and to do his will. We can confidently rest in the Spirit of God to lead and sanctify us so we serve God, not sin.

The Spirit of God leads and sanctifies the sons of God (Rom 8:14). In the context of overcoming sin in Romans 6-8, the Spirit leads us (8:14) to put to death the deeds of the flesh (8:13) by leading us to walk according to the Spirit not the flesh (8:4), to live according to the Spirit not the flesh (8:5), and to set our minds on the things of the Spirit not the flesh (Rom 8:5). The Spirit also leads us to kill sin by obeying the commands of Romans 6:

1. Consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus (6:11; use the sword of God’s word to by faith count / consider as true what 6:1-10 says about being set free from sin’s enslavement, which 6:11 summarizes as being dead to sin and alive to God in Christ);
2. Let not sin reign in you to make you obey its passions (6:12);
3. Do not present / offer your members to sin as instruments for unrighteousness (6:13);
4. Present / offer yourselves to God as those brought from death to life and present/offer your members as instruments for righteousness, for you are under grace not sin and law (6:13-14);
5. Present / offer your members as slaves to righteousness (6:19; see also 6:16, 22).

In other passages, the Spirit leads us to walk by the Spirit not the flesh (Gal 5:16), to keep in step with the Spirit (Gal 5:25), to not grieve the Spirit (Eph 4:30), to be filled with the Spirit (Eph 5:18), to pray in the Spirit (Eph 6:18), and to not quench the Spirit (1 Thess 5:19) so that we witness about Christ (Acts 1:8) and bear the Spirit’s fruit of “love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control” (Gal 5:22-23).

The center of the “in Christ” circle (page xx) summarizes how the Lord leads and sanctifies us to walk with Christ enjoying God and his riches: We walk in the Spirit in the Word. We seek, treasure and praise the Lord. We trust the Lord’s riches for all needs. We serve others in love, witness and prayer. We confess and forsake all sins.

God’s Spirit is leading us and sanctifying us so we shine like stars as we walk with Christ filled with God’s Word, faith, prayer, love, and outreach (“star” diagram, page 152).

For more on sanctification, see Day 11 and the diagram on page 151.

When flesh desires like anger or lust knock at your door, will you put them to death (Rom 8:13) by choosing instead to yield to the Spirit’s ways of love and purity?

Walking partners agree to walk in the same direction at the same pace. Will you walk with Jesus in the Spirit in the same direction and pace, and talk as you walk?

How wonderful it is that the Spirit of God is now abundantly, powerfully present to work in us in the New Covenant in Christ!

Affirm who you are in Christ--Lord, thank you that because of Christ’s death and resurrection you lead and sanctify me by your Spirit!

When sin wants you to let it in and party even though Christ lives in you in the power of his Spirit, will you say “No!” to sin and “Yes!” to Christ, refusing to walk grounded in the flesh when you can fly with Christ in the Spirit overcoming sin’s downward pull?

Reflection questions

In Romans 8:14, who are sons of God?

All who are _____ by the _____ of God

According to 1 Peter 1:1-2, how is God the Father, Son, and Spirit involved in our salvation?

We are _____ according to the _____ of God the _____,
in the _____ of the _____, for _____ to _____
_____ and for _____ with his _____.

In Romans 8, what is the Spirit leading us to do as he sanctifies us? (paragraph 2)

to _____ to _____ the misdeeds of the body (Rom 8:13),
to _____ _____ the _____ not the flesh (Rom 8:4),
to _____ _____ the _____ not the flesh (Rom 8:5),
to _____ our _____ on the things of the _____ not the flesh (Rom 8:5),

In other passages other than Romans 6-8, what is the Spirit leading us to do? (paragraph 3)

to _____ _____ the Spirit not the flesh (Gal 5:16),
to _____ in _____ _____ the _____ (Gal 5:25),
to not _____ the Spirit (Eph 4:30), to be _____ with the Spirit (Eph 5:18),
to _____ in the _____ (Eph 6:18), and to not _____ the Spirit (1 Thess 5:19)
so that we _____ about _____ (Acts 1:8) and bear the Spirit's _____ (Gal 5:22).

How does the center of the "in Christ" circle on page xx summarize how the Lord leads and sanctifies us to walk with Christ enjoying God and his grace? (paragraph 4)

We walk in the _____ in the _____. We _____, _____ and
_____ the Lord. We _____ the Lord's _____ for all _____.
We _____ others in _____, _____ and _____.
We _____ and _____ all sins.

Is there something you need to change in order to let the Spirit lead and sanctify you more?

Day 39 The Lord empowers us by the Spirit to be ambassadors for Christ

Gift # 64

But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth. (Acts 1:8)

¹⁷ Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold the new has come. ¹⁸ All this is from God, who through Christ reconciled us to himself and gave us the ministry of reconciliation; ¹⁹ that is, in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting to us the message of reconciliation.

²⁰ Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, God making his appeal through us. We implore you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God. (2 Cor 5:17-20)

What a privilege it is to be a representative of Christ as he continues to seek and save the lost (Luke 19:10). What glorious purpose and significance he has given us that God should make his appeal through us! God has committed the message of reconciliation to all reconciled to God. We go to others as ambassadors speaking on Christ's behalf.

The Helper bears witness about Jesus as we bear witness to Christ (John 15:26-27). When we share the testimony of Christ, it's like the Spirit whispers to the heart of the listeners, "Amen, that's true!" The Spirit convicts, convinces, and persuades that Christ is true (the demonstration of the Spirit (1 Cor 2:4). How wonderful to flow with the Spirit of Christ in compassion for others who can't believe unless they hear of the Savior (Rom 10:14)!

Through the Lamb slain, God in love wants to save people from every ethnos (Rev 5:9). Jesus commands us to go make disciples of every ethnos (Mat 28:19). God's love is poured into our hearts by the Holy Spirit to empower us to be ambassadors for Christ.

Will you help others, or make excuses to cover fears? Will you love as Jesus loves?

Lord, thank you for wanting to use us to help others come to your Son who died for them!

Day 39 The Spirit gifts us for service

Gift # 65

¹⁰ As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God's varied grace: ¹¹ whoever speaks, as one who speaks oracles of God; whoever serves, as one who serves by the strength that God supplies—in order that in everything God may be glorified through Jesus Christ. To him belong glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen. (1 Pet 4:10-11)

The Spirit gives every Christian special ability to impact others. Similar to how birds are implanted with instincts to fly and migrate, all who are born of the Spirit have implanted abilities, so they can build up other members of the body and reach out to the lost. God gives every believer at least one spiritual gift. "As *each* has received a gift" (1 Pet 4:10). "To *each* is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good" (1 Cor 12:7).

Every spiritual gift is for the benefit of *others*. God gives the gifts as *he* chooses; we do not choose which gifts we want, nor can we demand God give us a particular gift. God does not give the same gift to everyone. Walking with Christ in the Spirit in purity and love is the foundation for developing and using one's gift (1 Cor 13:1-3).

Various gifts are in four main passages (Rom 12:6-8; Eph 4:7-12; 1 Cor 12:4-11, 28-30; 1 Pet 4:10-11). More common gifts include teaching, encouraging, serving (helping), showing mercy, leading (administration), giving, pastoring, evangelizing, and hospitality. Music and craftsmanship could be included (Ex 35:30-35 and 1 Chron 25:1-8). Few seem to have tongues for the benefit of others as in Acts 2 tongues. (More on pages 89-92, 173-174.)

Some assume that they are not gifted, if they do not see talent automatically shining forth. This is not true! A gift needs development by practice and training, similar to sports or music skills. Little birds do not fly well the first time they try (even though gifted to fly). As we get involved serving others as God burdens us, our gifts develop into effectiveness.

Lord, thank you that your Spirit has gifted me to serve others! I can make an impact!

Reflection questions

In Acts 1:8, what is the power of the Holy Spirit for?

But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and ____ will be ____
_____ in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the _____ of the _____

According to 2 Corinthians 5:18-20, what has God equipped us to do for others?

¹⁸ Through Christ God gave us the _____ of _____.

¹⁹ In Christ God was _____ to us the message of _____.

²⁰ We are _____ for Christ, God making his _____ through _____.

²⁰ We _____ others on behalf of Christ, be _____ to God.

In 1 Peter 4:10, how is God's grace in believers described?

As each has received a _____, use it to _____ one another, as _____
_____ of God's varied _____.

In 1 Peter 4:10, what is the purpose of the Spirit gifting us? For whose benefit is the gift?

Use it to serve _____.

According to 1 Peter 4:11, how should we use a speaking gift and serving gift?

Whoever speaks, as one who speaks _____ of _____.

Whoever serves, as one who serves by the _____ that God _____.

In 1 Peter 4:11, why should we use our spiritual gifts to serve others by speaking and serving?

In order that in everything God may be _____ through _____.

In 1 Corinthians 12:7, what is the purpose of the Spirit gifting us? For whose benefit is the gift?

It is for the _____ of the Spirit (the revealing of the work of the Spirit)

It is for the _____ = for the good of others

Do not get drunk with wine . . . but be filled with the Spirit. (Eph 5:18)

Some people drink in enough alcohol that it influences and determines their thoughts, words, and actions. They become “under the influence” of alcohol. They are “filled” with wine (Acts 2:13). The alcohol influences them to give in to the impulses of their flesh (or sinful nature) which may now run out of control in sinfulness.

In contrast, as we thirst for and drink from Jesus, trusting him for all, rivers of living water of the Spirit flow out of our hearts (John 7:37-39), we “drink of one Spirit” (1 Cor 12:13), and the Spirit fills us to be “under his influence” to do the Lord’s will. The Spirit fills us, not alcohol and the flesh, to think and love like Jesus and obey God’s Word (cf. Rom 8:4).

Jesus was constantly filled with the Spirit, always “under his influence” as he loved and obeyed and drank from his Father. As we love and obey and drink from Jesus with repentance and fresh cleansing whenever we sin, we can keep on being filled with the Spirit.

Ephesians 5 commands us to be *continuously* filled with the Spirit in speaking God’s Word to ourselves in meditation, singing in worship, giving thanks and submitting to others (Eph 5:18-21). The Spirit wants to *continuously* fill us with the fruit of the character of Jesus (Gal 5:22-23) and witness to Jesus (Acts 1:8). The Spirit wants to *constantly* flow in rivers of life in Christ (John 7:38). The Spirit also fills us with fresh power to do the Lord’s will *in certain situations*. “Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said . . .” (Acts 4:8). “Paul, filled with the Holy Spirit, looked intently at him and said . . .” (Acts 13:9-10).

Our words, thoughts, and actions are either from the flesh or from God’s Spirit. We need to walk in the Spirit, not the flesh (Gal 5:16). We need to recognize the flesh and turn from it (page 154). We need to let Christ reign at the control-center of our being (page 155).

The Lord fills us with his Spirit as we yield control at the moment of salvation. The ongoing filling of the Spirit requires our ongoing surrender and faith to do all the Lord wants. We may quench or grieve the Spirit by walking in the flesh. We can be stiff, unbending gloves on his hand. When we sin, we need to repent and re-surrender to be refilled. Spirit fullness requires earnest daily drinking from Jesus in his word, and constant cooperation.

The extent we cooperate with and obey the Spirit determines the extent he fills us. Why not seek his maximum filling? The Spirit’s fullness is a gift purchased for us by Jesus.

The filling of the Spirit occurs when we present the sail of our soul completely unfurled that the wind of the Spirit may fill our sail to move us in the direction he is going. The filling of the Spirit occurs whenever we completely yield to Jesus as a glove on his hand. The filling of the Spirit occurs whenever we open all the rooms of our soul’s house that the Spirit may do whatever he wants in all our inner rooms (page 156). The filling of the Spirit occurs whenever we let Christ cleanse us of all defiling unclean practices in our inner temple so that the Lord may fill our temple with genuine worship, love, and obedience by his Spirit. The filling of the Spirit occurs whenever we let Jesus take over our steering wheel to do the driving. From one baptism/immersion flow many fillings as we yield!

Do you fully unfurl your sail to the wind of the Spirit using the word of God?

Do you constantly yield to Jesus as a soft, flexible glove on his hand?

Do you let Jesus keep on cleaning and redecorating all the rooms of your heart?

Do you let Jesus remove all that is defiling in your temple and fill you with worship?

Do you let Jesus take over your steering wheel again when you grab it from him?

After yielding all, *claim by faith* in God’s Word that you are under the Spirit’s influence to do all the Lord wants. Then focus on keeping in step in New Covenant life in Christ in the Spirit!

Thank you, Lord, that in Christ the Spirit fills me to do your will as I yield and trust you!

Reflection questions

In Ephesians 5:18, what are the two commands of the Lord?

Do not get _____ with _____ . . . but be _____ with the _____.

In Galatians 5:22-23, what are Spirit-filled people like?

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law.

But the fruit of the Spirit is _____, _____, _____, _____,
_____, _____, _____, _____, _____.

In Acts 1:8, what are Spirit-filled people like?

But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.

But you will receive _____ when the Holy Spirit has _____ you,
and you will be my _____ in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the
_____ of the _____.

In Ephesians 5:18-21, what are Spirit-filled people like?

**¹⁸ And do not get drunk with wine, for that is debauchery, but be filled with the Spirit,
¹⁹ addressing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and
making melody to the Lord with your heart, ²⁰ giving thanks always and for everything
to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, ²¹ submitting to one another
out of reverence for Christ.**

¹⁸ And do _____ get _____ with wine, for that is _____, but be filled with
the Spirit, ¹⁹ _____ one another in _____ and _____ and
_____, _____ and _____ to the Lord
with your _____, ²⁰ _____ and for
_____ to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, ²¹ _____
to _____ out of _____ for _____.

Take time in prayer to sincerely unfurl your sail, yield as a glove, unlock all the doors to your inner rooms, let Jesus cleanse your temple and fill you with pure worship, and give Jesus the steering wheel of your life. Be filled with the Spirit.

Day 41 The Lord circumcises us in Christ, set apart to God in the Spirit

Gifts # 67

¹¹ In him also you were circumcised with a circumcision made without hands, by putting off the body of the flesh, by the circumcision of Christ, ¹² having been buried with him in baptism, in which you were also raised with him through faith in the powerful working of God, who raised him from the dead. (Col 2:11-12)

But a Jew is one inwardly, and circumcision is a matter of the heart, by the Spirit, not by the letter. (Rom 2:29)

For we are the real circumcision, who worship by the Spirit of God and glory in Christ Jesus and put no confidence in the flesh. (Phil 3:3)

In physical circumcision in the Old Covenant, a piece of flesh is cut off to symbolize that the person is being *set apart to love the covenant Lord*. “The LORD your God will circumcise your heart and the heart of your offspring, so that you will love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul” (Deut 30:6).

In Colossians 2:11-12, the cutting off of the flesh in the Old Covenant is fulfilled in the New Covenant by Christ putting off our living in the flesh in order to live in Christ (“live in him” Col 2:6). How does Christ do this? How is the flesh put off? It is done by being buried with Christ and raised with Christ by faith. It is done by immersion into Christ’s death and resurrection by faith, which water immersion symbolizes.

In the Old Covenant, circumcision was the outward sign of inclusion in the covenant. In the New Covenant, baptism is the outward sign of inclusion in the covenant. According to Colossians 2:11-12, both the Old Covenant symbol of circumcision and the New Covenant symbol of baptism point to the spiritual fulfillment of being circumcised by Christ where we are buried with Christ and raised with Christ by faith so we no longer live in the flesh but live in Christ in the Spirit in New Covenant love relationship with the Lord.

The fulfillment of Old Covenant circumcision is not New Covenant baptism. The fulfillment of Old Covenant circumcision is the circumcision done by Christ, not by human hands, where Christ brings an end to our living in the flesh so we live in Christ in the Spirit by faith. Likewise, the fulfillment of New Covenant baptism is being buried and raised with Christ by faith, putting off life in the flesh to live in Christ in the Spirit. “You, however, are not *in the flesh* but *in the Spirit*, if in fact the Spirit of God dwells in you” (Rom 8:9, italics added).

We become Jews inwardly, for our circumcision is of the heart by the Spirit (Rom 2:29). It is of the heart; it is spiritual; it is not physical. In Romans 2:29, the circumcision is done by the Spirit circumcising us in heart. In Colossians 2:11, the circumcision is done by Christ as we are buried with him and raised with him to live in Christ, not the flesh.

As the true circumcision, we worship God by his Spirit, glory in Christ Jesus, and put no confidence in the flesh (Phil 3:3). True worship is by the Spirit. The truly circumcised glory in Jesus as Messiah and put all confidence in his saving work, not any works of flesh.

Will you believe the crucified and risen Christ has put off your old life and raised you to new life with him in the Spirit? Will you enjoy walking in New Covenant *agape* love and obedience? Will you walk as one circumcised by Christ, set apart unto God in the New Covenant to love the Lord by living in Christ in the Spirit, not the flesh?

Thank you, Lord, that in Christ I am circumcised, set apart to you in the Spirit in the New Covenant to love you with all my heart! Infuse me with your *agape* love!

Reflection questions

In Colossians 2:11-12, what words indicate that Paul is emphasizing the *spiritual* circumcision accomplished in believers of which baptism is simply a picture or public portrayal? What is true of a believer the moment they repent and trust Christ, even before they are baptized in water?

_____ also you were circumcised with a _____ made _____,
by putting off the body of the flesh, by the _____ of _____, ¹² having been
_____ in baptism, in which you were also _____
_____ in the powerful working of God, who raised him from the dead.

(Note, as we did on Day 22, that baptism or immersion in water is a picture of the spiritual realities already accomplished in our hearts in the putting off of our old life in the flesh by being buried with Christ and raised with Christ by faith.)

In Romans 2:29, how is God's circumcision in Christ described?

God's circumcision in Christ makes a man (or woman) a _____ inwardly in God's sight.
Circumcision is a matter of the _____, by the _____, not by the letter (law).

In Romans 8:9, what is true of believers?

Those in Christ are not _____ the _____, but _____ the _____, if
the _____ of _____ dwells _____ them .

In Philippians 3:3, what are three characteristics of the true circumcision?

We _____ God by the _____ of _____, we _____
in _____, and we put no _____ in the _____.

Praise you, Lord, that Jesus died for us and rose so that for all who repent and believe on the Lord Jesus, the Spirit dwells in us, making us your temple, and we are in the Spirit! You have put those in Christ under the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus, setting us free from the law of sin and death! For those in Christ, you have poured out the Spirit so streams of living water of the Spirit flow from within! You have immersed us into Christ and the Spirit! You have given us your Spirit; we have received the Spirit and have your Spirit! In Christ, the Spirit has come on us and has fallen on us! In Christ, you have anointed us and sealed us with your Spirit! We have been born of the Spirit! In Christ, the Spirit leads us and sanctifies us! The Spirit of truth helps and teaches us! In Christ, we have been adopted as sons with the Spirit of the Son sent into our hearts! The Holy Spirit prays for us! The Spirit has gifted us for service! The Spirit keeps on filling us as we keep on repenting! Christ has circumcised us, setting us apart to God to live in the Spirit not the flesh! Your Spirit has immeasurably great power! Thank you, Lord, for the precious, New Covenant ministry of the Holy Spirit in all your people!

¹⁸ Having the eyes of your hearts enlightened, that you may know what is the hope to which he has called you, what are the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints, ¹⁹ and what is the immeasurable greatness of his power toward us who believe. (Eph 1:18-19)

¹² In any and every circumstance, I have learned the secret of facing plenty and hunger, abundance and need. ¹³ I can do all things through him who strengthens me. (Phil 4:12-13)

The power God exerted in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him above all powers with all things under his feet is immeasurably great power. This same power is at work in us who believe (Eph 1:19-22)!

Consider from Ephesians other passages on what God's power can produce in us.

God strengthens us with power through his Spirit in our inner being so Christ dwells in our hearts through faith. God's power roots and establishes us in his *agape* love. God's power helps us comprehend the greatness of the love of Christ and love with the great love of Christ in order that we are filled with all the fullness of God (Eph 3:16-19).

God "is able to do far more abundantly than all we ask or think, according to the power at work within us, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus" (Eph 3:20-21).

Because we have such power, Paul insists that we no longer live in impurity as unbelievers do (Eph 4:17-19). God's power changes us from falsehood to speaking the truth, from stealing to working and sharing, from corrupting talk to good speech that builds up others, from bitterness, wrath, anger, clamor, slander and malice to being kind and tenderhearted, forgiving, and loving as Christ loved us (Eph 4:25-5:2).

God's power also purifies us from sexual immorality, impurity, coveting, filthiness, foolish talk and crude joking into thanksgiving for all that Christ is to us (Eph 5:3-4). God's power rescues us from darkness into the light of all that is good and right and true (Eph 5:9).

When married couples and families are filled with the Spirit, God's power produces loving leadership and cooperative submission as with Christ and the church (Eph 5:18-6:4).

One who is strong in the Lord and in his mighty power daily puts on God's armor of truth, righteousness, sharing the gospel, faith, salvation, the Word of God and prayer in the Spirit (Eph 6:10-18). Regarding power to share the gospel, Jesus said, "But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses" (Acts 1:8). The book of Acts is a record of how the power of the Spirit produces people who witness and people who turn to Christ as the Spirit uses the sword of the powerful truths of God in Christ.

Jesus Christ has infinite power and "strengthens" us (Phil 4:13 above). The verb is "endunamoo," from the two words "in" and "power." Christ puts his power in us; he empowers us. Christ puts his strength in us; he strengthens us, so we are content and do his will in all trials, "facing plenty and hunger, abundance and need" (Phil 4:12). Similarly, in 2 Corinthians 4:7, God's "surpassing power" overcomes in great difficulties.

As we yield to the Spirit, we are empowered to love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control (Gal 5:22-23).

Don't be weak by neglecting the power available - the power of God's Spirit, the power of Christ's death and resurrection, the power of the reigning Christ, the power of God's Word, the power of delight in God, the power of faith, the power of surrender, the power of prayer and praise, and the power of praying together!

When tempted, turn to the Lord in repentance and faith, relying on his incomparably great power to be greater than the power of any temptation, able to produce Christ in us.

Affirm your riches--In Christ I have immeasurably great power! Lord, you are in me, and you are more powerful than anything else! Thank you for giving me your strength!

Reflection questions

In Ephesians 1:18-19, what three blessings does Paul ask God to enlighten hearts to know?

The _____ to which he has called you, the _____ of his _____
_____ in the saints, and the _____ of his _____.

In Ephesians 3:20, what can God's power at work in us do?

Far more _____ than all that we _____ or _____

In Acts 1:8, what does the Spirit empower us to do?

The Spirit comes upon us in power so we will be _____ about Christ.

In Philippians 4:13, what does Christ do, and what can we do?

I can do _____ through him who _____ me.

What are the different kinds of power God has made available to us? (paragraph 11)

the power of _____, the power of Christ's _____ and _____
the power of the _____ Christ, the power of _____
the power of _____ in _____, the power of _____
the power of _____, the power of _____ and _____
the power of _____ !

What should we do when tempted? (paragraph 12, last paragraph)

From all the riches thus far, choose your best three each that meet people's needs for:

freedom from guilt	freedom from loneliness	victory over temptation	confidence and security
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Day 43 The Lord makes us his workmanship

Gift # 69

For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them. (Eph 2:10)

¹² Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, ¹³ for it is God who works in you, both to will and to work for his good pleasure. (Phil 2:12-13)

We may look at an ornate vase and say, “What beautiful handiwork!” The Lord wants to work in us constantly so that it can be said of us, “What beautiful handiwork!” We are his artwork, his workmanship, his handiwork. We are the work of his hands, created in Christ to do good not harm, to accomplish God’s purposes, to work out what he works in.

The potter delights to shape the clay into a work of art. As the saying goes, “God don’t make no junk!” The almighty, loving, Lord of all has a purpose for our lives. This makes us very significant. Every little thing we do in the will of God is of great value. We are workers together with God, God’s fellow workers (1 Cor 3:9; 2 Cor 6:1). We are servants of God (1 Pet 2:16). He delights to work in us each day as clay shaped by his hand.

Being God’s workmanship is also like being gloves powered by God’s hand. A glove by itself can do nothing. “As soon, however, as my hand comes into that glove, the glove becomes as strong as my hand. Everything possible to my hand becomes possible to that glove--but only in the measure in which the glove is prepared simply to clothe the activity of the hand. That is what it is to have Christ, by his Spirit, dwelling within your redeemed humanity. You are the glove. Christ is the hand.”¹⁹ We are God’s workmanship.

Is there any higher purpose to live for than to fulfill God’s purposes for you? No! Philippians 2 calls us to serve God by serving others, not just ourselves. We are to serve like Jesus, who became a servant and sought our best.

God is working in us to make us channels of his *agape* love (page xxx). This radically different love does not just do good to those who do good to us. God’s love is good, kind, and merciful to all, even to those who are selfish, unkind, and hurtful (Luke 6:27-36). It is a love that seeks to lavish *agape* grace upon those who sin.

Will you rest in Christ for all grace, then earnestly work out what Christ works in?

Will you let the Potter shape his artwork as he pleases today?

Will you let Christ move you as a glove on his hand?

Will you patiently trust the Potter to do what is needed in another’s life?

“Do not present your members to sin as instruments for unrighteousness, but present yourselves to God as those who have been brought from death to life, and your members to God as instruments for righteousness” (Rom 6:13).

Praise you, Lord, that through Christ’s death I’ve become your workmanship!

When sin knocks at the door to steal, kill, and destroy, say “No!” to sin and “Yes!” to Christ! Refuse to stay stuck on the ground in the flesh when you can fly with Christ overcoming the downward pull of sin! Refuse sin’s poison. Drink Christ’s pure water!

Rest in Christ and his riches of grace each day. Don’t struggle, labor, work, and weary yourself trying to meet your needs and gain God’s favor. Rest and receive, rather than be tired and weary. Stop working and let *Christ* graciously work. Be a glove on his hand, a branch in his vine, and a member of his body. Work as his zeal works in you.

¹⁹ Major W. Ian Thomas, The Saving Life of Christ (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1961), 41.

Reflection questions

In Ephesians 2:10, how are we made God's workmanship, and with what results?

We are God's workmanship by being _____ in _____ Jesus for
_____ .

In Philippians 2:13, what is God doing in us?

God _____ in you both to _____ and to _____ for his _____ .

In Philippians 2:12, what should we do if God is working in us to will and to work as he purposes?

_____ your own salvation with _____ and _____ .

How are Christians like gloves? (paragraph 3)

If we are God's workmanship, what does Romans 6:13 set forth as an appropriate response?

Do not _____ your _____ to _____ as _____ for
_____, but _____ yourselves to _____ as those who have
been brought from _____ to _____, and your _____ to _____
as _____ for _____

If being God's workmanship is like becoming a glove on Christ's hand, how does this encourage us in our calling to missions?

Praise the Lord! Praise changes everything as we study. Praise moves the Word from head to heart!
Praise based on God's promises is like drinking God's riches of grace!

Day 44 The Lord leads us in triumphal procession and nike victory

Gifts # 70,71

But thanks be to God, who in Christ always leads us in triumphal procession, and through us spreads the fragrance of the knowledge of him everywhere. (2 Cor 2:14)

Thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. (1 Cor 15:57)

Picture a commander of a conquering Roman army leading the troops in triumphal procession as they march back home after defeating another enemy. As they pass through Roman cities, crowds of cheering Roman citizens line the streets. The soldiers follow their commander with the captives behind them. Incense is burned. To the Romans, the incense is the fragrance of victory for the Roman Empire. To the captives, it is the smell of defeat, and death to many of their comrades.

The Lord leads his people in triumphal procession in Christ. He “leads us in His triumph in Christ” (NAS). Christ is the conquering commander of God’s army, the head of the procession of those in him. Christ, our victorious King, has conquered sin, the flesh, Satan, death and hell. He is always leading us triumphantly to final victory, based on the victory of his death and resurrection. The victory is won!

Consider how we are the Lord’s captives, soldiers, and incense.

We are captives of the triumphant Christ. We were opposing soldiers fighting against Christ. But we have surrendered to the conquering General who has taken us captive to serve the King. The NIV (2011) says God “always leads us as captives in Christ’s triumphal procession.” The NLT says, “Thanks be to God, who made us his captives and leads us along in Christ’s triumphal procession.” There is no victory over sin if we are not captivated by Christ, surrendered and submissive to his direction. The Lord must first win the victory over us before leading us in victory over the enemy.

We are soldiers of the triumphant Christ. Christ has triumphed over our sin and defeated Satan’s grip on us. We are soldiers who now fight for God against sin and Satan. The Lord fights for us, not against us. As he leads us in his triumph, he supplies the winning battle plan, the armor needed, and the strength to fight and win (Eph 6:10-20). He helps us endure hardship like good soldiers of Christ (2 Tim 2:3).

We are incense of the triumphant Christ. God “through us spreads the fragrance of the knowledge of him everywhere. For we are the aroma of Christ to God” (2 Cor 2:14-15). Christ triumphs whenever we are the fragrance of knowing Christ. He triumphs when we walk in the Spirit and share Christ with others. “As men of sincerity, . . . in the sight of God we speak in Christ.” (2 Cor 2:17).

Have confidence daily that the Lord will lead you in the triumph of his cross.

Be the Lord’s captive, giving up your rights to do what you please because you are taken captive by Christ the King.

Be the Lord’s soldier, reporting for duty to fight in the name of the Lord.

Be the Lord’s fragrance, walking in the Spirit, sharing Christ with others.

In addition to the picture of triumphal procession, the New Testament has many references to *nike* victory in Christ. For instance, since Christ has conquered death and will give us imperishable resurrection bodies, Paul declares, “Thanks be to God, who gives us the victory (nike) through our Lord Jesus Christ” (1 Cor 15:57). Since Nike products are so popular today, and the concept of *nike* was so important in the Roman Empire, an additional article on *nike* is included on pages 171-172. Enjoy God’s *nike* victory through Christ!

Thank you, Lord, that you always lead me in triumph and victory in Christ!

Reflection questions

In 2 Corinthians 2:14, what two things does God do for us in Christ?

God in _____ always _____ us in _____

Through us God _____ the _____ of the _____ of him everywhere.

In 1 Corinthians 15:57, why does Paul give thanks to God?

Thanks be to God, who _____ us the _____ through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Can you explain to someone the analogy for being led in triumphal procession in Christ? (para 1-2)

How are we captives of the triumphant Christ? (paragraph 4)

How are we soldiers of the triumphant Christ? (paragraph 5)

How are we fragrance of the triumphant Christ? (paragraph 6)

What are some of the riches thus far that produce confidence and replace discouragement and defeat?

Take time to praise the Lord for his wonderful riches in Christ! Praise moves God's truth from the head to the heart. Praise transforms study into meeting God. Faith-filled praise based on God's promises is like drinking in God's grace. Praise can change everything! Do we ever regret praising the Lord?!!

Applications for Days 31-44 Life in the Spirit

Put into practise the commands and principles of Scripture regarding life in Christ in the Spirit!

“Walk not according to the flesh but according to the Spirit” (Rom 8:4, ESV).

“Those who live according to the Spirit set their minds on the things of the Spirit” (Rom 8:5, ESV).

By the Spirit put to death the deeds of the body and flesh, “For if you live according to the flesh, you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the misdeeds of the body, you will live” (Rom 8:13, ESV).

Follow the leading of the Spirit, “For all who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God” (Rom 8:14).

“But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh” (Gal 5:16, ESV).

“But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control” (Gal 5:22-23, ESV).

“If we live by the Spirit, let us also keep in step with the Spirit” (Gal 5:25, ESV).

“Do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption” (Eph 4:30)

“Do not get drunk with wine, for that is debauchery, but be filled with the Spirit, addressing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody to the Lord with your heart, giving thanks always and for everything to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, submitting to one another out of reverence for Christ” (Eph 5:18-21, ESV).

Take the . . . the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God, praying at all times in the Spirit, with all prayer and supplication” (Eph 6:17-18, ESV).

“Do not quench the Spirit” (1 Thess 5:19, ESV).

“But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses . . . to the end of the earth” (Acts 1:8, ESV).

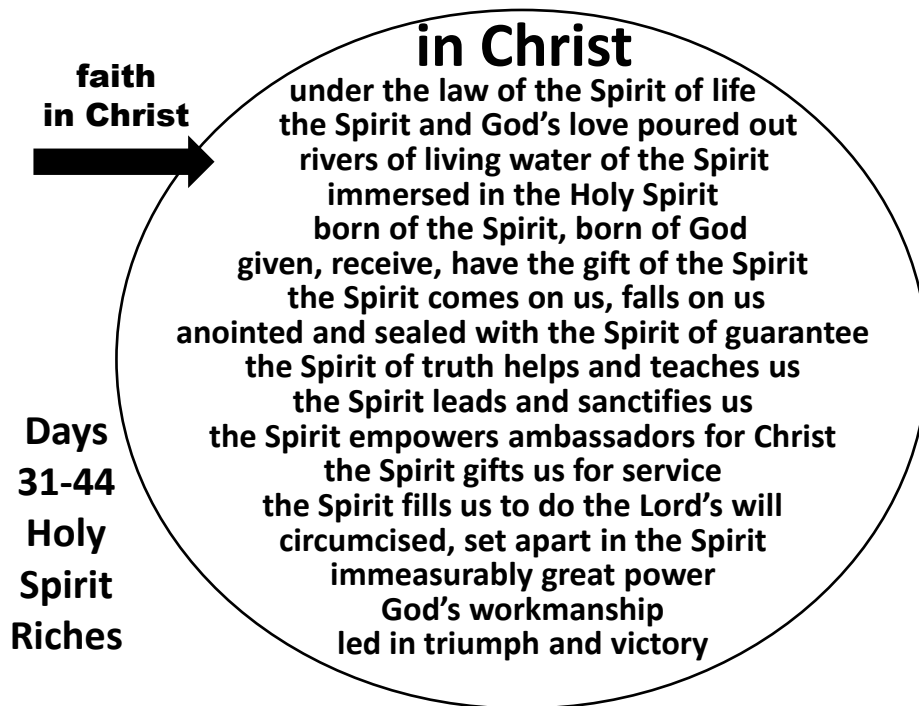
Like a former beggar now a billionaire in Christ, will you reach out to people who are bankrupt in sin to speak of the Lord who died for them to make them rich in Christ?

Like someone who knows a Doctor who cured you of terminal cancer, will you tell lost people about Christ and his riches that cure us of the cancer of sin?

More than anyone else, Jesus sought joy in God,
not in the things of the world, and more than anyone else,
Jesus walked in God's ways of righteousness in the Spirit,
so that his fullness of joy in God was made complete
by his always walking in harmony with God's will.

Whenever we disobey God, sin robs us of our fullness of joy in God, but of Jesus it is written, "You have loved righteousness and hated wickedness; therefore God, your God, has anointed you with the oil of gladness beyond your companions" (Heb 1:9, ESV).

Walking in harmony with the truths of the grace of God in Christ in the Spirit completes our joy in God that is different and better than joy in anything else!



in order to walk in Christ in the Spirit in *agape* love

That's not all of the Holy Spirit riches!

We can also include:

Day 14 in the Spirit and the Spirit in us, Temples of the Holy Spirit

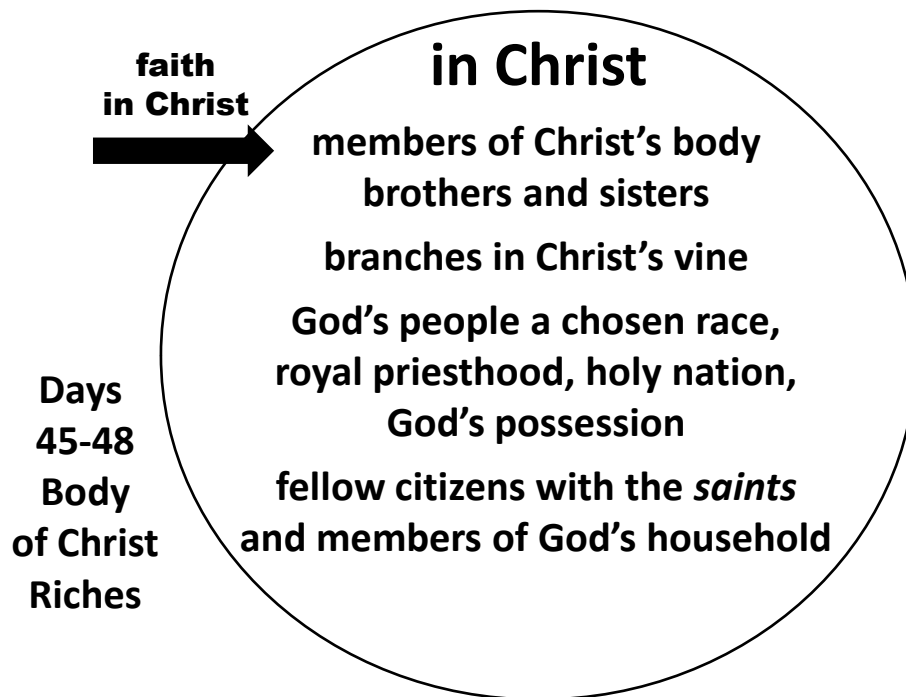
Day 15 immersed in the Father, Son and Spirit

Day 16 Fellowship with the Spirit

Day 17 involving access to the Father through Christ in one Spirit (Eph 2:18)

Day 20 the Spirit prays for us and helps us pray in the Spirit

**What wonderful grace that unites us with the Lord in order to know him
in his eternal fellowship and glory in Christ!**



**What wonderful grace that unites us with the Lord in order to know him
in his eternal fellowship and glory in Christ!**

Day 45 The Lord makes us members of Christ's body united with Christ our head, brothers and sisters in Christ

Gifts # 72-73

¹³ For in one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—Jews or Greeks, slaves or free—and all were made to drink of one Spirit. . . . ²⁷ Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it. (1 Cor 12:13, 12:27)

¹⁵ Rather, speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ, ¹⁶ from whom the whole body, joined and held together by every joint with which it is equipped, when each part is working properly, makes the body grow so that it builds itself up in love. (Eph 4:15-16)

²³ Christ is the head of the church, his body, and is himself its Savior. . . . ²⁹ For no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as Christ does the church, ³⁰ because we are members of his body. . . . ³¹ the two shall become one flesh. ³² This mystery is profound, and I am saying that it refers to Christ and the church. (Eph 5:29-32)

Through faith in Jesus, we are immersed into Christ, immersed in the Spirit, and immersed into Christ's body. We are united, joined, and connected with Christ our head as members of his body under his direction. We are also the embodiment of Christ on earth!

Our hands and organs do not struggle to get what they need to work. They rest in dependence on the head to direct all to function properly to supply all they need to do their work. Our members first rest and receive, then work. So should we with Christ our head.

As members of Christ's body, we need to rest in Christ as our Head to supply all our needs and give all the direction we need. We rest and receive from Christ, then work as he directs. We totally depend on our head to take care of us.

As members of one body of Christ in one Spirit, we fellowship with and accept all believers, whether Jews or Gentiles, poor slaves whom others despise or free (1 Cor 12:13 above). We are to have the same care for one another (1 Cor 12:25). We are to be eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace with each other (Eph 4:3), for we are members one of another (Eph 4:25).

As members of Christ's body where each has received a gift, we are to use it to serve others (1 Pet 4:10). As each part works properly in Christ's body, the body grows so that it builds itself up in love (Eph 4:16 above).

With our bodies as members of Christ and our spirits one spirit with Christ, we flee sexual immorality and honor God in our bodies (1 Cor 6:15, 17, 18, 20; Day 24).

Note in Ephesians 5:22-33 how Christ our head and Christ our Bridegroom are both linked together in loving, nourishing and cherishing the members of his body (Eph 5:29-30). The spiritual oneness which Christ has with both Jews and Gentiles who become members of his body is brought into effect by the profound love of the Messiah giving himself up for them to present them in splendor as his holy bride. The two become one. This is a profound mystery concerning the Messiah not understood in the Old Testament (Eph 5:25-32; Day 24).

As members of Christ's body, we are to do whatever our head directs us to do. How sick a human body is when parts no longer respond to the head!

Rest in Christ to supply all you need. Do all as your head directs. Love each other.

Zealously care for your local church body! Promote grace and love rather than criticism and contention. Study and share insight into the Word *together* with believers.

Affirm your riches in Christ--I praise you, Lord, for Christ's death making me a member of Christ's body in living spiritual union with Christ my head!

Reflection questions

In 1 Corinthians 12:13, what two things has the Lord done for those in Christ?

In _____ we were all _____ into _____

(Also note in 1 Corinthians 12:13, as we did on Day 22, that baptism or immersion in water includes the picture of immersion in the Spirit and immersion into the body of Christ. Immersion into Christ and his death and resurrection results in immersion in the Spirit into the body of Christ.)

In 1 Corinthians 12:27, whose body are all believers part of? Are there any people in Christ who are not part of the body of Christ?

Now you are the body of _____, and _____ of it.

In Ephesians 4:16, from whom is the whole body, and how should the body of Christ function properly?

_____, from _____ the whole body, _____ and _____
_____ by _____ with which it is _____, when
_____ part is _____, makes the body _____ so that
it _____ itself up in _____.

In Ephesians 5:23, 30, 31, how is the relationship of Christ to his people described?

²³ Christ is the _____ of the church, his _____, and is himself its _____.

³⁰ We are _____ of his _____.

³¹ The _____ become _____.

How do members of Christ's body rest as well as work? (paragraph3)

Summarize how a healthy body of Christ works, as stated in paragraphs 4-6, based on 1 Cor 12:13, 1 Cor 12:25; Eph 4:3, 16, 25; 1 Pet 4:10; and 1 Cor 6:15, 17, 18, 20.

How will you help the body work in a healthy way?

Day 46 The Lord makes us branches united with Christ our vine

I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing. (John 15:5)

A branch in a vine enjoys a very special union. It is united with the vine. It is part of the vine. We can't look at a branch and say it is not vine. Christians enjoy a very intimate union with the Lord Jesus Christ. We are united with Christ, joined to Christ, in Christ, as a branch in a vine. We are united, crucified, buried, raised, alive, one, seated, and hidden with Christ (Day 23-24). "I am in my Father, and you in me, and I in you" (John 14:20).

A branch in a vine enjoys a very special rest. It does not labor and toil to meet its needs. The vine draws the moisture and nutrients from the soil and delivers what is needed to the branch. The vine is responsible to provide for its branches. The branch doesn't grunt and groan to bring forth grapes. Grapes are the natural result of connection with the vine.

Christians enjoy a very special rest in Christ. The Vine supplies all we need as we stay attached to him. We rest by faith, depending on Christ to be all we need. Through his death and resurrection, he provides all we need. The branch rests and Christ the Vine works.

Resting does not mean we do nothing! Resting means we depend on Christ to work in us what we need to do his will. Resting results in working. "I toil, struggling with all his energy that he powerfully works within me" (Col 1:29). "Work out your own salvation . . . , for it is God who works in you, both to will and to work for his good pleasure" (Phil 2:12-13).

A branch in Christ's vine enjoys bearing much fruit. To bear the fruit that Jesus Christ produces is more important than "success" at school, in sports, or at work. It is fruit that abides (John 15:16). It is the fruit of loving the Lord by remaining in Christ, remaining in his words, obeying his commands, loving others, and testifying about Jesus as the Spirit testifies (John 15:7, 10, 12, 26-27; on next page). Apart from him we can do nothing.

To say it another way, the abundant fruit that Jesus produces on his branches is love for the Lord that walks with Christ in the Spirit and the Word in *agape* love and witness.

Don't miss this in John 15 – the fruit we bear is also the way to abide in Christ! We bear fruit *and* abide in Christ by loving the Lord, abiding in his words, obeying his commands, loving others, and testifying about Jesus as the Spirit testifies!

The fruit Jesus produces includes the fruit the Spirit produces. "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control" (Gal 5:22-23). The Holy Spirit also produces the fruit of witness for Christ (Acts 1:8).

Rejoice in your union with Christ. Rest in your union with Christ, as a branch in Christ's vine, as a member of Christ's body and as a glove in Christ's hand.

Let Christ bear much fruit on your branch. If we remain in Christ with continuous cooperation, he will be faithful to produce his abundant fruit through us.

**Praise you, Lord, for uniting me with Christ! I am a branch in Christ's vine!
Lord, I rest in you to fill me with your *agape* love so that I serve others.**

Christ works in us as branches in his vine and members of his body. We are instruments in his hand, gloves on his hand! It is tiring when we think, "I have a visit to make. I have an errand to run. I have a meal to cook." We rest in Christ when our mindset is, "Lord, I am united with you. Not I, but Christ lives in me. You want to make the visit. You want to run the errand and cook the meal."

Reflection questions

In John 15:5, who is Jesus and who are we?

Jesus is the _____ and we are his _____ .

In John 15:5, what does the Lord promise to do if we remain attached to him?

We will bear _____ .

In John 15:5, what can we do by ourselves? _____

What kind of fruit does the Lord want to bear in us? (paragraph 5-8)

What need do you have right now that you can rest in the Lord to meet as a branch in his vine?

In the passage below, underline important phrases on abiding in Christ and bearing much fruit.

⁷ If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. ⁸ By this my Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit and so prove to be my disciples. ⁹ As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Abide in my love. ¹⁰ If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commandments and abide in his love. . . . ¹² This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. . . . ¹⁴ You are my friends if you do what I command you. . . . ¹⁶ You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit and that your fruit should abide, so that whatever you ask the Father in my name, he may give it to you. ¹⁷ These things I command you, so that you will love one another. . . . ²⁶ But when the Helper comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth, who proceeds from the Father, he will bear witness about me. ²⁷ And you also will bear witness, because you have been with me from the beginning. (John 15:7-10, 12, 14, 16-17, 26-27)

**Day 47 The Lord makes us a chosen race, royal priesthood, holy nation,
God's possession, God's people**

Gifts # 75-79

⁹ But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light. ¹⁰ Once you were not a people, but now you are God's people; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy. (1 Peter 2:9-10)

⁴ You yourselves have seen what I did to the Egyptians, and how I bore you on eagles' wings and brought you to myself. ⁵ Now therefore, if you will indeed obey my voice and keep my covenant, you shall be my treasured possession among all peoples, . . . ⁶ and you shall be to me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation. (Exodus 19:4-6)

Through Abraham, God chose to make a new race of people into a nation to belong to him as his special possession. He chose them and set them apart (made them holy) from all others to be his very own. He provided them access into his presence by faith, through sacrifices which priests offered on their behalf.

In Christ, the Lord makes us a *chosen race* of people, chosen to be a distinct kind of people in special connection to God by covenant and new birth. He makes us *the people of God* who are a *holy nation* set apart from sin unto God in the Spirit.

With Jesus as our king and high priest (predicted in Zech 6:13), we are priests in his kingdom, a kingdom of priests, a *royal priesthood*. As priests, we all have access to God through Christ's sacrifice to worship, intercede, serve, teach, and receive grace. We don't offer sacrifices for sin, because Jesus our great high priest offered the final sacrifice for sin and now represents us in God's presence, but as New Testament priests we offer spiritual sacrifices (1 Pet 2:5), living sacrifices (Rom 12:1), and sacrifices of praise (Heb 13:15).

In Christ, we are *God's possession*, "a people for his own possession" (1 Pet 2:9 above and Titus 2:14), "a people belonging to God" (1 Pet 2:9 NIV), "a peculiar people" (1 Pet 2:9 KJV), God's "treasured possession" (Exod 19:5 ESV, NIV). Praise the Lord that we are no longer the possession of sin or Satan. All thanks to you, Lord, that we are not *our own* (1 Cor 6:19), for we are "his own" (1 Pet 2:9 above and Titus 2:14).

We once were in the darkness of sin. Now we are in the light of God's holiness and truth. We declare his excellencies, praises, greatness, power, love and grace.

Note God's call to us in 1 Peter:

"Be holy, for I am holy" (1 Pet 1:16).

"Be a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ" (1 Pet 2:5).

"Proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light" (1 Pet 2:9).

"Abstain from the passions of the flesh, which wage war against your soul" (1 Pet 2:11).

"Keep your conduct among the Gentiles honorable, so that when they speak against you as evildoers, they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day of visitation" (1 Pet 2:12).

In Christ, I am part of God's chosen race, royal priesthood, and holy nation, one of God's special treasured possessions, one of God's people! Thank you, Lord!

Reflection questions

In 1 Peter 2:9-10, what has the Lord given to those in Christ?

In Christ we are a _____ race

In Christ we are a royal _____

In Christ we are a _____

In Christ we are a people for his own _____

Once we were not a people, but now in Christ we are _____

Once we had not received _____, but now we have received _____ in Christ

In 1 Peter 2:9-10, what should be our response to these riches given us in Christ?

God did this so that we may _____ the _____ of him who _____
us out of _____ into his _____.

How are we a royal priesthood in Christ? (paragraph 3)

As priests, we all have _____ to _____ through Christ's _____ to _____,
_____, _____, _____, and receive _____.

We do not offer _____ for sin, because Jesus our _____
offered the _____ sacrifice for sin and now _____ us in God's presence.

But as New Testament priests, we offer _____ sacrifices (1 Pet 2:5), _____
sacrifices (Rom 12:1), and sacrifices of _____ (Heb 13:15).

As one of God's royal priests, what can you praise God for right now, for whom can you intercede, and with whom can you share Christ? Will you completely devote your body as a living sacrifice to God, offering all the members of your body as instruments of righteousness for God's use and honor?

What are some junk songs that play in your head sometimes and some new music from this week's riches that you would rather play instead?

Day 48 The Lord makes us fellow citizens with the saints, members of God's household

Gifts # 80-82

¹³ But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ. . . . ¹⁸ For through him we both have access in one Spirit to the Father. ¹⁹ So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are *fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God*, ²⁰ built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the chief cornerstone. (Eph 2:13, 18-20; italics added)

Some children in hurtful homes wish they could be in their friend's family. Various countries in turmoil have citizens who wish they could escape to another country, but they know they would be unwelcome as foreigners without citizenship.

In New Testament times, there were huge walls between Jews and Gentiles. Jews saw Gentiles as unclean, uncircumcised sinners, far away from God, and under his wrath. "The mystery of Christ, which . . . has now been revealed . . . is that the *Gentiles* are fellow heirs, members of the same body, and partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel" (Eph 3:4-6, italics added).

In terms of our passage in Ephesians 2, the mystery of Christ is that in Christ Jesus once far off *Gentiles* are brought near to God by the blood of Christ. Both Jew and *Gentile* have access in one Spirit to the Father. *Gentiles* are fellow citizens with all God's saints and equal members of God's household.

Equal citizenship and household membership are two lovely riches in Christ.

In Christ, God makes us holy people who are fellow citizens with equal citizenship along with all God's people, the saints. Saints are "set apart ones" or "sanctified ones" or "ones made holy." God calls all Christians "saints," set apart to God to be fellow citizens with all his people, set apart to belong to God, made holy to God in Christ. As we will see on Day 49, in Christ Gentiles also have citizenship in heaven.

In Christ, God also makes Gentiles members of God's household, God's family. (Note in Gal 6:10 and 1 Pet 4:17 that where the NIV is "family," the ESV is "household.") In terms of John 8, we are members of God's house or family, not Satan's. God is our Father; we are of God, we belong to God; others are of their father, the devil (John 8:42-47).

God's household is also connected with the church. "The household of God . . . is the church of the living God" (1 Tim 3:15). We are the church (ekklesia) "called out" of the world to assemble together as God's people, God's household, God's set-apart saints.

In Ephesians 2, note how being fellow citizens and members of God's household flows into being a "holy temple in the Lord" where Jew and Gentile "are being built together into a dwelling place for God by the Spirit" (Eph 2:21-22). Then as we saw above, Paul speaks of believing Gentiles as "fellow heirs" and "members of the same body" (Eph 3:6).

In Christ we are fellow citizens with the saints, members of God's household, God's family, a holy temple of God in the Spirit, fellow heirs and members of the body of Christ, the church of the living God!

Picture standing before the Lord as equal citizens and members with Moses, Elijah, Daniel, Peter, John and Paul. How powerful is the justifying and sanctifying work of Christ's death and resurrection! How great is the glorifying work to come! How wonderful is the love of God found in Jesus Christ our Lord!

Do you accept and respect yourself as one given equal standing before God with the greatest of God's people? Or do you often criticize and belittle yourself?

Do you accept and respect other believers as having equal standing before God with the greatest of God's people? Or do you cut them up and belittle them? Do you reach out to help them in their weakness or do you speak out to condemn?

Affirm who you are in Christ--Thank you, Lord, that through Christ I am a fellow citizen with God's people, the saints, and a member of your household, your family!

Reflection questions

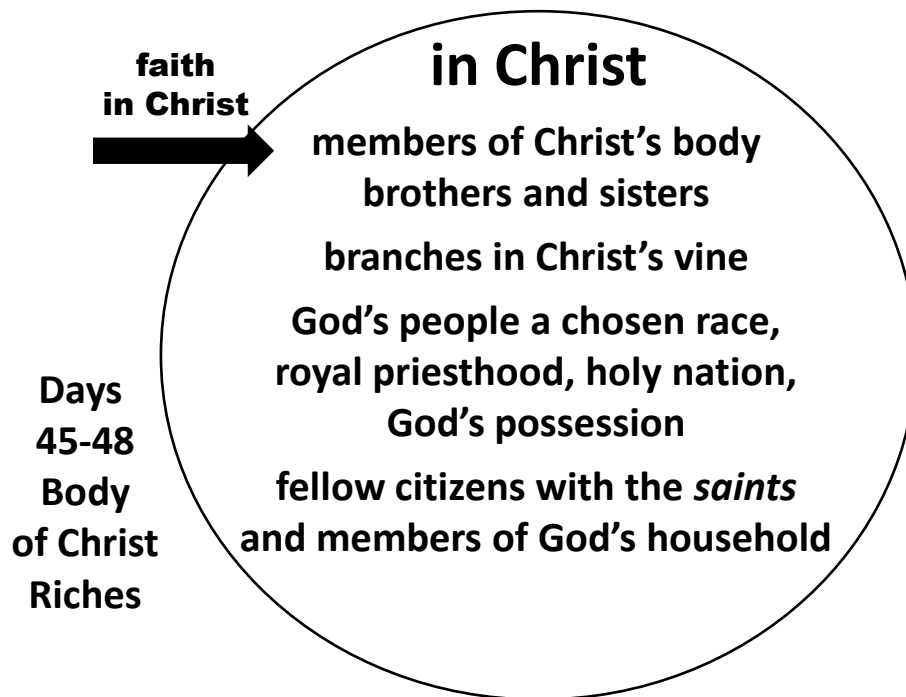
In Ephesians 2:13, 18-20, what has the Lord done for us in Christ?

In _____ you who once were _____ have been _____
_____ by the _____ of Christ. For through him we _____ (Jew and Gentile) have
_____ in one _____ to the _____. So then you are no longer _____
and _____, but you are _____ with the _____
and _____ of the _____ of God, built on the foundation of the _____
and _____, Christ Jesus himself being the chief _____.

Are you a saint? (paragraph 5)

Saints are “_____ ones” or “_____ ones” or “ones made _____.”

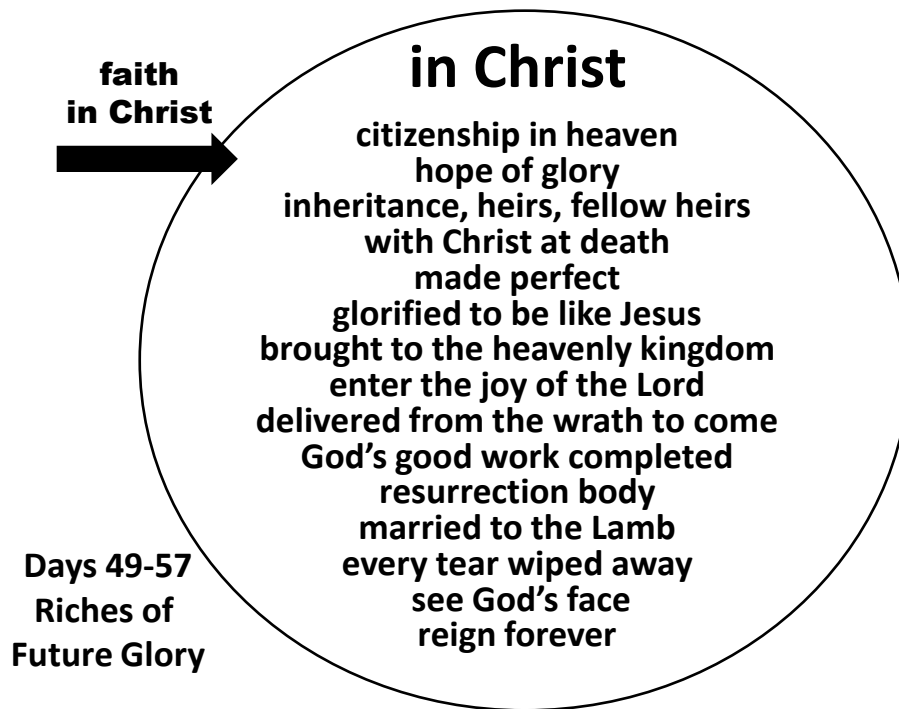
Many new missionaries today are going to people groups where there are many who are poor and oppressed, neglected and forgotten. What is something very special to them in this lesson that we can tell them Christ can do for them in addition to forgiveness and reconciliation with God?



That's not all of the body of Christ riches!

We can also include:

- Day 14 God's Temple
- Day 39 involving sons of God, brothers and sisters
- Day 48 involving God's family, the Church
- Days 24, 30, 55 involving the Bride of Christ



All these riches are part of our present possessions in Christ,
 but some of these gifts will not be unwrapped until we die,
 and some will not be unwrapped until after Christ's return in glory!

**What wonderful grace that unites us with the Lord in order to know him
 in his eternal fellowship and glory in Christ!**

Day 49 The Lord gives us citizenship in heaven

Gift # 83

¹⁹ Their end is destruction, . . . ²⁰ But our citizenship is in heaven, and from it we await a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ. (Phil 3:19-20)

²³ the assembly of the firstborn who are enrolled in heaven. (Heb 12:23)

Various people come to our country hoping to eventually obtain their citizenship. They may be attracted by better salaries and health care than in their country. Some who temporarily work overseas in very poor countries or dictatorships look forward to returning home and enjoying the rights, privileges and responsibilities their citizenship includes.

In Christ, God gives believers citizenship in heaven now. We are enrolled for heaven now! When we die, it is like all our documents are stamped so there is immediate welcome into heaven. There is no immigration application. Our citizenship is settled, like a citizen returning home after working overseas. "Welcome home, you belong here!"

The church is called "the assembly of the firstborn," because the firstborn receive the inheritance, the inheritance of being in heaven. Our names are enrolled in heaven; our names are registered as citizens of the kingdom to come, as we eagerly await our Savior.

We do not have to pay a great price to obtain citizenship, as the commander did for Roman citizenship in Acts 22:28. Christ paid the great price for us. Our citizenship in heaven is one of the many free gifts of grace in Christ.

Through justification in Christ, God makes Jew and Gentile believers perfectly righteous in his sight, holy, without a speck of sin on our account, so we are perfectly ready to be in God's presence as soon as we die. When we die, God glorifies us in Christ so we are perfectly righteous in every thought and action, perfect citizens of heaven!

The destiny of enemies of the cross of Christ is destruction (Phil 3:18-19). But believers are heavenward bound. At Christ's return he will make even our bodies heavenly.

Rejoice in your dual citizenship! Draw on the rights and privileges you have been given in Christ. Conduct yourself in this world as a citizen of heaven.

Think on your glorious future and press on with your Lord.

Praise you, Lord, that because of your salvation in Christ, my citizenship is in heaven!

Day 49 The Lord gives us the hope of glory

Gift # 84

We rejoice in hope of the glory of God. (Rom 5:5)

Christ in you, the hope of glory. (Col 1:27)

Compared to many in other religions, one of the differences of those who by faith rest in the grace and finished work of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ is that they have the hope of glory. To have the hope of glory is to have full assurance of heaven, to be confident of sharing in the glory of Christ, to know for sure God will keep his promises of future glory.

The riches in Days 50-57 describe what our hope of glory is: We have assurance of our inheritance as heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ. We will be with Christ when we die. The Lord will bring us safely into his heavenly kingdom, and bring to completion the good work he began in us. Jesus will deliver us from the wrath to come. The Lord will glorify us to be like Jesus and give us a glorious resurrection body like Jesus. We eagerly await being married eternally to the Lamb, entering the joy of the Lord, having every tear wiped away, seeing the Lord's face, and reigning with Christ forever and ever. Paul reasons that Christ in us is full assurance of sharing in the eternal glory of God and Christ!

Lord, we rejoice in Christ's finished work and the hope of the glory of God!

Reflection questions

In Philippians 3:19, what is the destiny of enemies of the cross of Christ?

Their end is _____

In Philippians 3:20, what has God given to those in Christ, and what is our response?

Our _____ is in _____

We _____ a _____, the Lord Jesus Christ.

In Hebrews 12:23, what is the inheritance and destiny of the firstborn?

The _____ of the firstborn who are _____ in _____

In what country do you have citizenship? When you travel abroad and return to your home country, what does your citizenship do for you at the border? How does this apply to our arrival at the borders of heaven if we have heavenly citizenship?

In Romans 5:5, in what do God's people rejoice?

We rejoice in _____ of the _____ of _____

In Colossians 1:27, if Christ is in us, what does that give us?

Christ in you is the _____ of _____

Here is my prayer for you regarding your hope in Christ:

"May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that by the power of the Holy Spirit you may abound in hope" (Rom 15:13).

Praise the Lord! Praise changes everything as we study. Praise moves the Word from head to heart!
Praise based on God's promises is like drinking God's riches of grace!

Day 50 The Lord gives us an inheritance as heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ

Gift # 85

¹⁶ We are children of God, ¹⁷ and if children, then heirs -- heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ. (Rom 8:16-17)

Then the King will say to those on his right, 'Come, you who are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.' (Matt 25:34)

When their parents die, some children inherit homes, property, many possessions, and lots of money. Others receive no inheritance at all. In fact, some children have to pay for the funerals of their parents. Other children may look forward to a very substantial inheritance, but as the years go by it dwindles away so that they receive very little.

God gives an abundant, glorious, rich inheritance to his children. "He has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you" (1 Pet 1:3-4). God keeps our inheritance safe in heaven where it can't dwindle away.

Right now we can't grasp the full extent of our future inheritance. All God's people will go from rags to riches! The greatest blessing of our inheritance will be to fellowship with the infinite Lord himself. "They will see his face" (Rev 22:4).

No parent has to die in order for us to receive God's inheritance. But Jesus died to purchase our inheritance for us.

It is staggering enough that we have been adopted by the Lord and made his children. It is greater still to be God's children with an eternal inheritance of being in glory in God's presence. But what surpassing grace that the Lord makes us fellow heirs with the Lord Jesus Christ! Who are we to be co-heirs who share in the inheritance of the true Son who was not adopted, the King of kings and Lord of lords, the one and only Son of God?! The cross of Christ makes us fellow heirs with Christ who share in what Christ inherits!

We can stretch our imagination to grasp the amazing love of parents with one child, who adopt another child and leave them an equal inheritance. But it is beyond our full grasp that although we deserve eternal hell because of our sin, we are made co-heirs with Jesus Christ. We inherit what Christ inherits. We share in the kingdom that belongs to the Son. "I will grant him to sit with me on my throne" (Rev 3:21)! What undeserved grace! Rejoice!

All God's people used to be like people in poverty in total unrepayable debt. But the bankrupt are now unbelievably rich in Christ, with far greater wealth to come!

Accept yourself and treat yourself with the dignity and grace that the Lord treats you with as an heir of God and co-heir of Christ. Treat others this way too.

Rejoice today with the joy and full confidence of reigning forever in God's glory as an heir of God and co-heir with Christ.

Walk in the Spirit of *agape* love that feeds the hungry, gives drink to the thirsty, welcomes in the stranger, clothes the naked, looks after the sick, and visits the imprisoned so that the King will say to you, "Come, you who are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world" (Matt 25:34).

Thank you, Lord, that in Christ I have an inheritance as an heir of God and fellow heir with Christ! What undeserved grace!

More of God's inheritance is described in the next pages as in Days 49-57 we focus on riches we have been given in Christ to enjoy in the future.

Reflection questions

In Romans 8:16-17, what are three love gifts the Lord gives to those in Christ?

We are made _____ of God

We are made _____ of God

We are made _____ with Christ.

In Matthew 25:34, how is our inheritance described?

Come, you who are _____ by my _____, inherit the

_____ for _____ from the _____ of the world

In 1 Peter 1:3-4, how is our inheritance described? (paragraph 2)

He has caused us to be _____ to a _____

through the _____ of Jesus Christ from the _____, to an

_____ that is _____, _____ and _____,

_____ in _____ for you.

In Revelation 22:4, what is the greatest blessing of our inheritance? (paragraph 3)

They will see his _____.

In Revelation 3:21, what is an amazing part of our inheritance as co-heirs with Christ? (paragraph 6)

I will grant him to _____ with _____ on my _____!

If you were talking to a new Christian, or an unbeliever, how would you explain what it means to be an heir of God and a fellow heir with Christ?

Let's praise the Lord together. Thank you, Lord, that in Christ we have an inheritance as an heir of God and fellow heir with Christ! What undeserved grace!

Day 51 The Lord will ensure that we are with Christ when we die, made perfect

Gift # 86,87

²¹ For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain. ²² If I am to live in the flesh, that means fruitful labor for me. Yet which I shall choose I cannot tell. ²³ I am hard pressed between the two. My desire is to depart and be with Christ, for that is far better. ²⁴ But to remain in the flesh is more necessary on your account. (Phil 1:21-24)

⁶ So we are always of good courage. We know that while we are at home in the body we are away from the Lord, ⁷ for we walk by faith, not by sight. ⁸ Yes, we are of good courage, and we would rather be away from the body and at home with the Lord. (2 Cor 5:6-8)

But you have come . . . to God, the judge of all, and to the spirits of the righteous made perfect, and to Jesus, the mediator of a new covenant. (Heb 12:22-24)

Picture Jesus Christ, the eternal Son of God, in all his glory. All power in heaven and earth. Crucified for sin and risen. Alive forevermore. Holy, innocent, blameless, unstained, pure, separated and set apart from sinners, exalted above the heavens (Heb 7:26). The Holy and Righteous One. The Word of God. Eyes of blazing fire. His head crowned with many crowns. King of kings and Lord of lords. Before him every knee bows.

Picture yourself with Christ, made perfect, conformed perfectly to his image as brothers (Rom 8:29), loved and loving perfectly, fellowshiping together in deepest affection and intimacy, a Bride married to the Lamb (Rev 19:7). Perfect oneness. Face to face. Ecstasy.

The Son was sent to die for our sins so God the Father, Son and Spirit could share himself with us throughout eternity in face to face love relationships. The moment we die, the Lord fulfills Christ's desire for us to "be with me where I am, to see my glory" (John 17:24).

When the righteous in Christ die, there is no need for years of further purging. Through the cross of Jesus Christ, God counts us as righteous in his sight as Jesus is himself, and through the cross of Jesus Christ, God glorifies us the instant we die so that we are as perfectly holy and righteous as he is in every thought, motive, word, and deed, able to fellowship in his holy presence forever. Whatever further purging is needed is done in an instant. This is the grace of God. This is the power of the cross -- with Christ, made perfect.

Nor are there years of unconscious soul sleep until Jesus returns in glory, as some cults teach. As Jesus declared, "Whoever believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live" (John 11:25). And as Paul taught, "My desire is to depart and be with Christ, . . . away from the body and at home with the Lord" (Phil 1:23; 2 Cor 5:8 above).

The power of a dying Savior could promise the repentant criminal, "Today you will be with me" (Luke 23:43). We can know for sure we will be with Christ when we die if we understand the power and grace of the death of Christ that justifies, sanctifies, and glorifies.

Do not empty the cross of its power (1 Cor 1:17). "For by a single offering he has perfected for all time those who are being sanctified" (Heb 10:14). Christ's death not only secures the total forgiveness of Hebrews 10:17-18, but also secures the "made perfect" of Hebrews 12:23. Christ crucified is our wisdom from God, our righteousness, sanctification and redemption (Day 12). The death of Christ is the basis for all grace we receive from God.

"At home with the Lord." Our home is "a house not made with hands, *eternal* in the heavens (2 Cor 5:1). Our home is to be with Christ when we die, made perfect in his holy righteousness and *agape* love, filled with wonder and pleasure in Christ our treasure.

Thank you, Lord, that in Christ you will bring me into your presence, with Jesus where he is, made perfect. Because you are infinitely superior to and more glorious and beautiful than all else, there is absolutely nothing better than being with you!

Reflection questions

In Philippians 1:21-24, what does Paul teach those who are in Christ about dying?

²¹ To die is _____

²³ To die is to _____ and be with _____, for that is _____

In Philippians 1:21-24, what does Paul teach those in Christ about living?

²¹ To live is _____

²² To continue to live in the flesh means _____

²⁴ To remain in the flesh is more _____ on account of others

In 2 Corinthians 5:6-8, what truths give us good courage to live fully for Christ?

While we are at _____ in the body we are _____ from the Lord.

We walk by _____, not by _____.

We would rather be _____ from the body and at _____ with the Lord.

In Hebrews 12:22-24, how are God, God's people in heaven, and Jesus described?

God is the _____ of _____.

God's people in heaven are the _____ of the _____
_____.

Jesus is the _____ of a _____.

Why do we believe that when those in Christ die, they are immediately in the presence of the Lord in fullness of praise, and there is no need for further cleaning in purgatory like Roman Catholics believe? (paragraph 4,6)

Why do we believe that when those in Christ die, they are immediately in the presence of the Lord in fullness of praise, and are not sleeping in an unconscious state, like Jehovah's Witnesses teach? (paragraph 5,6)

Day 52 The Lord will glorify us to be like Jesus

Gift # 88

² Beloved, we are God's children now, and what we will be has not yet appeared; but we know that when he appears we shall be like him, because we shall see him as he is. ³ And everyone who thus hopes in him purifies himself as he is pure. (1 John 3:2-3)

²⁹ For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn among many brothers. . . . and those whom he justified he also glorified. (Rom 8:29-30)

Since Jesus is far more lovely than all else, there is nothing better than being glorified to be like Jesus in his righteousness and love. Although 1 John 3 above refers to Christ's appearing, it is also true that when we see him the moment we die, "we shall be like him, because we shall see him as he is." As spirits, we are "made perfect" in Christ (Day 51). At Christ's return, "we shall be like him," includes resurrection bodies like Jesus (Day 55). When God glorifies us, he makes us as righteous as Christ in every thought, motive, word, and deed. He conforms us to the likeness of his Son as brothers and sisters truly like Christ.

Jesus died to make us like him as he is. What love and grace! What a wonderful destiny we have in Christ! No more sinful flesh. No more giving in to temptation. No more selfishness. Pure holiness. Overflowing love for God with all our hearts. Overflowing love for everyone with the fullness of the love of Jesus Christ!

Praise you, Lord, that one of the great love gifts flowing from the cross of Jesus Christ is that you will glorify me to be like Jesus. "We shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is." All praise to you, my Lord and my God.

Day 52 The Lord will bring us safely into his heavenly kingdom

Gift # 89

The Lord will rescue me from every evil deed and bring me safely into his heavenly kingdom. To him be the glory forever and ever. Amen. (2 Tim 4:18)

Jesus Christ died in order to include us in his heavenly kingdom. Right now Jesus Christ reigns as King at the Father's right hand. In his presence is fullness of righteousness, peace, and prosperity. No kingdom on earth, no matter how prosperous it is, has ever been anything like the heavenly kingdom of our infinitely glorious God and Christ.

Picture the moment the Lord brings you safely into his heavenly kingdom. The power and the authority and holiness of the Lord, the King, bursts upon you. You instantly fall on your face before him in total reverence, awe, and submission. "From the throne came flashes of lightning, and rumblings and peals of thunder" (Rev 4:5). The sound is deafening, yet the holiness of God draws you. Your ears are filled with the singing all around you, "To him who sits on the throne and to the Lamb be blessing and honor and glory and might forever and ever!" (Rev 5:13).

The King of Kings welcomes you. You experience what Jude told us God could do, "Now to him who is able to keep you from stumbling and to present you blameless before the presence of his glory with great joy" (Jude 1:24).

A new security settles upon you, the security of being with the King in his never ending kingdom. As Daniel wrote when he saw Jesus, the Son of Man in heaven, "And to him was given dominion and glory and a kingdom, that all peoples, nations, and languages should serve him; his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom one that shall not be destroyed" (Dan 7:14). The Lord will keep his promises.

Praise you, Lord, that through the cross you purchased for me the kingdom of heaven, and you will bring me safely into your heavenly kingdom!

Reflection questions

In 1 John 3:2, what will the Lord do for the children of God when we see Jesus as he is?

When he appears, we shall be _____, because we shall _____ him as he is.

In Romans 8:29-30, what has the Sovereign Lord predestined for those in Christ?

He predestined us to be _____ to the _____ of his _____, in order that he might be the firstborn among many _____. . . . and those whom he justified he also _____.

In 2 Timothy 4:18, what two things will the Lord do for those in Christ?

The Lord will _____ us from _____ and _____ us _____ into his _____.

How should we respond to such grace in 2 Timothy 4:18?

To him be the _____ and _____. Amen.

According to Jude 24, what two things does the Lord want to do for those in Christ? (paragraph 3)

He is _____ to _____ you from _____ and to _____ you _____ before the presence of his _____ with _____.

In Daniel 7:14, how is the kingdom of Christ described? (paragraph 4)

His _____ is an _____ dominion, which shall not _____, and his _____ one that shall not be _____.

Take time to praise the Lord for the riches we have been given in Christ to enjoy in the future!
Praise changes everything as we study. Praise for God's promises is like drinking God's riches!

Day 53 The Lord will bring us into the joy of the Lord

Gift # 90

Well done, good and faithful servant (*doulos*, slave). You have been faithful over a little; I will set you over much. Enter into the joy of your master (*kurios*, master or Lord). (Mat 25:21, 23)

The LORD your God is in your midst, a mighty one who will save; he will rejoice over you with gladness; he will quiet you by his love; he will exult over you with loud singing. (Zep 3:17)

What makes the LORD a God of infinite joy? From eternity past, the holy, infinite LORD has had infinite joy, satisfaction, delight, and pleasure in himself in all his infinitely superior qualities (including his immeasurable riches of grace in Christ) and the perfect delight, love, fellowship and cooperation flowing between the Father, Son and Holy Spirit!

“For God to be the holy, righteous God that he is, he must delight infinitely in what is infinitely delightful. He must enjoy with unbounded joy what is most boundlessly enjoyable. He must take infinite pleasure in what is infinitely pleasant. He must love with infinite intensity what is infinitely lovely. He must be infinitely satisfied with what is infinitely satisfying. . . . God’s joy in God is part of what it means for God to be God.”²⁰

In the parable in Matthew 25:14-30, when the master returns and settles accounts with his servants, his good and faithful servants enter the joy of their master. Those not faithful with the master’s property are cast into outer darkness, for they are not true servants.

Throughout the New Testament, the word ‘master’ is *kurios*, the same word for *Lord*. The Lord will bless his servants with sharing in the joy of their Master and Lord. In the words of John Piper above, we will delight in God who is infinitely delightful. We will enjoy with unbounded joy the Lord who is most boundlessly enjoyable. We will take infinite pleasure in God who is infinitely pleasant. We will love with infinite intensity the Lord who is infinitely lovely. We will be infinitely satisfied with the God who is infinitely satisfying.

As Steve Green sings, “God and God alone, will be the joy of our eternal home. He will be our one desire. Our hearts will never tire of God and God alone.”²¹

The most satisfying and joy-filled love, communion, and cooperation in the universe flow between the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. They want us to share in their joy and fellowship, like joining in the joyful fellowship around the table at a family celebration.

The war within us between the flesh and the Spirit (Gal 5:17) is a war between seeking joy in created things and seeking joy in God. This war will finally cease when we are with the Lord. We will have the same joy in God as God does. We will rejoice in the Lord as we clearly see him as the infinitely enjoyable God that he is, and we will enjoy all created things as gifts from the generous Lord who creates and sustains all for his praise.

Why did Jesus have the greatest joy of anyone? Jesus had and sought none of the joys of the world like a nice home and money, and was constantly opposed and attacked in ministry, but he was the happiest person ever on earth because more than all others, he had the greatest joy in God. His joy in God was different and better than joy in anything else.

When we stop seeking joy in earthly, temporary things, to seek joy in the eternal Lord who’s better than all else, we will find joy and satisfaction in Christ that is different and better than joy in anything else. Jesus died “that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be full. . . . that they may have my joy fulfilled in themselves” (John 15:11; 17:13).

Faith-filled praise based on God’s promises of the grace of God in Christ is like drinking God’s grace and joy. Walking in harmony with the truths of the grace of God in Christ completes our joy in God that is different and better than joy in anything else!

Thank you, Lord and Master, that you will share yourself with us so your joy is our joy!

²⁰ John Piper at minute 15:10 on mp3 at www.desiringGod.org 20031010_john_piper.mp3 “A God-Entranced Vision of All Things: Why We Need Jonathan Edwards 300 Years Later” <http://www.desiringGod.org/conference-messages/a-god-entranced-vision-of-all-things-why-we-need-jonathan-edwards-300-years-later#>

²¹ The title of the song by Steve Green is “God and God alone”

Reflection questions

In Matthew 25:21, 23, what are two rewards for good and faithful servants?

You have been _____ over a little; I will _____ over _____.
_____ into the _____ of your _____ (*kurios*, master or Lord).

In Matthew 25:21, 23, the word 'servant' is *doulos*, slave. What connection can you draw between gladly serving Christ as his slave faithfully managing his property and entering the joy of the Lord? Conversely, what connection can you draw between those who are unwilling to serve Christ as his slave and not entering the joy of the Lord? What is it about being a slave of Christ that brings joy?

In Zephaniah 3:17, what are two ways the joy of the Lord is expressed?

The LORD your God is in your midst, a mighty one who will save; he will _____ over _____ with _____; he will quiet you by his love; he will _____ over _____ with loud _____.

In Zephaniah 3:17, what are five sources of our eternal joy in God?

The _____ your _____ is in your _____,
a _____ who will _____;
_____ will _____ over _____ with _____;
_____ will _____ you by his _____;
_____ will _____ over _____ with loud _____.

In John 15:11, what does Jesus desire for us as we abide in him and his love and commandments?

That _____ may be _____, and that your _____ may be _____.

In John 17:13, why did Jesus come into the world and speak God's truth to us?

That they may have _____ fulfilled _____.

Day 54 The Lord will deliver us from the wrath to come

Gift # 91

⁹You turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God, ¹⁰and to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, Jesus who delivers us from the wrath to come. (1 Thess 1:9-10)

The Lord Jesus will be “revealed from heaven with his mighty angels in flaming fire, inflicting vengeance on those who do not know God and those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus. They will suffer the punishment of eternal destruction, away from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of his might, when he comes on that day to be glorified in his saints, and to be marveled at among all who have believed” (2 Thess 1:7-10).

“For God has not destined us for wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ” (1 Thes 5:9). “Since, therefore, we have now been justified by his blood, much more shall we be saved by him from the wrath of God.” (Rom 5:9).

Try to picture the wrath of God and the Lamb for those who spurn salvation and refuse to repent. “Everyone . . . hid themselves . . . calling to the mountains and rocks, “Fall on us and hide us from the face of him who is seated on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb, for the great day of their wrath has come, and who can stand?”” (Rev 6:16-17). “From his mouth comes a sharp sword with which to strike down the nations, . . . He will tread the winepress of the fury of the wrath of God the Almighty. On his robe and on his thigh he has a name written, King of kings and Lord of lords” (Rev 19:15-16).

“If anyone’s name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire” (Rev 20:15). Jesus died for us to save us from the wrath to come.

All thanks and praise, Lord, that Christ's death and resurrection has purchased for me everything I need to be rescued from the coming wrath and lake of fire. What a Savior!

Day 54 The Lord will bring to completion his good work begun

Gift # 92

And I am sure of this, that he who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ. (Phil 1:6)

The Lord who begins a good work in us through Christ is the God who carries on that good work to completion. He is not like someone who wants to build a tower, who lays the foundation, and then is not able to finish it (Luke 14:28-29). God finishes what he starts.

When the Lord brings our spirit into his presence when we die, we join with “the spirits of the righteous made perfect” (Heb 12:23, Day 51), but his good work in us is still not totally complete. As our verse says, God’s good work will not be complete until the day of Christ Jesus. It is only at the return of Christ that we will receive our new glorious, imperishable, immortal resurrection body (1 Cor 15:50-53).

Those in heaven right now are holy and perfect spirits full of joy, but they still await their resurrection body and the marriage of the Lamb (Rev 19:7). We can be fully confident “sure of this” that in Christ God will bring to completion the good work he has begun in us.

Thank you, Lord, that in Christ you will complete the good work you have begun.

Thank you, Lord, that in Christ you will ensure we are with you and Christ when we die, made perfect, glorified to be like Jesus, brought safely into your heavenly kingdom, entering the joy of the Lord. You will rescue us from the wrath to come. You will complete your good work begun. Our future is settled!

Reflection questions

In 1 Thessalonians 1:9-10, what three main things do converts to Christ do?

They _____ to God from idols

They _____ the _____ and _____ God

They _____ for his _____ from _____, whom he _____ from the _____

In 1 Thessalonians 1:10, what does Jesus do for his people when he returns?

Jesus _____ us from the _____ to _____.

In 2 Thessalonians 1:7-10, how is the coming wrath described? (paragraph 1)

Jesus is revealed from heaven in with his mighty _____ in _____,

inflicting _____ on those who do not _____ God and those who do not _____ the

gospel of our Lord Jesus. They will _____ the _____ of _____

_____, away from the _____ of the Lord and from the _____ of his

_____, when he comes on that day to be _____ in his _____, and to be

_____ at among all who have _____.

In 1 Thessalonians 5:9 and Romans 5:9, what do we need to be saved from the wrath to come? (para 2)

People need to obtain _____ through our _____ (1 Thes 5:9)

People need to be _____ by Christ's _____ (Rom 5:9)

In Philippians 1:6, of what can those in Christ be sure?

I am sure of this, that _____ who _____ a _____ in you will _____

it to _____ at the _____ of _____.

Day 55 The Lord will glorify us with a resurrection body like Jesus

Gift # 93

²⁰ But our citizenship is in heaven, and from it we await a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, ²¹ who will transform our lowly body to be like his glorious body, by the power that enables him even to subject all things to himself. (Phil 3:20-21)

Our earthly bodies are weak and subject to illness and death. Paul calls them “lowly.” What will our new bodies be like? Paul says they will be “like his glorious body,” bodies like the resurrection body of Jesus. “So it is with the resurrection of the dead. What is sown is perishable; what is raised is imperishable. It is sown in dishonor; it is raised in glory. It is sown in weakness; it is raised in power. It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body” (1 Cor 15:42-44).

When will this happen? When our all-powerful Savior comes from heaven. “Behold! I tell you a mystery. We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we shall be changed” (1 Cor 15:51-52).

How should we respond to this? We “await” our Savior. “But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, my beloved brothers, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that in the Lord your labor is not in vain” (1 Cor 15:57-58).

Thank you, Lord, that in Christ you will glorify me with a resurrection body like the resurrection body of Jesus. Jesus is the resurrection and the life!

Day 55 The Lord will marry us eternally to the Lamb as his Bride

Gift # 94

⁷ Let us rejoice and exult and give him the glory, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and his Bride has made herself ready; . . . ⁹ And the angel said to me, “Write this: Blessed are those who are invited to the marriage supper of the Lamb.” (Rev 19:7, 9)

Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her to sanctify and cleanse her in order to present his bride to himself in splendor, holy and without blemish (Eph 5:25-27). We are one with Christ as members of his body and as his bride (Eph 5:29-32; Day 24).

Paul also sees us as those engaged or betrothed to Christ, awaiting our marriage in eternity. “I feel a divine jealousy for you, for I betrothed you to one husband, to present you as a pure virgin to Christ. But I am afraid that as the serpent deceived Eve by his cunning, your thoughts will be led astray from a sincere and pure devotion to Christ” (2 Cor 11:2-3).

We wait in hope of “the wedding of the Lamb” (Rev 19:7) to “the Bride, the wife of the Lamb” (Rev 21:9). At the covenant meal of “the marriage supper of the Lamb,” Christ will confirm the New Covenant with his people as he brings his Bride into the new phase of eternal union. As we eat the covenant meal together with Christ, we will confirm the marriage covenant with him to be his loyal, faithful bride forever. When confirming the New Covenant with Christ in the Lord’s Supper, it’s good to see it pointing ahead to the marriage supper.

Honor human marriage with love and submission as God designed it to point ahead to the union of Christ and his bride in love, and to reflect the love and submission in the Trinity.

When sin or false teaching knocks at your door, do you have zeal to keep yourself and the church pure, as a virgin keeping herself pure for her wedding day with Christ?

Do you invite others to Christ? “The Spirit and *the Bride* say, Come.” (Rev 22:17).

Praise you, Lord, that Christ gave himself up for us to present us as his holy bride, one with Christ now, making ourselves ready (Rev 19:7) to be married eternally to the Lamb!

Reflection questions

In Philippians 3:20-21, why do we eagerly await our Savior to come from heaven?

Because our _____ is in _____ .

Because Christ will _____ our _____ body to be _____ his _____ body,
by the _____ that enables him even to _____ things to himself.

According to 1 Corinthians 15:42-44, what are our resurrection bodies like?

What is raised is _____ ; it is raised in _____ ; it is raised in _____ ;
it is raised a _____ body.

In Revelation 19:7, 9, what is the Lord going to do with those who are in Christ?

The _____ of the _____ has come, and his _____ has made herself ready; . . .
_____ are those who are invited to the _____ of the _____ !

In Revelation 19:9, what is the significance of the wedding supper that is part of the wedding? (para 4)

At the covenant meal of "the marriage supper of the Lamb," Christ will _____ the _____
_____ with his people as he brings us into the new phase of _____ .

As we eat the covenant meal together with Christ, we will _____ the _____
_____ with him to be his _____, _____ bride forever.

In Ephesians 5:25-27, what are three reasons Christ gave himself up for the church? (paragraph 1)

Because he _____ the church.

To _____ and _____ her.

To _____ his bride to himself in _____, _____ and without _____ .

Day 56 The Lord will wipe away every tear

Gift # 95

³ And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "Behold, the dwelling place of God is with man. He will dwell with them, and they will be his people, and God himself will be with them as their God. ⁴ He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning nor crying nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away." (Rev 21:3-4; see Rev 7:17 also)

There are many tears in this life. We go through much sorrow and disappointment. We live in a fallen world where sin's ruin and destruction has permeated everything. There is something wrong with everything; there is nothing that has not been affected in some way by sin. Such is the order of things.

Someday the present order of things will pass away. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain. The Lord will wipe away every tear from our eyes. There will be fullness of joy forevermore. There will be no more cancer or disease of any kind. There will be no more accidents, drownings, murders, rapes, or thefts. There will be no more starvation, war, floods, hurricanes or earthquakes. The curse of sin will be no more. Everything will work perfectly as God originally intended. All because Jesus died and took the curse of sin upon himself.

We can picture a little child crying, and a parent tenderly comforting them and wiping every tear from their eyes. Someday the Lord will do the same for us.

Thank you, Lord, that in Christ you will wipe away every tear. Pure joy will flow.

Day 56 The Lord will let us see his face

Gift # 96

³ No longer will there be anything accursed, but the throne of God and of the Lamb will be in it, and his servants will worship him. ⁴ They will see his face, and his name will be on their foreheads. (Rev 22:3-4)

God desires to bring his people into his presence where he can commune with them face to face for all eternity! Some families are separated from each other for a while, and are thankful for the ability to make long-distance calls, but they eagerly long for the time they will fly home and share love with family face to face. So with God.

There is nothing more beautiful, awesome, satisfying, or delightful than God himself. There is no greater blessing in heaven than being in the Lord's presence, beholding him as he is, in perfect intimate communion face to face with God the Father, Son and Spirit.

Since the Lord is infinite, there is no end to his holiness, love, wisdom, power, compassion and all that God is. We will spend eternity being awestruck as the Lord constantly reveals more of his infinite, unlimited holiness and perfections. Nothing will give more joy and satisfaction than God himself fellowshiping with us face to face, drawing us into the oneness of intimacy, love, and cooperation of God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

Praise you, holy Lord, that Christ died so that you may be able to share your love with your people face to face for all eternity. What acceptance! What intimacy! What communion! Thank you that in Christ we can fellowship with you now in prayer as we eagerly await far deeper communion with you face to face!

Reflection questions

In Revelation 21:3-4, what will the Lord do in the future for those in Christ?

And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "Behold, the _____ of God is with _____. He will _____ with _____, and they will be his _____, and God himself will be _____ them as their _____. He will _____ every _____ from their eyes, and _____ shall be no more, neither shall there be _____ nor _____ nor _____ anymore, for the former things have passed away."

In Revelation 22:3-4, what will the Lord do in the future for those in Christ?

No longer will there be anything _____, but the _____ of _____ and of the _____ will be in it (the city, the New Jerusalem), and his _____ will _____ him. They will _____ his _____, and his _____ will be on their _____.

Do you believe the following statement from paragraph 2 of "The Lord will let me see his face"?

There is nothing more _____, more _____, more _____, or more _____ than God himself. There is no greater _____ in _____ than being in the Lord's _____, beholding him as he is, in perfect, intimate _____ face to _____.

Take time to praise the Lord for the riches we have been given in Christ to enjoy in the future! Praise changes everything as we study. Praise for God's promises is like drinking God's riches!

Thank you, Lord, that in Christ you will ensure we are with you and the Lamb when we die, made perfect, glorified to be like Jesus, safely in your heavenly kingdom, entering the joy of our Lord and Master. You will rescue us from the wrath to come. You will complete your good work begun. Praise you that our future is settled! Praise you, Lord, that in Christ you will glorify us with resurrection bodies like Jesus. You will marry us eternally to the Lamb. You will wipe away every tear. You will let us see your face. Hallelujah! Praise to you forever!

Day 57 The Lord will let us reign with him forever and ever

Gift # 97

And night will be no more. They will need no light of lamp or sun, for the Lord God will be their light, and they will reign forever and ever. (Rev 22:5)

The one who conquers, I will grant him to sit with me on my throne, as I also conquered and sat down with my Father on his throne. (Rev 3:21)

There is no greater victory than to reign with the Lord for ever and ever. Jesus will reign as our perfect King in the kingdom that will never end. The Lord will pour out his grace and favor in fullness upon his people. God will dwell with his people. Christ died in order to be able to bestow upon us the unfathomable privilege of reigning with him in his kingdom that will never end. No more struggles or failure.

Try to picture the Lord Jesus Christ on his throne. See the glory of his holiness, love, wisdom, justice, and power, which with the Father creates blazing light, brighter than the brightest sun. All heaven shines with the light of the glory of God. "From the throne came flashes of lightning, and rumblings and peals of thunder" (Rev 4:5). See, hear, and feel the flashes and crashes. The holiness and power of the Lord and all that he is makes our chests vibrate like standing in front of the speakers at a concert. All declares praise and honor and glory and power to God and the Lamb.

Try to imagine being invited to sit with Jesus Christ on his throne. To reign with him for ever and ever goes beyond our understanding.

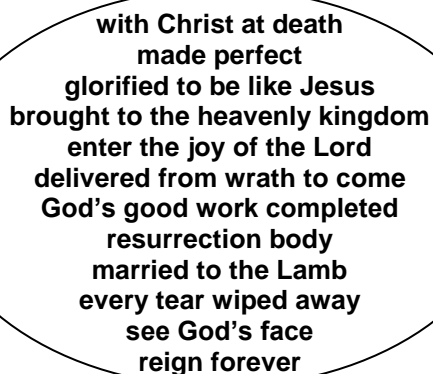
Rejoice in your glorious future! Fix your eyes on the eternal. Don't be preoccupied with the unimportant. Believe God's promises with full confidence.

What decisions can you make that are the best investments in your future in Christ?

Affirm God's riches promised you in the future. Thank you, Lord, that by your grace in Christ you will ensure I am with Christ when I die, made perfect, glorified to be like Jesus, brought safely to your heavenly kingdom! You will allow me to enter the joy of my Lord. You will deliver me from the wrath to come. You will complete your good work begun in me. Praise you that my future is settled! Praise you, Lord, that in Christ you will glorify me with a resurrection body like Jesus. You will marry me eternally to the Lamb. You will wipe away every tear. You will let me see your face. You will let me reign with you forever and ever! Hallelujah! Praise to you forever!

Through Christ, our citizenship is in heaven. We are heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ. We have riches that are ours in Christ now, which we will experience in the future.

We may struggle with many things now. We may fail often. But someday we will experience total joy and victory in Christ.



**with Christ at death
made perfect
glorified to be like Jesus
brought to the heavenly kingdom
enter the joy of the Lord
delivered from wrath to come
God's good work completed
resurrection body
married to the Lamb
every tear wiped away
see God's face
reign forever**

Reflection questions

In Revelation 22:5, what will heaven be like?

And _____ will be no more. They will need no _____ of _____ or _____ ,
for the Lord _____ will be their _____. And they will _____ and _____ .

In Revelation 3:21, how does Jesus describe reigning with him by those who conquer?

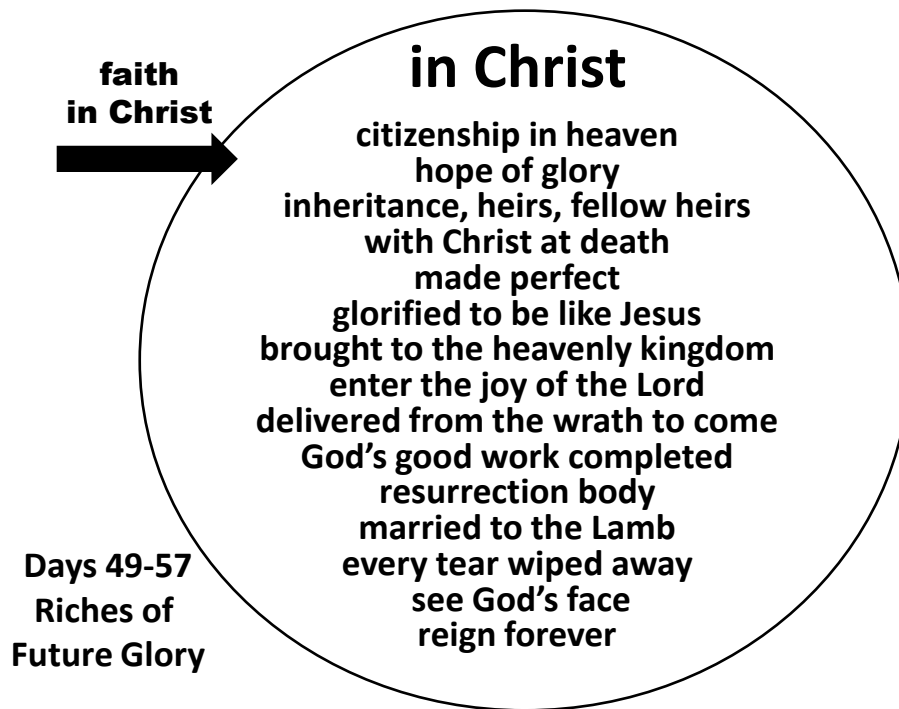
To him who _____ , I will grant him to _____ with _____ on my _____ ,
as I also _____ and _____ with my _____ on his _____ .

We may struggle with many things now. We may fail often. But someday we will experience total joy and victory in Christ. How should this help us when we struggle now or when we fail?

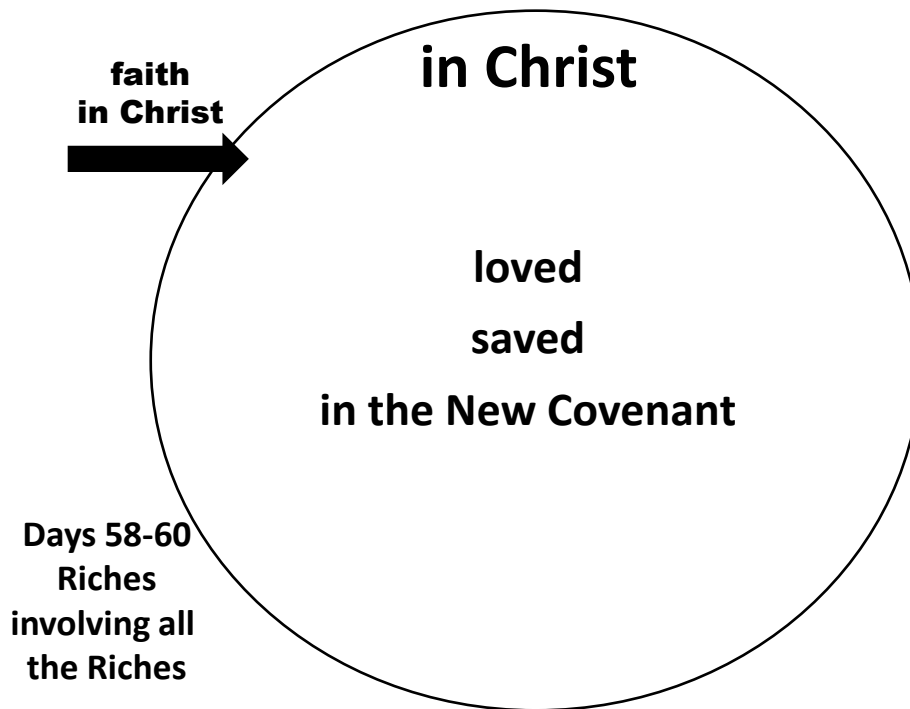
Take time to praise the Lord for the riches we have been given in Christ to enjoy in the future!

Thank you, Lord, that in Christ you will ensure we are with you and the Lamb when we die, made perfect, glorified to be like Jesus, safely in your heavenly kingdom, entering the joy of the Lord. You will rescue us from the coming wrath. You will complete your good work begun. Our future is settled! Praise you, Lord, that in Christ you will glorify us with resurrection bodies like Jesus. You will marry us eternally to the Lamb. You will wipe away every tear. You will let us see your face. Hallelujah! You will let us reign with you for ever and ever! Praise to you forever, wonderful Lord of grace!

Praise changes everything as we study.
Faith-filled praise for God's promises is like drinking God's riches!



**Don't miss the end to which all God's amazing grace in Christ brings us
– to be united with the Lord in order to know him in his eternal
fellowship and glory in Christ!**



Let's enjoy the last three riches of our study.

They are last because they involve all the other riches.

All the riches of God's grace in Christ are ways God loves us!

All the riches of God's grace in Christ are ways God saves us!

All the riches of God's grace in Christ are part of the New Covenant!

8 God is love. 9 In this the love of God was made manifest among us, that God sent his only Son into the world, so that we might live through him. 10 In this is love, not that we have loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins. (1 John 4:8-10)

But God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. (Rom 5:8)

Our last three riches of grace involve all the other riches. All the riches of grace in Christ are ways the Lord *agape* loves us and saves us in the New Covenant. Christ's cross is the center and foundation of how God loves and saves (diagram page xvi).

There is no other love like the *agape* love of God in Christ. In compassion, despite torture and crucifixion, the Son of God bore our sins in order to bring both Jews and Gentiles who believe into an eternal love relationship in God where two become one in love as the Lord shares himself with his people, continually lavishes grace and kindness on us instead of the eternal judgment we deserve, and glorifies us into a joy in God beyond comprehension.

“Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another” (1 John 4:11).

It is helpful to reflect often on the many qualities of *agape* (page xxx) as we seek to know the breadth, length, height and depth of the love of Christ (Eph 3:18).

Many doubt God really loves them if they have big problems and hurtful difficulties. But as one of my mentors, Dr. Don Loveday, said, “How do you know for sure that God loves you? Is it because all goes well? I have found only one proof in the Bible that God loves us, and that is Romans 5:8” (above). The death of God's Son is the way God has set forth clear evidence that he loves us and wants our best.

Henry Blackaby writes, “When our daughter had cancer at age sixteen, in the bewilderment of it all I sensed God asking me this simple question: “Henry, where was it that I told you I loved you, and love you forever?”

“Well, Lord, it was at the cross.”

Then He said, “Then place your daughter in front of the cross, so you'll never become disoriented to My love. The love I demonstrated on the cross will never change, so place your daughter there, and understand right now that the cross and My love was for such a time as this.”

God wants us to put all our circumstances in front of the cross, because if we don't, we'll question His love when difficult circumstances arise in our marriage or family or health, or in our ministry or work or finances. We will be asking Him, (or at least thinking the question in our minds), “Lord, if You love me, why would You let this happen?”

But he answers, “It's not by circumstances that I've told you I loved you. I told you I loved you when My Son died for you. And no combination of difficult or bewildering circumstances will ever change any aspect of that love.”²²

Do you let God's *agape* love surge through you when others are unkind?

Does God's *agape* love move you to tell as many as possible of his great love?

Praise you, Lord, that your love lavishes on us all your riches of grace freely given in Christ! Your bank is always overflowing with gifts of Christ's love!

²² Henry Blackaby, *Experiencing the Cross*, (Sisters, Oregon: Multnomah, 2005), 81.

Reflection questions

In 1 John 4:8-10, what is the main way the love of God for us has been made manifest?

God sent his _____ into the _____, so that we might _____ through _____.

God sent his _____ to be the _____ for our _____.

In Romans 5:8, what is the way God shows his love for us?

While we were still _____, Christ _____ for _____.

What is one way we can describe the *agape* love of God in Christ? (paragraph 2)

In _____, in spite of cruel _____ and _____, Christ _____ our _____

in order to bring both _____ and _____ who _____ into an _____ love

_____ with _____ where _____ become _____ as the Lord _____

_____ with his _____, continually _____ and _____

on us instead of the _____ we _____, and _____ us into a

_____ in _____ beyond _____.

Underline key words in Ephesians 5:25-32 that describe the *agape* love of God in Christ.

Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her, that he might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, so that he might present the church to himself in splendor, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, that she might be holy and without blemish. In the same way husbands should love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. For no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as Christ does the church, because we are members of his body. "Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh." This mystery is profound, and I am saying that it refers to Christ and the church. (Eph 5:25-32)

The Grace of God in Christ gives us 100 ways God loves us in Christ.

What are some of your favorite ways that God loves you?

Take a moment to thank the Lord for some of your favorite ways he loves you in Christ.

Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved. (Acts 16:31)

You shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins. (Matt 1:21)

All of the riches of grace given us freely in Christ are ways that the Lord loves us and saves us in the New Covenant. It is so helpful to look again at the diagram on page xvi. Christ's cross is the center and foundation of how God loves us and saves us.

Jesus means "the Lord saves." Jesus saves us from sin, Satan, death and hell.

Jesus *has saved us* from our sins by his death and resurrection that atones, forgives, and justifies. Jesus *keeps on saving us* from sin each day by his death and resurrection that crucifies us with Christ, frees us from sin's power to rule us, and empowers us to walk in the Spirit not the flesh. Jesus *will save us* in the future by his death and resurrection that authorizes him to deliver us from the wrath to come.

Praise to our great God and Savior Jesus Christ (Titus 2:13), who saves us through his justifying, sanctifying, and glorifying riches that flow from the cross!

Romans 6-8 gives us several very helpful commands on what we are to do when we are tempted by sin. If we obey them we can experience Christ saving us in the midst of temptations like anger, lust, arguing, selfishness, and addictions. They are:

Consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus (Rom 6:11)
Let not sin reign in you to make you obey its passions; don't obey flesh impulses (Rom 6:12)
Do not present / offer your members to sin as instruments for unrighteousness (Rom 6:13)
Present /offer yourselves to God as those brought from death to life and your members as instruments for righteousness, for you are under grace not sin and law (6:13-14)
Present / offer yourselves as slaves to obedience, righteousness and God (6:16, 18, 20)
Die to the law by death with Christ to belong to Christ and serve God in the Spirit (Rom 7:4,6)
Walk / live according to the Spirit, not according to the flesh (Rom 8:4)
Set your minds on the things of the Spirit, not the things of the flesh (Rom 8:5)
By the Spirit put to death the body's sinful deeds; kill flesh by walking in the Spirit (Rom 8:13)
Follow the leading of the Spirit (Rom 8:14)

All of these principles in Romans 6-8 are based on the fact that Jesus Christ died for sin and now reigns. They are ways that we cooperate with our Savior as he seeks to save us from the sin that knocks at our doors daily. They are ways that we deny ourselves, take up our cross, and follow Jesus (Matt 16:24). Each temptation requires us to die to it and our rights to run our lives. "This very temptation is included in my death with Christ. Christ died to save me from sin, including this evil. I am in Christ, dead to sin, freed and saved from sin. I present / surrender myself to you for the Holy Spirit to empower me with your saving life."

Are you drawing on the love gifts of the cross to save you from sin each day? Are you constantly praising God for all he has given to you in your Savior?

Do you seek to tell others of God's riches in Christ? Do you seek to *save*?

Praise you, Lord, that in Christ I am loved and saved! Thank you for your abundant love and salvation that you lavish on us through all your riches of grace in Christ! Thank you for loving us in spite of our sin. Praise you for rescuing us from sin and hell and pouring out the fullness of your blessings upon us in Christ. Thank you that your bank is always overflowing with the riches of your love and salvation in Christ! What a wonderful Savior is our Lord Jesus Christ!

Reflection questions

In Acts 16:31, what must we do to be saved? Who does the saving? Is it by our efforts?

_____ in the _____, and you will be _____.

In Matthew 1:21, what is the meaning of Jesus' name? (paragraph 2)

The _____.

From what does Jesus save us? (paragraph 2)

Jesus saves us from _____, _____, _____ and _____.

What does the death and resurrection of Christ do for us past, present and future? (paragraph 3)

Past - his death and resurrection _____, _____, and _____.

Present - his death and resurrection _____ us with _____, _____ us from sin's _____ to _____ us, and _____ us to walk in the _____ not the _____.

Future - his death and resurrection authorizes him to _____ us from the _____ to _____.

What does Romans 6-8 teach us to do in order to experience Christ saving us when we are tempted?

_____ yourselves _____ to sin and _____ to God _____ Christ Jesus (Rom 6:11)

Let not sin _____ in you to make you _____ its _____; don't obey flesh impulses (Rom 6:12)

Do not _____ your members to _____ as _____ for _____ (Rom 6:13)

_____ yourselves to _____ as those brought from _____ to _____ and your members as _____ for _____, for you are under _____, not _____ or _____ (Rom 6:13-14)

_____ yourselves as _____ to _____, _____ and _____ (6:16, 18, 20)

_____ to the _____ by _____ with _____ to belong to Christ and _____ God in the _____ (Rom 7:4,6)

_____ according to the _____, not according to the _____ (Rom 8:4)

Set your _____ on the things of the _____, not the things of the _____ (Rom 8:5)

By the _____ put to _____ the body's sinful _____; kill flesh by walking in the Spirit (Rom 8:13)

Follow the _____ of the _____ (Rom 8:14)

Take time to thank the Lord for some of your favorite riches of grace by which he saves you in Christ!

This cup that is poured out for you is the new covenant in my blood. (Luke 22:20)

¹⁴ How much more will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without blemish to God, purify our conscience from dead works to serve the living God.

¹⁵ Therefore he is the mediator of a new covenant, so that those who are called may receive the promised eternal inheritance, since a death has occurred that redeems them from the transgressions committed under the first covenant. (Heb 9:14-15)

When Christ died, the New Covenant began. God tore the curtain in the Most Holy Place at the Temple because the New Covenant was now in effect (Matt 27:51). Jesus had said, “This cup that is poured out for you is the new covenant in my blood” (Luke 22:20). Unlike the Old Covenant priests presenting animal sacrifices for sin at the Temple, in the New Covenant Christ “entered . . . into heaven itself” (Heb 9:24), “he entered once for all into the holy places . . . by means of his own blood” (Heb 9:12).

“In speaking of a new covenant, he makes the first one obsolete” (Heb 8:13). God has fulfilled and replaced the Old Covenant sacrifices, priests, High Priest, and Temple with Jesus Christ! In the New Covenant, anyone can stand in God’s holy presence righteous by faith in Christ’s atoning blood, and receive all God’s covenant blessings in Christ.

God brought the New Covenant into effect by Christ’s death. He also sealed it by Christ’s blood; Christ died “to seal the deal.” In the Hebrew language, to make a covenant means to cut a covenant, referring to the parties walking between the animals killed and cut in two as they vowed to keep the covenant or die. In Christ’s death, God is cutting the New Covenant, like God cut a covenant with Abraham (Gen 15:9, 17), sealing his New Covenant, vowing that he will faithfully keep his New Covenant promises or die!

The New Covenant is so important that the Lord established the Lord’s Table as a regular reminder for us of the basic truths of the covenant. “Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved” (Acts 16:31). God has made a new covenant in Christ’s blood (Luke 22:20 above), Christ is the mediator of the new covenant (Heb 9:15 above), and God has sealed it, solemnly vowing by the death of his Son to faithfully keep his New Covenant.

In the New Covenant, God declares that he freely provides justification, sanctification and glorification through the death and resurrection of Christ. All the riches of God’s grace in Christ are New Covenant promises and blessings. The New Covenant is summarized in the two diagrams on pages xx and xxxi.

Note how our part in the New Covenant is summarized in the center of the diagram on page xx – We walk with Christ in the Spirit and the Word, enjoying God and his grace, by seeking, treasuring and praising the Lord, trusting God’s grace in Christ for every need, serving others in agape love, witness, and prayer, confessing and forsaking all sin.

Do you need forgiveness? By Christ’s blood, God has solemnly covenanted to forgive all who repent and rely upon Jesus Christ’s death as God’s atoning sacrifice for sin!

Do you want eternal life? By Christ’s blood, God has solemnly covenanted to give us eternal life in his Son (1 John 5:11)!

Do you thirst for any of God’s riches of grace in Christ? By Christ’s blood, come to the throne of grace in confidence that God has covenanted to give you all his riches in Christ!

Enter into covenant and enjoy keeping covenant with God through steadfast faith in the faithfulness of our magnificent, all-satisfying Savior and eternal Messiah, Jesus our Lord!

Covenant Lord, I want you to covenant together with me in the New Covenant. I want to be counted as righteous in your sight through the blood of Christ poured out for my eternal salvation. Thank you for all your riches given in Christ in the New Covenant! I surrender to walk in Christ in the Spirit in agape love, witness and prayer.

Reflection questions

In Luke 22:20, what does drinking from the communion cup symbolize?

This cup that is _____ you is the _____ in my _____.

In Hebrews 9:14, what does the shedding of Christ's blood do for us that the Old Covenant sacrifices could not do (as stated in Hebrews 10:2,4)?

How much more will the _____ of _____, who through the eternal Spirit _____ without _____ to God, _____ our _____ from dead works to _____ the _____ !

In Hebrews 9:15, what are three results from the shedding of Christ's blood to cleanse us from sin?

Christ is the _____ of a _____.

Those who are called may _____ the promised _____.

Christ's death _____ them from the _____ committed under the first covenant.

The Grace of God in Christ gives us 100 ways God saves us in Christ.
Take time to thank the Lord for some of your favorite ways he saves you in Christ!

Lord, Jesus Christ is everything to us! No follower of anyone else has what you give in Christ.
Jesus Christ can do what no one else can do. Jesus Christ gives what no one else gives!

It is finished! Will you joyfully draw on the many riches of the grace of God in Christ given the moment we receive salvation in Christ?

Repentance toward God and  faith in our Lord Jesus Christ



**It is finished! Will you joyfully rest in Christ's death
to freely provide all you need in God?**

justified, declared righteous ransomed, redeemed
 propitiation, sin atoned, wrath turned away
 forgiven peace with God reconciled eternal life
 adopted sons welcomed, accepted filled, complete
 blessed with every blessing
 Christ is our wisdom from God, righteousness
 and sanctification and redemption
 delivered from the domain of darkness into
 the light of the kingdom of the beloved Son
 in Christ and Christ in us in the Spirit and the Spirit in us, God's temple in God the Father and Father in us
 immersed in the Father, Son and Holy Spirit Father, Son and Holy Spirit fellowship with us
 access to God and his grace answered prayer grace at the throne of grace
 every need supplied the Spirit prays for us, helps us pray
 Christ intercedes for us as our one mediator Christ advocates his propitiation in our defense
 immersed into Christ in death and resurrection united with Christ in death and resurrection
 old self in Adam crucified and buried with Christ new self in Christ raised and alive with Christ
 set free from sin body members instruments for righteousness under Christ and his abundant grace
 slaves of Christ for righteousness joined to Christ one with Christ seated with Christ
 hidden with Christ in God released from the law to be married to Christ
 under the law of the Spirit of life in Christ the Spirit and God's love poured in
 rivers of living water of the Spirit flow out of us immersed in the Spirit
 born of the Spirit given the Spirit receive the Spirit
 have the Spirit the Spirit comes on us, falls on us
 anointed with the Spirit sealed with Spirit, guaranteed inheritance
 the Spirit of truth helps and teaches us
 the Spirit leads and sanctifies us
 empowered by the Spirit as ambassadors for Christ
 the Spirit gifts for service the Spirit fills us
 circumcised, set apart to God in the Spirit
 immeasurably great power God's workmanship
 led in triumphal procession and nuke victory
 members of Christ's body brothers and sisters
 branches in Christ's vine
 Chosen race, royal priesthood, holy nation,
 God's possession, God's people
 fellow citizens with the saints members of God's household
 citizenship in heaven hope of glory
 inheritance, heir, fellow heir with Christ at death
 made perfect in his presence glorified to be like Jesus
 into heavenly kingdom enter the joy of the Lord
 delivered from wrath to come God's good work completed
 resurrection body like Jesus married to the Lamb every tear wiped away
 see God's face reign forever loved and saved in the New Covenant

CONCLUDING APPLICATIONS

Put into practice the repeated applications

I will no longer see myself only as a believer who is loved, forgiven, and on my way to heaven, but I will now view myself as a billionaire rich in Christ.

No matter what hurt, sin, or inferiority is in my past, I will not chain myself to it. I will define myself by who I am in Christ and what I have in my freedom in Christ.

Whenever I have a need I will affirm who Christ is and who I am in Christ. I will confidently draw on the Lord's riches in Christ at his bank of grace.

I will not listen to the music of doubt, unbelief, and low self-esteem. I will press the eject button and play the new music of Christ esteem and who I really am in Christ.

Because Jesus Christ lives in us and leads us by his Spirit so that we are branches in his vine, members of his body, and gloves on his hand, I determine to stop thinking, "I have an errand to run, I have a friend to contact, I have a meal to cook." I resolve to rest in Christ. "Christ in me wants to run this errand, contact my friend, and prepare this meal. I love you, Lord, and rely on the riches of your grace to energize me as your branch, member, and glove."

When sin wants me to let it in and party even though Christ lives in me by his Spirit in full power and grace, I will say a definite "No!" to sin and "Yes!" to Christ, refusing to walk in the flesh grounded when I can fly with Christ overcoming sin's gravity.

I want to reach out more to people as a former beggar now a billionaire to speak of the Lord who died for them to make them rich in Christ. I want to engage lost people in conversation and turn the conversation to witness about Christ's riches like I would if they had cancer and I knew a specialist who cured me of my cancer.

Note - the fifth application above involves the very important concept of resting in Christ. It would be helpful to reflect again on pages xvi-xvii in the introduction on "Rest in Christ's finished work on the cross to freely provide God's grace."

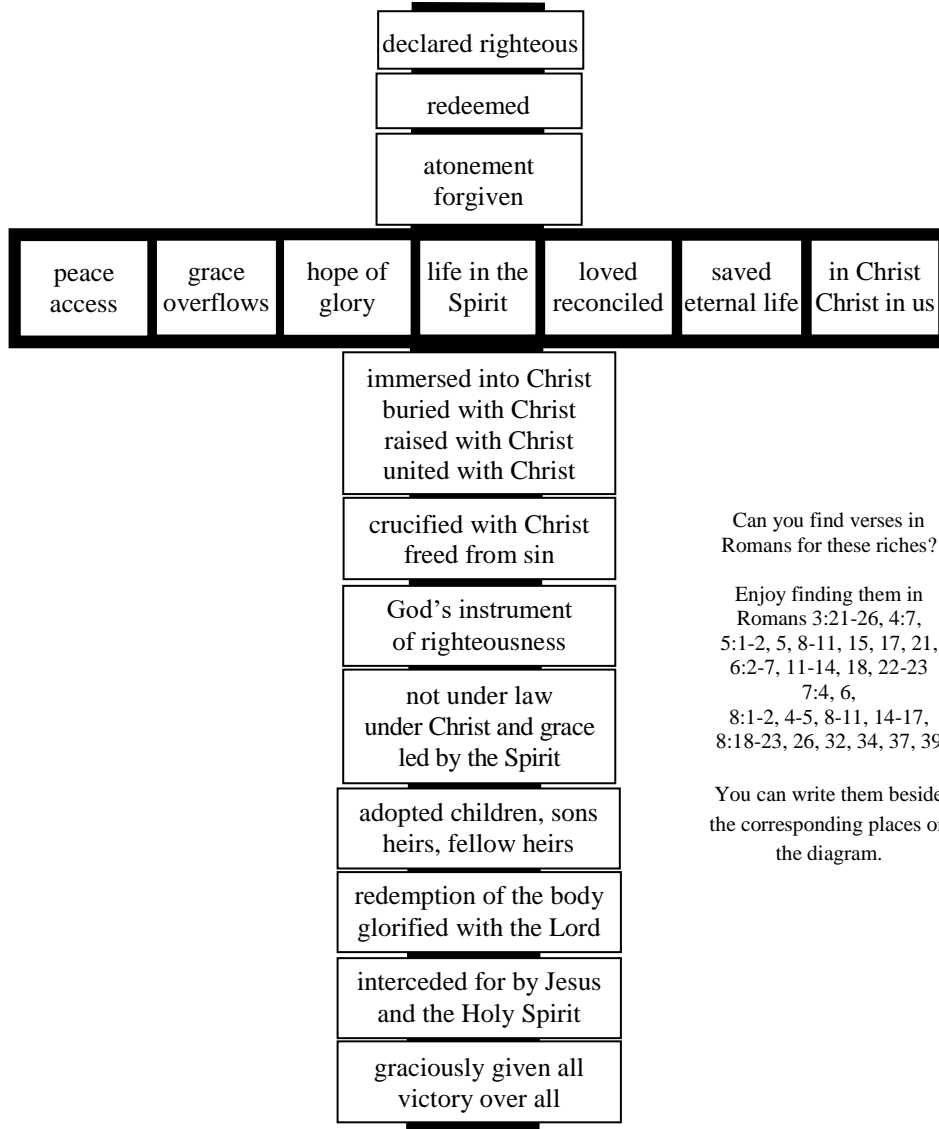


"Delight yourself in the LORD"
(Psalm 37:4).

You and your riches in Christ
flowing from the cross are my
treasure, Lord!

Determine which riches meet which needs

When in need, think through the riches that most meet that need, then go to Lord and draw on those particular riches. Picture them as gifts attached to Christ's cross. It is finished. Christ has purchased them for us. They are ours in Christ. **Open your gifts through praise and thanks, recalling a verse where the LORD promises them.** Rest in Christ.

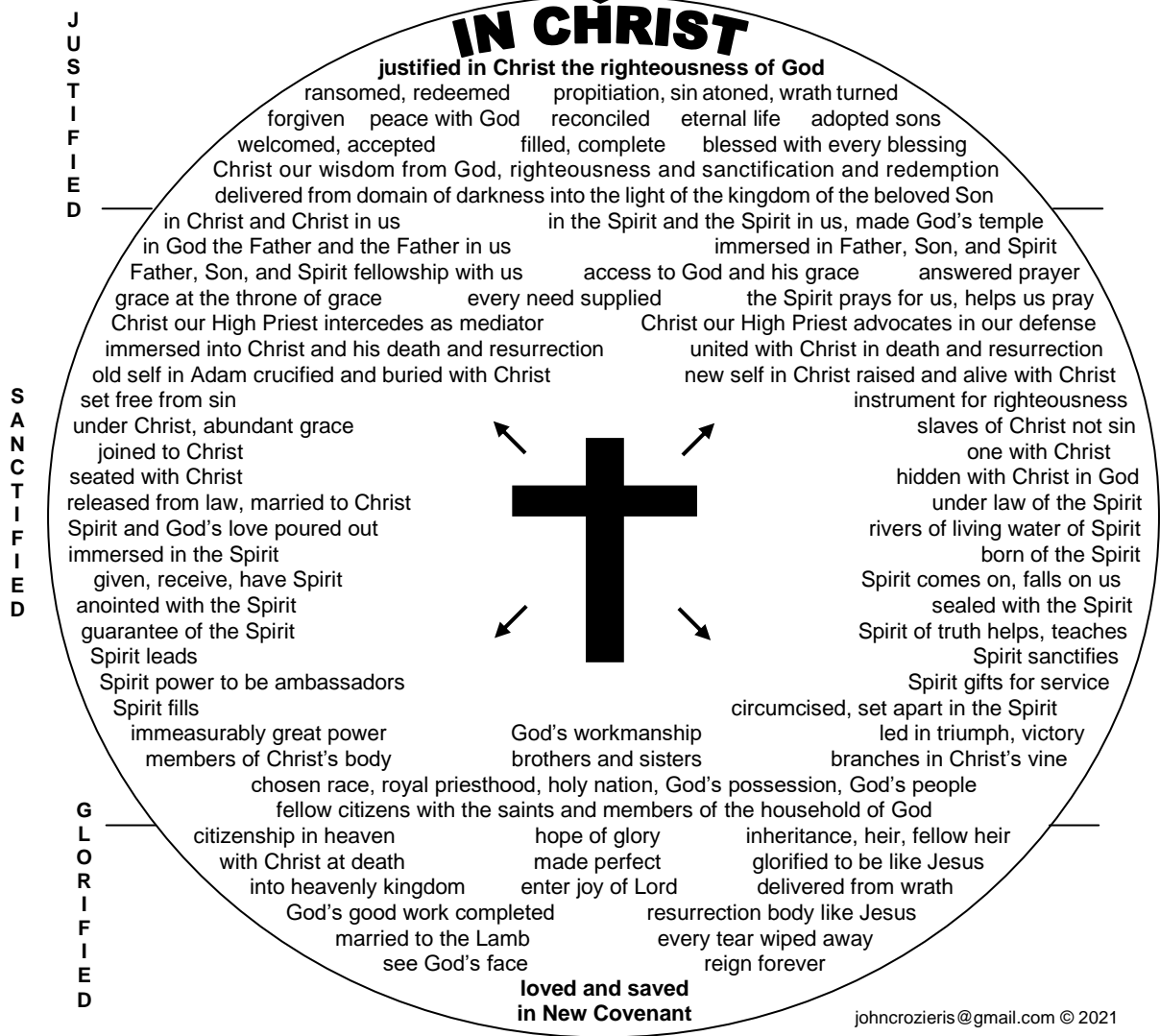


In the following situations, which 3-4 riches in Christ help the most to meet the need?

- | | | | |
|-------------------|-------------------|------------------|----------------|
| Guilt | Abused as a child | Marriage | Low self-worth |
| Addictions | Trials or tragedy | Raising children | Anger |
| Spiritual warfare | Making decisions | Lust | Lonely |
| Unemployment | Abusive marriage | Poor health | Tempted |

Connect God's riches in Christ with justification, sanctification and glorification

Repentance toward God and  faith in our Lord Jesus Christ



It is helpful to grasp how most of God's riches contribute to one in particular of our three great needs for justification, sanctification, or glorification.

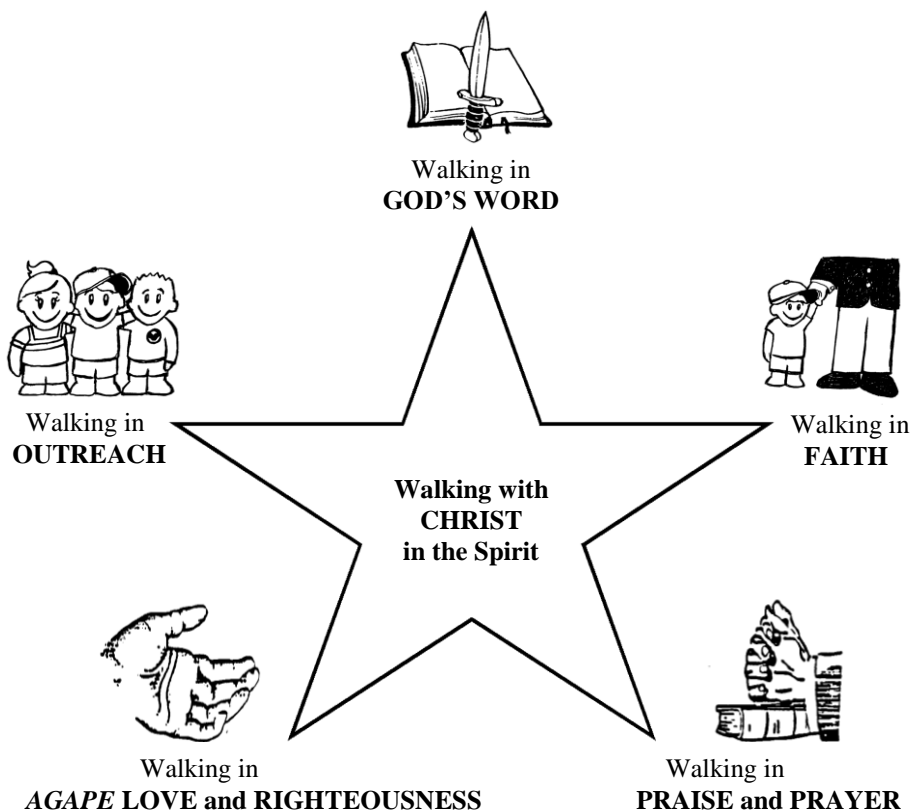
When we confess and forsake our sins but still feel guilty, it is helpful to claim in prayer how Christ's death provides the various riches connected with justification.

When we need power over sinful temptations, it is helpful to prayerfully claim how Christ's cross provides the many riches connected above with sanctification.

When we need our hope in Christ renewed, it is helpful to thank the Lord in prayer for the various riches of glorification which the finished work of Christ provides.

In all the different needs we have, God calls us to rest in Christ's death and resurrection by coming to the Lord at his throne of grace to receive whatever we need.

Shine with Christ like a star:
Walk with Christ in the Spirit in God's Word, faith, prayer,
love and outreach



While on earth our Lord Jesus passionately walked in the Spirit in joyful union with the Father, walking in God's Word, faith, prayer, love, and outreach. Jesus now calls his people to deny themselves and fervently follow him (Mark 8:34). We are to walk by the Spirit (Gal 5:16). We are to walk as Jesus walked (1 John 2:6). We are to walk in him (Col 2:6). We are to follow in his steps (1 Pet 2:21). We are to abide in him as a branch in a vine (John 15:5). We are to shine like stars (Phil 2:15).

The Lord is calling many more Christians to walk in faith by claiming specific promises each day; many more to repent of selfishness and surrender to walk in Christ's righteousness and *agape* love that serves, forgives, and lavishes grace upon others; many more to pray and praise in the Spirit; many more to meditate in his Word day and night; and many more to reach out to others to share Christ's magnificence.

The Lord is calling his church to *train* disciples to passionately walk with Christ in the Spirit, walking in God's Word, faith, prayer, love, and outreach.

(For a description of God's special *agape* love see pages xxviii-xxxii.)

Rely on Jesus to fill your cup



Our heart HUNGERS to be filled. Our heart HUNGERS for happiness, unceasing love, no guilt, guidance, empowerment, resurrection, and safety. Our heart is like a cup that longs to be filled. Many try to meet their needs and fill their cup in various ways--through the opinions of others, relationships, work achievements, sports achievements, education, appearance, clothes, possessions, money, family background, sex, or favorable circumstances. It is sin to value and depend on these things to satisfy our HUNGERS instead of God. It is sin when we try to manipulate others to get them to meet our needs.

There is a far better way to meet our needs. The Lord wants to satisfy our deepest longings and thirsts in a love relationship with him through Jesus Christ. **Jesus Christ** fills our cup. **The Lord and his riches in Christ are the answer to our deep longings and hungers.** He satisfies now, with fullest satisfaction awaiting us in glory.

Some manage to feel more satisfied than others. But we long for a depth of satisfaction that people, accomplishments, and things cannot give. We hunger for a depth of satisfaction that only an infinite, holy, loving God can satisfy.

God wants us to be joyfully satisfied in his fullness and love in Christ. He offers all of himself and his riches to us each day as a gift. But gifts must be received and unwrapped. **Through prayers of thanksgiving based on God's Word** (like the affirmations at the end of each article) we trust Christ's death and resurrection every day as the source of receiving and unwrapping all the happiness, unceasing love, no guilt, guidance, empowerment, resurrection, and safety for which our hungry souls longs.

There is rest when we rest in Christ for all our needs and hungers. The banker waits for us to come in prayer to freely receive all we need. There is no reason to run on half empty; we can stop and fill up. And full cups free us to give *agape* to others.

When we are busy valuing and enjoying Christ's living water, we are far less tempted to try to be satisfied drinking sin's counterfeit muddy puddles, and we are far more able to serve others with *agape* love rather than try to manipulate others to fill us.

Thank the Lord for satisfying your HUNGERS through Jesus!
Let Jesus fill your cup each day! Jesus can do what no one else can.

Recognize the flesh and turn from it

Healthy, joyful walking in the Spirit

Hurtful, unhappy walking in the flesh

thoughts

hopeful	thankful	impure	ungrateful
forgiving	humble	unforgiving	proud
appreciative	confident	selfish ambition	covetous
willing	wise	greedy	deceitful
impartial	truthful	lustful	ill will
caring	faithful	uncaring	unbelieving
thoughtful of others		insensitive	self-centered

emotions

love	joy	anger	hatred
peace	patience	impatience	unloving
gentle spirit	kindly spirit	bitterness	jealousy
merciful	free of guilt	guilt	resentment
confidence	optimism	worry	annoyance
compassion	zeal	bad temper	rebellion

speech

helpful	truthful	unhelpful	criticizing
building up	honest	tearing down	lying
good report	beneficial	sowing discord	slandering
thankful	timely	complaining	yelling
gentle	soothing	harsh	backbiting
encouraging	pleasant	discouraging	arguing
tactful	praising	boasting	swearing
peacemaking	reconciling	gossip	attacking

actions

kindness	gentleness	unkindness	sexual immorality
doing right	self-control	impurity	no self-control
faithfulness	giving	adultery	drunkenness
obedience	cooperation	disobedience	stealing
goodness	sincerity	abuse	violence
courage	serving others	revelry	serving self
non-retaliation	love	uncooperative	hurtful
caring	diligence	neglect	laziness
		withdrawing	distancing ²³

All Christians have a “flesh” or “sinful nature” that constantly wars against the Spirit with selfish, sinful desires (Gal 5:16-23). Many do not call their fleshly habits sin. Recognize the flesh and turn from it. Ask for cleansing from its defilement, admit powerlessness, ask Christ to transform you by his Spirit, and rest in the Lord to do it.

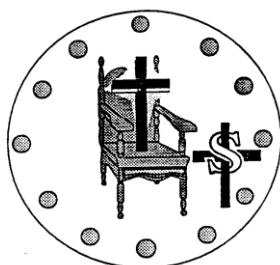
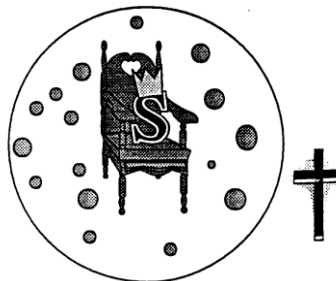
(Lists are based on Mark 7:20-21; Gal 5:19-23; Eph 4:25-5:2; Col 3:5-9, 12-17; Jas 3:13-18; Rom 1:28-31; Prov 6:16-19; 2 Tim 3:1-5.)

²³ Adapted from Henry Brandt, Breaking Free (Eugene: Harvest House, 1994), 96-97.

Let Christ reign, not self and the flesh

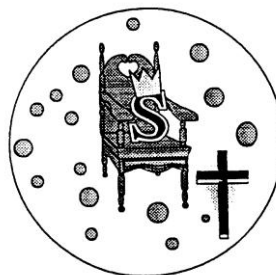
The Non-Christian Life

Self reigns at the control-center of the heart.
Self does what self wants.
Christ is kept outside.
Sin causes pain and confusion. ²⁴



The Healthy Christian Life

Christ reigns at the control-center of the heart.
Self is crucified with Christ, led by the Spirit.
We say “no” to flesh desires and “yes” to Christ.
Christ gives direction, order, and leads in *agape* love.



The Frustrating Christian Life

Self reigns often, rather than Christ.
We follow flesh desires, not Spirit desires.
The flesh seeks life from wrong sources (Jer 2:13).
Following the flesh causes sin, pain, and confusion.



The New Self

Self is crucified with Christ (Rom 6:6; Gal 2:20); old gone, new come.
The new self is born of God, raised, alive, united, and hidden with Christ, under Christ’s authority, freed from sin’s authority, led by the Holy Spirit in *agape* love, and desires to do all the Lord wants (Rom 6:1-14, 8:14; Eph 4:24).

All Christians have a “flesh” or “sinful nature” that constantly wars against the Spirit with selfish, sinful desires (Gal 5:16-23).

The root problem of many Christians is walking in the flesh rather than walking in harmony with who we are in Christ—old self crucified with Christ; new self under Christ’s authority to do all he wants by his Spirit’s power; no longer under sin’s authority; yielding all rights to the Lord we are united to; no longer serving self, trusting self, or promoting self but serving Christ, trusting Christ, promoting Christ, delighting in Christ.

The root solution is to walk by faith in Christ in the Spirit in *agape* love.

Flesh pride reacts to the sins of others with frustration, anger, and judgment; pride prevents *agape* in the Spirit. “You’re not doing what I want!”

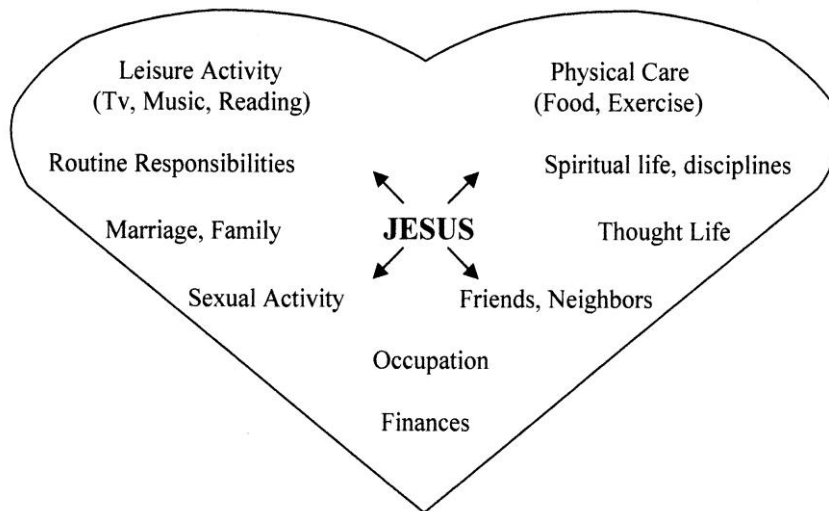
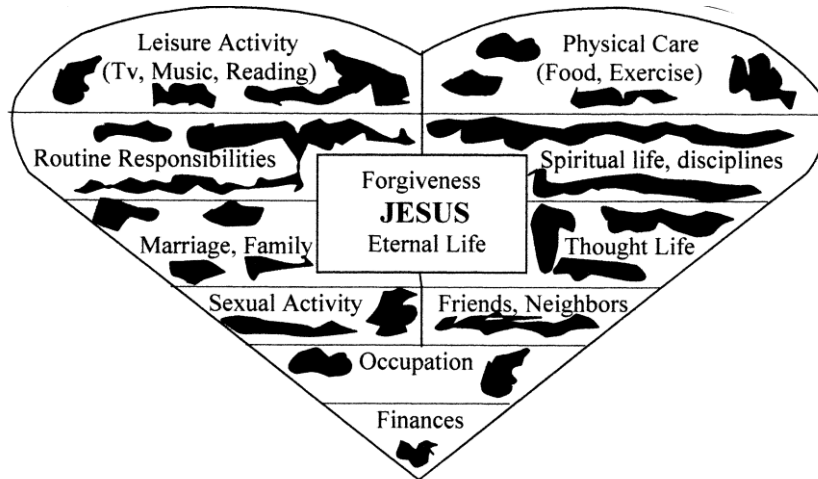
Relying on others to meet our needs also prevents *agape* in the Spirit. Only relying on Christ to meet our needs truly frees us to *agape* others. Otherwise, all our relationships are greedy grasping to get others to fill our cup, self-centered efforts to get rather than give.

Walking in the Spirit in love includes walking in Christ’s fullness, not neediness.

²⁴ The throne concepts are adapted from “The Four Spiritual Laws” © Copyright 1965, 1994 by Bill Bright, *NewLife* Publications, Campus Crusade for Christ. All rights reserved. Used by permission.

Surrender fully

Many Christians trust Jesus Christ for forgiveness and eternal life, but still do not surrender every area of their lives to the King's control. It is like blocking off areas of rooms in our hearts where we do not allow Jesus to lead us and meet our needs. When we do not find our satisfaction in the Lord and his riches, we end up trying to meet our needs the wrong way. This results in sin, frustration and tiresome self-effort.



Full surrender helps us live in the center of being in Christ (xxii-xxiii), shine like stars as we walk with Christ (152), rely on Christ to fill our cup (153), recognize the flesh and turn from it (154), and let Christ reign not self and the flesh (155). Maximum surrender brings maximum transformation by the Spirit of Christ and maximum satisfaction in the Lord. In full surrender we become gloves on Christ's hand. Romans 6:13 can be translated as "Keep on presenting every part of yourself to God as an instrument of righteousness." Let Jesus direct in every area.

APPENDICES

Lewis Sperry Chafer's list of riches in Christ

1. In the eternal plan of God
foreknown, predestinated, elect, chosen, and called
2. Redeemed
3. Reconciled
4. Related to God through propitiation
5. Forgiven all trespasses
6. Vitally conjoined to Christ for the judgment of the old man "unto a new walk"
7. Free from the law
8. Children of God
born again, regenerated, quickened, Sons of God, a new creation
9. Adopted
10. Acceptable to God by Jesus Christ
made righteous, sanctified positionally, perfected forever,
made accepted in the beloved, made meet
11. Justified
12. Made nigh
13. Delivered from the power of darkness
14. Translated into the kingdom of the Son of his love
15. On the rock, Christ Jesus
16. A gift from God the Father to Christ
17. Circumcised in Christ
18. Partakers of the holy and royal priesthood
19. A chosen generation, a holy nation, a peculiar people
20. Heavenly citizens
21. Of the family and household of God
22. In the fellowship of the saints
23. A heavenly association
partners with Christ in life, partnership in position, partners with Christ in
service, partners with Christ in suffering, partners with Christ in prayer,
partners with Christ in betrothal, partners in expectation
24. Having access to God
25. Within the much more care of God
objects of his love, grace, power, faithfulness, peace, consolation, intercession
26. His inheritance
27. The inheritance of the saints
28. Light in the Lord
29. Vitally united to the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit
30. Blessed with the earnest or first-fruits of the Spirit
31. Glorified
32. Complete in Him
33. Possessing every spiritual blessing ²⁵

²⁵ Lewis Sperry Chafer, "Riches of Divine Grace," Systematic Theology (Dallas: Dallas Seminary Press, 1948)
Vol. 3, 225-266.

Neil Anderson's list of riches in Christ

WHO I AM IN CHRIST

I am Accepted in Christ

I am God's Child (John 1:12)
I am Christ's friend (John 15:15)
I have been justified (Rom 5:1)
I am united with the Lord and one with Him in spirit (1 Cor 6:17)
I have been bought with a price; I belong to God (1 Cor 6:20)
I am a member of Christ's Body (1 Cor 12:27)
I am a saint (Eph 1:1)
I have been adopted as God's child (Eph 1:5)
I have direct access to God through the Holy Spirit (Eph 2:18)
I have been redeemed and forgiven of all my sins (Col 1:14)
I am complete in Christ (Col 2:10)

I am Secure in Christ

I am free forever from condemnation (Rom 8:1,2)
I am assured that all things work together for good (Rom 8:28)
I am free from any condemning charges against me (Rom 8:33,34)
I cannot be separated from the love of God (Rom 8:35)
I have been established, anointed and sealed by God (2 Cor 1:21)
I am hidden with Christ in God (Col 3:3)
I am confident that the good work God has begun in me will be perfected (Phil 1:6)
I am a citizen of heaven (Phil 3:20)
I have not been given a spirit of fear, but of power, love and a sound mind (2 Tim 1:7)
I can find grace and mercy in time of need (Heb 4:16)
I am born of God and the evil one cannot touch me (1 John 5:18)

I Am Significant in Christ

I am the salt and light of the earth (Matt 5:13,14)
I am a branch of the true vine, a channel of His life (John 15:1,5)
I have been chosen and appointed to bear fruit (John 15:16)
I am a personal witness of Christ's (Acts 1:8)
I am God's temple (1 Cor 3:16)
I am a minister of reconciliation (2 Cor 5:17-20)
I am God's coworker (2 Cor 6:1)
I am seated with Christ in the heavenly realm (Eph 2:6)
I am God's workmanship (Eph 2:10)
I may approach God with freedom and confidence (Eph 3:12)
I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me (Phil 4:13) ²⁶

²⁶ Neil Anderson, Living Free in Christ (Ventura: Regal, 1993) 278.

How many riches has God given us in Christ?

After much Bible study and analysis of Chafer and Anderson, I organize God's riches in Christ into one hundred blessings provided through the death and resurrection of our Lord Jesus. I hope this helps people see how rich we are and how gracious God is. To arrive at one hundred riches as listed on page xxiv, note the separate blessings in descriptions like redeemed and ransomed, anointed and sealed, and crucified and buried with Christ, raised and alive with Christ, one, seated, and hidden with Christ in God.

My titles also are meant to help people easily think of a Bible verse.

Chafer arranged his study into thirty-three headings, with sub-points that can be seen as over fifty separate riches. Some of my points are the same. I cover some of his points under different headings in my list. (Why doesn't Chafer's first point appear in my study? Because God's foreknowledge, predestination, election, choosing, and calling are based on God's sovereign will, something within his character, and do not result from the death and resurrection of Christ, as do the rest of the riches. In my study, God's riches of grace in Christ all result from Christ's finished work and are given as a gift the moment one believes on the Lord Jesus. But praise be to God for his sovereignty in salvation!)

As far as I know, Chafer is the only Systematic Theology in the world in English that seeks to systematize and list the riches of salvation in a separate chapter of study. Dan Spader copies Chafer's list in his wonderful Sonlife booklet entitled "Thirty-three things that happen at the moment of salvation."

Neil Anderson has a very helpful list of thirty-six affirmations. His focus is on spiritual warfare and the key riches of our new identity in Christ that we need to affirm in our warfare against evil and lies. I have more riches because my goal is to study all God's riches in Christ. I pass on Anderson's great list from "Living Free in Christ." His affirmations are also in two of his other books on spiritual warfare, in both "The Bondage Breaker" and "Victory Over the Darkness." Some of our points are the same as we seek to use the language of Scripture. If you think I've missed one of his points, look for how the concept may be included under one of my categories.

There are far more than one hundred riches in Christ. God's riches in Christ are unsearchable and boundless (Eph 3:8). For instance, we could add at least ten more riches in the future from Christ's promises to the churches in Revelations 2-3. However, in this study these riches are seen as part of our riches we enter into in the future on Days 49-57. I did not want to make so many separate categories with such small distinctions that the connection of some terms to each other was not made, or the distinctions became overly complex.

If you come across a Bible verse that describes one of our riches in Christ and it is not in my list, look for how it may be included under one of my headings. Let me know if you find riches I have truly missed! I want to know my Savior in all his glory.

When the angel announced that Jesus would *save* his people from their sins (Matt 1:21), there were a great deal of riches included in the little word "save." What a full and rich salvation God has provided through the death and resurrection of our Lord Jesus! What great *love* God showers upon us in Christ's cross (diagrams on pages xvi, xxxi).

God's riches of grace are not simply gifts given through Jesus. In another sense the riches are Jesus and what he does for those who surrender to him. Jesus is justification. Jesus is forgiveness. Jesus is full fellowship with God. Jesus is atonement that turns God's wrath away. To receive Jesus is to receive justification. To receive Jesus is to receive atonement. So to not know the riches is to not know who Jesus is to those who trust him. To not know the riches is to not know Jesus as he desires. Let us keep seeking to know Jesus more by knowing his riches better!

Distorting God's holiness and Christ's cross

1. Many people today come to God expecting him only to be loving. Many do not grasp God's holiness, righteousness, and justice. God's holiness totally loves and delights in what is pure and right. He absolutely opposes, rejects, and justly judges all unrighteousness and evil. It only took one sin for Adam and Eve to become separated from God and to die. Only those cleansed from the contamination of sin and made as righteous as God can live in the presence of the Holy One in eternal fellowship.

Many people pray and ask God to help them without first acknowledging the fundamental character of God in his holiness, righteousness and justice. They do not first acknowledge their sinfulness before God apart from Christ - their unrighteousness that demands justice. Christ's death is the only basis on which our sin is justly punished and the gift of righteousness is given to make us as holy and righteous before God as Jesus. Many do not approach the Holy One in humble dependence on Christ's death for right standing and fellowship with God (Great Exchange diagram, page xv).

Police can not *ignore* other crimes if they become aware of them during a road check. Many selfishly call to the Lord for help. They expect him to love them and to *ignore* the issues of their sin and his holiness, righteousness, and justice. But our sin, disobedience, rebellion, and lack of love screams out at our Holy Lord.

In Christ God loves to be merciful and not treat us as our sins deserve. But it is a distortion to not see God as fundamentally holy, holy, holy (Isa 6:3; Rev 4:8). God does not accept one speck of dirt in his presence. Each sin is a contaminating, defiling, and profaning of what God meant to be holy to the Lord. Do you regularly meditate on and rejoice in God's holiness? Do you regularly confess how unrighteous you are and how dependant you are on Christ crucified and risen for his right standing with God?

God's holiness, justice, and merciful love revealed in Jesus Christ should constantly motivate us to love the Lord with all our heart, to turn from all sin, and to walk in holiness, righteousness, justice, mercy, and love towards others.

Christ's cross is not just about a loving God. The cross is where God's holiness, justice, righteousness, mercy, and love shine together in amazing beauty.

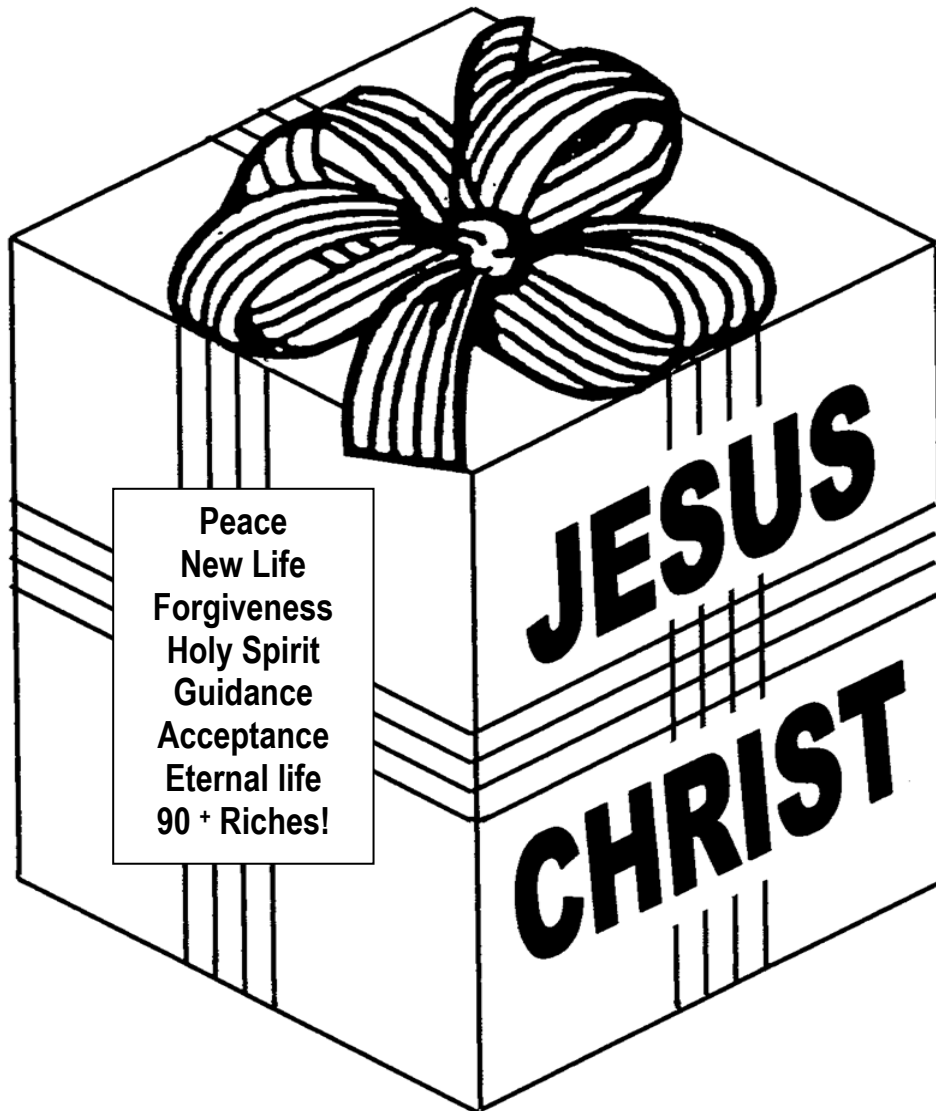
2. Christ's cross is not being talked about as much today in some evangelical churches. During a sabbatical in 2004 about one quarter of sermons I heard never mentioned Christ's death, blood, or cross, including five in a row in four evangelical churches! In many other sermons Christ's death was not important. Jesus is presented as the Lord who is available to help those who call on him, but he is basically a *crossless Christ*. This is a distortion, like seeing God as mainly loving.

Without Christ's death we receive no grace from God, nothing but the hell we deserve. All God's love gifts and everything God does for us result from Christ's finished work. We minimize and belittle Christ's death if we don't connect everything else to Christ's sacrifice. Christ's finished work is the basis for rest in God (Heb 4:10).

If we do not emphasize Christ's cross, we may not appreciate God's holiness that requires Christ's death, nor the centrality of the cross to all relationship with God (diagram page xvi). Paul preached "Jesus Christ and him crucified" (1 Cor 2:2). That Christ died for our sins and rose is of *first importance* (1 Cor 15:3-4).

Christ's cross is central to all we have in God. Don't minimize it, nor fail to see its connection to all else. Do not empty the cross of its power (1 Cor 1:17).

**God's gift of Jesus Christ
is like a big gift with many other gifts inside**



**Receive, open, enjoy and put to use
all God freely gives to meet all our needs
through his gift of Jesus Christ!**

The Grace of God in Christ in each New Testament book

It is a wonderful encouragement to search for God's riches of grace in each of the New Testament books! We want the readers to develop their antennae sensitivity so they more easily detect the riches. Sometimes the riches are not the main point that is being made, so we may miss them. We want the readers to develop their vision so they notice the riches that are often laying quietly along the side of the road but are not standing up in the middle of the road waving for our attention.

Sometimes the riches are implied rather than stated directly! This is especially true in the gospels. For instance, when Jesus heals a person, the gospel writer intends the miracle to be evidence that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God (Mark 1:1; John 20:31). However, each miracle also implies that in the kingdom where all is brought into subjection to the power of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, our resurrection bodies will have no disease!

When the gospels touch on a principle that is more clearly taught in the epistles as one of the riches, it is included. For instance, with "fishers of men" in Mark 1:17, Jesus says to the fishermen Simon and Andrew, "Follow me, and I will make you become fishers of men." The epistles make it clear that all Christians are entrusted with the gospel and empowered by the Spirit to be fishers of men (Acts 1:8; 8:4; 2 Cor 5:18-21) so this inference is included as one of the riches implied in Matthew.

The question is always, "What is stated or implied about what God gives to us through the death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ? What love gifts of grace were purchased for us through the death of Christ for our sins?"

I find it a great encouragement to look at the cross diagram for each NT book and praise the Lord for each love gift. I love how the Holy Spirit can bring a Scripture verse to mind as I look at the brief descriptions of each gift in the diagram and then help me turn the verse into praise to the Lord.

I also love how the cross diagrams give the overview of some of the very important teachings in each book. I think the most important teaching in each book is whatever it says about who Jesus is, but the next important is what it says about the work of Christ. The New Testament is about the person and work of Christ and how we who believe should live because of the person and work of Christ. The diagrams on the next pages seek to focus on the work of Christ.

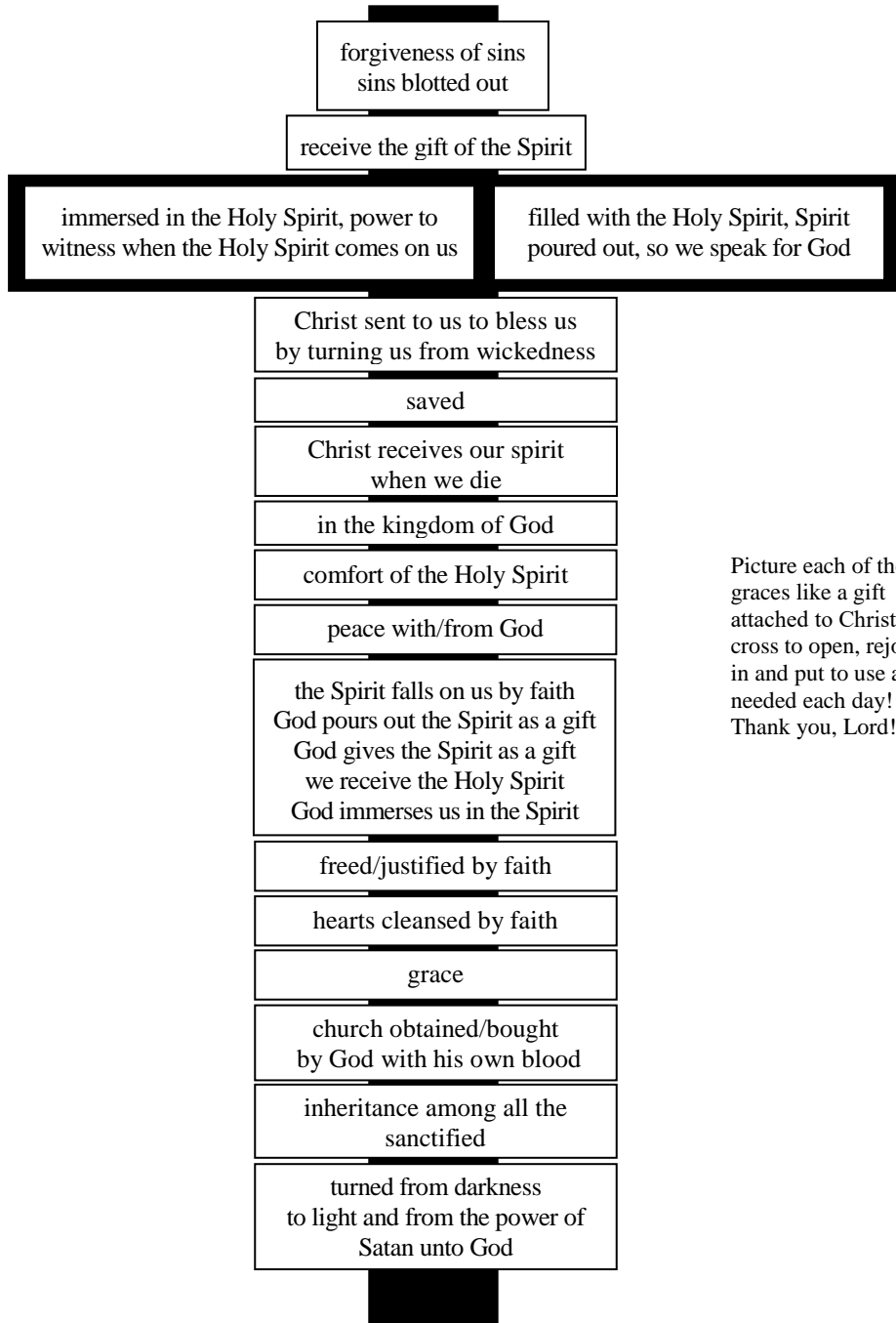
As you look at each cross diagram, let's recognize that Jesus is alive and reigning, but all we receive at the throne of grace is based on Christ's death for us; all has been purchased for us at the cross. I find it very helpful to picture our riches of grace in Christ as gifts attached to Christ's cross. Christ purchased them for us. His work is finished. We can rest in Christ by FAITH in God's Word for all the grace he gives to meet all our needs.

As we reflect on each diagram, and as we look up the verses, we can unwrap and open the gifts we need by FAITH as we praise and thank the Father and the risen and reigning Lord for freely giving the gift as one of our possessions resulting from Christ's death, while quoting God's Word that speaks of the gift.

On many days, we can enjoy turning to these as part of our prayer time and praise our way through one of the books of the New Testament! The following are two examples from Acts and Romans. **You can get the free download for all 27 New Testament books at www.GraceGodChrist.com**

The Grace of God in Christ in Acts

What do the Apostles teach that we receive from God by faith
as a result of Christ's death and resurrection?



Picture each of these
graces like a gift
attached to Christ's
cross to open, rejoice
in and put to use as
needed each day!
Thank you, Lord!

The Grace of God in Christ in the Sermons in Acts

What is proclaimed in Acts about who Jesus is and what he does for those who trust him?
What results from his death and resurrection? What riches of grace does God give in Christ?

Who is Jesus Christ?

Acts 2:36 _____ (9:5;10:36) 2:38 _____ (5:42)

3:13 _____ 3:14 _____

3:15 _____ 4:11 _____

4:12; 13:23 _____ 4:26 _____

4:27,30 _____ 5:31 _____

7:52 _____ (22:14) 7:55-56 _____ (Dan 7:13-14)

9:20 _____ (8:37) 10:36 _____

10:42 _____ (17:31) 17:7 _____

Jesus Christ 2:38; 3:6; 4:10; 8:12; 9:34; 10:36,48; 16:18

Christ 2:31,36; 3:18,20; 5:42; 8:5; 9:22; 17:3; 18:5,28; 26:23

Lord Jesus 1:21; 4:33; 7:59; 8:16; 11:20; 15:11; 16:31; 19:5,13,17; 20:21,24,35; 21:13

Jesus is the Christ 5:42; 9:22; 17:3; 18:5,28

Lord Jesus Christ 11:17; 15:26; 28:31

Christ Jesus 24:24

Anointed One 4:26

Jesus of Nazareth 2:22; 6:4; 10:38; 22:8; 26:9

Jesus 2:32; 3:13,16,20; 4:2,13,18,30; 5:30,40,42; 7:55; 8:35; 9:5,27; 13:27,33,38; 17:7,18; 18:25; 19:4,13; 26:15; 28:23

Raised from the dead 2:32; 3:15,26; 4:10,33; 5:30; 10:40; 13:30,33,34,37; 17:3,18,31; 26:23

Exalted to God's right hand 2:25,33,34; 5:31; 7:55,56

What does Jesus do for those who repent and trust him?

2:38;3:19 _____ 5:31;10:43;13:38

2:38;10:45,47;11:17 _____

1:5,8;11:16;19:6 _____

2:4,17-18;4:31;10:45-46 _____

3:20,26 _____ 4:12;15:11;16:31 _____ (2:21)

7:59 _____ 8:12 _____ (1:3,6;14:22;19:8;
20:25;28:23,31)

9:31 _____ 10:36 _____

10:44-47; 11:15-17 _____ 5:32; 8:15-17; 15:8

13:38-39 _____ (freed=justified) 15:9 _____

15:11 _____ 4:33;20:24,32 20:28 _____

20:32 _____ (sanct 26:18) 26:18 _____

The Grace of God in Christ in Romans

What gifts of grace in Christ are like gifts attached to the cross of Christ?

justified, declared righteous redemption in Christ propitiation, atonement sins forgiven		
peace with God access to God and his grace hope of the glory of God	God's love poured into heart Spirit poured into heart Spirit given to us	God loves us by Christ dying for us while sinners
saved reconciled	abundant grace overflows eternal life reigns	immersed into Christ, into his death and resurrection
united, crucified, buried, raised, alive with Christ	dead to sin, freed from sin old self crucified, new life	God's instruments for righteousness
under Christ/grace not law slaves of Christ/God not sin	die to law through Christ married to Christ	serve in new way of Spirit Spirit circumcises heart
no condemnation in Christ freed from sin to walk in righteousness in the Spirit	the law of the Spirit of life sets us free in Christ from the law of sin and death	God sends Son in flesh for sin to fulfill righteous law in Christ in Spirit (in agape)
we walk according to Spirit set mind on things of Spirit	in the Spirit not the flesh since Spirit dwells in us	have the Spirit of Christ belong to Christ/of Christ
Christ is in us Spirit of Father dwells in us	He who raised Jesus will raise our bodies	by the Spirit we put to death flesh deeds
led by the Spirit of God since sons of God	receive the Spirit of adoption as sons	Spirit witnesses to persuade spirit we are God's children
heirs of God fellow heirs with Christ	resurrection of the body glorified with the Lord	the Spirit prays for us Christ intercedes for us
conformed to Christ brothers of Christ	God is for us gives us all with Christ	conquerors of all inseparable love in Christ
mercy riches bestowed	members of Christ's body and one another	the Spirit gifts for service put on, clothed with Christ
welcomed/accepted in the kingdom of God	ministers of Christ priests with gospel duties	offerings acceptable to God sanctified by the Spirit
one of God's people saints, set apart ones, holy	brothers and sisters in God's church	Satan will be crushed under our feet

The Grace of God in Christ in Romans

Match the diagram to the verses

- | | |
|--|--|
| 3:22,24,26,28,30
also 1:17; 4:23-25; 5:1,9,17,18,19,21; 8:30,33; 9:30; 10:4,10 | 3:24; 8:23 |
| 3:24
also 5:2; 6:11,23; 8:1,2; 12:5; 16:7,9,11 | 3:25 |
| 4:7
11:27 | 5:1
1:7; 2:10; 15:33 |
| 5:2 | 5:2
also 2:10; 8:18,21,24,25,30; 9:23; 15:13 |
| 5:5 | 5:5
15:30 |
| 5:5 | 5:8 |
| 5:9-10
also 1:16; 8:24; 9:27; 10:1,9,10,13; 11:11,26 | 5:10-11; 11:15 |
| 5:15,17,20,21
6:1;16:20 | 5:17,21
2:7; 6:22-23 |
| 6:3-4 | 6:4,5,6,7,8,11,13 |
| 6:2,4,6,7,11,14,18,22 | 6:4,6 |
| 6:13,19 | 6:14,22 |
| 7:4
"belong to" is literally "married to" as in 7:3 | 7:6; 2:29 |
| 8:1,2 | 8:2
14:17 |
| 8:3,4 | 8:4,5 |
| 8:9 | |
| 8:9
1:6; 14:8 | 8:10-11 |
| 8:11 | 8:13
13:14 |
| 8:14
8:19; 9:26 | 8:15,23 |
| 8:16
8:21;9:8 | 8:17 |
| 8:18-23 | 8:27,34 |
| 8:29 | 8:31-32 |
| 8:37-39
9:24 | 9:22-23; 10:12
mercy, riches also 9:15,16,18; 11:12,30,31,32; 12:1; 15:9 |
| 12:5 | 12:6-8; 13:14
1:11 |
| 14:3; 15:7
11:15 | 14:17 |
| 15:16,19 | 15:16
Spirit sanct. 8:1-14; implied 5:3-5; 12:9-21; 13:8-14 |
| 15:10
9:25; 11:1-2 | 16:2,15
1:7;8:27;12:13;15:25,26,31 |
| 16:14,16
1:13; 7:1; 8:12,29; 9:5; 10:1; 11:23; 12:1; 15:14,30; 16:1,4,5,23 | 16:20 |

Why must Jesus be both God and human?²⁷

The Scripture claims that Jesus was conceived in the womb of Mary without sexual union with Joseph. The angel said to Mary, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be called holy -- the Son of God" (Luke 1:35). The angel said to Joseph that the child conceived in Mary was "from the Holy Spirit" (Matt 1:20).

The conception of Jesus in the virgin Mary means that while remaining God, the eternal Son also "became flesh" (John 1:14), being conceived in Mary by the work of the Holy Spirit, not as a result of human sexual intercourse, so that from conception, Jesus, the Son of God, was fully God and fully human - God in human flesh, the God-Man.

When Jesus declared, "I and the Father are one," they picked up stones to stone him "for blasphemy, because you, being a man, make yourself God" (John 10:30, 33). Impossible? No! God's word says Jesus became man while continuing to be God, born of a virgin through the Holy Spirit to be both God and human. But *why* must Jesus be both God and human?

WHAT REASONS ARE THERE TO BELIEVE THAT JESUS IS GOD?

1. The Bible declares that Jesus is God

"the Word was God" (John 1:1).

"the Christ who is God over all, blessed forever" (Rom 9:5).

"For in him the whole fullness of deity dwells bodily" (Col 2:9).

"our great God and Savior Jesus Christ" (Titus 2:13).

"He is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature" (Heb 1:3)

"Jesus Christ. He is the true God and eternal life" (1 John 5:20).

2. Jesus himself declares that he is God

"I and the Father are one . . . We are going to stone you for blasphemy, because you, being a man, make yourself God" (John 10:30,33).

"Whoever has seen me has seen the Father" (John 14:9).

John's gospel records "I am" statements Jesus makes declaring he is

"I am who I am," Yahweh, the LORD, of Exodus 3:14, such as:

"I am the bread of life" (John 6:35).

"I am the light of the world" (John 8:12; 9:5).

"before Abraham was, I am" (John 8:58).

"I am the door" (John 10:7, 9).

"I am the good shepherd" (John 10:11, 14).

"I am the resurrection and the life" (John 11:25).

"I am the way, and the truth, and the life" (John 14:6)

"I am the vine; you are the branches" (John 15:5)

3. Jesus is given the titles and names of God

"I am the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end" (Rev 22:13).

"Lord" and "Savior" are two of God's titles or names often used of Jesus:

"Jesus Christ (he is Lord of all)" (Acts 10:36).

"the appearing of our Savior Christ Jesus" (2 Tim 1:10)

"the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ" (2 Peter 1:11).

²⁷ Over the years, I have repeatedly revised and added to this article, but most of the major points are from my Systematic Theology professor, Dr. Douglas Shantz. It is my understanding that his outline was from his professor's lessons at Westminster Theological Seminary in Philadelphia.

4. Jesus is honored and worshipped as God

“Thomas answered him, “My Lord and my God!”” (John 20:28).

Daniel saw Jesus in heaven as “one like a son of man,” human in his appearance like a son of a man, but he was worshipped and served by all, equal to God. “And to him was given dominion and glory and a kingdom, that all peoples, nations, and languages should serve him” (Dan 7:13-14).

John saw “a great multitude . . . from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages . . . crying out with a loud voice, “Salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!”” (Rev 7:9-10; note the link with Daniel). John also heard every creature in heaven and earth worshipping: “To him who sits on the throne and to the Lamb be blessing and honor and glory and might forever and ever!” (Rev 5:13). If Jesus was not God, the Lord would never allow in his presence equal praise to Jesus.

Even if Jesus is the first created, the greatest angelic being, only God is to be worshipped (Rev 19:10; 22:9). All else is blasphemy.

5. Jesus possesses the attributes of God

Jesus is self-existent

“the Father . . . has granted the Son also to have life in himself” (John 5:26).

Jesus is unchanging

“Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever” (Heb 13:8).

Jesus is holy

“you are the Holy One of God” (John 6:69).

Jesus is eternal

“before Abraham was, I am” (John 8:58). (also an “I am” statement)

Jesus is all-powerful

“All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me” (Matt 28:18).

6. Jesus does what God alone can do

Jesus creates

“All things were made through him” (John 1:3).

“all things were created through him and for him” (Col 1:16).

Jesus sustains

“in him all things hold together” (Col 1:17).

“he upholds the universe by the word of his power” (Heb 1:3).

Jesus judges

“The Father . . . has given all judgment to the Son” (John 5:22).

Jesus forgives sin

“Who can forgive sins but God alone? . . . the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins” (Mark 2:7,10).

Jesus resurrects and gives life

“I am the resurrection and the life” (John 11:25). (also an “I am” statement)

7. God raised Jesus, declaring him to be the Christ, God the Son

“declared to be the Son of God in power according to the Spirit of holiness by his resurrection from the dead, Jesus Christ our Lord” (Rom 1:4). God would not raise a deceiver; the resurrection proves all Jesus claimed is true.

Who do you believe Jesus is?

Do you worship, love, and obey Jesus as God the Son as you do God the Father?

WHY IS IT NECESSARY THAT JESUS IS GOD?

1. **To perfectly obey God's law in order to be our sinless sacrifice and our righteousness.** If Jesus was born with the stain of Adam's sin, his sinful nature wouldn't have perfectly obeyed God's law; he couldn't be our sinless substitute sacrifice of atonement and the righteousness of God justifying us from our sin (Rom 3:21-26; 2 Cor 5:21). The Holy God only unites himself eternally to those as righteous as God without a speck of sin.
2. **To be a sacrifice of infinite value.** Only as God could Christ's punishment on the cross be of infinite value and a just payment for all sin, more than equal to the eternal punishment each sinner deserves (Acts 20:28). Otherwise, it is not enough (Psa 49:7-9). A sinless substitute, if merely human, even a second Adam, would still need to be punished eternally to take the place of just one other sinful human. Only by his Son can God say, "It is finished." Billions of eternal punishments are paid in full!²⁸
3. **To be a proper object of heart-satisfying worship.** In heaven, Jesus is worshipped equally with the Father (Rev 5:13, 7:10). Anything created is infinitely lesser and different than God; to worship Jesus if he's not God is blasphemy and idolatry. To worship the Father and God the Son is satisfying.
4. **To bring us to God.** Not only does Christ bring us to God (1 Pet 3:18), but to come to Christ is to come to God and not to someone who is not God (John 5:40, 7:37; 2 Cor 5:19). Coming to one who is above humans but who is not God is like going to an address that is close but not right. We do not arrive at the desired destination.
5. **To reveal the Father.** "Whoever has seen me has seen the Father (Jn 14:9). If Jesus is a finite created being, the infinite Father remains unknown.
6. **To reveal the love of God.** If Jesus isn't God, at the cross Jesus shows his own self-sacrificing love, but God doesn't sacrifice *himself* and show his own "agape" love for sinners (Acts 20:28; 1 John 4:9-10). What love is it for God to create someone else to suffer for our sins, and not suffer himself?
7. **To assure us he can complete his work in us and bring us to be with him where he is.** As God, we are assured Jesus can and will do what he sets out to do (John 14:3; 2 Tim 4:18).

WHY IS IT NECESSARY THAT JESUS IS HUMAN?

1. **To be our sympathetic high priest.** "He had to be made like his brothers in every way, in order that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in service to God, and that he might make atonement for the sins of the people" (Heb 2:17, see also Heb 5:1-2). Because Jesus was tempted as a human being, he is able to sympathize with us in our weakness and is able to help those tempted (Heb 2:14-18; 4:14-16). We can come to Christ confidently to receive mercy and grace to help us in our need (Heb 4:16).
2. **To be our substitute and take our place** as only another human can. To satisfy God's judgment on the guilt of people, a sacrifice was needed which could truly represent people and substitute for the punishment people deserve for their sin. In order that Jesus could turn aside the wrath of God against guilty sinners, he had to become one with them and die in their place as a substitute for them (Heb 2:14, 17, 9:22, 26-28; 2 Cor 5:21).
3. **To be our perfect human example** to follow (Jn 13:34, 15:12; 1 Jn 2:6).
4. **To be the last or second Adam** (Rom 5:12-21, 1 Cor 15:21-22). Jesus must be human like the first Adam in order to create a new humanity freed from the sin and death Adam caused. The second Adam's grace brings righteousness, eternal life and resurrection.

²⁸ for further on this, listen to Bruce Ware, "Jesus and the Spirit" mp3 at DesiringGod.org, Desiring God 2005 Conference for Pastors ("This Is My Beloved Son!" Exulting in the Trinitarian Relationships of Jesus Christ) February 1, 2005, minutes 1-10. See also, "The Trinity of Persons" and "Jesus and the Father."

5. **To make us his brothers and sisters, and God's sons in the Son.** “that he might be the firstborn among many brothers” (Rom 8:29). “In Christ Jesus you are all sons of God, through faith . . . God sent forth his Son, born of a woman . . . that we might receive adoption as sons. And because you are sons, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts” (Gal 3:26; 4:4-6).

6. **To destroy the devil's power over death and free humans from death.** Jesus partook of flesh and blood “that through death he might destroy the one who has the power of death, that is, the devil, and deliver all those who through fear of death were subject to lifelong slavery” (Heb 2:14-15).

7. **To fulfill Old Testament promises and types.** For instance, the Messiah was to be a descendent of David (2 Sam 7:16 with Luke 1:32-33; Isa 9:6-7, 11:1-16; Jer 23:5). Isaiah 53 predicted a suffering, despised and rejected servant who bore humanity's sin; compare Isaiah 53:3 with John 1:11. A descendent of Abraham will bring blessing to the world (Gen 12:3, 18:18; Acts 3:18, 24-26; Gal 3:8, 14, 16, 29). Jesus fulfilled hundreds of predictions in detail.

OUR RESPONSE

We need a Savior who is God and human. A human is not enough! Even if Jesus was God but he was not human, he would not be all that we need! Jesus is the Son of God who became man while continuing to be God, the man who is God and the God who became man. He is the one and only God-man who can be and do all we need to be saved. By raising Christ, God confirms that all Christ claimed is true, and that God has accepted Christ's sacrifice for our sins. Jesus is God the Son, the Messiah King reigning in his kingdom, our sins are forgiven through his death for sin, and we are justified by faith in him!

Thomas declares Jesus to be “my Lord and my God” (John 20:28).

Paul declares Jesus to be “our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ” (Titus 2:13).

Peter declares Jesus to be “our God and Savior Jesus Christ” (2 Pet 1:1).

John declares Jesus to be “the true God and eternal life” (1 John 5:20).

Who do you declare Jesus to be?

**Do you treat Jesus as God is to be treated? Do you love him? Do you obey him?
Do you delight in him? Do you worship him?**

**Do you rely on the Lord Jesus Christ to be your sin sacrifice of infinite value and
the only one who perfectly obeyed, so that you have right standing with God?**

**Is Jesus so marvelous and satisfying to you that you can't help telling others of his
greatness and excellence?**

The Nicene Creed of 325 A.D. affirmed the Bible's teaching that Jesus is God.

“We believe in one God, the Father Almighty, Maker of all things visible and invisible. And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God [the only-begotten; that is, of the essence of the Father, God of God], Light of Light, very God of very God, begotten, not made, being of one substance (ὁμοούσιον) with the Father; by whom all things were made [both in heaven and on earth]; who for us men, and for our salvation, came down and was incarnate and was made man; he suffered, and the third day he rose again, ascended into heaven; from thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead.

And in the Holy Ghost.

[But those who say: 'There was a time when he was not;' and 'He was not before he was made;' and 'He was made out of nothing,' or 'He is of another substance' or 'essence,' or 'The Son of God is created,' or 'changeable,' or 'alterable'—they are condemned by the holy catholic and apostolic Church.]”²⁹

²⁹ Philip Schaff, *Creeeds of Christendom, with a History and Critical notes. Volume I. The History of Creeeds* (Grand Rapids, CCEL Christian Classics Ethereal Library, 2005), 50-51.

Passages omitted in the received text are enclosed in brackets []. The CCEL edition in pdf format is a republishing of Schaff's work in 1876. Download <http://www.ccel.org/ccel/schaff/creeeds1.pdf>

Nike in the New Testament: Jesus Christ has niked and gives us nike victory

(adding to Day 44)

The Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has conquered (niked). (Rev 5:5)

Thanks be to God, who gives us the victory (nike) through our Lord Jesus Christ. (1 Cor 15:57)



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Nike is the Greek word for victory, conquer, and overcome. *Nike* is the Greek goddess of Victory, the god who can run faster than all others. She gives victory in battle and in sports. Phil Knight and Bill Bowerman chose the name *Nike* to say their running shoes are for the fastest, the winners of the race, the victors, the conquerors, the overcomers.

There is a statue of the goddess *Nike* at the entrance to the *Nike* headquarters in Beaverton Oregon. The *Nike* swoosh symbol was designed by Carolyn Davidson for \$35.00 in 1971. The swoosh represents the wings on the feet of the goddess *Nike*. The *Nike* swoosh has become one of the most recognized symbols in the world.

In 47 B.C., Julius Caesar defeated the king of Pontus and announced his victory in Latin with “Veni, vidi, vici” which means “I came, I saw, I conquered.” The word for “I conquered” is *vici* in Latin, and *nike* in Greek. The Romans spoke both languages. Rulers of the Roman Empire saw themselves as the great conquerors, the *nike* victors.

A group of names come from the word *nike* or *vici*, like Nick, Nicki, Nicole, Nicolette and Nicholas, or Vic, Vicki, Victor, and Victoria. They are to be victorious ones, conquerors, overcomers, *nikes*.

The New Testament uses *nike* thirty-four times. It presents Jesus as the great *nike* victor and conqueror, not Caesar. For centuries, the Latin church has hailed Jesus as “Christus Victor,” Christ the Victor, the *Nike* Christ. As soon as God announces Christ’s *nike* victory in Revelation 5 (quoted above), note how Jesus is praised for his *nike* victory at the cross:

The Lion . . . has conquered (niked) . . . Worthy are you to take the scroll and to open its seals, for you were slain, and by your blood you ransomed people for God from every tribe and language and people and nation, and you have made them a kingdom and priests to our God, and they shall reign on the earth. (Rev 5:5, 9-10)

Jesus has *niked* sin, Satan, death and hell by his death and resurrection. His *nike* victory over our sin brings us forgiveness and also conquers Satan’s claim on us, and the death and the hell we deserve. Christ’s shed blood on the cross purchased people from all people groups (16,000+) to belong to God and his kingdom, to stand in God’s presence to worship and serve him as priests, and to reign with Christ! This is *nike* victory for Christ and for us!

Note how Jesus used the word *nike*.

I have said these things to you, that in me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation. But take heart; I have overcome (niked) the world. (John 16:33)

The one who conquers (nikes), I will grant him to sit with me on my throne, as I also conquered (niked) and sat down with my Father on his throne. (Rev 3:21)

Jesus *niked* all the world’s temptations and the powers of evil in the world. He has *niked* our sin, Satan, death and hell. He now reigns in victory with the Father on his throne. Therefore in Christ is peace, while in the world is trouble. Jesus gives grace to *nike* all worldly trouble. Jesus Christ promises overcomers the *nike* victory of sitting with him on his throne!

Jesus made seven “those who overcome (*nike*)” promises in Revelation 2-3 (2:7, 11, 17, 26, 3:5, 12, 21). He calls us to overcome *nike* : leaving our first love for Christ for something else (2:4), persecution (2:10; 3:8, 10), false teaching, immorality and idolatry (2:14, 20), disobedience (3:2), and lukewarmness (3:16), so we do his will to the end (2:26).

Note how the Apostle John speaks of *nike* in other passages in Revelation.

They have conquered (niked) him (Satan) by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, for they loved not their lives even unto death. (Rev 12:11)

We *nike* Satan by trusting Christ’s blood and confessing Christ even to death.

They will make war on the Lamb, and the Lamb will conquer (nike) them, for he is Lord of lords and King of kings, and those with him are called and chosen and faithful. (Rev 17:14)

God reveals that when Jesus returns in glory, the kings of the earth and their armies will gather to fight against the Lord Jesus and his people. Those who are against Nike Jesus will never defeat him. But Jesus will *nike* them. We can joyfully join the right army now, as followers of the Lamb who is destined to *nike* over all.

I love how the Apostle John uses *nike* four times as he declares the following:

Everyone who has been born of God overcomes (nikes) the world. And this is the victory (nike) that has overcome (niked) the world--our faith. Who is it that overcomes (nikes) the world except the one who believes that Jesus is the Son of God. (1 John 5:4, 5)

People who rely on Jesus as God’s Son are born of God and can *nike* the world with all its evil! Depending on Jesus by faith for everything is the way to *nike*!

Note how the Apostle Paul uses the *nike* concept.

“Death is swallowed up in victory (nike).” “O death, where is your victory (nike)? O death, where is your sting?” . . . But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory (nike) through our Lord Jesus Christ. (1 Cor 15:54, 55, 57)

The *nike* victory of Jesus over death is given to us in fullness when the resurrected Christ returns and God gives his people resurrection bodies like our Lord!

Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or danger, or sword? . . . No, in all these things we are more than conquerors (supernikes) through him who loved us. (Rom 8:35, 37)

Paul says Christians are *supernikes* (one big word in Greek)! We are more than victorious, more than conquerors, as Christ keeps loving us through the worst others may bring upon us. We are *supernikes* when by Christ’s power we keep loving the Lord and others no matter how others treat us, just as Jesus did. This is *supernike* success in life.

God wants us to become his victorious ones, his conquerers, his overcomers through Christ. Every day we can *nike* because Christ has *niked*.

We can live with a *supernike* attitude. “Lord, thank you that Jesus has *niked* sin, Satan, death, and hell for me through his *nike* victory at the cross. Thank you that Jesus reigns in *nike* victory. *Nike* my selfishness and infuse me with your *nike* ways of pure *agape* love. Thank you that you give us *nike* victory in life based on the *nike* victory of Jesus Christ in his death and resurrection. Thank you that your global purpose is to ransom people by Christ’s blood from every people group to be with you enjoying you forever in *nike* victory.”

(For a complete list of *nike* in the New Testament, get a free download at www.GraceGodChrist.com
A helpful PPT on *nike* is also freely available at www.GraceGodChrist.com)

Tongues: does edification require understanding what is said?

In Acts 2, the Holy Spirit empowered disciples to speak of the mighty works of God in Christ in languages understood by the Pentecost pilgrims from around the Roman Empire. No seeking. No pleading. Totally unexpected. Wonderful! Amazement and conviction. However, years later in Corinth, some spoke in tongues no one could understand. Religious groups in Corinth prized tongues not understood as if it indicated connection with their god. In nearby Delphi, the priest of Apollo spoke in tongues in a frenzy then interpreted it as from Apollo. Many from all over the Empire paid big money for personal messages from Apollo. Pagan religions in Corinth prized tongues as more “spiritual” than speaking gospel truth. In 1 Corinthians 14, Paul gives principles to weed out unhelpful tongues while keeping Acts 2 tongues that can be understood, interpreted and edify others! What genius!

In 1 Corinthians 14, tongues that “no one understands” (2):

does not speak for upbuilding, encouragement, and consolation of others like prophecy (3)
is seeking to build up (edify) oneself rather than building up others (4)
is not of any benefit, good or profit (6)
is like no one knows what tune is playing (7)
is like no one recognizes the bugle (trumpet) call to prepare for battle (8)
is not intelligible so no one knows what is said (9), so it is just speaking into the air (9)
is like becoming a foreigner to the speaker and the speaker a foreigner to the hearer (11)
does not build up (edify) (12)
makes the mind unfruitful (14)
prevents the spirit and mind working together; Paul wants to pray and sing with his spirit and mind working together, like swimming with both his right arm and left! (15)
Don’t interpret this verse to promote the very thing that Paul is against throughout the chapter!
means nobody can say "Amen" since they do not know what is being said (16)
means the other person is not being built up (edified) (17)
does not speak words with the mind (intelligible words) to instruct others (19); five words that are understood are better than 10,000 words that are not understood
is like being out of your mind (23)
brings no conviction (24)
breaks the principle that everything must be done so that the church may be built up (26)

Principle - Edification does not occur unless the mind understands what is said!

Tongues that are not understood do not edify. Don’t do what does not edify others.

I’ve lived in South Korea and taught at the Missionary Training Institute. Evangelical Presbyterians are everywhere in Korea. Many speak in tongues in praise and prayer, not knowing what they are saying. Tongues not understood are an absolutely accepted part of conservative evangelicalism in Korea. I’m told the leading Presbyterian Seminaries in Korea teach that tongues are more “spiritual.” Like in North America, if I ask any questions about tongues and the principle of edification, the first half of 1 Corinthians 14:4 is quoted.

**“The one who speaks in a tongue builds up himself,
but the one who prophesies builds up the church” (1 Cor 14:4, ESV).**

For over 100 years now, the Pentecostal movement has quite successfully spread their teaching around the world that one of the purposes of tongues is “That we may edify ourselves. 1 Cor.14:4.”³⁰ If you praise the Lord in tongues, the Spirit edifies you without your mind understanding what you are saying. However, this interpretation goes against the clear emphasis in chapter 14 outlined above, and disagrees with the second half of verse 4 that only those speaking truth from God that the mind understands builds up (edifies) others!

“but the one who prophesies builds up the church.” (1 Cor 14:4b, ESV).

Only God’s truth in Christ in a language understood builds up God’s people! Context!

For 100 years, the new teaching ignores the very negative use of ‘himself, herself, myself’ pronouns in 1 Cor 10:24,33, 13:5, 14:4. If we read them as “Me,Me,Me,” we can see the extremely negative meaning of “builds up himself” in 1 Cor 14, obvious to Greek readers.

The last time Paul uses the ‘himself, herself, myself’ word is just twelve verses before when he said, “Love seeks not the things of herself (Me,Me,Me)” (1 Cor 13:5). When concluding 1 Cor 8-10, Paul uses it two more times. “Let no one seek the things of himself (Me,Me,Me), but the things of the other (You,You,You)” (1 Cor 10:24). “Not seeking the advantage of myself (Me,Me,Me), but of the many (You,You,You), that they may be saved” (1 Cor 10:33). Likewise, Philippians 2:4, 20-21 calls for You,You,You love like Jesus in 5-11, not Me,Me,Me.

Paul’s original readers clearly got his point in 1:4. “The one who speaks in a tongue builds up himself (Me,Me,Me)” It is unloving, for love seeks not the things of Me,Me,Me. Speaking what no one understands is seeking the things of Me,Me,Me not You,You,You. It is selfish and self-seeking. It doesn’t build up others with You,You,You love as prophecy does.

When tied to “himself” in a negative sense, “builds up” or “edifies” is negative, as in “His dirty joke is of no benefit to others, but only builds up himself” or “He strutted his stuff at the beach, but only to build up himself.” Thus in 14:4a, tongue-builds up-himself is in a triple negative sense which contrasts in 14:4b with the triple positive sense of prophesies-builds up-church.

I know a Pentecostal Revivalist devastated to conclude that some of the Me,Me,Me needy people speaking in tongues at the altar at his crusades were “edifying themselves” by the attention and respect they received from others as being “spiritual.” Paul speaks to this!

Paul corrects the selfishness and pride of the Corinthians in 1:10-13; 3:1-4; 4:6,7,18-21; 5:2; 6:6-8, 15-18; 8:1,9-13; 10:23-33; and 11:17-22. Now he corrects their selfish pride with tongues.

Using 1 Corinthians 14:4 to promote tongues not understood also goes against the passages where God’s Spirit of truth builds us up with God’s Word of truth as he bears witness to the crucified and risen Christ (Day 37, “The Spirit of truth helps us and teaches us God’s Word”).

Beware of using a verse from 1 Corinthians 14 to promote tongues that are not understood, when the clear emphasis in the chapter is to stop the use of tongues that are not understood!

Weep for the mindless spiritism throughout the church of Jesus Christ, when the Spirit of truth wants to fill our minds with the glory of God in Christ in God’s Word so we praise him! Plead for a church that earnestly prays and worships with the Spirit of truth focusing minds on the glory of the infinitely magnificent Christ and God’s glorious covenant promises in Christ! God’s command is, “Take . . . the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God, praying at all times in the Spirit” (Eph 6:17-18). Praying in the Holy Spirit uses God’s word!

³⁰ Robert Chandler Dalton, *Tongues Like As Of Fire* (Springfield: Gospel Publishing House, 1945), 104.

Dalton is quoting Harold Horton, an English Pentecostal, who he believed had written the best piece of work on Glossolalia ever written up to that time in 1945. Harold Horton was a prominent Pentecostal spokesman in Britain and the U.S.A., a prolific author and writer of articles in most English language Pentecostal periodicals. This quote is chosen to fairly represent the normal Pentecostal teaching in the 1920’s and 1930’s (and still today).

Ephesians 5:19 speaking to “yourselves” vs. “one another”

What difference does it make to translate Ephesians 5:18-19 as “be filled with the Spirit, speaking to *yourselves* in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs” rather than “speaking to *one another*?”

In Ephesians 5:19, the Greek uses the reflexive pronoun εαυτοις (yourselves), and in 5:21 the reciprocal pronoun αλληλοις (one another). If both words clearly communicate distinct meaning, and all English versions consistently translate αλληλοις in 5:21 as submitting to “*one another*,” why not consistently translate εαυτοις as “*yourselves*” in 5:19, as in only the KJV, rather than “*one another*,” as in all other major English translations?

**18 And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit;
19 Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord; 20 Giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ; (Eph 5:18-20, KJV)**

Translating εαυτοις as “yourselves” leads us to see that when the Spirit fills us, he first focuses *us* on God’s Word (psalms, hymns, spiritual songs) so we sing in joy to God with his truth (making melody, lit. *psalming*), give thanks, and submit to one another. Translating εαυτοις as “one another” leads us to focus only on how we relate to one another.

Speaking to a new convert, we might say, “In life in Christ in the Spirit, the Spirit of truth helps you prayerfully speak the word of God to *yourself* continually.” To a group we might say, “In life in Christ in the Spirit, the Spirit of truth helps you prayerfully speak the word of God to *yourselves* continually.” We mean that each believer speaks to themselves the truth of God. We don’t mean that each speaks to others. They may do so, but only after first speaking God’s truth to themselves so they have something worthwhile to say!

To one child, a mother says, “Go wash *yourself* and come to the table for lunch.” To all her children, a mother says, “Go wash *yourselves* and come to the table for lunch.” The children do not go and wash one another.

If a Greek father wants to emphasize to his children about to perform that they stay calm first of all by mediating on, and focusing on God’s promises, he can say, “Speak to *yourselves* (εαυτοις) God’s promises. Sing and make melody in your hearts to the Lord. Keep giving thanks for the privilege of performing. Then submit to one another; get along with one another; be a team.” The children do not go and first of all speak to *one another*. They may do so, but only after first speaking to themselves, recalling a promise of God which they then share. If the father wants to emphasize that they encourage *one another* with God’s promises, he says, “Speak to *one another* (αλληλοις) God’s promises.”

Most English translations rob us of the wonderful benefit that comes from Paul’s wise counsel. To walk in the Spirit, first of all prayerfully speak to yourselves God’s word of truth. This is what the Spirit is seeking to do in you as he fills you. Then with minds filled with the revelation of God in Christ, joyfully singing to the Lord with his truth will follow, as well as giving thanks and submitting to one another. Then when with others, we have a heart joyfully filled with God’s truth in Christ, prepared to share with others.

Note in Ephesians 5 that filling with the Spirit leads to praying in the Spirit, using the word of God. Then note that the next time Paul speaks of the Holy Spirit, God’s word and prayer is Ephesians 6:17-18. “Take . . . the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God, praying at all times in the Spirit, with all prayer and supplication. To that end keep alert with all perseverance, making supplication for all the saints.” In Ephesians 6 praying in the Spirit, the Spirit helps us take God’s word to *ourselves* to use in persevering prayer for *one another*. In Ephesians 5 praying in the Spirit, the Spirit helps us speak God’s word to *ourselves* so we rejoice *in God* with his truth in singing and thanksgiving, and submit to *one another*.

Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another (yourselves, εαυτους) in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to God. (Col 3:16, ESV, words in brackets added)

In Colossians 3:16, “Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly” directs us to take in the truth of Christ to ourselves first, “teaching and admonishing yourselves” (εαυτους), “singing . . . with thankfulness in your hearts to God.” As in Ephesians 5, εαυτους is the reflexive word in Greek, not the Greek reciprocal αλληλους (one another), but all major translations, even the KJV, translate εαυτους as “one another.” Note how psalms, hymns and spiritual songs are about Christ, the word of Christ, the mystery of God in Christ, as unfolded in Colossians 1-3.

There is nothing lost in translating εαυτους as “yourselves.” It still encourages teaching and singing God’s truth with others, but after we let Christ’s word first dwell richly in ourselves. There is something to be gained in translating εαυτους as “yourselves” and something lost in translating it as “one another.” We gain the wonderful aspect of first teaching and singing to ourselves the truth of Christ, to first of all let the word of Christ dwell in ourselves richly before we teach and sing with others. This is lost by translating εαυτους as “one another.”

If the translations would consistently translate the “yourselves” and “one another” words, nothing would be lost, but something precious would also be gained. We all need to meditate on the word of God constantly. The Spirit of truth is wanting to help us set our minds on God’s truth constantly. When the Spirit fills us, he first focuses *us* on God’s Word.

But you, beloved, building yourselves up in your most holy faith and praying in the Holy Spirit, keep yourselves in the love of God, waiting for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ that leads to eternal life. (Jude 20-21, ESV)

Two times the Greek reflexive εαυτους is translated properly as “yourselves” in Jude 20-21. Nothing is lost here; the passage leads us to build others up in our holy faith, but the point of building ourselves up first is gained, as it also could be in Ephesians 5 and Colossians 3. Why aren’t the different translations consistent to use “yourselves” rather than “one another” in Ephesians 5 and Colossians 3? The condition of our faith is first of all a personal responsibility for each of us to take care of daily in personal meditation. Then and only then are we properly prepared to build up others.

The Spirit of truth wants to personally build each believer up in faith in the word of God as each believer speaks to themselves the word of Christ and takes up their own sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. The Spirit of truth wants each believer to sing and make melody in their own heart to the Lord. The Spirit of truth wants to help each believer pray in the Spirit for others with perseverance. The Spirit of truth is wanting to help each believer keep themselves in the love of God by personally contending for the faith once for all delivered to the saints and not giving in to false teaching (Jude 3-4, 21). The Spirit of truth is wanting to help each believer stand firm in faith in God’s promises as they wait for the mercy of the Lord Jesus Christ to bring them into eternal life.

The Spirit wants to help each believer speak, share, and sing God’s truth with one another in order to build up one another. Of course the Spirit of love would lead us to love one another this way. However, we don’t need to inconsistently translate “yourselves” and “one another” for that point to be made at the expense of the call to personally feed on God’s word as the Spirit of truth first of all focuses each of us on the truth of the word of God in Christ!

Praying in the Spirit in Ephesians 5:18-20; 6:18 and Jude 20

(adding to Day 20)

¹⁸ And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit;
¹⁹ Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord; ²⁰ Giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ; ²¹ Submitting yourselves one to another (Eph 5:18-21, KJV)

¹⁷ and take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God,
¹⁸ praying at all times in the Spirit, with all prayer and supplication. To that end keep alert with all perseverance, making supplication for all the saints, (Eph 6:17-18, ESV)

²⁰ But you, beloved, building yourselves up in your most holy faith and praying in the Holy Spirit, ²¹ keep yourselves in the love of God, waiting for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ that leads to eternal life. (Jude 20-21, ESV)

Note how the Spirit, the truth of the word of God, and praying are in all three passages.

	The Holy Spirit	the Word of God	Praying in the Spirit
Eph 5	be filled with the Spirit in psalms, hymns and spiritual songs (truth from God's word)	speaking to yourselves melody (psalming) to the Lord, giving thanks always for all things unto God	singing and making melody (psalming) to the Lord, giving thanks always for all things unto God
Eph 6	the sword of the Spirit praying in the Spirit	the sword of the Spirit the word of God	praying at all times in the Spirit
Jude	praying in the Holy Spirit in your most holy faith	building yourselves up	praying in the Holy Spirit

In Ephesians 5, filling with the Spirit leads to praying in the Spirit using God's word. The Spirit of truth first helps us focus our minds on truths of God's Word (psalms, hymns and spiritual songs) to speak and sing God's truth to ourselves in meditation, and sing and make melody with God's truth to the Lord. This is a type of praying in the Spirit, and so is "giving thanks always" as the Spirit helps us apply God's word to every circumstance to always giving thanks to God based on his promises. The Spirit wants to fill hearts with God's truth so we sing in worship to God, thank God in everything, and submit to others.

The next time Paul speaks of the Holy Spirit, the word of God and prayer is Ephesians 6:17-18. "Take . . . the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God, praying at all times in the Spirit, with all prayer and supplication. To that end keep alert with all perseverance, making supplication for all the saints." The Spirit helps us take up his sword, the word of God, to always pray in the Spirit with perseverance in all prayer and supplication for all saints. Praying in the Spirit involves the Spirit helping us use God's word to pray.

Jude calls the church "to contend for *the faith* that was once for all delivered to the saints" (3) because ungodly people perverting God's grace have crept in (4). Jude commands believers to "keep yourselves in the love of God" by "building yourselves up in your most holy *faith* and praying in the Holy Spirit, . . . waiting for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ that leads to eternal life" (20-21). "Faith" contrasts with denying Jesus is Lord (4). Praying in the Spirit contrasts with being "devoid of the Spirit" (19, lit. not having the Spirit). "Faith" once again connects praying in the Spirit with using the truth of God's word in Christ to pray. Believers in Christ have the Spirit and are in the Spirit to pray in the Spirit with the truth of Christ.

In Ephesians 5 praying in the Spirit, the Spirit helps us speak God's word to ourselves so we rejoice in God with his truth in singing and thanksgiving. In Ephesians 6 praying in the Spirit, the Spirit helps us take God's word to ourselves to use in persevering prayer for one another. In Jude praying in the Holy Spirit, the Spirit helps us build ourselves up in our most holy faith in God's word so we pray with faith in the truths of God's word, wait with the promises of Christ's coming, and thus keep ourselves in God's love in Christ.

Being filled with the Spirit involves being filled with the word of God in Christ. Praying in the Spirit involves being filled with the word of God in Christ. The sword of the Spirit is the word of God. Take the sword of the Spirit to pray in the Spirit and walk in the Spirit.

It has been a tremendous encouragement to my soul to learn to pray with my eyes open on the word of God. Like a child on a treasure hunt, my eyes look at the word for whatever it says about God. As I find God my treasure revealed in his word, I rejoice with praise and thanks to my Lord. Like a child playing "I spy with my little eye," I look at God's word, and whenever I spy God in his word, I rejoice with praise and thanks to my Lord.

It has been a great encouragement to my wife and I to pray together with our eyes open on the word of God. We enjoy praising the Lord back and forth as we move through a passage and intersperse our praise with prayer for others based on the Scripture we are using.

For each day of the riches of grace in this book, we have encouraged a response of praise based on God's word. Praise that personally applies God's Word moves God's truth from the head to the heart. Praise changes Bible study into fellowship with God. Faith-filled praise based on God's promises in Christ is like drinking God's grace. Since God is different and better than all else, enjoying God with praise, love and doing his will gives different and better joy than all else. Praise using the word of God is the way of the Spirit.

So many prayers in church are so bereft of the word of God. So many prayers lack any praise to God for who God is, and so few praises are based on a specific verse. Many prayers reveal that the person praying is not thinking of any particular text in God's word. This is a sad and terrible problem today.

Jacob wrestled with God about the covenant promises God had made to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob (Gen 32:24-28). Jacob's name was changed to "Israel" because he wrestled with God in prayer based on his covenant promises. Very little prayer today is being a true Israelite, a faith-filled, Spirit-filled wrestler with God in prayer based on his words of promise.

Korean-style prayer is to pray out loud together at the same time. In times of prayer for missionaries at MTI, I notice how many people pray for a brief time in English or Korean, then pray in tongues. It seems like when we quickly run out of things to say, we revert to tongues. In general it is also true that Korean Christians are taught that tongues are more "spiritual." How sad that we do not know how to pray in the Spirit using the word of God.

Two Christians went up to church to pray, one praying in tongues, and one praying in the Spirit with God's word. One praised the Lord in tongues in a language he did not understand and prayed for others not knowing what he was praying. The other prayed relying on the Spirit to help him use the sword of the Spirit to praise the Lord using Scripture and to wrestle with God in prayer for others based on God's promises. What do you think? Do you believe the one praying in tongues is more "spiritual" and is "praying in the Spirit" more than the other? What have we done to praying in the Spirit with the word of God?

In Colossians, if someone claimed something made believers more "spiritual," Paul would say we are "filled" if we are in Christ in whom dwells the fullness of God (Col 2:9-10), and we can't add to Christ's supreme fullness and preeminence (Col 1:15-23). "Therefore, as you received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in him, rooted and built up in him and established in the faith, just as you were taught, abounding in thanksgiving" (Col 2:6-7). Don't be deluded by the plausible arguments of anyone who says receiving Christ the Lord does not provide all the spiritual wisdom and fullness God gives (Col 2:4). Beware of any who say that praying in tongues adds to the spiritual fullness we receive in Christ our Lord!

Super-supernaturalism vs. the supernatural life of Jesus

And when they had performed everything according to the Law of the Lord, they returned into Galilee, to their own town of Nazareth. And the child grew and became strong, filled with wisdom. And the favor of God was upon him. (Luke 2:39-40)

- 41 Now his parents went to Jerusalem every year at the Feast of the Passover.
42 And when he was twelve years old, they went up according to custom.
46 After three days they found him in the temple, sitting among the teachers, listening to them and asking them questions.
47 And all who heard him were amazed at his understanding and his answers.
48 And when his parents saw him, they were astonished. And his mother said to him, "Son, why have you treated us so? Behold, your father and I have been searching for you in great distress."
49 And he said to them, "Why were you looking for me? Did you not know that I must be in my Father's house?"
50 And they did not understand the saying that he spoke to them.
51 And he went down with them and came to Nazareth and was submissive to them. And his mother treasured up all these things in her heart.
52 And Jesus increased in wisdom and in stature and in favor with God and man. (Luke 2:41-52)

For not even his brothers believed in him. (John 7:5)

Then he went home, and the crowd gathered again, so that they could not even eat. And when his family heard it, they went out to seize him, for they were saying, "He is out of his mind." (Mark 3:21)

Was Jesus filled with the Spirit when he was a boy? Was he completely righteous and sinless in thought, motive and action, compared to all the sinful selfishness of his fallen brothers and sisters and friends? Did he have fullness of joy in his Father? Did he have a heart of faith, praise and surrender, contentment in God and joy in God as he studied, memorized and meditated on the word of God continuously?

Was Jesus super-supernatural? Did he fall on the ground in ecstasy? Did he have extraordinary spiritual experiences, visions, dreams, and words from the Lord? Or was he a young man full of Jewish reverence, faith, the Word and the fear of the Lord? Did Jesus stand out as super-supernatural? No! His brothers did not recognize him as special at all. They saw no super-supernaturalism. They never thought he demonstrated anything super-spiritual that made them think he was the Messiah. It never entered their minds. Jesus was a good boy. His life in God was supernatural in a way that appeared humanly natural.

When he was six years old, Jesus acted like a six year old, but with a heart after God's own heart. His family, relatives and community saw nothing super-supernatural, for when he was twelve, even though Jesus had a mind centered on God and his word in an extraordinary way, his parents were "astonished" about him at the temple and "did not understand" his saying that "I must be in my Father's house." They did not expect this.

Jesus was an ordinary boy in the eyes of his home town of Nazareth. Was he marked by super-joy that made him stand out? Did he have super-peace that was obvious to all? Did he have experiences of ecstasy that set him apart as really "spiritual?" No. No. No. Jesus did nothing super-supernatural that prepared Nazareth for his claim in the synagogue in Luke 4 that he was the Messiah of Isaiah 61. They were ready to throw him down the cliff!

Today there are many Christians who believe life in the Spirit should be super-supernatural. If you are filled with the Spirit you will regularly experience ecstatic praise to God, not knowing what you are saying. You will regularly experience dreams and visions. For instance, I know a Pastor who makes no decisions without a vision; if he needs a different car, he gets a vision of what kind of car God wants including the color, then he goes looking for that car.

Today many regularly get “words from the Lord,” personal messages from God giving personal direction to individuals. Some Pastors no longer preach through Bible books, but every week they wait on the Lord to give them a fresh word for their congregation. Others expect that healing miracles should be done regularly by those who really have the fullness of the Spirit. For others, if the Spirit is really working in a church meeting, people truly meeting God will be immobilized by being “slain in the Spirit.” All of these are considered as “normal” for the truly spiritual Christian.

**16 But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh.
17 For the desires of the flesh are against the Spirit, and the desires of the Spirit are against the flesh, for these are opposed to each other, to keep you from doing the things you want to do.
19 Now the works of the flesh are evident: sexual immorality, impurity, sensuality,
20 idolatry, sorcery, enmity, strife, jealousy, fits of anger, rivalries, dissensions, divisions,
21 envy, drunkenness, orgies, and things like these. I warn you, as I warned you before, that those who do such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.
22 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness,
23 gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law.
24 And those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires.
(Gal 5:16-17, 19-24)**

The New Testament clearly emphasizes walking in the Spirit as “supernatural.” It is natural to walk in the flesh. It is supernatural to walk in the Spirit, but this is not enough for the super-superspiritual.

But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.” (Acts 1:8)

The New Testament clearly emphasizes that life in the Spirit involves compassionate witness to others about the glory of Jesus Christ. But this is not enough for the super-spiritual.

**17 and take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God,
18 praying at all times in the Spirit, with all prayer and supplication. To that end keep alert with all perseverance, making supplication for all the saints, (Eph 6:17-18)**

The New Testament clearly says that praying in the Spirit involves using the sword of the Spirit, the word of God, in order to pray with perseverance for the saints. However, this is not enough for the super-spiritual, who instead of praying with Spirit-led focus on the word of God, instead consider it more spiritual to praise the Lord in ecstatic speech they do not understand. Minds emptied of God’s Word are more spiritual.

Did Jesus, the Logos, the Word of God, pray in a language he did not understand, so that his mind was not filled with the word of God? Is that more spiritual, more of the Spirit?

In heaven, will we praise the Lord in the Spirit in a language we don’t understand, so the Spirit isn’t filling and edifying our minds with God’s truth in Christ?!! That’s spiritual?

Because we live in a fallen world where there is something wrong with everything, and the glorious world of the kingdom of Christ is not yet, there is a longing for more than what we experience. Even if we are filled with the Word of God, rejoicing in full faith in the riches of God's grace in Christ, worshiping in the Lord's presence in prayer, with no interpersonal conflicts and no unconfessed sins, and we are even in an extra-beautiful location receiving all the beauty of creation around us as a gift for his praise, there is still a longing for more.

Our longings for God and his glory in Christ are so deep that they can only be fully met in his presence where there is fullness of joy, and pleasures forevermore (Psa 16:11).

It is helpful to understand that our longing for more, even in our best times of joy-filled fellowship with the Lord, is partly due to the flesh battle that wars within us which Jesus did not have. Jesus was truly tempted (Heb 2:18; 4:15), but inside us the flesh keeps on warring against the Spirit. We long for the redemption of the body, when the flesh war will cease.

History clearly shows the longing for more leading into super-supernaturalism. For instance, Montanism, which began in the 100's, and was also called the New Prophecy, differed from the accepted prophesy in the early church because Montanus, Prisca and Maximilla prophesied in a trance and spoke in the first person, "I, the Lord, say to you . . ." Even when the church rejected Montanism, its super-supernaturalism was still attractive to some into the 400's. The mystery religions around Corinth had ecstasy and spoke in the tongues of the god they worshipped. In the Great awakenings and Finney revivals in America there were those who thought it was more spiritual if you were shaking and rolling on the floor.

In Greece in New Testament times, the Oracle of Delphi claimed to speak personal words to individuals from Apollo. People travelled from all over to pay large sums for Apollo to give them counsel through the Oracle. This was very special spirituality in the Greek / Roman world of religion. Yet today many Christians claim to be "oracles." Perhaps they are small group leaders with the gift of "prophecy" or "the word of wisdom." Do you want a word from the Lord, a personal oracle from the Lord to you? Group members can ask their leader for a word from the Lord, and after prayer, they receive a private, personal message from God. Oracles abound in the church today in super-supernaturalism! "It's my gift!"

Super-supernaturalists do not accept that Christians who meet God in his Word each day in humble seeking and study of the mind of God in Bible books, who depend fully on the grace of God in Christ, who enjoy God's riches in Christ with heartfelt praise, thanks and surrender, who walk in the Spirit of Christ in spite of trials, loss and persecution, who find all in Christ, receive all from Christ and do all with Christ, who experience the love, joy and peace of the Holy Spirit, *are fully alive in Christ with fullness of life in the Spirit!*

Satan is glad if we think we are not as alive as we should be, nor as spiritual as we should be, nor experiencing all we should, so we leave walking with Christ by faith in God's promises to seek spiritual experiences. We end up in super-supernaturalism and spiritism, having separated the Spirit from the Word and from Jesus. Walking with Christ by faith in the word of God is not as spiritual as walking in the Spirit in super-supernatural experiences.

Colossians is written to warn against false teachers who want to lead Christians astray into super-spirituality. Even though Christ is the invisible God made visible, the Creator and Upholder of all, preeminent over all, in whom all the fullness of God dwells (Col 1:15-19), it is not enough to receive Christ Jesus the Lord then "walk in him, rooted and built up in him and established in the faith, . . . abounding in thanksgiving" (Col 2:6-7). Walking in Christ is not enough. You need encounters with angels and visions which you see in detail (Col 2:18).

For the false teachers in Colossians, even though you have “the riches of full assurance of understanding and the knowledge of God's mystery, which is Christ, in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge” (Col 2:2-3), it is not enough. Even though in Christ “the whole fullness of deity dwells bodily, and you have been filled in him, who is the head of all rule and authority” (Col 2:9-10), Christ's fullness is not enough.

What does Paul say about those who teach that faith in Christ is not enough?

“Let no one disqualify you, insisting on asceticism and worship of angels, going on in detail about visions, puffed up without reason by his sensuous mind, and not holding fast to the Head, from whom the whole body, nourished and knit together through its joints and ligaments, grows with a growth that is from God” (Col 2:18-19).

Picture a new convert that receives Christ Jesus the Lord then walks in him, rooted and built up in Christ and established in the faith, as taught by the Apostles, abounding in thanksgiving (Col 2:6-7). Beside this new convert is a modern Christian, seeking and rejoicing in their super-supernatural experiences. Do you think the modern Christian is more “spiritual?” Do you think they have more of the Spirit? If so, are you not (perhaps unwittingly) saying that being justified by faith in Christ and walking in Christ in the Spirit in the word of God, enjoying God's riches in Christ is not enough? Are you not repeating the principle of the Colossian heresy? Are you not promoting spiritual experience that goes beyond what Paul says is normal Christian supernaturalism in Christ into heretical super-supernaturalism?

During his public ministry revealing his Messiahship, the miracles of Jesus certainly were supernatural acts of power never seen before. The voice from heaven at his baptism, at his transfiguration and with the crowd in Jerusalem in John 12:28 were all clearly supernatural and extraordinary. The resurrection of Christ is an unrivaled supernatural act of power, exalting Christ above all (Eph 1:19-21). However, Christ didn't model the super-supernatural experiences some seek today and which some say are the real indicators of being spiritual. And for the first thirty years, Jesus was the one and only perfectly righteous human being ever, the most “spiritual” human being ever, and his family saw nothing super-supernatural!

What is it that we should most earnestly want to experience of the supernatural life of Jesus? Jesus, having left the Father's side, was deeply convinced that God and his ways were supremely satisfying and enjoyable; seeking satisfaction and joy apart from God was absolute non-sense and heinously evil. In the words of the center of the “in Christ diagram” on page xx, this led Jesus to walk with the Father in the Spirit and the Word, enjoying God and his grace, seeking, treasuring and praising the Lord, trusting God's grace for all needs, serving others in *agape* love, witness and prayer, rejecting anything sinful. However, even his own family did not recognize this supernatural life that was so non-super-supernatural!

We should want to experience the supernatural life of intimacy with God enjoyed by Christ and made possible by Christ. But where was this supernatural intimacy most wonderfully displayed? At the cross. There Jesus shows that he found the Father and his will to be supremely desirable, and there his supreme esteem for God is revealed in love that sacrifices for others. This is profound spirituality, but it is not at all what super-supernaturalists want!

The apostles were beaten and charged not to speak in the name of Jesus. “Then they left the presence of the council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer dishonor for the name. And every day, in the temple and from house to house, they did not cease teaching and preaching that the Christ is Jesus” (Acts 5:41-42). They found the Lord and his will to be supremely desirable, and their supreme esteem for God is expressed by love that costs!

Paul and Silas were unjustly and unlawfully beaten with rods and thrown in prison because of proclaiming the truth of the glory of Jesus. Instead of making threats or complaining to God, they were “praying and singing hymns to God” (Acts 16:25). They show that they found the Lord and his will to be supremely desirable, and their supreme esteem for God is revealed in love that sacrifices for others. This is profound spirituality, but it is not at all what super-supernaturalists want! They seem to want power but no cross.

Can we be more spiritual than to have the life of Jesus manifested in us? Isn't this what we want? However, Paul says he experienced Jesus in this profound intimacy through being afflicted, perplexed, persecuted and struck down, “always carrying in the body the death of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be manifested in our bodies. For we who live are always being given over to death for Jesus' sake, so that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our mortal flesh” (2 Cor 4:10-11). This is profound spirituality, but not what super-supernaturalists want! They seem to want power but no cross.

Supernatural life in God is being demonstrated around the world by people who love the Lord and their neighbor with God's agape love poured into your heart by the Spirit, sacrificing to take the gospel of Christ to all tribes, languages, peoples and ethnic groups (Rev 5:9-10). It is supernatural when God's people persevere in Christ under threats and opposition, faithfully loving and sharing the Lord as the supremely desirable and enjoyable God that he is, but it is not what the super-supernaturalists seek.

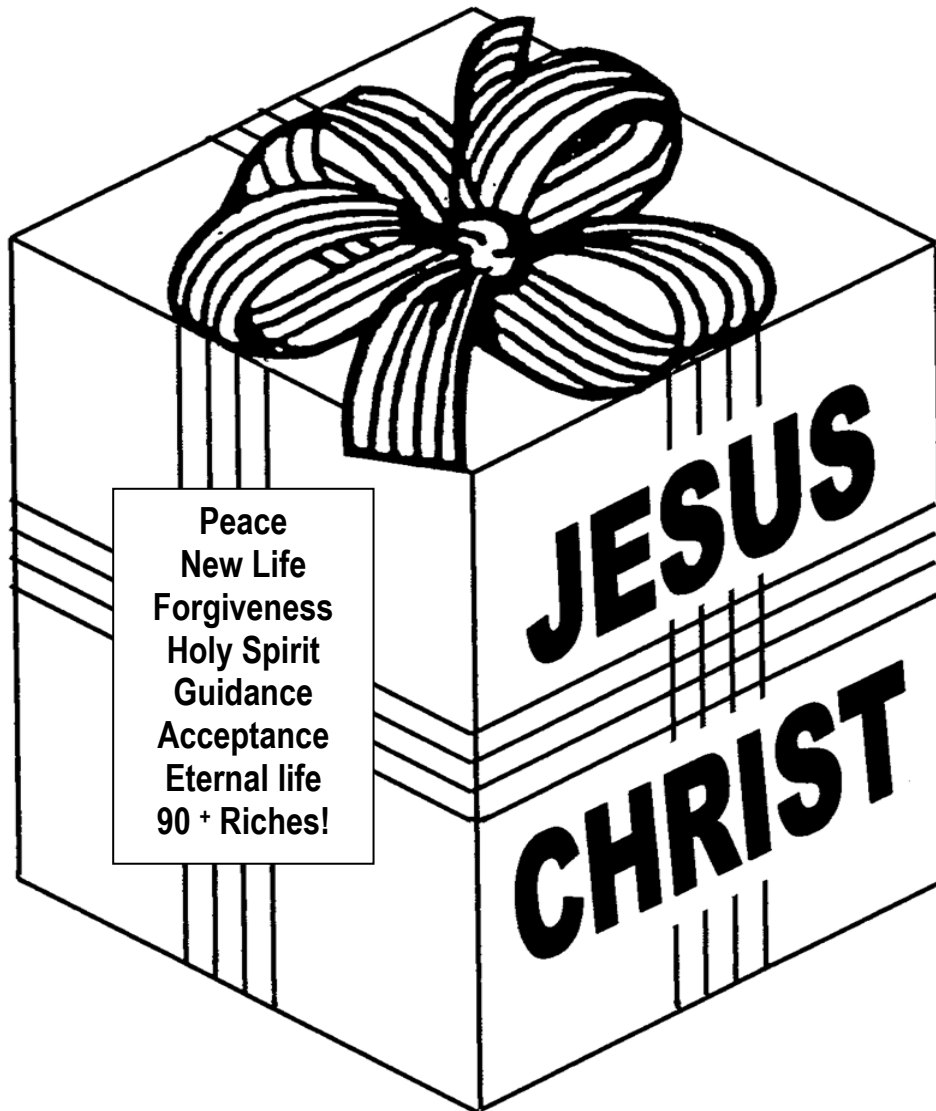
Many missionaries have given up the comforts and security of their homeland to go with the gospel of Christ to very poor, hot, disease-ridden people groups. When the electricity goes off, they are soaked in their sweat, unable to sleep. They suffer with malaria and other diseases they would not have back home. They spend themselves and their own money for the needs all around them. They disciple the new converts and provide jobs for those rejected by their families and the anti-Christian society. Through it all, they walk in the Spirit of Christ, convinced that God and his ways are supremely satisfying and enjoyable; they believe there is more joy doing God's will to God's glory in their difficult field than being back in their homeland unwilling to surrender all for others. Their supreme esteem for God is revealed in love that sacrifices for others. They live in supernatural life in Christ, but some would criticize them that they do not live a super-supernatural life in Christ, and if they only would, there would be more converts!

Our hearts long for connection with God in profound intimacy, joy and supernatural power. Our flesh can crave super-superspiritualism that goes beyond even what Jesus experienced. Don't be deceived. Don't be led away from the joy of the Lord through faith that obeys his Word in a life of sacrificial love, led astray to believing that “normal” life in Christ in the Spirit involves super-supernatural experience and ecstatic feelings. Be satisfied with the grace of God in Christ. Drink with joy. Surrender to love with the love of Christ at the cross.

The supernatural life of intimacy with God enjoyed by Christ and made possible for us by Christ was most wonderfully displayed at the cross. It is supernatural to treasure the Lord and his will as supremely desirable, and to express this supreme esteem for the Lord with Christ's love in the Spirit that sacrifices all for others. This is supernatural spirituality, even though many do not recognize it, nor others think it is spiritual enough.

If today's super-supernaturalists observed the sinless Jesus in his 20's, he wouldn't be “spiritual” enough, just as his family saw nothing super-supernatural. Beware! Glorify God by walking in Christ in the Spirit and God's Word, enjoying God and his grace in Christ energizing us to constantly sacrifice ourselves for the good of others!

**God's gift of Jesus Christ
is like a big gift with many other gifts inside**



**Receive, open, enjoy and put to use
all God freely gives to meet all our needs
through his gift of Jesus Christ,
energized to serve others with God's love in Christ!**

Important notice about free PPT diagrams

“The Grace of God in Christ PPT”

I have a PPT with a picture for each of the days of riches.

I think they are super helpful!

Each slide has what God gives us in Christ, a Bible verse and a picture.

English, Korean, Chinese, Nepali, Indonesian and French.

The diagrams are transferable concepts for any language.

“Daily Praise for the Grace of God in Christ” PPT

This is a summary list of the 100 riches to put on a smartphone.

It organizes the riches into seven days of praising.

I enjoy praising the Lord for a few minutes each day.

“How did Jesus change our understanding of God?” PPT

The PPT's must always be free because of copyright laws for various graphics such as Microsoft clip art and some pictures from the internet.

You can not make copies for profit.

The PPT's and other free resources can be downloaded from
www.GraceGodChrist.com

Please send the PPT's on to friends and missionaries.

I think they are super helpful and encouraging.

I love how the pictures further sow God's truth in my heart
and results in more praise.

Helpful comments or questions?

Email John at: johncrozieris@gmail.com

**Today's generation is visual.
We think and learn with visuals.
We watch videos and movies.
We post our pics on Facebook,
Instagram and Twitter.
We download and upload YouTube clips.**

**Today's generation spends a lot of time on Smartphones.
Many are numbing their minds with endless gaming, pitching
out, off in another world, playing with their Smartphones on
the bus, while having coffee with friends, or walking along the
street not paying attention to what's going on.
Many guys are becoming addicts to porn.**

**I want Christians to have something
for their Smartphones and iPads
that truly nourishes their minds and hearts
rather than numbing them with games
or poisoning them with porn.**

**I long for Christians to start spending a few minutes
here and there during the day enjoying
"Finding True Joy"
"God's Gifts of Delight in Christ"
or "Lord, thank you!"**

**I dream of the Smartphone generation using their
Smartphones to become joyfully satisfied and preoccupied in
God's fullness and love in Christ.**

**Please help others get these PPTs at
www.GraceGodChrist.com**

**All God's gifts of grace in Christ were purchased for us
by Jesus and paid for by his death on the cross!
It is finished, paid in full!**

justified, declared righteous ransomed, redeemed
propitiation, sin atoned, wrath turned away
forgiven peace with God reconciled eternal life
adopted sons welcomed, accepted filled, complete
blessed with every blessing
Christ is our wisdom from God, righteousness
and sanctification and redemption
delivered from the domain of darkness into
the light of the kingdom of the beloved Son

in Christ and Christ in us in the Spirit and the Spirit in us, God's temple in God the Father and Father in us
immersed in the Father, Son and Holy Spirit Father, Son and Holy Spirit fellowship with us
access to God and his grace answered prayer grace at the throne of grace
every need supplied the Spirit prays for us, helps us pray
Christ intercedes for us as our one mediator Christ advocates his propitiation in our defense
immersed into Christ in death and resurrection united with Christ in death and resurrection
old self in Adam crucified and buried with Christ new self in Christ raised and alive with Christ
set free from sin body members instruments for righteousness under Christ and his abundant grace
slaves of Christ for righteousness joined to Christ one with Christ seated with Christ
hidden with Christ in God released from the law to be married to Christ
under the law of the Spirit of life in Christ the Spirit and God's love poured in
rivers of living water of the Spirit flow out of us immersed in the Spirit
born of the Spirit given the Spirit receive the Spirit
have the Spirit the Spirit comes on us, falls on us
anointed with the Spirit sealed with Spirit, guaranteed inheritance
the Spirit of truth helps and teaches us
the Spirit leads and sanctifies us
empowered by the Spirit as ambassadors for Christ
the Spirit gifts for service the Spirit fills us
circumcised, set apart to God in the Spirit
immeasurably great power God's workmanship
led in triumphal procession and nuke victory
members of Christ's body brothers and sisters
branches in Christ's vine
Chosen race, royal priesthood, holy nation,
God's possession, God's people
fellow citizens with the saints members of God's household
citizenship in heaven hope of glory
inheritance, heir, fellow heir with Christ at death
made perfect in his presence glorified to be like Jesus
into heavenly kingdom enter the joy of the Lord
delivered from wrath to come God's good work completed
resurrection body like Jesus married to the Lamb every tear wiped away
see God's face reign forever loved and saved in the New Covenant

Also by John Crozier

Know Your God
Thirty Days of Enjoying the Lord and His Character

This is a study of God's attributes, with concise definitions, several verses to meditate on for each characteristic, and several applications to life. There is nothing better for humans to contemplate than the awesome, beautiful, infinitely perfect being and nature of God himself, and then to dwell on the Lord and his riches of grace given through the death and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Two key fountains to constantly drink from are God's character and his riches in Christ. They are really one fountain, the fountain of God in Christ, for God's grace in Christ unites us with the Lord to know him in his eternal fellowship and glory. *Know Your God* focuses on God's character. *The Grace of God in Christ* focuses on God's riches of grace in Christ. Both are available in ESV as free eBooks at www.GraceGodChrist.com

Alive, Self-existent
Active Spiritual Personal
Self-conscious Free Self-determining
Independent Absolute Wise Intelligent
Infinite Eternal Incomprehensible
Omniscient Omnipotent Sovereign
Omnipresent Immanent
Transcendent Immense
Faithful Holy
Righteous Perfect
Love Just
Longsuffering Patient
True Truthful Gracious
Merciful Unchanging Jealous
Zealous Wrathful Good Humble
Oneness and Trinity of Father, Son and Spirit
Creator Upholder/Sustainer Savior
Shepherd Judge King
Joy in Himself



Enjoy and Delight in the LORD

Do the many riches of the grace of God in Christ make you overflow with thanks and treasure the Lord as your supreme joy?

Repentance toward God and  faith in our Lord Jesus Christ



Do you know how rich you are in Christ, united with the Lord to know him in his eternal fellowship and glory in Christ?

Do you rest in Christ's cross to freely provide all you need or struggle in self-effort, seeking satisfaction from temporary things?