

Men in Christ – December 2019

2 Corinthians 5:17-19 *So for anyone who is in Christ there is a new creation: the old is passed away, and an all new being has come. It is all God's work; he reconciled us to himself through Christ and entrusted to us the work of reconciliation. I mean, God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself, not holding anyone's wrongdoing against them, and entrusting the Word of reconciliation*

Galatians 6:14-15 *But far be it from me to glory except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world; for neither circumcision counts for anything, nor uncircumcision, but only a new creation.*

Ephesians 2:13 *But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near in the blood of Christ. For he is our peace, who has made us both one, and has broken down the dividing wall of hostility, by abolishing in his flesh the law of commandments and ordinances, so that he might create in himself one new man in place of the two, thereby making peace; and reconcile us both to God in one body through the cross, thereby bringing hostility to an end.*

In what way (or to what extent) did Christ create us as a new person? Ephesians 2:15 reveals that the new person is created “in himself,” that is, “in Christ.” The use of parallelism in this verse is critical: He abolished the law of the commandments in ordinances “in his flesh,” and he created the new life “in himself.” He dealt with the segregating ordinances in his flesh that he might create the once divided Jews and the Gentiles into one new man “in himself” Christ is not only the Creator of life - he also creates the new man, making believers are more than people with a conviction. Christ is the very essence of the new person, making God’s divine nature one entity with humanity. The Greek word rendered in here can also have an elemental significance, implying that the new man was created with Christ I his divine being. According to Colossians 3:5, Christ is the believer’s life. In the Spirit he came into the believer to be their life inwardly. He now unites Godself to his new creation - that he might begin to dwell within them, and gradually bring them into a complete union with God in Christ. The Lord Jesus prophesied concerning this mutual indwelling to be accomplished on the day of his resurrection: “In that day you shall know that I am in the Father and you in me and I in you” (John 14:20). Paul prayed that, based on this initial indwelling, Christ would go on to make his home in the believers’ hearts (Ephesians 3:17). In his epistles, Paul also frequently directed the believers to the indwelling Christ, with phrases such as “Christ in you” (Colossians 1:27); “Christ is in you” (Romans 8:10); “Christ lives in me” (Galatians 2:20); and “Jesus Christ is in you” (2 Corinthians 13:5); that through Christ and in Christ, the believers may be united to God (Ephesians 2:18; John 14:10; 17:21).

God’s Purpose

It is critical that we see Christ’s redemption in the larger context of God’s purpose. Did God redeem man only because man was a sinner otherwise destined to perish? No, God’s purpose in salvation was a new life! The Bible reveals that God’s will for man is timeless, predating creation, and that Christ’s redemption is its goal. According to this purpose, God wants to be intimately united with man by entering human life. Therefore, we are to be cleansed - through faith. In this new man, there is neither Jew nor Greek, but Christ is all and in all (Colossians 3:10-11). Christ is everything. What the believers are in their natural constitution, in their corrupted human nature has no part in the new man. Their nationalities, their cultures, their social statuses, their religious ordinances, and all other things which distinguish and divide them have all been annulled in the death of Christ. Religion, race, human philosophies and all human ego and divisions die in the cross. The substance of the new man is God’s nature in renewed humanity.