In Christ

Prepared by Nathan L Morrison for Sunday September 13th, 2020

Text: II Corinthians 5:14-17

### Intro

1. We all want to feel special!
	1. Have you ever wanted to be part of a club or business organization (Costco or Busch Gardens, etc.) for the benefits (Shopping, rental cars and travel discounts, or Exclusive events, pricing, parking, etc.)? *(Some businesses offer exclusive VIP lounges at airports)*
	2. Whatever it is, to get those benefits you must be a member, you must be ***in*** the group.
2. John 3:14-15; 12:32
	1. Jesus said that if He, like the brazen serpent in the days of Moses (Num. 21:4-9), was lifted up, He would draw all men to Himself.
	2. He used this O.T. account to teach the message of the gospel and man’s need for a Savior.
	3. All men have been bitten by the viper of sin, and the only cure is to look in obedient faith to the cross of Calvary where the Son of God died and shed His blood for our sins!
3. II Corinthians 5:14-17
	1. When a person obeys the gospel and comes to Christ, they are renewed spiritually and becomes a new creature *(new self – Rom. 6:4, 6; Eph. 4:22-24; Col. 3:9-11)*
		1. Old things have passed away (former manner of life), now that person walks “in newness of life” (*Rom. 6:4)* no longer living for themselves but for Christ!
	2. Everything that really matters depends on one’s being “in Christ” (Exclusive benefits for those “in Christ”):
		1. Happiness in life, Hope in death, Salvation in eternity!
4. In Christ are found the blessings of God!

#### In Christ: Happiness In Life

* 1. II Cor. 5:17: If in Christ, one is a “new creature, the old things passed away.”
		1. How does one get “into Christ” to become a “new creature?”
	2. Gal. 3:26-27
		1. Baptism puts a person “in Christ.”
		2. Rom. 6:3-7: Baptism crucifies the “old self” with Christ, so that one comes up out of the waters of baptism to “walk in newness of life.”
		3. Many teach that “faith only” or “repentance” is all that is needed to put a sinner into Christ. If so, why didn’t Paul say:
			1. “For all of you who believed into Christ,” or
			2. “For all of you who repented into Christ?”
	3. Col. 3:15: In Christ there is peace and gratitude!
		1. In Christ there is peace (Phil. 4:6-9) and salvation (Eph. 5:23) of the body (church – Col. 1:18) – One can truly love life (I Pet. 3:10-12)!
		2. If one is “in Christ” they have been baptized and became a “new creature!”
	4. II Cor. 12:10; Phil. 4:11
		1. Paul, after stating that he prayed to God 3 times to remove a “thorn in the flesh” (II Cor. 12:7-10), said that he is “well content with weaknesses, with insults, with distresses, with persecutions, with difficulties, for Christ's sake; for when I am weak, then I am strong.”
		2. Paul said, “I have learned to be content in whatever circumstances I am.”
		3. He went on to describe that the circumstances of life don’t dictate his happiness, but that he learned to be content in adversity and prosperity because it is Christ who strengthens him! (Phil. 4:11-13)
		4. In Christ, one can be happy in this life, even with its ups and downs!
	5. Once in Christ one can truly enjoy and have happiness in life (both here and eternal life!)

#### In Christ: Hope In Death

* 1. II Cor. 5:17: In Christ, one is a “new creature, the old things passed away” and “new things have come.”
	2. Jn. 15:1-6: Jesus used the figure of the vine and branches to teach faithfulness.
		1. 15:4: The command to “Abide” implies there is a possibility to not abide – Apostasy is possible (despite the teachings to the contrary by some)
		2. Why abide? *“TO BEAR FRUIT!”*
		3. Jn. 8:31: Must “continue” in Christ’s word to truly be His disciple.
		4. “Continue” is same word used for “abide” *(G3306: menō).*
	3. Some do not “abide” in Christ:
		1. Some fall from grace – Gal. 5:4
		2. Some depart from the faith – I Tim. 4:1
		3. Some deny the faith – I Tim. 5:8
		4. Some overthrow the faith – II Tim. 2:18
	4. We must “abide” in Christ to have hope in death:
		1. To abide in the doctrine (teaching) of Christ – II Jn. 9
		2. To abide in holiness and purity – Rom. 12:1-2; I Jn. 3:3
		3. To abide in faithful obedience to Christ’s commands – Jn. 15:14; I Jn. 3:21-24
	5. II Tim. 4:6-8
		1. In Christ & continued (abided) faithfulness in His word one has hope in death!
		2. Death has no power over one who has “kept the faith” as they will be rewarded by Christ! (I Jn. 2:25: The promise is eternal life!)
	6. If one is “in Christ” they have hope even in death!

#### In Christ: Salvation In Eternity

* 1. II Cor. 5:17: In Christ, the old things passed away” and “new things have come.”
	2. Rev. 14:13
		1. “Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord”
		2. “So that they may rest from their labors, for their deeds follow with them.”
		3. Rev. 2:10: Faithfulness till death is necessary to have the hope of heaven
	3. Phil. 1:21: The apostle Paul was able to say:
		1. “For to me, to live is Christ and to die is gain.”
		2. Why could he make such a statement?
			1. He had been baptized into Christ – Acts 22:16; Rom. 6:3
			2. He served a life abiding in Christ – II Tim. 4:6-8
	4. I Pet. 1:3-4: Once in Christ and after living a faithful life, when one dies “in the Lord” they will inherit their reward of Heaven!
		1. Heaven is reserved for the faithful and if they overcome the trials and storms of life they will inherit the home of God – Rev. 21:7!
	5. If one is “in Christ” and remains faithful till death they will inherit Heaven, the home of God Almighty!

## Conclusion

1. Jesus said He would draw all men to Himself in His sacrifice on the cross *(Jn. 12:32).*
2. The apostle Paul said we get “into Christ” through faith in baptism *(Gal. 3:26-27).*
3. Paul also says, “If anyone is in Christ, he is a new creature; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come” *(II Cor. 5:17) –* Rev. 21:5-6: God will make all things new!
4. Only in Christ are found the blessings of God: Happiness in life, hope in death, and salvation in eternity! (Must be in Christ for the benefits!)
5. Blessed is the one who gets into Christ, abides in Christ, and dies in Christ!
6. Are you “in Christ?” *(The alternative is eternal punishment! – II Thess. 1:7-9)*
7. If you are not a Christian, you need to be. Repent and be baptized into His name!
8. If a Christian, are you faithfully abiding in Christ? Repent and be renewed!
9. Whatever your requests, let them be made known ***NOW*** while we stand & sing!