

God sent His Son, Jesus Christ, to this world to be the Savior of mankind. But it was the apostle Paul that God chose to explain this good news of salvation. Paul does this by using a key phrase that runs through all his epistles. If you were to take out this phrase there would be very little left of Paul's exposition of the gospel. That phrase is "in Christ" or "in Christ Jesus." The truth expressed by this phrase is also expressed by other similar phrases such as "in Him," "together with Him," "in the Beloved," "in whom," etc. All these phrases express the same "in Christ" idea or motif.

The truth behind this phrase was first introduced by Christ Himself when He told His disciples to "abide in Me." These are the undergirding words of the gospel. If we do not understand what the Bible means by the expression "in Christ," we will never be able to fully understand the good news of the gospel. Everything that the Bible offers mankind, with regard to our salvation, it does so in Christ. Outside of Him, we have nothing but sin, condemnation, and death.

The "in Christ" concept is based on Biblical solidarity, the idea that all mankind constitute or share a common life. To illustrate Biblical solidarity, let's look at the way the writer of Hebrews applies this concept masterfully in describing how the heavenly priesthood of Christ is superior to that of the Levitical priesthood. First he establishes that Melchizedek blessed Abraham (Hebrews 7:1), and that Abraham paid tithes to Melchizedek (Hebrews 7:2, 4). He then shows how the one who blesses is greater than the one who is blessed (Hebrews 7:7).

This is where the writer uses Biblical solidarity to make his key point. He shows that Levi met Melchizedek and paid tithes to him through Abraham when he was still in the loins (or body) of Abraham (Hebrews 7:9, 10). What the writer is showing is that Melchizedek actually blessed Levi, and that Levi paid tithes to Melchizedek, the greater. Therefore, Melchizedek is greater than Levi. And since Jesus is a priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek (Hebrews 7:11, 17, 21), His priesthood is superior to that of the Levitical priesthood!

Scripture reveals three fundamental facts that are based on Biblical solidarity. We have to accept them by faith, although we may find them hard to understand. These three facts are as follows:

condemned, now you are justified. We are told in 2 Corinthians 5:18, 19 that in Christ, not only believers, but the whole world was reconciled to God. The person in 2 Corinthians 5:17 is the one who (1) by faith enters into Christ (see Lesson 6, especially Questions 3, 4, and 9-12), and (2) is baptized into Christ (see Lesson 7, especially Questions 1, 5, 6, and 8).

18. What two things did Christ accomplish by His death and resurrection? 2 Timothy 1:8-10

- (verse 10):
- (verse 10):

19. What two things must we do to be saved? Mark 16:15, 16

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Your only hope of salvation is to believe in Christ and to be baptized into Him. (We will study what it means to be baptized into Christ in Lesson 7).

### My Response to Lesson 3

- Do you believe that some 2000 years ago, God placed the entire human race into Jesus Christ, the second Adam? Do you also accept that by His perfect life and sacrificial death, He rewrote your history, changing your status from condemnation unto death to justification unto life?

Response: \_\_\_\_\_

eternal life. This includes those who through no fault of their own never heard the gospel but were faithful to the light they had. (See Romans 2:14-16).

13. What assurance does John give to those who believe in Christ? 1 John 5:13

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14. By believing in Jesus Christ, what do we become? John 1:12

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What a privilege, that by receiving Christ by faith we can all become sons and daughters of God (see 1 John 3:1, 2).

15. If we hear and believe God's Word, what will be the result? John 5:24

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We pass from death to life by accepting Christ as our personal Savior. However, the hope of the Christian is in the resurrection, when Christ comes the second time to take believers to heaven (see 1 Corinthians 15:22, 23).

16. What does Christ become to those who believe in Him? Romans 10:4

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The word "end" means something completed or fulfilled. Christ perfectly obeyed the law on our behalf when He was on this earth (see Matthew 5:17). This obedience becomes ours by faith in Him and we stand justified before God.

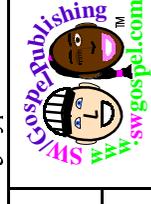
17. What happens when you accept the gift of Christ's righteousness? 2 Corinthians 5:17

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On the cross, Christ's death brought our condemned human life to an end. Thus by His death, humanity has been redeemed from sin. In exchange, God gave humanity the life of His Son in the resurrection. When you accept Jesus by faith you become a new creation in Christ. Before you were a sinner, now you are righteous. Before you stood

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1. God created all men in one man – in Adam.
2. Satan ruined all men in one man – in Adam, and
3. God redeemed all men in one man – in Christ.

It is this last fact that constitutes the good news of the gospel and gives us everlasting hope. As you study God's Word regarding the "in Christ" motif or idea, may your eyes be opened to the matchless charms of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

1. In order to save mankind, in whom did God put us?  
1 Corinthians 1:30

In order to qualify Christ to legally be our Savior, God had to first unite the divine life of His Son with our corporate, condemned life that needed redeeming. It is through this union that Christ qualified to be our substitute and representative. Then by His perfect life and sacrificial death, He satisfied all the demands of the law on our behalf and thus changed our legal status from condemnation to justification. In Christ, God has given humanity a new history that fully qualifies us for heaven. This is the incredible good news of the gospel!

2. Who are the two men responsible for our death and resurrection? 1 Corinthians 15:21, 22



Because the human race is composed of the descendants of Adam, his sin brought death to all mankind. But thank God, in Christ we have been given the hope of the resurrection to life.

3. What were the first and the last Adam made to be?  
1 Corinthians 15:45  
(First Adam):  
(Last Adam):

The word Adam, in Hebrew, means mankind. By his sin, the first Adam lost the Holy Spirit and introduced condemnation and death for the entire human race. God put us into Christ who became the last Adam, the second representative of the human race. This renewed the Holy Spirit, and by His obedience, Jesus reversed mankind's destiny by introducing justification and life for all mankind. As we shall see, this is the incredible good news of the gospel.

4. Because of one man's offense what passed on to all mankind? Romans 5:18a

Since the human race is the multiplication of Adam's life (see Acts 17:26), we all inherit a life that has sinned and therefore stands condemned to death. While God does not hold us responsible for Adam's sin, nevertheless, because we were in Adam when he sinned, we inherit his death sentence.

5. Because of one man's obedience what passed on to all mankind? Romans 5:18b

Just as all die because all have sinned in Adam, so also God made it possible for all to obey in Christ and stand *justified to life* in Him. However, what God has obtained for mankind in Christ is a "free gift." Like any gift we cannot enjoy it until we receive it by faith (see Romans 5:17). The good news of the gospel is that **"God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life" (John 3:16).**

6. When did God plan our redemption in Christ? Ephesians 1:4

Even before we were created in Adam, God had already planned our salvation in Christ. God predestined all men to be adopted as His children in Christ (Ephesians 1:5), not because we were good or deserved it, but because of His unconditional love for us. The moment you accept Christ as your Savior, God looks at you as "accepted in the Beloved" (Ephesians 1:6).

7. While still dead in sins, what three things did God do for us in Christ? Ephesians 2:5, 6

These three actions are what God has accomplished in Christ for the entire human race. Together they constitute the good news of the

gospel. In Christ God has obtained salvation full and complete for all mankind. However, for these actions to become ours personally, there must be a human response. That response is our faith.

8. How do we experience this salvation obtained for all mankind in Christ? Ephesians 2:8, 9

Salvation is by grace alone in what Christ has done. This is God's supreme gift to mankind. But this grace has to be made effective through faith.

9. What is the wages of sin? Romans 6:23a

By nature, as well as by performance, we are sinners and deserve death since all have sinned and come short of the glory of God (Romans 3:23).

10. What is the gift of God in Christ? Romans 6:23b

While death is wages we earn, eternal life is entirely a "free gift" that comes from God through the life and death of Jesus Christ. This is what it means to be saved by grace alone.

11. What gift has God given mankind in His Son? 1 John 5:11

None of us can escape death, the "grim reaper." But by faith in Christ we are able to pass from death to eternal life (see John 5:24).

12. What are the two options we have regarding this gift of life in Christ? 1 John 5:12

Because God is love, He does not force the gift of life on anyone. The choice is ours. Only those who receive Christ by faith will experience