



**Truth Seekers
Fellowship**

Equipping The Faithful To Be Fruitful

PHASE 2

MilktoMeat Book 3

Walking In THE TRUTH Part 01 Realizing Your New Identity in Christ

AWARE > ALIVE > **AWAKE** > FREE > FAITHFUL > FRUITFUL



Truth Seekers Fellowship

Equipping The Faithful To Be Fruitful

WALKING IN THE TRUTH

Part 1: Realizing Your New Identity in Christ

“I am The Way, **The Truth** and The Life;

No one comes to the Father

except through me.”

Jesus the Messiah

[John 14:6]

| AWARE | ALIVE | **AWAKE** | FREE | FAITHFUL | FRUITFUL |

Walking in The Truth Part 1: Realizing Your New Identity in Christ

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For
Tom Murray
who taught us the importance of
teaching the truth, in the right order, at the right time.

And many thanks to
all our students over the years
who have served as our
editors, encouragers and supporters.

CHRIST we proclaim
by warning and teaching all people with all wisdom
so that we may present every person mature in Christ.
Toward this goal we also labor,
struggling according to His power
that powerfully works in us.
| Colossians 1:28-29 |

The MilktoMeat Map		
Phase 1 Discovering The Way	1. Recovering The Master Story	Aware
	2. Enlightened By The Gospel	Alive
Phase 2 Walking In The Truth	3. Realizing Your New Identity in Christ	Awake
	4. Rooted and Growing in Christ	Free
Phase 3 Living The Life	5. Empowered By The Presence of the Spirit	Faithful
	6. Serving as The Body of Christ	Fruitful

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Introduction to MilktoMeat

“Christ we proclaim,
warning everyone and teaching everyone with all wisdom,
so that we may present everyone mature in Christ.”

~ COLOSSIANS 1:28 ~

Who is This Study For?

We have designed this study around a simple idea: *these are the truths that we wished someone had taught us as new believers, new followers of Jesus.*

» *If you are a new follower of Jesus, or*

» *If you have never been trained how to follow Jesus, or*

» *If you want to learn how to train others to follow Jesus...*

then you are PERFECT for this study.

***This study follows our first Phase of workbooks, DISCOVERING THE WAY. Since the sequence is central to this study, we would highly recommend doing PHASE 1 first if you have not already. You can order that set and find out more at www.tsfmemphis.org/milktomeat.**

What is The Story Behind MilktoMeat?

Do you want to grow spiritually but aren't sure where to start or what will work? For over twenty years we have been developing and refining MilktoMeat based upon what makes a difference in people's lives. Many men and women, from various walks of life, ages, and backgrounds have been transformed while going through this study. This study is an invitation to experience how Father-God working in Jesus Christ through the power and presence of His Holy Spirit will transform You.

We believe that this is a powerful tool and resource for anyone who wants to “grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ” (2 Peter 3:18). We pray that this study will become a means for you to connect more deeply with Father-God's love and purposes for you in Christ so that you *make your life's journey worthy of your destination!*

Tom Murray, the founder of Truth Seekers Fellowship, began to follow Jesus in his late twenties. At that point, he was what all new followers of Jesus are: *a blank sheet of paper*. Although Tom was hungry and willing to pursue spiritual growth, he found that his early years as a student of Jesus were not as fulfilling and productive as they could have been. Tom got bits and pieces of important truth and practices, but he had no one to lead him and train him in a logical and sequential way with the goal of spiritual maturity in sight.

After many years of searching, learning, and growing through trial and error, Tom decided to put together a study that would, “*teach others what I wish older, more mature Christians had taught me as a new believer*.” This study and curriculum became MilktoMeat. The guiding principle behind all of MilktoMeat is simple: *teaching the truth in the right order at the right time*.

What are Our Core Commitments?

» **Bible Based** | The Bible has been given to us by God to instruct us in His Ways and give us hope. This study is **Bible Based** because we are confident that the Message of the Bible (the Written Word) gives us hope by guiding us to Jesus Christ.

Romans 15:4 For everything that was written in former times was written for our instruction, so that through endurance and through encouragement of the Scriptures *we may have hope*. {NET}

2 Timothy 3:14–15 But as for you, continue in what you have learned and firmly believed. You know those who taught you, and you know that from childhood you have known the sacred Scriptures, which are able to give you wisdom for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus.

» **Christ Focused** | Jesus Christ is the Creator, Savior, and King of all creation and therefore the ONLY Way that leads us to the One True God. Therefore, this study is **Christ Focused** because we are confident that He is Creator, Savior, and King of all Creation and therefore central to all things:

Hebrews 12:1–2 ...Let us run with endurance the race that lies before us, keeping our eyes on Jesus, the source and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that lay before Him endured a cross and despised the shame and has sat down at the right hand of God's throne.

» **Life Transforming** | Father-God Works in Christ His Son through the Holy Spirit to transform our lives. When anyone is presented with the truth and goodness of God in the glory of Jesus Christ, that person will be affected. The Lord-God has revealed Himself to us in His Written Word—*The Bible*—and this Word points us to the Living Word—*Our Savior and Lord Jesus*—so that we can see Him. We are confident that Father-God has given us His Word and is working in Christ through His Spirit to set free, heal, and transform anyone who is willing to turn from their old way of life and to trust and follow Jesus Christ who leads us in *the way of true life*.

2 Corinthians 3:17–18 Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom. 3:18 We all, with unveiled faces, are looking as in a mirror at the glory of the Lord and are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory; this is from the Lord who is the Spirit.

What is the Larger Structure of MilktoMeat?

MilktoMeat is divided into three Phases: 1) Discovering the Way, 2) Walking in the Truth and 3) Living the Life. Each of these Phases consist of two 7 Session study units. These units are designed to lead you in the process of Spiritual Transformation that takes place as you grow in your relationship with Father-God in Christ.

» **Phase 1 | DISCOVERING THE WAY**

In this first phase, our goal is *to build a frame of reference* for life by recovering The Master Story of the Bible. This Master Story sets the context for understanding The Gospel—the Good News about Jesus and The Kingdom which enlightens our lives. We focus on the three core life questions: 1) *Where have we come from?* 2) *Why are we here?* And 3) *How will our lives turn out?* We then turn to explore the major Gospel Questions: 1) Why Did God Create Us? 2) What Went Wrong? 3) What Did God Do? 4) What is God Doing? 5) What will God Do? and 6) How Should We Respond? Our Father-God working in Christ through The Spirit has provided answers to these questions that give us the one thing that we need more than anything else: **HOPE**. This phase is divided into two seven-session workbooks: *Recovering the Master Story* and *Enlightened by the Gospel*

» Phase 2 | WALKING IN THE TRUTH

In our second phase, we explore what it means to trust and follow Jesus ALONE as our only Savior. We focus on our **new identity** and **position** in Christ and how this new reality fulfills our need for 1) *Security*, 2) *Significance* and 3) *Fulfillment* as people created in the image and likeness of God. We also explore issues related to The Great Spiritual War in which we find ourselves—broken and wounded by sin, but now being transformed to be like Jesus. Our lives are journeys of FAITH; we are all **trusting** someone to show us The Way. This phase is divided into two seven-session workbooks: *Realizing Your New Identity in Christ* and *Rooted and Growing in Christ*

» Phase 3 | LIVING THE LIFE

In our final phase, we consider what it means to be a life-long disciple/student/apprentice of Jesus. We focus on the significant role everyone “in Christ” has. “In Christ” we are each gifted and empowered to serve *as* the Body of Christ (The Church) *in* the World where Jesus is leading His mission to seek and save those who are spiritually lost, dead, and enslaved in the Dominion of Darkness. God is love. As we come to know Jesus Christ truly, following Him wherever He may lead, we too become people characterized by His self-sacrificial **LOVE**. This phase is divided into two seven-session studies: *Empowered by The Presence of the Spirit* and *Serving as The Body of Christ*.

Session 1

What Does it Mean to Walk in The Truth?

Core Truth: We have already been completely accepted in Christ—welcomed into the eternal fellowship of the Father, Son, and Spirit—*through* faith in Christ. In this new relationship, we have a **New Position** and **Identity** that equips us to live an entirely new way of life that is pleasing to The Father and soul-satisfying to us.

To Remember: “...the Truth is IN Jesus.” [Ephesians 4:21]

Objective: Knowing *who we are in Christ* is fundamentally important for every follower of Christ. In this phase we are going to be considering two intertwined threads of reality that shape the journey of our lives: 1) What Father-God has **freely given** to us *in Christ* through His Spirit, and 2) How we **respond** to His gracious gifts. Because of what Jesus has done for us received through faith, the Father is now pleased to call us His beloved children. The Spirit now works within us, shaping us into people who grow to reflect more and more of the truth, goodness and glory of the Lord Jesus. These truths are parts of the Gospel foundation that we build our lives upon and enable us to fight our spiritual battles with power and in victory.

Prayer: *“Heavenly Father, I thank you for the countless ways you have provided for me in Christ. Help me to see and understand the incredible and limitless eternal riches I have in Him. In Jesus’ name, AMEN.”*

WORDwork | Day 1

1.1 **Where Are We Heading?**

Welcome to Phase 2 of MilktoMeat! This workbook follows our workbooks from Phase 1 *Discovering The Way: Recovering The Master Story* and *Enlightened by The Gospel*. If you have not completed those studies, we would highly recommend you do so. You can get more information on our website, www.tsfnmemphis.org/milktomeat.

We have two workbooks in Phase 2: *Realizing Your New Identity in Christ* and *Rooted and Growing in Christ*. In this phase, we are going to be covering the core truths that help you understand who you are *in Christ* and how you can live in the peace, joy and power that this relationship with Father-God brings.

We are also going to be touching on basic truths about *spiritual warfare*. We live in a world at war and *our Adversary, the Devil, does not want us to know or realize who we truly are in Christ*. He seeks to steal our hope, kill our joy, and destroy the power that is available to us. *We need to know how to walk in The Truth in order to withstand his attacks.*

“Walking in the Truth” will be the theme of this stage of study and application. Our lives are journeys. We are moving through time, moving through LIFE heading toward a destination. The Bible uses the word-picture of “walking” to talk about the manner, the WAY, we live our lives—the thoughts, desires, emotions, and actions that move us through each day throughout our lives.

In this first session, we are going to lay out some basic truths that we will build on all throughout this phase of study. So, let’s jump right in to it.

1.2 **What Does It Mean to “Walk in The Truth”?**

2 John 1:4 I rejoiced greatly to find some of your children *walking in the truth*, just as we were commanded by the Father. {ESV}

3 John 1:3-4 For I rejoiced greatly when the brothers came and testified to your truth, as indeed you are walking in the truth. *I have no greater joy than to hear that my children are walking in the truth.* {ESV}

Simply put, “walking in the truth” is *living life in such a way that we **realize** (make it real in our thoughts, emotions and desires) and **express** who we are in Christ in all that we are and do.* We are loved by Father God with a love that is beyond our compre-

hension; we should be people who are characterized by that same amazing love. We have been forgiven by God in Christ—this calls us to be people who forgive. We have received God’s mercy and grace in Christ—we should be people who are characterized by mercy and grace. **The blessings that God has given us in Christ are all blessings that shape who we are and what we do.**

All of the blessings that we are going to discuss in this study are what some refer to as “birthright blessings.” All of these blessings came to us the very minute, the very second that we became aware of God’s work in our life and in hope placed our final and ultimate confidence and trust (faith) in Him.

Read the following verses very carefully:

Colossians 3:1-3 If then you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. 3:2 Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth. 3:3 **For you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God.** {ESV}

This passage could be the “theme” of this whole workbook. Our lives are hidden with Christ in God who is in Heaven. We should turn our minds in that direction. *This study is designed to help you do that.*

There will be times when you are depressed, frustrated, and beat down by the circumstances of your earthly journey. When those times come, that is when you should turn your mind to all the things that God has given you *in Christ* – all the things that we will explore in this study. Rediscovering “every spiritual blessing in Christ” that you have either ignored or overlooked or forgotten will remind you that you now possess all you need to live in peace, joy, and freedom—make and make each day worthy of your destination.

Living with this VISION of who we truly are in Christ will transform our lives. As we keep our hope fixed on Jesus, we are purified by God’s power and grace as we make our journey toward our conclusion *in Him*. As we think on Him and as we grow in His grace and Knowledge (2 Peter 3:18) we will become more and more like Him in the way we live our lives. We are making a choice to turn from our old way of life to follow the Way of New Life that is found in Christ. ***That is what it means to walk in The Truth.***



Take a minute to think about what we have discussed today. Do you have a basic understanding of what it means to “walk in the Truth”? Write out an explanation in your own words.

WORDwork | Day 2**1.3 What is the Hope that is set before us?**

1 John 3:1-3 Look at how great a love the Father has given us that we should be called **God's children. And we are!** The reason the world does not know us is that it didn't know Him. 3:2 Dear friends, we are God's children now, and what we will be has not yet been revealed. We know that when He appears, we will be like Him because we will see Him as He is. 3:3 ***And everyone who has this hope in Him purifies himself just as He is pure.***

- ? 01 According to verse 1, how has the Father given His love to us?
- ? 02 Why do you think John emphasizes the fact that we are God's children now?
- ? 03 What is the meaning of "what we will be has not yet been revealed"? Who will we be like when we "see him just as he is"?
- ? 04 Can you explain verse 3 in your own words?

John was overwhelmed with the truth that God loved us so much that He would actually welcome us into His eternal family!!! For all of us who have placed our *faith*—our trust and confidence—in Jesus, the Father has given us His love in the form of a new name: **God's Children.**

This awesome *position* and membership in Father-God's family also defines our *identity*: **we are God's children now.** In Christ, you are a child of the One True God and there is no honor or privilege greater than being part of His Eternal Family. This new identity should saturate and permeate every part of our thoughts, desires and emotions. Before we move on, consider this:

Key Realization: Your **IDENTITY** is formed by your relationships with others.
Who you are is shaped by your personal relationships.

In this workbook, we are going to look at 12 primary blessings that shape our new identity in Christ. In many ways, this blessing of being included in Father-God's family by our *new spiritual birth* and *adoption* is the culmination of all the other blessings that we will hear about in this unit. There is no greater thing that can be said about you other than, "*You are a beloved child of God.*" The other blessings either support this primary idea or equip us to live in the reality of this great and glorious calling.

1.3.1 **When we see Christ face to face, we will be like Him.**

Notice that John says, "what we will be has not yet been revealed." Yesterday, we read Colossians 3:1-3 which told us that our lives are "hidden *with* Christ in God." Who and what we truly are in our essence, in our core, has not yet been fully shown, revealed!

But notice also that You and I will one day be just like Christ!!! One day we will be free of sin and made perfect. Our *condition*, the reality of our day to day living, will be brought into full balance with our *position* in Christ. This perfection will not happen until we see Christ face to face. In Romans 8, we hear:

Romans 8:28-29 And we know that all things work together for good for those who love God, who are called according to his purpose, 8:29 because those whom he foreknew he also predestined ***to be conformed to the image of his Son***, that his Son would be the firstborn among many brothers and sisters. {NET}

Don't get hung up in that "predestination" language at this point (*it is not as bad as it sounds*). For now simply take note that God is working all things together for our good so that we will ultimately be *conformed to the image of Christ*. This means, just as John explained, that God the Father desires that we be like Jesus in all things. One day, this will be completely true of us. For now, Father-God is shaping us and molding us into people who will fully bear the image and likeness of Jesus Christ.

1.3.2 **Jesus Christ is our Hope.**

For now, *we hope toward that day*. And it is this hope that brings our purity. Read again what John says in 3:3 above: "*And everyone who has this hope focused on him*

purifies himself, just as Jesus is pure.” In order to understand this statement, first of all remember how we have defined hope:

Key Definition: **Hope.** Hope is the **confident expectation** that our lives will turn out well because God will be who He promises to be and do what He promises to do. Hope is built on the foundation of God’s past works, yet always looks to the *future completion* and *perfection* of these works.

Hope, as defined by the Scriptures and lived out by the faithful who have come before us, is not just wishful thinking; it is **confident expectation**. Because Father-God is faithful to us in Christ through His Spirit, we can have assurance that His purposes for us will be accomplished.

There are some old sayings like, “We become what we behold” or “We become what we worship.” These are true statements. Consider the times that the Scriptures call for us to “look” to Christ and focus on Him and to “see” what God has done and is doing to us in Christ:

Hebrews 12:2 Let us run the race ... **keeping our eyes on Jesus**,...

2 Corinthians 5:17 Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away, and **look (Behold!)**, new things have come.

Right now, in the here and now, if you are *in Christ*, you are a new creation! Your old way of life dead in Adam is gone and you have a new Origin and a new Destiny and therefore a whole new Meaning and Purpose for life. Christ Jesus Himself gives shape to the reality of this new life. We are called to focus hopefully on Him. As we do this, our thoughts, desires and emotions are purified and we are transformed to reflect more and more of Christ’s own truth, goodness and glory.



We have covered quite a bit today. Take a few minutes to look back over the main points and Scriptures and take note of the truths that have impacted you the most.

WORDwork | Day 3

1.4 What is Faith and Why is it Important?

Hebrews 11:1 Now faith is being sure of what we hope for,
being convinced of what we do not see. {NET}

Hebrews 11:1 Now faith is the substance of things hoped for,
the evidence of things not seen. {KJV}

Throughout MilktoMeat we explore the relationship of Hope, Faith, and Love. These three virtues are intertwined and inseparable. In our first Phase, *Discovering the Way*, we focused on Hope as being the “first thing” that our Father gives us through the Message of the Gospel (see Colossians 1:4-6). Yesterday we reviewed the foundational role Hope plays in our lives. Now we are going to focus on understanding Faith.

1.4.1 Faith is Assurance based in God’s Faithfulness.

As a starting point, take note in the verses above that Hope *comes before* Faith —*faith is being sure of what we hope for. We hope in something or someone before we trust them.* We don’t want to press this point too far because these ideas are so closely linked together. But it is important to note that faith flows from hope. Faith brings assurance to the things that we hope for. Faith says that since Father-God Himself is faithful, the things that He has promised to us *are as good as done*. Faith is being sure that God will be faithful to us based on what He has said and promised to us.

1.4.2 Faith is the “evidence” of God’s Invisible work.

Notice also that faith “is being convinced of what we do not see.” This will become an important truth to unpack as we move along. The writer of Hebrews gives us some practical application by going on to say,

Hebrews 11:3 By faith we understand that the universe was created by God’s command, so that what is seen has been made from things that are not visible.

We did not see God speak all things into creation, but we have faith (we trust) in God who told us that this is the way things happened. Much of the work that Father-God is doing within us, in Christ is *invisible*. (Remember, our lives are

hidden in Him!) As we have already heard, when we received Christ by trusting Him alone as our Savior, the Holy Spirit came to dwell within our hearts. We did not “see” this happen, nevertheless, we are called to trust that this is true. The very fact that we can believe this is part of the *evidence* that the Father gives to confirm that this is reality.

With these basic things in mind let's give a general definition of faith:

Key Definition: **Faith** is placing our ultimate and final confidence (trust) in God The Father, Son and Spirit as they oversee and direct our lives. Faith brings assurance to our hope. Faith is the *evidence* that Father-God is working in Christ through the Holy Spirit in and through us.

1.4.3 **Faith is the instrument of God's power protecting us.**

Let's take these truths a little further. Take a look at this:

1 Peter 1:3-5 Praise the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

According to His great mercy, He has given us a new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead 1:4 and into an inheritance that is imperishable, uncorrupted, and unfading, kept in heaven for you. 1:5 **You are being protected by God's power through faith** for a salvation that is ready to be revealed in the last time.

Here Peter is talking about the full and complete reality of our salvation. For Peter (and all the New Testament writers) our Salvation will not be perfectly complete until we are present with Christ in redeemed, glorified bodies. Yet even now, we have been given a *new birth* (A New Origin) and a *new inheritance* that is protected in Heaven for us (A New Destiny). Our Hope is focused toward this New Heavenly Inheritance. While we are here on Planet Earth, we live in the reality of our New Birth, looking toward the Hope of our New Inheritance.

But how can we be sure that we will make it to this New Inheritance? Peter gives us a wonderful answer: *we are being protected in the present time by God's power **through** our faith!* Faith is the “tool,” the instrument that God uses to implement His protective power in our lives. We will develop this as we move along.

1.4.4 Our Faith pleases God.

Hebrews 11:2–6 For by it (Faith) the people of old received their commendation... And without faith it is impossible to please Him (God), for whoever would draw near to God must believe that He exists and that he rewards those who seek him. {ESV}

The last thing that we need to remember about faith is that it is what sets us in a right relationship with God. We are commended by God on the basis of our faith, trust, confidence in Him. We please God through faith. This is an important truth to keep in mind throughout this study. The most pleasing thing that we do is to trust our Father who has given us all things in Christ through the Holy Spirit.

As we close out today, you can think about Hope>Faith>Love in terms of our Journey here on Earth. In **HOPE** we see the Future Reality of the Glorious fulfillment of our lives at the end of our Earthly journey in Christ. By **FAITH** we engage the journey hopefully, even taking great risk, because we are confident in God. Along the way we are able to follow Christ's example of **LOVE**, even to the point of self-sacrifice, because we know that this present life is not all that we have.



Take a minute to review what you have read today. Mark some of these key passages in your Bible. Could you explain what Faith is to someone else?



Think about this truth: Father-God is protecting you powerfully **through** faith. What does that say about the significance of faith? What does that say about the security of your relationship with the Father?

WORDwork | Day 4

1.5 **What Are Some First Steps “Walking in The Truth”?**

In *Discovering The Way*, we discussed our first **Core Exercise: Hearing the Word and Seeing God’s Glory**. To grow spiritually healthy we need both the proper **diet** (The Truth of God’s Word) and spiritual **exercise**. Take a look at our definition for spiritual exercise again:

Key Definition: **Spiritual Exercise** is any activity that engages your body and your mind in a way that affects your core—your heart. Although these exercises require our effort, they always work in cooperation with Father-God’s empowerment—His grace.

Our first, foundational exercise involved reading, hearing and studying the Scriptures so that we clearly *hear* what Father-God has said to us and *see* the glory that is revealed in Christ. Our second major exercise is Prayer and it is a **response** to hearing God’s Word.

Core Exercise 02: Prayer—Responding To Father-God’s Word

Prayer is the natural response to our first exercise of reading and hearing the word of God. God initiates towards us in His Word; we respond in prayer. And as we pray, we may be surprised that God reveals His presence to us there as well. Now, take a look at these passages:

1 Thessalonians 5:16-18 “Rejoice always; *pray without ceasing*; in everything give thanks; for this is God’s will for you in Christ Jesus.”

Romans 12:12 Rejoice in hope, endure in persecution, *persist in prayer*.

Colossians 4:2 *Be devoted to prayer, keeping alert in it with thanksgiving.*

Ephesians 6:18 With every prayer and petition, *pray at all times in the Spirit*, and to this end be alert, with all perseverance and requests for all the saints.

As we pray, we are bringing our day-to-day world into the vast scope of God's sovereign Kingship and Kingdom. We confess to Him that we exist by His will and desire and that we *desperately* need His grace in order to survive the forces of chaos and despair that surround us. This is a good point to remind you of our definition for grace:

Key Definition: **Grace** is Father-God's **undeserved** and **unearned favor** given to us **freely in Christ** that gives us access to His **unlimited power** in the Spirit.

As we pray, we are trusting in all that Father-God has freely given us *in Christ*. We are entering a conversation with the One who is "able to do exceeding abundantly beyond all that we ask or think according to the power that works within us..." (Ephesians 3:20).

As we pray, we gain an eternal perspective as our words are shaped by Father-God's words in the outworking of His Divine will. Prayer is our means of discussing with the Father what He is doing in us and in our world through the work of His Spirit within us.

So, How do we pray? Praying is something that we can do all the time, anytime. We can pray out loud, but we can also pray silently in our hearts and minds. Praying is something that we simply do and as we do it "constantly," it becomes second nature to us. If we take the attitude that prayer is simply talking to The Father in Christ through the Spirit, then we enter prayer as a conversation, a dialogue.

There have been many books and studies written on "how" to pray. The Scripture is rich with examples of prayers—the Psalms, Jesus' prayers and instructions, Paul's prayers, etc. For now, it is important to realize that *how* we pray is not nearly as important as just developing a *consistent* prayer life. Here are a few suggestions to get started:

1. Set a **regular time, each day** that you devote to prayer. This doesn't have to be a long time, 5-10 minutes to start. Also, when you have a moment of "quiet" or space in between activities, pray. I find that the time I spend driving in my car is great time to pray. Also, when it comes to mind, pray. Many find that praying many short prayers throughout the day is easier than having one longer prayer time. The goal should be for us to develop a *constant attitude of prayer*, which is to say doing all things in conversation with the LORD.

2. As you get in the habit of praying, begin by simply giving **THANKS** to Father-God in Christ for all that He is doing in and through you by His Holy Spirit. Think about ways to give Thanks for *who He is* (gracious, powerful, merciful, loving, wise, etc.). Think about ways to give Thanks for *what He has done and is doing and will do...* Giving thanks sets us in the right frame of mind.
3. Now, simply *ask the Lord for what you need*, your **Requests**. Take **all** your needs and desires to the Lord. In prayer, we are opening our lives to the One who knows us better than we know ourselves. We may also be praying for others. One of the great privileges we have as God's beloved Children is that we can *intercede*, pray for others, putting their needs before our Heavenly Father.
4. **Be AWARE** and sensitive to the reality that Father-God may respond to you as you are praying and after you have prayed. Thoughts, words, images, ideas, impressions may come to mind and as they do, *take note*. Part of praying is becoming sensitive to the voice of your Father.

There are many more things we could say about prayer and it is a topic that is worth pushing into deeper. The main goal now is to simply provide a simple way for you to get in the habit of "praying without ceasing."

Also, notice that at the beginning of each session we have a short prayer to acknowledge the Lord's presence with us and ask for His direction in our studying.



Take a few minutes to review what we have said about prayer and the suggestions on how to make this a regular part of your daily habits. Now, make some specific plans to work this into your daily habits.

Session 2

What Has Jesus Done For Us?

Core Truth: *Everything* we have has been given to us. This is true for life in general but especially true when talking about our spiritual lives. Father-God has worked **in** Christ **through** His Holy Spirit to do everything for us that we could not do for ourselves in order to make us whole and holy.

To Remember: “And because of Him (Father-God) you are in Christ Jesus, who became to us **wisdom** from God, **righteousness** and **sanctification** and **redemption**, so that, as it is written, “Let the one who boasts, boast in the Lord.” [1 Corinthians 1:30–31]

Objective: Before we talk about all that have been given to us “in Christ,” it is important to understand more deeply all that Christ has done for us—all that He has sacrificed to make us whole. We discussed some key things that Christ did for us in our first study unit, *Discovering The Way*. In this phase, we are going to continue looking at more ways Jesus has provided a whole new way of life for all of us who trust Him.

Prayer: *“Father God, we thank you for sending Jesus to do all for us that we could not do for ourselves. I thank you for His sacrifice, for His life, for His grace. Help me to see all that He has done for me more clearly so I can know Him more deeply. Amen.”*

WORDwork | Day 1

2.1 **How is Christ Our Wisdom From Father-God?**

1 Corinthians 1:30–31 “And because of Him (Father-God) you are in Christ Jesus, who became to us **wisdom** from God, **righteousness** and **sanctification** and **redemption**, so that, as it is written, “Let the one who boasts, boast in the Lord.”

? 05 Explain what Paul means by, “because of Him (Father-God) your are in Christ Jesus.”

? 06 What has Christ Jesus become “to us” according to this passage?

If you will remember, one of our key phrases that we use throughout this whole study is, “*Father-God working in Christ through the Holy Spirit.*” That one statement sums up how the Lord-God is working for, in, and through us in salvation. In this study we will see that because of Father-God’s *choosing* and *calling*, we are now “in Christ.” He is the One who *initiates* toward us.

Now that we are “in Christ,” He—Jesus—has become everything to us. In this verse, He is our wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption. These are the truths we are going to focus on this week that will lay a foundation for the rest of the study.

Christ Jesus is our wisdom, because “in Him” we discover Father-God’s way of doing things. His ways are not our ways. His wisdom often seems counter-intuitive. But now that we have the ability to know Him deeply *in Christ* we have access to His true wisdom. Part of that wisdom involves understanding His process of salvation.

2.1.1 **What Is the Process of Salvation?**

Take a look at the following verses and think about what they are saying about “when” we are saved:

Ephesians 2:8–9 For by grace you **have been saved** through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, 2:9 not a result of works, so that no one may boast. {ESV}

Romans 13:11 Besides this you know the time, that the hour has come for you to wake from sleep. **For salvation is nearer to us now** than when we first believed. {ESV}

2.1.2 **There are Three Aspects of Salvation**

In the verses above, Paul seems to be saying that we “have been saved”—it is already done—but also that salvation is yet future; it is coming and is nearer now than when we first believed. In order to understand this we need to understand that the Scriptures present the process of salvation from three perspectives. Take a look at the following chart:

Salvation in the PAST	Salvation in the PRESENT	Salvation in the FUTURE
God works in Christ through the Holy Spirit to provide the basis for our <i>justification</i> (being declared to be in right relation with Him) and reconciliation (being placed in a peaceful and fruitful relationship with Him)	God works in Christ through the Holy Spirit to transform us step by step, degree to degree into the image of Christ in the process of <i>sanctification</i> . This process will not be finished until we see Christ face to face.	God works in Christ through the Holy Spirit to completely conform us to the image of Christ in <i>glorification</i> . We inherit our full inheritance and we are made perfect (body, soul and spirit) as Christ is perfect.
“I have been saved!”	“I am being saved!”	“I will be saved!”
“For by grace you have been saved through faith.” (Ephesians 2:8–9)	“Now I want to make clear for you, brothers and sisters, the gospel that I preached to you, that you received and on which you stand, and by which you are being saved ... (1 Corinthians 15:1–2)	“ For salvation is nearer to us now than when we first believed.” (Romans 13:11)

As we think about this process of salvation, it is absolutely critical that we understand the goal of this process: *to make us like Jesus!* Now Father-God is not making “clones” of Jesus; we will be who we are *personality* wise, but in *virtue* we will be like Jesus—thinking, desiring, acting in ways that are only good and righteous.

In faith, we look back to see what Christ *has done for us* to make the means of our salvation complete and finished. In hope, we look forward to see that our complete and full salvation will not be *experientially* complete until we are fully conformed to Christ’s image. ***But this future reality is made certain because of the faithfulness of Father-God and the finished work of Christ.*** So now in the present, as we journey toward our eternal destination we can be certain and secure in God’s work *for* us and *in* us because He will finish what he has started.

Consider these truths:

Philippians 1:6 For I am sure of this very thing, that the one who began a good work in you will perfect it until the day of Christ Jesus.

1 Thessalonians 5:23-24 Now may the God of peace himself make you completely holy and may your spirit and soul and body ***be kept entirely blameless*** at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. *24 He who calls you is trustworthy, and he will in fact do this.*

This process of salvation that you are now experiencing was not *initiated* by you, it is not *sustained* by you, nor will it be *completed* by you. The work of salvation belongs to God alone. Our Father does call us to cooperate in the work that He is doing *in* us, *to* us, and *through* us, but in the end *He has the responsibility to complete what He started in us.* This should be a great encouragement to you. No good father expects his children to raise themselves and your Heavenly Father does not expect you to perfect yourself. We now belong to Him and He will complete what He has begun.



Thinking about today’s discussion, is there anything new that you have heard here? How has this helped you understand the process of salvation better? What questions do you still have about salvation?

WORDwork | Day 2

2.2 How is Christ Our Righteousness from Father-God?

Romans 3:21 But now an apart-from-the-law-righteousness of God (which is attested by the law and the prophets) has been disclosed—22 namely, the righteousness of God through the faith/faithfulness of Jesus Christ for all who believe.

Instead of asking questions about these verses (they are difficult), we are going to jump right in to our discussion. Before Jesus, the Lord had given the Law (a way the Jewish people described the books of Moses, Genesis—Deuteronomy) to keep Israel “bound up” until the Messiah Jesus would come. Once Jesus entered human history, Father-God revealed His true wisdom in salvation. Both the Law (the books of Moses) and the Prophets foresaw this dimly, but until Jesus the full wisdom of Father-God’s salvation was not clearly revealed.

In the New Testament, the Letter to the Romans develops the theme of “righteousness” more than any other. There, Paul explains both God’s *righteousness* and our being *justified*—declared righteous—in Christ. For Paul, “being justified” is a way of talking about “being saved.” These are truths that we are going to return to in a future session of this study.

For now it is important that we understand what “righteousness” is.

Key Definition: **Righteousness** is doing

- 1) the right **thing**,
- 2) in the right **way**,
- 3) at the right **time**,
- 4) with the right **motives**.

This definition may oversimplify things a little, but we think it is a good starting place to understand this concept.

Remember, we are discussing how Christ Jesus has become the righteousness from God for us. Let’s take our definition and show how Father-God’s righteousness—right way of doing things—has been revealed in Christ.

2.2.1 Father-God did the “right thing” in Jesus

Father-God’s right way is revealed in the verse from Romans above. In the context of Romans 3, Paul is making the argument that there is absolutely no one who is

righteous in and of themselves before God (see Romans 3:10-20). Instead, He declares people to be righteous “**through** the faith of Jesus Christ, **for** all who believe.” This one statement is at the very heart of the Christian worldview. To sum it up: *only Christ Jesus has been faithful and His faithfulness has won the blessing of salvation/righteousness for all who trust in Him.*

Romans 3:22 introduces what has become a somewhat controversial issue. Notice the translation we have used (NET) says, “through the faith OF Jesus Christ.” If you look at other translations you will see “through faith IN Jesus Christ.” There are a handful of passages in the New Testament that when taken at face value seem to refer to the “faith **of** Jesus,” which is to say this is the faith that Jesus Himself exercised. We don’t want to get sidelined with this issue right now. There is a discussion at the end of this workbook if you would like to dig deeper.

For now, simply know that we think it is best in this context take the least interpreted meaning of the text and that Paul is saying that Father-God’s “right way of doing things” was accomplished “through the faith of Christ Jesus.” We will say more about this shortly.

2.2.2 **Father-God did things “the right way” in Jesus.**

Paul goes on to say this:

Romans 3:22-25 ... For there is no distinction, 23 for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God. 24 But they are justified (*declared righteous*) freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus.

We have all sinned and fall far short of God’s glory. But we are also justified—*declared to be right with God*—1) **freely** by His grace, and 2) **through** the redemption that is in Christ. We are going to talk about *justification* in more detail a little later. For now, just know that it means to *declare* that someone has done what is right. We are also going to talk about *redemption* at the end of this week. For now, understand that redemption is paying a price to get something back. Both of these terms describe a different *aspect*, a different *facet* of Father-God’s glorious way of salvation.

The main point here is this: Father-God’s “right way” of saving us is displayed in the fact that He did so “**freely**”—we could do nothing to earn it or pay for it. And He did it **through** the redemption that is in Christ—Jesus has done something for us that we cannot do for ourselves. *God’s “right way” of salvation is saving us in a way that we did not earn or could ever accomplish ourselves!*

2.2.3 **Father-God did things “at the right time” in Jesus.**

Romans 5:6 For while we were still helpless,
at the right time Christ died for the ungodly.

So when did Father-God do these things for us? **At the right time—when we were completely helpless!** That is when Jesus died for us! If we could have done anything to accomplish our salvation, our redemption, then Jesus died needlessly. Instead, Father-God send Christ Jesus to die for us when it is clear that we, as the human race, were completely incapable of saving ourselves in any way. Paul makes another statement about this in Galatians:

Galatians 4:4–6 But when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth his Son, born of woman, born under the law, 4:5 to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons. 4:6 And because you are sons, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, “Abba! Father!”{ESV}

2.2.4 **Father-God did things “with the right motives” in Jesus.**

Romans 5:8 ... but **God shows His love for us** in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

Ephesians 2:4–7 But God, being rich in mercy, **because of the great love with which he loved us**, 2:5 even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved— 2:6 and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, 2:7 so that in the coming ages he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus.

***Because of His great love for us**...* What more needs to be said? The implications of this simple statement are profound and we will be exploring them over the course of this study.



Review all that we have said today. Think of a few things that you can give thanks to Father-God about in relation to all that He has given us In Christ.

WORDwork | Day 3**2.3 How is Christ Our Sanctification From Father-God?**

Acts 26:16–18 ... I have appeared to you for this purpose, to appoint you as a servant and witness to the things in which you have seen me and to those in which I will appear to you, 26:17 delivering you from your people and from the Gentiles—to whom I am sending you 26:18 to open their eyes, so that they may turn from darkness to light and from the power of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and a place among those **who are sanctified by faith in me.**

When Jesus appeared to Paul on the road to Damascus and “commissioned” him, He gave Paul a new purpose, a new course, a new ministry (service). Paul was being sent by Jesus to the Gentiles (people of the nations) **to open their eyes** that they might 1) turn from darkness to light, 2) from the power of Satan to God, and that they **could receive** 1) forgiveness of their sins, and 2) a place among those who are **sanctified by faith in Jesus**.

There is a lot to be unpacked in what Jesus’ says there; for now, our focus is going to be on that last phrase: “sanctified by faith in Jesus.”

To be “sanctified” in the Scriptures means to be “set apart.” When Father-God sets something or someone apart for Himself, that thing or person is *made holy, sanctified*. In the New Testament, Jesus’ people have been “set part” for Him, His blood has sanctified them, and are called “saints” (*holy ones*):

1 Corinthians 1:2 ... to the church of God that is in Corinth, to those who are **sanctified in Christ Jesus, and called to be saints**, with all those in every place who call on the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, their Lord and ours.

You may know that the people who made up the church at Corinth were not shinning examples of Christian maturity. They were divisive, argumentative, and immoral. One man is in an illicit relationship with his step-mother (something even the “pagans” despise)(see 1 Corinthians 5:1-2). Some are apparently still taking part in prostitution (see 1 Corinthians 6:15-20). Now the point is this: *this group is very immature and yet Paul still refers to them as “Saints” - those sanctified in Jesus.*

Throughout this study we are going to be referring to the idea of “**your position vs. your condition.**” Now, as we are talking about sanctification, is a good time to introduce the idea. As we will see, many of the things that Father-God says, declares about us may not be “experientially true” in the present. But in calling us “saints,” or “justified,” or “glorified,” He is defining a new reality for us by giving us a new identity. So, our *position* before Father-God is that we are Saints - we are who He says we are. But, in our experience—our present *condition*—we still need to grow into the full reality of that identity.

Father-God is able to give us this new, assured identity because it is based in ***what Jesus has done for us*** and not what we did, do, or might do. It is Jesus’ blood that sanctifies us:

Hebrews 13:12 Therefore Jesus also, **that He might sanctify the people through His own blood**, suffered outside the gate.

The writer of the Letter to the Hebrews makes the case that just the animal sacrifices given under the Law, were all offered “outside” the gate of the Tabernacle, so also Jesus was offered “outside” the city of Jerusalem. The main point, however, is that it is *through Jesus’ blood* that our sanctification takes place.

Tomorrow, we are going to discuss the significance of Jesus’ blood. For now, simply understand that in Father-God’s way of doing things, blood is applied to things or to people to make them holy and to cleanse them. The writer of Hebrews tells us that it was the offering of Jesus whole body that makes us holy:

Hebrews 10:10 By His will (Father-God’s) we have been made holy through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.

Take note that this is a “once for all” thing. Jesus offering is “once, for all.” And so all the blessings that are tied to His sacrifice are “once, for all”, for us. There is nothing left to be done to make you holy. Jesus has done all that is necessary. For now, it is vitally important that you lean to see yourself and think about yourself as Father-God sees you “in Christ”: *you are sanctified, set apart as holy, a saint through your faith in Christ*. You are sanctified *by* Father-God’s will, *by* your faith in Christ, *through* the offering of His body and blood.



Think about that last sentence and the significance of those prepositions *by* and *through*. Give thanks to Christ for what He has done for you and think about ways you need to change the way you think about yourself to get “in line” with what Father-God has said about you “In Christ.”

WORDwork | Day 4**2.4 How Is Christ Our Redemption from Father-God?**

Ephesians 1:7 In Him (in Christ) we have **redemption through His blood**, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace, 8 which He lavished upon us ...

In the Ephesians passage above, Paul tells us that we have redemption **through** Jesus blood. He also links this truth together with “the forgiveness of our sins.” When we get into all the blessings that have come to us “in Christ” in the weeks to come we are going to talk about redemption specifically. In today’s reading, we are just going to work through some key passages that help us understand why Jesus gave His life—literally, His blood—for us. This is a topic that have fallen out of favor in recent times, but it is absolutely critical to understanding all that Father-God has done for us in Christ.

2.4.1 Jesus’ Blood Is Precious, Beyond Value.

1 Peter 1:18-19 You know that from your empty way of life inherited from your ancestors you were ransomed (redeemed)—not by perishable things like silver or gold, 1:19 **but by precious blood like that of an unblemished and spotless lamb, namely Christ.**

As we will discuss in detail later, to redeem something is to pay a price for something or someone to set them free. The price paid for redemption tells us something about how valuable that thing or person is to the one paying. In our case, Jesus’ precious blood was the price paid for our redemption. What does that tell us about our “value” in Father-God’s eyes?

2.4.2 Jesus’ Blood Cleanses Us Completely.

The truths about blood and sacrifice has its roots in the Hebrew Scriptures (the Old Testament). In the Bible, blood is associated with life:

Leviticus 17:11 ... now the life (soul) of the flesh is in the blood.
So I myself have assigned it to you on the altar to make atonement (literally: *covering*) for your lives, for the blood makes atonement (*covering*) by means of the life.

The ideas of the “covering” and cleansing that is caused by blood is one that is foreign to us. In Leviticus, God instructs the priests to take some of the blood from the animal sacrifices and apply it to various items and places in The Tabernacle and later in the Temple to make atonement. Now the word atonement is a translation from a Hebrew word which simply means “a covering.” This atonement—a *covering of blood*—cleansed the place where God dwelt and thereby also covered over the sins of the people so that God could live with them in peace.

Before Christ came, however, the blood which was offered for this covering was *only* the blood of animals. These sacrifices were imperfect in that *they could not actually remove the sins of the people*, this animal blood could only “cover” the sins:

Hebrews 10:4 For it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats
to take away sins.

Now, in Christ, God has provided a much better sacrifice. The blood of Christ has not merely covered over our sins; *His sacrifice has completely removed our sins*. In doing so, Christ has secured for us and eternal—*forever*—redemption:

Hebrews 9:11–12 But now Christ has come as the high priest of the good things to come. He passed through the greater and more perfect tent not made with hands, that is, not of this creation, and **he entered once for all into the most holy place not by the blood of goats and calves but by his own blood, and so he himself secured eternal redemption.**

Jesus’ blood has also cleansed and purified us from all sin. This application of Jesus’ blood is not something that must happen over and over again like in the old priesthood of Israel. Instead, Jesus has accomplished an eternal redemption, once for all, He has offered one sacrifice that has made us perfect forever:

Hebrews 10:14 For by one offering He has perfected for all time
those who are being made holy (*sanctified*).

In the context of Hebrews, the word “perfect” refers to being qualified to be a priest serving the one True God. By Jesus one offering—His sacrifice—we have been perfected and made holy. There is nothing left to be done. *We simply grow into who we already are* “In Christ.”

2.4.3 Jesus' Blood Cleanses Our Consciences.

One of the great benefits that comes from the salvation that Jesus makes possible is that *our consciences are also cleansed by His blood*. Your conscience is that part of your spiritual self that gives moral direction, leading you to know what is right and wrong. It is also that part which brings our *feelings* of guilt or shame. Jesus has cleansed our consciences once for all so that we will be free to serve God!!! Read this passage carefully, maybe a couple of times:

Hebrews 9:12-14 ... so (Jesus) himself secured eternal redemption. 13 For if the blood of goats and bulls and the ashes of a young cow sprinkled on those who are defiled consecrated them and provided ritual purity, 14 how much more will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without blemish to God, *purify our consciences from dead works to worship the living God*.

Notice the redemption that Jesus provides is eternal—it *will last forever!!!* The cleansing that comes to us on the basis of Jesus' blood is one that reaches even to our consciences—that part of us that recognizes guilt and shame. The blood of Jesus tells us that we no longer have to bear the burden of our shame and guilt for sin. He has forgiven us, freed us from these things so that He no longer holds them against us and *He has cleansed us of these things so that we no longer have to hold our sins against ourselves*.

Now make note of this: *you cannot serve God out of guilt!!! You cannot serve Father-God with a guilty conscience*. God wants us to serve Him out of our freedom. When we choose to dwell on our sins, we are choosing to reject the full benefit of what Christ has done for us. In truth, if we think there is something about us that is still keeping us from being accepted by Father-God fully, we are not trusting what He has told us; we are not acting in faith on His Word! He wants us to be free so that we can become people who fully reflect His mercy, grace and glory in all that we are and do. This all comes from trusting Christ alone for all that He has done for us!



Review and Think about all that we have discussed this week. In what ways do these truths call you to rethink your relationship with Father-God in Christ? In what ways do these truths call you to rethink the way you view yourself?

Session 3

What Does It Mean to Be “In Christ”?

- Core Truth:** “In Christ” we are new creations—people with a New Origin, a New Destiny and a New Purpose. We have passed out of Death into New Life, and this New Life is shaped by all that Christ is for us.
- To Remember:** “So then, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; what is old has passed away - Behold, what is new has come!”
[2 Corinthians 5:17]
- Objective:** To be “in Christ” is to be completely accepted into the life, love and power of The Trinity. The Father, Son and Spirit have welcomed you in their eternal joy, glory and fellowship through your trust in Christ. As you live in line with the truth of this new position and identity, you will be able to experience more and more of the security, satisfaction and significance that only this relationship with the One True God can grant. *Knowing who you are in Christ will equip you to deal with the external battles that come from the Devil at work in the world and also your battles with the Sin that still lives in your flesh.*
- Prayer:** “Father-God, I thank you that I am a new creation in Christ. Thank you Jesus for all that you have done for me to make me whole and renewed. By the power of your Spirit, help me to understand who I am in You so that I can express more and more of your joy and peace in all that I am and do. Amen.”

WORDwork | Day 1

3.1 **What Have the Father, Son and Spirit Done for Us?**

For today's reading, we are going to focus on an extended passage in Ephesians 1. In this passage, Paul simply *overwhelms* us with all of the blessings that have come to us because of the Father, Son and Spirit's work for us. Read the passage then answer the following questions.

Ephesians 1:1-23 From Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, to the saints [in Ephesus], the faithful in Christ Jesus. 1:2 Grace and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ!

>> **We are Blessed by the Father:**

1:3 Blessed is the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly realms in Christ. 1:4 For he chose us in Christ before the foundation of the world that we may be holy and unblemished in his sight in love. 1:5 He did this by predestining us to adoption as his sons through Jesus Christ, according to the pleasure of his will— 1:6 *to the praise of the glory of his grace* that he has freely bestowed on us in his dearly loved Son.

>> **We are Redeemed by the Son**

1:7 In him (In Christ) we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace 1:8 that he lavished on us in all wisdom and insight. 1:9 He did this when he revealed to us the secret of his will, according to his good pleasure that he set forth in Christ, 1:10 toward the administration of the fullness of the times, to head up all things in Christ—the things in heaven and the things on earth. 1:11 In Christ we too have been claimed as God's own possession, since we were predestined according to the one purpose of him who accomplishes all things according to the counsel of his will 1:12 so that we, who were the first to set our hope on Christ, would be *to the praise of his glory*.

>> **We are Sealed by the Holy Spirit**

1:13 And when you heard the word of truth (the gospel of your salvation)—when you believed in Christ—you were marked with the seal of the promised Holy Spirit, 1:14 who is the down payment of our inheritance, until the redemption of God's own possession, *to the praise of his glory*.

In verse 3, to what extent has God blessed us?

? 07 Observe these verses very carefully and in your margin write down a word or a phrase that lists all the things that God has done for us in these verses.

>In verses 3-6, what has the Father done for you?

>In verses 7-12, what has the Son done for you?

>In verses 13-14, how does the Spirit work in you?

? 08 Why did God do all of this for us? (Notice verses 4, 6, 7, 12, 14)

3.1.1 **You Are Blessed by Father in the Son through the Spirit**

In the Greek text, this passage is just one very long, run together sentence. This marvelous text is just an explosion of praise to God. It is as if Paul is so overwhelmed by all that Father God has done for us as believers that he gets excited and starts talking and doesn't know when to stop. We too should be totally overwhelmed by all that our Father has done for us in Christ through the power of the Spirit. In this study, we are going to work through all that is mentioned in the text. For now, just be overwhelmed by the "Big Picture."

We have divided the text above into three sections that are developed around the work of the One True Triune God in our salvation. Notice the three Big Ideas in this passage:

1. We were **Blessed** by the Father
2. We were **Redeemed** by the Son
3. We were **Sealed** by the Holy Spirit

Paul starts this section: "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ." God is blessed in the sense that He is worthy of our praise and thanks. When we say that God is blessed, we are saying that He is worthy to be seen as the source of all that is good, true and glorious. Notice at the end of each section Paul says, "to the praise of the/his glory."

The reason that God should be praised and given thanks is because of His blessing us "with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places." When Father-God blesses us, it means something a little different:

Key Definition: Blessing. When we are blessed by God, this means that He speaks to us and enables us in a way that equips us to accomplish the purposes for which He has created us.

God has blessed us – He has given us every good thing that we need for our journey here on Earth toward our home with Christ in Heaven. Christ has done all that is necessary so that we can be in right relationship with God. By the work of God’s Spirit, we are now equipped with everything that we need spiritually to sustain and complete our journey. There is nothing that you are lacking to complete your journey to Christ. *Spiritually, you are complete.* Peter states this very plainly:

2 Peter 1:3 ... His divine power has bestowed on us everything necessary for life and godliness through the rich personal knowledge of the one who called us by his own glory and excellence.

We are loved by God with a love that is beyond our comprehension; we should be people who are characterized by that same amazing love. We have been forgiven by God in Christ; this calls us to be people who forgive. We have received God’s mercy and grace in Christ; we should be people who are characterized by mercy and grace. The blessings that God has given us in Christ are all blessings that shape who we are and what we do.

All of the blessings that we are going to discuss in this study are what some refer to as “birthright blessings.” All of these blessings came to us the very minute, the very second that we became aware of God’s work in our life and in hope placed our final and ultimate confidence and trust (faith) in Him. There will be times when you are depressed, frustrated, and beat down by the circumstances of your earthly journey. When those times come, that is when you should set your mind on all the things that God has given you in Christ – all the things that we will explore in this study. Rediscovering “every spiritual blessing in Christ” that you have either ignored or overlooked or forgotten will remind you that you now possess all you need to make each day an adventure instead of an ordeal.



As you discover all of the blessings that you have in Christ, you should start to commit some of these verses to mind and remind yourself, “In Christ I am redeemed.” “In Christ I am forgiven.” “In Christ I am alive” ... As we learn to see ourselves as our Heavenly Father sees us, we become the people that He desires for us to be.

WORDwork | Day 2

3.1.2 You Have Been Blessed and Chosen by The Father

Ephesians 1:3 Blessed is the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly realms in Christ.

In the passage from Ephesians 1 that we are exploring this week, we see first that the Father has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in Christ. This means that we have all that we need in Christ for our journey here on Earth. When Father-God chose us, He also set certain goals for us; He predetermined that we would be *holy* and *blameless* when we arrive at our final destination in His presence. He did all of this by deciding before anything else that He would adopt us as His children. All of this touches on some sticky issues like choosing and predestination that we will discuss later in this study.

Notice first of all God's motivation in blessing us:

“In **love** ... according to the **purpose of his will**, to the praise of his glorious grace ... according to the riches of **his grace** which he lavished upon us, ... in all wisdom and insight according to the purpose of him who works all things according to the counsel of his will ... **to the praise of his glory**”

God does what He does for us by His love and grace to the praise of His glory!!! Something you must understand and accept is that God does not save you first and foremost for your sake; God saves you for His sake. At first this may sound a little harsh—it might even put you off a little. But that is the old way of thinking about things; putting ourselves in the center of the Universe. In order to understand and comprehend all that God is doing in your life you must first understand that it is not all about you. God always acts for the sake of His name because there is no higher goodness, purpose or reason. This is part of His righteousness revealed in His “right motivation.” ***When God acts for the sake of His glory, it results in the greatest blessing for you.***

This study will give you assurance that you do not need to begin looking outside what Father-God makes available in Christ or in new experiences for blessings. You now possess every spiritual blessing the Father has for you this side of Heaven. There is more to come, but everything you need for the present is already with you through the power of the Holy Spirit in Christ!

3.1.3 **You Have Been Redeemed by the Blood of Christ the Son**

In this passage, notice how many times Paul says “in Him...” This whole study is going to focus on your *new position* before God “in Christ” and your *new identity* that flows out of this position. Whereas once your position and identity was defined by your fellowship and relationship with your physical fore-father Adam, now “in Christ” both your position and identity are defined by your fellowship and relationship with God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

Our new position and identity is shaped by the *redemption* that Christ has provided in His blood. As we will hear a little later, to redeem something is to pay a price to set something (or in our case, someone) free from some slavery or obligation.

1 Peter 1:18-19 ...you were ransomed (redeemed) from the futile ways inherited from your forefathers, not with perishable things such as silver or gold, 1:19 but with the precious blood of Christ, like that of a lamb without blemish or spot.

Jesus has given His own precious blood for us so that we could be set free from the debt and slavery of sin and death. This is a great blessing that we will explore in the rest of this study.

3.1.4 **You Are Sealed by the Holy Spirit**

Finally, Paul lets us see what happened behind the scenes when we heard the Gospel and trusted Christ. At that point, we were sealed by the Holy Spirit in order to guarantee that we would make it to our glorious destination and inheritance in Christ. Here, the idea is that all of this happens at the same instant: we hear, we believe, we are sealed. This is a one time event that happens all at once for every believer.

In ancient times, an official would often need to send official documents to other officials. In order to make sure that the documents were not tampered with, he would seal the documents with wax marked by a signet ring or cylinder seal. If the documents arrived with the seal broken, the servant who was entrusted with the documents would often be put to death. Thus, *the seal became a way to guarantee that the authentic documents reached their destination unaltered*. The seal signified and guaranteed several things:

1. **Security**, as in the case of official documents from a king or ruler,
2. **Authenticity** and Genuineness,
3. **Identity** and ownership.

This is what the Holy Spirit does for us. He marks us as God's genuine children. He shows that we belong to God. He secures us on our journey so that we make it to our destination. His *presence in us* guarantees that God's work will be fully completed when we arrive at our eternal inheritance.

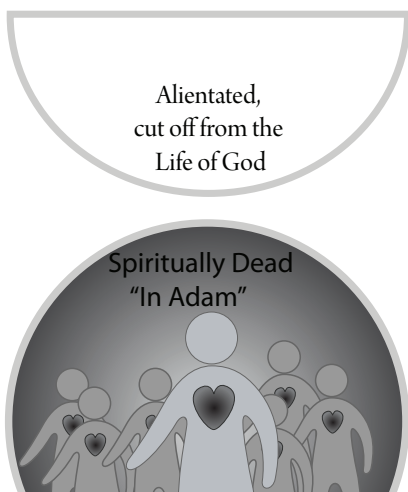
God the Father blesses us in Christ. Christ redeems us with His own blood and enables God to welcome us into His family. The Holy Spirit seals us to guarantee that we make it to our final destination. All of this is made real by faith, by trusting the truth of the Gospel. And what motivates God to do any of this? *Because of His great love with which He loved us* (Ephesians 1:4b, 2:4)!!!

3.2 **In Adam Vs. In Christ**

All of this lays the foundation for where we will be going in the next several lessons. These will all develop the truths that flow out of Romans 5:12-21 that we discussed in *Discovering the Way*. Our destinies have been shaped by the choices of two men: Adam and Christ. Adam brought **Sin, Condemnation** and **Death** into our human experience whereas Christ brings **Righteousness, Peace** and **Life**.

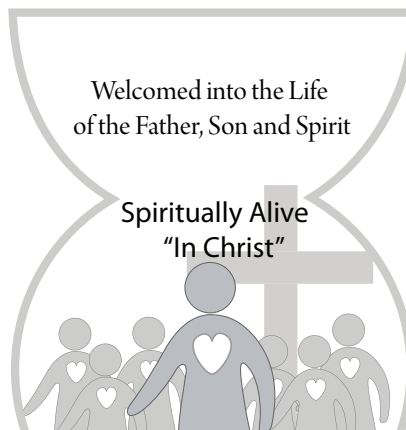
Illustration 1: The Spiritual "In Groups"

Still "Dead in Adam"



Remain Spiritually Dead
Enslaved to the power of Sin
Enslaved in the Kingdom of Darkness
Under Condemnation
Destined for Eternal destruction

Now Eternally "Alive in Christ"



Spiritually Reborn—Eternally Alive
Freed from the power of Sin
Transferred to the Kingdom of Christ
Forgiven and Reconciled to God
Destined for Christ's Glorious
Eternal Kingdom

WORDwork | Day 3

3.3 What is Your Position vs. Your Condition?

Ephesians 2:6-7 He [God the Father] raised us up with him [Christ] and seated us with him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus, 7 to demonstrate in the coming ages the surpassing wealth of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus.

Christ is now in Heaven. He is at the Father's right hand overseeing, sustaining and holding together all of creation, moving all things toward His good and glorious conclusions (see Colossians 1:17 and Hebrews 1:3). He has accomplished his saving work and Has provided us with an eternal redemption. You should be convinced by now that God saves you by His grace – He has made us alive with Christ. But notice what else He has done: *He has raised us up and seated us with Christ in the Heavenly realms!!!*

If you look at your present situation you will very quickly come to the conclusion that you don't look like you are a "heavenly person." But remember, it is your position that determines your identity. Spiritually, God has raised you up to a new glorious life with Christ. You are truly a new creation!!!

This reality is one that we will explore in terms of our **condition** (what is true about us in the present, both good and bad) and our **position** in Christ (what is spiritually true of us even if the full reality is not present **yet**). In Ephesians 2:6, we hear that God *has* (past tense, already done!) "raised us up with Christ and seated us with Him in the Heavenly realms." This is a spiritual reality even if it is not an experiential reality *yet*.

In Paul's letters, he will often use the phrase "in Christ" or "in Him" to help believers like you and me understand their new identity and position before God. One passage that summarizes this idea well is this one:

2 Corinthians 5:17 So then, if anyone is **in Christ**, he is a new creation; what is old has passed away - now look, what is new has come!

It is very important for you to see that Paul's phrase "in Christ" is not simply a preposition—it *is a position*. And your new position "in Christ" brings tremendous blessings for you! Because of what Christ has done for you, you now have an entirely new way of life with a new identity and a new position before God.

Our life is sustained by our vision. Our vision is not just what we see with our eyes, but more importantly, what we “see” with our heart and minds—what we believe to be true about ourselves and our world and realize first in our imaginations. Our spiritual vision comes from what we read and hear in the Word of God. *God has spoken things about us and His words define our present reality.* He has called us; He has given us new names; He has set us apart for Himself. All of this changes who we are and where we belong. In Christ, you also have been granted everything you need to complete your journey to your eternal destination with Christ. *Your Heavenly Father has blessed you with every spiritual blessing in Christ.*

As we think about our identity being shaped and formed to reflect the glory of Jesus, we must realize that God is emptying us of everything that would hinder us from realizing the joy and power of being “filled” with all of His goodness. He is transforming us into people who reflect His glory in all that we are and do. One day, we will do this completely when we become full partakers of Jesus’ own glory:

2 Thessalonians 2:13-14 But we ought to thank God always for you, brothers and sisters loved by the Lord, because God chose you from the beginning for salvation through sanctification by the Spirit and faith in the truth. 2:14 He called you to this salvation through our gospel, *so that you may possess the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.*

In the next several sessions, we are going to focus on 12 foundational positional truths that define your identity in Christ. Take a look at these 12 statement:

1. In Christ, you are **Chosen By Father-God.**
2. In Christ, You are **Sanctified, Set Apart by the Spirit.**
3. In Christ, You are **Reborn into a New and Living Hope.**
4. IN Christ, You are **Adopted in to the Family of Father-God.**
5. In Christ, You are **Justified, Set Right with God.**
6. In Christ, You are **Redeemed by Jesus’ Blood.**
7. In Christ, You are **Forgiven of All Your Sins.**
8. In Christ, You are **Reconciled, at Peace with God.**
9. In Christ, you are **Delivered from the Dominion of Darkness.**
10. In Christ, you are **Transferred to the Kingdom of Christ.**

11. In Christ, you are **Glorified, Being Perfected to be like Jesus.**

12. In Christ, you are **Set Free from Sin, Shame and Death.**

These 12 statements touch on the foundational realities of what it means to have New Life in Christ. There are many more blessing that we have in Christ (see the chart at the end of this lesson). However, if you understand these 12 aspects of who you are in Christ, you will be able to understand all the other statements of who we are “in Christ” that we see in the New Testament.



As you read through Paul’s letters in the New Testament, underline all of the verses that say something about who we are “in Christ” (“in Him”, “in the Lord”). These verse will become “mile-markers” for you as you read through the Scriptures.

WORDwork | Day 4**3.4 Who are We In Christ?**

On the next couple of pages, there is a chart that contrasts our old way of life, Dead in Adam to the reality of our new life, Alive in Christ. For today, as an application exercise, simply read through this list.

This list will help you see not only what is true about you now, but also gives you a framework for understanding how God the Father is working in Christ through the Holy Spirit to shape you and transform you into a person who truly and completely reflects His truth, goodness and beauty. Some call these “positional blessings” or “birthright blessings.” Whatever the case, these are all gifts from the Father that enable us to be the people He has designed us to be.

As you reflect on these things, you may want to pray about these things daily, reflecting on the following requests.

- » **Father, help me to see the reality of my new life in Christ.**
- » **Father, how are you working in my life in the present to help me become who you want me to be.**
- » **Father, help me to see how blessed and worthy you are to have my full confidence, commitment and devotion as you seek to shape me according to the perfection of your son.**
- » **Father, give me a heart of humility and gratitude as I begin to realize how blessed I am in Christ.**

In Christ, We are Made New...

The Old Life in Adam	vs.	The New Life in Christ
I was born spiritually dead in my sins.	<i>But now...</i>	I Am Spiritually Reborn. (Titus 3:5; 1 Peter 1:3)
I was born into the family of Adam.	<i>But now...</i>	I Am Adopted into God's Family. (Romans 8:15ff; Galatians 4:5)
I was held captive by the god of this age, Satan.	<i>But now...</i>	I Am Delivered into the Kingdom of God's Beloved Son Jesus. (Colossians 1:13)
I was without God and without hope in this world.	<i>But now...</i>	I Am Chosen. (Ephesians 1:4; 2 Thessalonians 2:13)
I was broken by sin and corruption.	<i>But now...</i>	I Am Filled in Christ. (Ephesians 3:19; Colossians 2:10)
I was a citizen of the Dominion of Darkness.	<i>But now...</i>	I Am A Citizen Of Heaven. (Philippians 3:20)
I was a "child of wrath" deserving of God's righteous wrath condemning me for my sins.	<i>But now...</i>	I Am no longer condemned. (Propitiation) (Romans 3:21ff, 8:1ff)
I rejected God's love for me.	<i>But now...</i>	I Know I Am Loved and Can Love Others. (1 John 4:10-11)
I was out of relationship with God, helpless and without hope.	<i>But now...</i>	I Am in Right Relationship with God. (Justified) (Romans 3:24)
I was enslaved to sin, corruption and death.	<i>But now...</i>	I Am Redeemed. (Galatians 3:13; Ephesians 1:7)
I was held captive by Satan, sin and my own evil desires.	<i>But now...</i>	I Have Been Set Free. (Galatians 5:1ff)
I was burdened by the debt of my sin.	<i>But now...</i>	I Am Forgiveness. (Ephesians 1:7, 4:32; Colossians 1:14)

I was out of fellowship with God, the source of all life.	<i>But now...</i>	I Am in Fellowship With God. (1 Corinthians 1:9)
I was an enemy of God, hostile to His truth, goodness and beauty.	<i>But now...</i>	I Am Reconciled To God and Have Peace with Him. (Romans 5:1ff.)
I was not acceptable to God due to my own rebellion and sinfulness.	<i>But now...</i>	I Am Accepted By God in Christ. (Colossians 1:12)
I was alienated from God.	<i>But now...</i>	I Have Complete Access To God. (Hebrews 4:16)
I was lost in the darkness of sin.	<i>But now...</i>	I Am Called to be Holy. (Ephesians 1:4; 2 Timothy 1:9)
I was ruined and corrupted by my sins.	<i>But now...</i>	I Am made Holy by the Blood of Jesus. (Hebrews 9:14, 10:14)
I was dead in the “uncircumcision of my flesh.”	<i>But now...</i>	I Am Spiritually Circumcised. (Colossians 2:11)
I had no purpose, or mission.	<i>But now...</i>	I Am a Priest in God’s New Priesthood. (1 Peter 2:4-10)
I was made powerless and ineffective by the external restraint of the Law.	<i>But now...</i>	I Have Been Freed From The Law so that I may become fruitful. (Romans 7-8)
I was spiritually powerless to live a life that is pleasing to God.	<i>But now...</i>	I Have Access To Jesus’ Resurrection Power by the Holy Spirit. (Romans 6; Philippians 3:10; Colossians 2:12)
I was useless for God’s kingdom.	<i>But now...</i>	I Am (and will be) Glorified. (Romans 8:17, 30; Colossians 3:4)
I would have been cast into the Lake of Fire with the Devil and his angels.	<i>But now...</i>	I Am Christ’s Inheritance. (Ephesians 1:18; Hebrews 2:13)
I had no inheritance except eternal destruction.	<i>But now...</i>	I Have A Glorious Eternal inheritance. (1 Peter 1:3ff.)

Session 4

How Has Christ Freed Us from Condemnation?

Core Truth: “In Adam” we were condemned. Now, In Christ, Father-God working in the Spirit has chosen you, sanctified you, given you a new spiritual birth and adopted you. All these blessings define who you are now in a new family.

To Remember: “By His will He [Father-God] gave us birth through the message of truth, that we would be a kind of firstfruits of all he created.” [James 1:18]

Objective: The reality of Father-God’s love for us and choosing of us is displayed in His giving us New Spiritual Birth as well as being Adopted into His eternal family. This **New Birth** means that we have a new identity, a new inheritance, and a new destiny. This new birth is also described in terms of being **adopted** by Father-God. In both cases, we are now beloved children of Father-God. We need these truths to saturate our thinking, shape our desires and comfort our hearts and minds. Father is now pleased to call us His children and our “older brother” Jesus is not ashamed to call us His brothers and sisters. Until we are convinced how much Father-God loves us, we can make little progress in our growth in Christ.

Prayer: *“Father, I thank you that you have chosen me and called me to yourself and given me a new spiritual birth in Christ. I thank you that I am accepted by you and adopted into your eternal family. AMEN.”*

WORDwork | Day 1

4.1 You are Chosen in Christ.

Ephesians 1:3-6 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, ⁴ even as **he chose us in Him** before the foundation of the world, *that we should be holy and blameless* before him. **In love ⁵ he predestined us for adoption** through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will, ⁶ to the praise of his glorious grace, with which he has blessed us in the Beloved (Jesus Christ).

? 09 When were we chosen by Father-God in Christ?

? 10 For what purposes or results did Father-God choose us?

? 11 For what were we “predestined” by Father-God?

We all want to know that someone cares about us. *We all need to know that we are loved.* In Christ, we have been chosen by God. Our Father-God loved us enough to make the first move toward us to call us back to Himself. Father-God chose to initiate a meaningful and life-transforming relationship with us long before we ever thought about Him. Not only did God choose us, He has also set plans in motion that will guarantee that we end our journey exactly where He wants us to be – in His presence in complete fellowship with Him.

This passage contains some difficult words like “chosen” and “predestined.” Unfortunately, these concepts have caused many people grief when they should have caused great joy. It is going to be beyond the scope of this study to deal with these issues fully, particularly with all the controversy that surrounds them. Here, we just want you to begin to see what a blessing these truths are for you and how they can give you *encouragement* and *security* on your life journey. So let’s first simply hear what is here, accept it in faith and then wrestle with the truth.

4.1.1 You Were Chosen before the Foundation of the World

First, God set his mind and affections on us before the “foundation of the world.” God had set us in His purposes before He created this world!!! Even knowing all that would take place—all the sin, rebellion and chaos—He nevertheless loved us and set plans for us that would lead us to Him.

In the Bible, *Father-God is always the one who takes the initiative* with rebellious, helpless and hopeless humanity. In Adam’s rebellion, we were all made sinners. So when God saves, it is not out of an obligation He has to anyone, but on the basis of His *grace* (recall our definition of grace: *The Father’s unearned favor that gives us access to His unlimited power in Christ through the Spirit*). As we have already seen, God does all of this work “In love according to the purpose of his all wise will to the praise of his glorious grace.”

4.1.2 You Were Chosen to Be Holy and Blameless.

Paul also tells us the purposes for which God chose us: *to be holy and blameless*. We were all born into this World defiled by the corruption of sin. As a result, we all, by nature, rebelled and fought against God and His truth, goodness and glory. But even before all of this, God had set His mind and heart on us and determined that we would be **holy**—*set apart uniquely for Him and His service*. He has also chosen us to be *blameless* which means that we would be “without defect” or “without blemish” or “perfect” when we finally see Him face to face. We will explore this further tomorrow.

4.1.3 You Were Predestined for Adoption.

Predestination is another topic that has caused many people grief. This too is unfortunate. *Remember, in this passage Paul is showing us why we are to praise God because of the many ways He has blessed us*. One of the ways that He has blessed us is in predestining us for adoption as sons through Jesus Christ.

The Greek word that is used in this verse for “predestine” simply means “*to determine someone’s destiny beforehand*.” In His great love for you, Father-God not only chose you, but He also determined beforehand what your destiny—the final conclusion, destination of your life journey—would be. In fact, the grammar of this text seems to indicate that God chose us because He predestined us for certain conclusions. Father-God pre-determined that He wanted to adopt us as His sons and daughters and so to do that He chose us in order to make us *holy* and *blameless*.

Now, take a good look at why God does all of this for us and to us: *His great love for us*. God expresses His love for us in that He began to pursue us and set

our course and destiny *before* the foundation of the world. God has done all of this for us because of His love for us, because of His desire for us, because He was willing to do whatever it would take to call us to Himself for the sake of His good pleasure.

Right here, at the beginning, we need to see what great implications all of these truths have for us: In Christ, your life-journey is *secure*. Your Heavenly Father has already decided and determined where you will end your present earthly journey: *holy and blameless, perfect in His presence*. This is the *foundation* of our Hope. This is the *focus* of our Faith. This is the *reason* for our Love. In the meantime, we cultivate our complete confidence in our Father working in Christ by the power of the Spirit to do in and through us what we cannot do for ourselves!

One of the most difficult things that we have to wrestle with as human beings is that our lives do not ultimately belong to us. Our lives have been granted to us by our Creator, Redeemer and King. Also, we must, at some point, come to the realization that *we are not in control*. We cannot control the *circumstances* of life, nor all the *consequences and conclusions*. Nevertheless, we do have the ability and responsibility to choose to live in accordance to the Lord-God's truth, goodness and glory. Knowing that He has been working for us long before we entered the scene should be a comforting truth.

We have been created, redeemed and called to play a significant role in the reality that the One True God has begun and is moving along toward His wise and good conclusions. He has chosen us and set us apart for the role that He has prepared for us. Father-God working in Christ through the power of the Holy Spirit has set us free from the condemnation that we inherited "in Adam" and has accepted us as His beloved children.

* You can find a "Digging Deeper" discussion about predestination in the End Notes on **page 109**.



As you think about what you have heard today, in what ways could these truths build and encourage your faith in the Father, Son and Spirit?

WORDwork | Day 2**4.2 You are Sanctified in Christ.**

2 Thessalonians 2:13 But we ought to thank God always for you, brothers and sisters loved by the Lord, because God chose you from the beginning for salvation through sanctification by the Spirit and faith in the truth.

? 12 Notice that Paul says “we ought to thank God always for you...” How does this relate to what we have said about prayer?

? 13 For what did God choose the Thessalonians “from the beginning”?

? 14 Through what two means did God bring about this salvation according to the end of the verse?

Yesterday, we heard that we have been chosen by God to be *holy* and *blameless*. Today, we want to focus on that word *holy*. In the simplest terms, when God sets something apart for His *unique* purposes, it is *declared* to be holy. The process of setting something apart, declaring it to be holy and purifying it so that it actually becomes pure is called *sanctification*. This is the process that we are now in, in Christ.

Notice also that Paul says the Thessalonians (and us) were chosen by God for salvation from the beginning through 1) the **sanctification by the Spirit** and 2) our **faith** (confidence, trust) in the **truth**. First, take note that it is *the Spirit* who sanctifies you. Secondly, all of this comes to us by our faith in the truth; we heard about this truth in the Gospel.

4.2.1 **Sanctification: Past, Present and Future**

Being set apart for God is referred to as *being sanctified*. This is both a one time event and a process. Take a look at the following chart:

Past	Present	Future
Positional/Relational Sanctification God <i>has</i> set me apart	Progressive Sanctification God <i>is transforming</i> me so that I can <i>express</i> more of my positional holiness	Complete Sanctification God will make me <i>perfect</i>

4.2.2 **Past: In Christ, you have been POSITIONALLY sanctified.**

When God saved you “in Christ” He positionally set you apart for His use and purpose—and you became *positionally sanctified*. ***You cannot become any more positionally holy than you are right now!!!*** To be set apart means to be set apart. This happens one time at your new birth. Consider the following verse:

Hebrews 10:10 By God’s will we have been made holy through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.

This aspect of sanctification does not really involve any “moral” component. God simply declares sinners who are morally corrupt to be “holy”—set apart for His purposes. For this reason, we are referred to as “saints” in the Scriptures. Being a saint is not first about living a “saintly life,” but about being declared “holy” by God your Father.

4.2.3 **Present: In Christ, you are being PROGRESSIVELY sanctified.**

*As you grow in the grace and knowledge of Christ, God will empower you to **express** more of your true identity in Christ.* This learning to express more and more of who you already are positionally in Christ is what we call progressive sanctification. Learning to cooperate with God’s Spirit produces a life characterized by God’s goodness and glory:

1 Thessalonians 4:3-7* For this is God’s will: *that you become holy* (sanctification), that you keep away from sexual immorality, 4:4 that each of you know how to possess his own vessel in *holiness* and *honor*, 4:5 not in lustful passion like the Gentiles who do not know God. ... 4:7 *For God did not call us to impurity but in holiness.*

Positional sanctification occurs in a moment in time whereas progressive sanctification is a process over time. This aspect of sanctification has a moral aspect to it. Now that we have been set apart, we should think and act like Jesus in goodness and purity. This is a lifelong process and will not be completed until we see Him faced to face. This is a process that will conclude in experiencing the full reality of eternal life:

Romans 6:22 But now, freed from sin and enslaved to God, you have your benefit *leading to sanctification, and the end is eternal life.*

4.2.4 **Future: In Christ, you will be made PERFECT/BLAMELESS.** God will be faithful to complete the work of sanctification that He has begun in us. Some simply call this glorification. Consider the following verses:

1 Corinthians 1:2-9 ...to the church of God that is in Corinth, *to those who are sanctified in Christ Jesus, and called to be saints, ... 1:8 He will also strengthen you to the end, so that you will be blameless on the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. 1:9 God is faithful*, by whom you were called into fellowship with his son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

If you know anything about the “saints” at Corinth you will know that they were not exactly models of Christian maturity. They were one of the most immature group of Christ followers in the New Testament. Yet Paul is convinced that even though they had a lot of growing to do, there were still sanctified and called saints and that they would be blameless on the day they saw Christ because God would be faithful to complete the work He had started in them. This should be a great encouragement to us: Father-God will be faithful to us even when we are not faithful to Him!!! We will explore this passage in more detail toward the end of this study.



How does it change the way you view yourself to know that your Heavenly Father calls you a Saint - Set apart, holy in Christ?

WORDwork | Day 3

4.3 **We Have Been Reborn to a Living Hope.**

1 Peter 1:3-9 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ!

According to his great mercy, he has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, 4 to an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you, 5 who by God's power are being guarded through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. 6 This brings you great joy, although you may have to suffer for a short time in various trials.

7 Such trials show the proven character of your faith, which is much more valuable than gold - gold that is tested by fire, even though it is passing away—and will bring praise and glory and honor when Jesus Christ is revealed. 8 You have not seen him, but you love him. You do not see him now but you believe in him, and so you rejoice with an indescribable and glorious joy, 9 because you are attaining the goal of your faith—the salvation of your souls.

? 15 Notice in this passage, just as in Ephesians 1, God is to be blessed. What has God done for us in verse 3? On what basis does He do this?

? 16 What does all of this lead to in verse 4? Where is this inheritance now?
What does this say about the quality of the inheritance?

? 17 How can we be certain that we will receive this inheritance in verse 5?

? 18 Explain verses 6 and 7 in your own words. What is the purpose of the "trials" and "suffering" that we face?

- ? 19 According to verse 7, how valuable is our faith?
- ? 20 In verses 8 and 9 what causes our joy and rejoicing?
- ? 21 What do you think Peter means in verse 9 where he says, “you are attaining the goal of your faith – the salvation of your souls.”

4.3.1 **Reborn According to God’s Great Mercy**

In this passage, we see that on the basis of God’s mercy, He has caused us to be born again! Just as in the Ephesians passage that we have exploring, God treats us according to the riches and blessing of His Grace. Here His grace is revealed as His mercy —He has not treated us as we have deserved, but has been merciful and kind to us.

4.3.2 **Reborn to a Living Hope**

Notice also that this rebirth gives us access to a “living hope through the resurrection of Jesus.” When we think of Jesus’ works for us, we most often think of the Cross and we should. *But we must also remember that the resurrection of the Jesus is just as important.* Because He has defeated death, He forever lives to save and sustain us. We have hope in Him and this hope is a *living hope*. It is an ongoing, life sustaining hope that God will complete His saving work in us and make sure that we reach our eternal destination.

4.3.3 **Reborn to a New Inheritance**

This spiritual rebirth also means that a *new inheritance* has come to us as Father-God’s children. This inheritance is *imperishable* (does not grow old and does not wear away with time), *undefiled* (untouched by the corruption of this fallen world) and *unfading* (is eternally glorious and beautiful). This full inheritance is kept in Heaven for us and is far above anything that we can even imagine now.

Earlier, we considered verse 5 where Peter talks about God protecting us by His power through faith. Our experience of complete, perfect salvation will not occur until we are in the presence of Christ. Until that time, Father-God is pro-

tecting us so that we arrive at this final destination. Until that time, we experience trials which reveal the real value of our faith.

4.3.4 **Our Faith is being Refined**

As we move forward in our journey, we will face suffering and hardships—trials. Remember, the world does not “know” us because it did not know our Master and it also hates us because it hated Him (1 John 3:1, 13). However, now with our new origin and destiny these trials *prove* the character of faith. They are also used by our Heavenly Father to build up our faith.

When suffering and trials come, they simply reveal the character of our faith. They help us to see that there is no other hope than to cling to our Creator, Savior and King in the midst of this fallen and corrupt world. *Our trials push us to see that there is no greater joy and blessing than being completely included in Father-God’s glorious, eternal family in Christ through His Spirit.* The conviction of our faith, empowered by God, is the very thing that enables us to persevere to the end, to see Christ and be revealed with Him in glory (see also Colossians 3:1-3).

4.3.5 **Christ is our Goal**

Finally, Peter brings all of this to a point: Even though we have not seen Christ, we love Him. We do not yet see Him, but we believe, trust in Him. Because of our faith and hope we can rejoice now, in the present, because we know for certain that we will reach our final eternally glorious destiny – complete, made perfect in His presence! Then we will experience the full salvation of our souls. All of this will come to us because we have been reborn, welcomed into God’s eternal family.



Take a minute to think on anything new that you learned in today’s discussion. How do these truths help you to understand what Father-God is doing in Christ to save you?

WORDwork | Day 4**4.4 You Are Adopted into God's Family**

Romans 8:15 For you did not receive the spirit of slavery leading again to fear, but you received the Spirit of adoption, by whom we cry, “Abba, Father.”

Galatians 4:4-7 But when the appropriate time had come, God sent out his Son, born of a woman, born under the law, ⁵ to redeem those who were under the law, *so that we may be adopted as sons with full rights.* ⁶ And because you are sons, God sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, who calls “Abba! - Father!” ⁷ So you are no longer a slave but a son, and if you are a son, then you are also an heir through God.

? 22 How is the Spirit described in Romans 8:15? How does the Spirit lead us to address God?

? 23 How is the Spirit described in the Galatians passage above? What is common in both of these passages?

We have all heard Jesus referred to as God's “only begotten son” in John 3:16: “For God so loved the world, He gave His only begotten Son...” What does that phrase “only begotten” mean? Some used to think that it meant God's “only born” Son. Although that is in line with the meaning of the term, it is not quite accurate. The term that is used here is better translated, God's “one unique Son” or “one-of-a-kind Son.” It still points to the fact that Jesus is God's only literal human son, which highlights the fact that there is no one else like him. We have already heard how we have to be “born again” spiritually to enter God's family. Now we want to consider another way to think about what Father-God has done for us: He has *adopted* us.

4.4.1 What Does Adoption Mean?

As we heard earlier, God predestined us to this adoption as His children (Ephesians 1:5). Whereas Jesus and Peter speak about our “new spiritual birth,” Paul

chooses to express these same ideas in terms of our *adoption*. The reason for this is probably because the idea of a new birth would have been a more powerful and provocative idea for a mainly Jewish audiences, whereas the idea of adoption would have been more meaningful to Paul's largely Gentile audiences.

Paul is probably drawing his analogy from the Roman Laws concerning adoption that existed in his day. In these times, the father had absolute rights and absolutely authority over all aspects of the Roman family. When a man wished to adopt another son, two steps were taken. First, the son to be adopted would have to be released from the authority of his natural father. Second, the son to be adopted would be placed under the authority of the new father and granted the position of a "natural son" so that the father could then pass on his rights, authority, and inheritance to the new son. In this way, the family could be sustained and maintained from generation to generation.

So how does this help us understand our position before God? This means that we who were once "sons of disobedience" and "children of wrath" (Ephesians 2:2-3) have been freed from the cruel tyranny of our old "father"—Satan (see John 8:38, 44; Ephesians 2:2)—and have been placed under the authority of our gracious and merciful Heavenly Father. We are now part of God's family and He predestined us for this—He determined this for us, before He created the world!!!

By being adopted into God's family, we gain a new position and a new inheritance. Our "old father" the Devil only sought to terrorize and ultimately destroy us. Our inheritance with him was only *death* and *eternal condemnation*. Now, we have been adopted into God's family with Jesus as our "older brother" (Hebrews 2:11-15) who gives us a share in His glorious and eternal inheritance! In Christ, we have been adopted into God's family as sons with full rights! This means that we have a claim on the family inheritance and all the blessings that go along with being part of the family.

Women should remember that you are included in this as "sons" as well. Paul always calls us "sons" whether we are male or female because in the first century, only male sons received inheritances. In Christ, we are all "sons" sharing in the inheritance and women are likewise "fellow heirs of the grace of life" (1 Peter 3:7).

4.4.2 **Father-God Chose You!**

What makes this blessing of "adoption" so meaningful? Natural parents differ in many ways from adoptive parents. Natural parents don't really know anything about their children before they are born. They may know whether they

are having a boy or a girl, but the baby's personality will now be known until later. Adoptive parents however can know a lot more before deciding whether to accept or reject a child as their own. Adoptive parents choose to take a child who is not biologically their "own" out of their love and concern for that child.

When Father-God adopted you into His family, it was His deliberate voluntary choice and was made with *total knowledge* about you: your past, present and future! He knew exactly what He was getting! You should experience tremendous joy knowing He voluntarily chose you for His own family. He knew all about your glories and strengths, even your faults and failures and still said "I choose this child for my own." Nothing that ever shocks you about yourself has ever shocked God! It is so wonderful to be adopted. Adoption means you were chosen and accepted while still "in Adam" with all your sins and imperfections. Your being adopted by God proves His unconditional acceptance of you "in Christ." Being adopted should give you direction and purpose for the rest of your journey.

In the memory verse from James at the beginning of this session, we hear that our Heavenly Father has given us a new birth so that we could be a kind of "first-fruits" of all that He created. As God's beloved children, we now serve as a *model* for what the Creator desires for all His creation. As beloved children, we give those around us a "taste" of what it means to find security, fulfillment and significance in our Father who chooses and calls, our older Brother Jesus who sacrifices Himself for us, and the Spirit who indwells us to empower us.



Take a few minutes to review what we have discussed this week. What truths are you most thankful for? How do these blessings help you understand how Father-God sees you and relates to you? What do you need to change in the way you view yourself and your relationship with Father-God in Christ to be in-line with these truths?



Take a few minutes now to pray for people you know who need to know these truths, asking Father-God to open their eyes so that they can see all that He is offering them in Christ.

Session 5

How Has Christ Freed Us From Sin?

Core Truth: Jesus has done all that is necessary for us to be set in right relationship with God through his faithfulness and sacrifice. When we trust Christ—that His blood has set us free from the guilt and debt of our sins—we are declared to be “in the right,” in right relationship with Father-God. **In Christ** our sins have been removed from us. Because of the redemption, forgiveness and justification that comes to us in Christ, we are also reconciled—put at peace—with God. This peace is not just the absence of hostility, it is the presence of His personal blessing as He now deals with us as His beloved Children.

To Remember: “For we all have sinned and fall far short of the glory of God. But we are justified (declared righteous) freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus.” [Romans 3:23-24]

Objective: As we think on all that Jesus has literally sacrificed for us, our hearts and minds should be captivated by Father-God’s love for us and the grace that we have received in Jesus Christ. Discussing justification focuses us on Jesus as the One who has set us right with the Lord-God. Discussing redemption focuses on what Christ has paid for us so that we no longer belong to ourselves. Discussing forgiveness applies the truth of justification. The truth of Reconciliation will be a good way to prepare for and transition into hearing about deliverance and glorification.

Prayer: *“Father-God, I thank you for all that you have done for me in Christ. This week, help me to understand and know your love more deeply. Help me to know your goodness and righteousness that I might be an instrument of these to those around me. Amen”*

WORDwork | Day 1

5.1 You are Justified in Christ.

Romans 3:19-25* 19 Now we know that whatever the law says, it says to those who are under the law, so that every mouth may be silenced and the whole world may be held accountable to God. 20 For no one is **declared righteous** before him by the works of the law, for through the law comes the knowledge of sin.

21 But now an apart-from-the-law-righteousness of God (which is attested by the law and the prophets) has been disclosed—22 namely, the righteousness of God through the faithfulness of 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 But they are justified (declared righteous) freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. 25 God publicly displayed Him as a propitiation *accessible through faith in His blood...*

- ? 24 Can you explain verse 20 in your own words?

- ? 25 What has now been disclosed or revealed according to verse 21?

- ? 26 How does God now disclose or display His righteousness? In whose faithfulness?

- ? 27 What is true of everyone according to the end of verse 22 and the beginning of verse 23? What is possible for us according to verse 24?

5.1.1 What does it mean to be justified?

To justify someone is to *declare* that person to be *righteous*. So in order to understand justification, we need to understand what righteousness is. Remember our

“definition” of righteousness: *doing* 1) *the right thing*, 2) *in the right way*, 3) *at the right time*, 4) *with the right motives*.

This passage from Romans is both about God’s “right way of doing things” and how that affects us. It is easy to understand that both who God is and what He does is always *righteous*—He always does the right thing, in the right way, at the right time, with the right motives and this is why He is true, good and glorious. We too were created with the capacity to act *righteously*, but we have fallen far short of that standard (God’s glory). The Good News is that although we have all sinned and fall far short of the standard of God’s glory (His holy beauty), we are justified—declared to be in the right with Him, *in right relationship*—because Jesus has done for us what we cannot do for ourselves. For this reason we trust Him and Him alone.

5.1.2 **Father-God Reveals His Right Way of Doing Things.**

So what does this passage tell us about God’s right way of doing things? First of all, God’s right way has now been *revealed apart from the Law*. In other words, what God has revealed about *his righteousness* is not based in law or law-keeping. This is good news for us because we can’t keep the Law perfectly! This “new revelation” of His right way of doing things is supported, confirmed by the Law and the Prophets (the Hebrew Scriptures), but it is something that has been clearly revealed in Jesus.

So what has God revealed about this new right way of doing things? In this present age, *God’s righteousness is revealed in the way He declares sinners who place their ultimate trust in Jesus to be in right relationship with Him (justification) based on the work of Jesus*.

5.1.3 **We are declared to be righteous freely by God’s grace.**

God now declares that we are in right relationship with Him not because we have caused this or earned it but because He desired to do so freely as a gift for us! The word “freely” here is used in other contexts of the New Testament to speak of 1) *a gift* (John 4:10, Acts 2:38), 2) *doing something “free of charge” or “without payment”* (John 15:25, 2 Corinthians 11:7, 2 Thessalonians 3:8) and 3) *something that is done without a cause* (John 15:25). *We do not deserve what God has done for us in Christ and we cannot pay for it, all we can do is receive it!* This is the very definition of Grace.

5.1.4 **We are declared to be righteous on the basis of what Jesus has done (redemption).**

Even though this relationship with God did not “cost” us anything, we cannot forget that it cost Jesus a high price—His life, His blood. He was faithful and poured out his blood for us (redemption). The basis for our being set right with God is not what we have done, but what Christ has done for us. We will talk more about redemption tomorrow.

5.1.5 **We are declared to be righteous through our faith.**

In the last verse of this passage, we get a very difficult line: “*God publicly displayed Him as a propitiation accessible through faith in His blood...*” There has been endless debate over how to translate this line and also what this means. Basically we believe Paul is telling us that Father-God has displayed Christ publicly (on the Cross) as a propitiatory sacrifice, a sacrifice that annuls His wrath (we will deal with this in a future lesson). This word can also mean “mercy seat,” the covering of the Ark of the Covenant where the blood of Atonement was poured out. Paul wants us to see Jesus’ death on the Cross as the place where the perfect sacrifice was made and also the place where we find mercy and grace and forgiveness and cleansing.

He then tells us how we get “access” to all of these blessings: *through faith in the blood of Jesus*. Remember our discussion of Jesus’ blood earlier? Take note that all of the salvation and life-sustaining blessings that we receive from the Father come to us freely, but at the cost of Jesus’ blood!



In this passage there is a reference to the “faithfulness/faith of Jesus Christ.” In the appendices there is a discussion of this important but controversial topic. We would encourage you to read about this if you have never seen it before.

WORDwork | Day 2**5.2 We Are Redeemed By Jesus' Blood.**

Ephesians 1:7 In Him (in Christ) we have redemption through His blood,
the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace,
8 which He lavished upon us...

? 28 In verse 7, what do we have in Christ? Could you define redemption in your own words?
Through what means does this redemption come to us?

? 29 What is this blessing linked with in the same verse?
Why does God "lavish" this rich blessing upon us?

5.2.1 Redemption is paying a price to claim something

Yesterday we heard that we have been "justified through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus." In our Ephesians passage we hear that we have redemption through Christ's blood, which is the forgiveness of our sins. Justification, redemption, forgiveness are all interrelated ideas. The central truth that binds them all together is the redemption that Christ provides through His blood, death which we discussed in the first sessions of this study.

The concept of redemption is very important in God's work of salvation. In its broadest sense, redemption is made up of two interrelated ideas 1) **paying a price** to claim something (or reclaim something that was lost) and 2) **setting something/someone free** by a payment. Look at a couple of passages which illustrate these ideas:

1 Corinthians 6:20 For you were bought at a price.
Therefore glorify God with your body.

In this passage we see that we have been "bought with a price" which means that we have been "purchased" by God with Jesus' blood. How should we respond to this? We should glorify God with our bodies. Now look at the other aspect of redemption, being set free:

5.2.2 **Redemption sets us free.**

Titus 2:14 He gave himself for us to set us free (*redeem us*) from every kind of lawlessness and to purify for himself a people who are truly his, who are eager to do good.

The idea present in Ephesians 1:7 focuses on this second nuance. The word used here speaks not only to the payment of the price, but more importantly **to the effect of the payment**: being reclaimed as God's own possession so that God can set us free!!! Through the payment of Christ's own blood, God the Father has purchased you for Himself!!! And as we have already seen, He has sealed you with the Holy Spirit to ensure that you arrive at your final eternal destination – at home with your Heavenly Father (remember Ephesians 1:13-14).

Christ has paid His own life in order to reclaim us for the Father. The blood of Jesus is the price that our Heavenly Father paid to reclaim us as His children and to set us free from our slavery to sin, death and corruption that we were born into in Adam. Consider the following ways in which we have been set free in Christ:

1. We have been set free from **the burden and debt of our sins** (Ephesians 1:7, Colossians 1:1).
2. We have been set free from **the tyranny of the Devil**.

Hebrews 2:14-15 Therefore, since the children share in flesh and blood, he likewise shared in their humanity, so that through death he could destroy the one who holds the power of death (that is, the devil), 15 and set free those who were held in slavery all their lives by their fear of death.

(We will return to this passage a little later.)

3. We have been set free from **the burden of external law** as a means of maintaining our relationship with God.

Galatians 5:1 For freedom Christ has set us free. Stand firm, then, and do not be subject again to the yoke of slavery.

Romans 8:2 For the law of the life-giving Spirit in Christ Jesus has set you free from the law of sin and death.

The benefits of this redemption are made real to us right now, in the here and now. But our redemption will also be made complete in the resurrection. We

have been spiritually set free, but God will also set our physical bodies free from their corruption and brokenness in the future:

Romans 8:23 ... we also, who have the first fruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we eagerly await *our adoption, the redemption of our bodies*.

Notice that here Paul describes our completion/perfection in two ways: 1) it is the completion of our adoption process, which is 2) the redemption (the reclaiming) of our physical bodies. Although we *have been* adopted by God and redeemed through Jesus blood, these great blessings *will be* made perfectly complete in the future when we see Him face to face. Now, in the present, we only enjoy a taste these blessings!



Think about all the ways that Jesus has set us free. Were there any new things that you learned today? Pray that Father God would reveal practical ways for you to live out your freedom in ways that are pleasing to Him.

WORDwork | Day 3

5.3 You are Forgiven in Christ.

Matthew 26:27-28 And after taking the cup and giving thanks, he gave it to them, saying, “Drink from it, all of you, 28 for this is my blood, the blood of the covenant, *that is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins.*”

Forgiveness is probably the blessing that is most often associated with Jesus’ work on the Cross. At the Last Supper, Jesus initiated the New Covenant that would be established by His blood. The “pouring out” of His blood would also be the basis for many having their sins *forgiven*. Forgiveness is the result of a central, “first” truth of the Gospel: Jesus died for our sins (see 1 Corinthians 15:3).

As you already know, the penalty for sin is death. Under the Old Covenant, The Law, blood is a symbol that a death has taken place in order to deal with the debt and penalty of sin. But the application of blood *does* something. Take note of this verse:

Hebrews 9:22 Indeed, according to the law almost everything was **purified** with blood, and without the shedding of blood there is no **forgiveness**.

So, the Scriptures teach us that God accepts blood as a means to:

1. **cleanse** from the impurity of sins, and
2. **pay the penalty** required of sin (death) so that we can be set free from the debt and power of sin (forgiveness)

When Jesus first appeared for His public ministry, John the Baptist said of Him, “...Look, the Lamb of God *who takes away the sin of the world!*” (John 1:29). In Ephesians 1:7 we heard, “In him (Christ) we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses...” The redemption that we have in Christ’s blood is the basis of our forgiveness. Again, *we must never forget that what Father-God gives to us freely also cost Jesus dearly.* We are forgiven *because* Jesus died for us.

5.3.1 What is Forgiveness?

The basic idea of forgiveness is simply *releasing or setting someone free from a debt*. In our relationship with God, when He forgives us, He is releasing us from the

debt, guilt and shame of our sins. In His death on the Cross, Jesus has died in our place to pay the debt that our sins had incurred. Consider the following passage:

Colossians 2:13-15* 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 canceling the record of debt* that stood against us with its legal demands. This he set aside, nailing it to the cross.

God has clearly revealed in His Word what is right and wrong. We have all *trespassed or transgressed*—stepped over, intentionally rebelled against—these standards because we were born spiritually dead and therefore insensitive to God’s truth, goodness and glory.

Because of these trespasses, we all have a record of debt that shows not only that we are guilty of breaking the wise instruction of God, but also the penalty that is incurred by these transgressions. But God, in His great mercy, has *cancelled this debt* by nailing it to the Cross with Christ. He has released us from debt of our sins. He has cancelled our debt so that now we owe Him nothing as far as our sins are concerned. This is forgiveness.

5.3.2 **Our sins are *removed* from us in Christ.**

Notice, this is very different from what happened in the animal sacrifices. The blood of those animals only “covered” over the sins the people. Now, the blood of Christ actually provides the basis on which God actually *removes* our sins from us. It is amazing to discover that even David speaks about this removal of the guilt of our sins in the Psalms:

Psalms 103:7-12 The LORD is merciful and gracious,
slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love.
103:9 He will not always chide, nor will he keep his anger forever.
103:10 He does not deal with us according to our sins,
nor repay us according to our iniquities (*perversions*).
103:11 For as high as the heavens are above the earth,
so great is his steadfast love toward those who fear him;
103:12 as far as the east is from the west,
so far does he remove our transgressions from us.

Although David does not actually use the word “forgiveness” in this Psalm, the idea is present. Hear what David says: God does not deal with us according to what our sins deserve. He does not repay us according to the debt of our sinful-

ness. Instead, He *removes* our transgressions from us, as far as the east is from the west.

This metaphor is important. If you are traveling North on the globe, you will eventually reach the point at which you are going South. But if you travel East you will never reach the point at which you will be traveling West. *East and West never meet. God removes our sins from us in such a way, that they never touch us again.* This is why Paul quotes David in Romans as he says:

Romans 4:7-8 “Blessed are those whose lawless deeds
are forgiven, and whose sins are covered;
Blessed is the one against whom the Lord will never count sin.”

God, in Christ, has freed us from the debt of our sins so that now He deals with us according to His love and mercy and not His wrath and anger as our sins deserve. ***You are forgiven in Christ.*** Can you accept this and live free from your guilt as well?

When Jesus shed His blood on the Cross 2000 years ago, you and I did not yet exist. Not only that, but we had not committed one sin. When Jesus died for us, all of our sins were still “future sins.” On the Cross He paid the price that would release us from the debt of *all* of our sins. Jesus came *to take away* the sins of the world – all sin past, present and future. This means all your sins as well. This means that **in Christ**, you are released from the *debt, guilt* and *shame* of your sins and *you are free* to live for God’s glory and pleasure.

This blessing, as all of our other blessings, became real and experiential for you the moment you received Jesus as your Savior: all of your past, present, and future sins were forgiven by God!!! Since we can be assured that God has forgiven us and will forgive us, we can have confidence to live our lives openly and honestly before Him. He has truly set us free from the burden of our sins.



Is there anything new that you learned about forgiveness? How did today’s discussion help you understand forgiveness better?

WORDwork | Day 4**5.4 You Are Reconciled to God the Father.**

Romans 5:1-11 1 Therefore, since we have been declared righteous by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, ...

... 6 For while we were still helpless, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly. 7 (For rarely will anyone die for a righteous person, though for a good person perhaps someone might possibly dare to die.) 8 But God demonstrates his own love for us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

9 Much more then, because we have now been declared righteous by his blood, we will be saved through him from God's wrath. 10 *For if while we were enemies* we were reconciled to God through the death of his Son, how much more, since we have been reconciled, will we be saved by his life? 11 Not only this, but we also rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received this reconciliation.

- ? 30 What is the result of our having "been declared righteous by faith" in verse 1?
- ? 31 When did Christ die for us according to this passage? Why is this timing significant?
How does it display the reality of God's love for us?
- ? 32 What is another benefit of being declared righteous in verse 9?
- ? 33 What does Paul say that we were to God before our salvation in verse 10?

? 34 According to verse 11, How should we respond to the reconciling work of Christ?

5.4.1 **We were enemies of God.**

When two people are enemies with one another, their relationship is one of hostility and discord. In Romans 5:10 Paul states clearly that we were once God's enemies. Yet, God did not create us to live this way. The real problem is that each of us were hostile to God by *nature* and *choice*, despising His truth and goodness. We needed to have someone bring peace to this relationship, we needed someone to put an end to the hostility. Christ came to reconcile us to God our Father. Where there was once hostility and wrath, now there is *peace* and *salvation*.

5.4.2 **We are now justified in Christ and this brings peace.**

Christ has now *reconciled* us—put us on favorable and friendly terms—with God so that we are at peace with Him. Notice first of all that this blessing flows out of our justification. Earlier, we defined justification as being declared to be in right relationship with God on the basis of Christ's faith/faithfulness transferred to our credit through our faith. So now that we have been declared righteous, we now have peace with God. We were born His enemies, but by the death of His Son, He is now able to call us His friends.

5.4.3 **God loves us to the point of giving His Son for us.**

When did Christ do this for us? When we were helpless, ungodly, sinners!!! Christ saved us when we were at our worst. Paul highlights this point by saying that it is rare for somebody to give their life for a righteous or even a good person, but for someone to die for a useless and wicked person is unheard of. But this is the only kind of people God saves—the corrupt and the wicked. God saves us when we were confirmed enemies, hostile to Him, dead in sin, lost in the darkness.

All of this should overwhelm us with how much God loves us. Christ died for us when we were all at our lowest, helpless and hopeless, enslaved to sin. Yet God saves us *in our sin from our sins*. The awesome reality of God's gracious love is that He saves the very people that really deserve His wrath. While we were yet sinners, Christ died for us and saved us.

5.4.4 **We Will Be Saved From God's Future Wrath**

Notice that being set right with God and reconciled to Him also results in our being saved from God's *present* and *future wrath* in Christ. This speaks to the truths of *propitiation* and *deliverance* that we will discuss next week. God's *present wrath* is the process in which He turns people over to their own corrupt desires which would ultimately lead to their self destruction. Christ has set us free from this process. We also have no fear of God's *future wrath* because we now have peace with Him *through* Christ and *in* Christ. Because of this we can now rejoice! As Paul says, if God reconciled us through Jesus' death while we were His enemies, then how much more will He save us by His life! Now that we are at peace with God, we can have hope that He will save us completely.

5.4.5 **The Terms of Reconciliation**

When we think about reconciliation, we need to understand that this speaks of bringing peace, harmony and fellowship back to a relationship in which one person has offended the other. In order to set the relationship right, terms for reconciliation need to be laid out. It is the *offended person* that gets to set the terms of reconciliation. When this happens in the context of human relationships, it is almost never the case that one party is completely right and the other party completely wrong. In fact, in most cases, both sides of the dispute have offended the other and both need forgiveness.

In the case of our relationship with God, we have sinned against God but He has been completely faithful to us. We were born in an alienated state, hostile to God. This being the case, it is God alone who gets to define the terms that will lead to reconciliation. What are the terms that God has set? – Trust in my Son Jesus!!!

Session 6

How Has Christ Freed Us From Death?

- Core Truth:** Through the self-sacrificial work of Jesus, Father-God has delivered from the Dominion of Darkness where we were *spiritually dead* and transferred us to the Kingdom of His Beloved Son where we are now spiritually alive. Although we were held captive both by *nature* and by *choice*, Father-God has set us free in Christ from His wrath so that we may now serve Him through the power of His Spirit. In Christ, we have truly been set free. Father-God desires that we use our freedom to love one another and others in the fellowship the Spirit brings.
- Core Truth:** “He (Father-God) delivered us from the Dominion of darkness and transferred us to the Kingdom of His Beloved Son, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.”
[Colossians 1:13-14]
- Objective:** We need to understand that in Christ we have been set free. We have been delivered from the Tyranny of Satan’s dark and dying dominion to the glorious and everlasting Kingdom of Christ. Father-God has adopted you into His family. He has glorified you (given you honor) by giving you the greatest name and title that you could ever receive – “Son of God.” But God will also glorify us in the future when He completely redeems our corrupt physical bodies. At that point, we will be made completely, gloriously free. Until then, we are called to live in the freedom that Jesus has given to us, using our time serve and love others as He has loved us.
- Prayer:** “Father-God, I thank you that you have truly set me free in Christ. Help me to understand this more deeply. Empower me through your Spirit to use my freedom for good, to be an instrument of your grace in the lives of all those around me. Amen”

WORDwork | Day 1

6.1 **We Have been Delivered and Transferred.**

Colossians 1:9-14* ...from the day we heard about you, (we) have not ceased praying for you and asking God to fill you with the knowledge of his will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding, 10 so that you may live worthily of the Lord and please him in all respects bearing fruit in every good deed, growing in the knowledge of God, 11 being strengthened with all power according to his glorious might for the display of all patience and steadfastness, joyfully 12 giving thanks to the Father who has qualified you to share in the saints' inheritance in the light. 13 **He delivered us from the power (dominion) of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of His Beloved Son,** 14 in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.

? 35 With what does Paul pray for the Colossian church to be filled?

? 36 What should be the result of this filling? (v10-12, 5 things)

? 37 What has the Father done for us? (verse 13)

6.1.1 **We Have Been Delivered From the Dominion of Darkness.**

In Christ, we have been delivered. We have been delivered out of the kingdom of darkness and transferred to the kingdom of God's beloved Son Jesus. We have also been delivered from God's wrath through the sacrifice of Jesus. Now that we are delivered, there is now no condemnation for all of us who are "in Christ."

First of all, notice what Paul says at the end of this passage from Colossians: *He delivered us from the power of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of the Son he loves, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.*

We have been delivered by God to the Kingdom of His Beloved Son!!! Notice, he again touches on what we have considered earlier: in Christ we have

redemption, the forgiveness of our sins. Because we are now in a New Kingdom, we have a new position before God, a new relationship to Him and that means that we have a new way of life. We will consider the first part of this passage in a future session. For now, we are going to explore the last part of this passage.

6.1.2 **We were all once citizens of Satan's Dark Dominion.**

Most of us are not used to thinking in terms of “kingdoms” and “dominions.” In fact, it may be a surprise to discover *that God's universe is not a democracy*. God is Sovereign King over all His creation. He does not submit to the popular vote of His subjects. Instead, He rules by His own perfect knowledge, wisdom and power expressed in His grace and righteousness.

On this present Earth, there is a Dark Dominion (a ruling power and authority) that stands opposed to the truth, goodness and glory of God. This dominion has as its “king” Satan (the Adversary, the Devil)—the enemy of all who would love and worship the One True God. This World has temporarily been usurped by Him. Paul tells us that Satan now blinds non-believers to light of Gospel:

2 Corinthians 4:3-4 ... even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled only to those who are perishing, among whom the god of this age has blinded the minds of those who do not believe so they would not see the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God.

Satan is not God's equal, but he is still very powerful nonetheless. The bad news for each of us is that we were born by natural birth into Satan's Dominion of Darkness. This is the destiny our first parents chose for our human family. Each of us was born dead in sin, blind to God's truth and incapacitated by our own pride and desire for total self-sufficiency. We were born enemies of God, “children of wrath,” “disobedient sons” (see Ephesians 2:3, 5:6).

6.1.3 **God has Delivered Us!**

But then God intervened:

2 Corinthians 4:6 For God, who said “Let light shine out of darkness,” is the one who shined in our hearts to give us the light of the glorious knowledge of God in the face of Christ!

God shined in our hearts, He illuminated us with the light that comes by way of the life and glory of the Lord Jesus. He called us to Himself by His love and grace and He opened our eyes to see the truth of the Gospel of Christ. When we received God's gift of salvation through faith, we were transferred out of the

Dominion of Darkness and transferred to The Kingdom of God's Beloved Son Jesus.

You, just like every other Child of God, have been turned from the Darkness to the Light by the power of God's Gospel, the "good news," the "royal proclamation" of Jesus the King. By His grace, through faith, God has transferred us from the Darkness to the Light. Whereas Satan was once our King, now Christ is our Great King.

Those who remain enslaved to the Enemy in his dark dominion will finally enter into their eternal destiny, the Outer Darkness (see Matthew 22:13). To reject the One True God is to be cut off from all that is good, true and glorious. Yet all of us who have been transferred to the kingdom of Christ by His grace made real in the power of the Gospel will one day enter our eternal destiny: Reigning together with Christ in His Kingdom:

Revelation 5:9-10 (The Elders in Heaven) were singing a new song: "You (Christ) are worthy... and at the cost of your own blood you have purchased for God persons from every tribe, language, people, and nation. 5:10 *You have appointed them as a **kingdom** and **priests** to serve our God, and they will reign on the earth.*"

One last, important we need to make here: it was Jesus Himself who destroyed the Devil at the Cross to set us free from the *power* of death and even from our *fear* of death:

Hebrews 2:14-15 Therefore, since the children share in flesh and blood, he likewise shared in their humanity, so that through death he could destroy the one who holds the power of death (that is, the devil), 15 and set free those who were held in slavery all their lives by their fear of death.

We will have more to say about this in our next unit. For now, take note that Jesus has "shared in our flesh and blood" - He became human as we are - so that going through Death He might gain mastery over it!!! Now, in Christ, death has no power or hold over us. *We have truly passed out of death into everlasting life.*



What can you take from today's discussion to pray and gives thanks to Father-God for? Take a few minutes to pray, give thanks and pray for a couple of people you may know who need to know these truths.

WORDwork | Day 2

6.2 **We Are Delivered From God's Wrath. (Propitiation)**

6.2.1 **What is God's Wrath?**

The wrath of God is not a popular topic these days (nor has it ever been). People don't like to hear about God's wrath and assume that it is a part of His personality that He left behind in the Old Testament. But this is far from the truth. Take a look at the following passages:

Romans 1:18 For the *wrath of God* is presently revealed from heaven against all *ungodliness* and *unrighteousness* of people who suppress the truth by their unrighteousness, ...

Ephesians 5:6 Let nobody deceive you with empty words, for because of these things *God's wrath comes* on the sons of disobedience. (see Colossians 3:6 for a parallel statement of this)

Simply stated, God's wrath is his righteous way of dealing with sin and evil (all that is not in line with His truth, goodness and beauty) by allowing them to have their way. On a personal level, God's wrath is His turning people over to themselves which ultimately results in their own destruction.

There are two aspects of God's wrath that we need to consider: 1) His *present wrath*, and 2) His *future wrath*. God's *present wrath* is displayed in the way He is allowing rebellious humanity to cave in upon itself because of its own wicked and corrupt desires. God's *future wrath* is also coming. This wrath is displayed in the present reality of Hell and the coming eternal reality of the Lake of Fire. This will be the eternal destiny of all those who ultimately and finally rejected the mercy and grace of the One True God made available in Christ.

The Biblical truth of God's wrath is not very popular because questions like "How could a loving God send anyone into eternal torment?" come up. In order to understand this we need to see how wrath is actually bound up with God's love and righteousness and desire.

6.2.2 **God's Wrath is related to God's love and desire.**

God's righteous wrath against sin and wickedness and His love for things good and pure are really two sides of the same coin. Since God *loves* what is true, good and beautiful, He *hates* all that stands contrary to these—all that is evil and

twisted and corrupt. In fact, God loves what is good and glorious so much that His righteousness demands that He ultimately destroy all that is evil and corrupt. This is the reality of His *wrath*.

In Ephesians 2:2 Paul says that we all were “children of wrath.” We were children who were destined for and deserving of wrath because we were born dead in Adam, enslaved to the Evil Powers of this world, and enslaved to our own sinful desires. We too were once among the “sons of disobedience” who are worthy of God’s condemnation. But God has provided the means in Christ by which we escape His wrath.

6.2.3 **Christ’s sacrifice for us turns away God’s wrath.**

Earlier, we saw how Christ has redeemed us—He has given His blood to set us free from all that enslaved us. Jesus’ blood has also provided another great blessing for us: the *propitiation* of God’s wrath. Propitiation takes place when an acceptable blood sacrifice is given to satisfy God’s righteous wrath. For us, Christ is that sacrifice. Take a look at what John says about this:

1 John 4:10* In this is love: not that we have loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son to be *the satisfying sacrifice (propitiation)* for our sins.

God displays his great love for us in that He sends His One Unique Son Jesus to be a satisfying sacrifice for our sins so that He can freely and lavishly accept us as His sons and daughters!!!

This is not a sacrifice that we have to bring to God and offer Him; this is a sacrifice that He makes for us and then offers it to us freely, without cost to us!!! There is no offering that you could possibly bring to God to accomplish propitiation. God Himself had to provide His own acceptable sacrifice.

There is an illustration that helps communicate this awesome concept. The plains Indians of North America lived under constant threat of wildfires that swept across the plains, fed by forceful winds. Wildfire could appear and encircle a village in a matter of minutes, preventing any escape. But the Indians learned that as wildfire rushed toward them, they could voluntarily burn a wide fire-ring around their village. When the wildfire met the fire-ring that had already been burned, it could not burn again where the fire had already burned. The wild fire would pass them by. All those who were inside the fire-ring of safety were passed by and saved.

In Christ, you are saved from God’s wrath because His wrath has already burned and been satisfied in Jesus’ suffering for you. He provides a “ring of

safety” for all who trust in Him. When you accepted Him and stepped inside the family circle of all those in Christ, you entered into a position in which God’s wrath has been satisfied, never to burn again.

In 1 Thessalonians Paul encourages the community of believers with the blessings that have come to them in Christ in spite of some affliction that they were enduring. There he says:

1 Thessalonians 1:9-10 For people everywhere report how you welcomed us and how *you turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God* 10 and to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, *Jesus our deliverer from the coming wrath.*

Jesus is our Deliverer from the coming, future wrath of God! Father-God will never abandon you to yourself; He will not turn you over to your un-purified desires. You are now in His care in Christ, delivered from both His *present* and *future* wrath!



Take a few minutes and think about the implications of our discussion today. What do you feel knowing that you have been freed from God’s wrath and have no reason to fear it anymore?

WORDwork | Day 3

6.3 We Have Been Set Free in Christ.

Galatians 5:1-16 For freedom Christ has set us free. Stand firm, then, and do not be subject again to the yoke of slavery. ... 5:5 For through the Spirit, by faith, we wait expectantly for the hope of righteousness. 5:6 For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision carries any weight—*the only thing that matters is faith working through love...*

5:13 For you were called to freedom, brothers and sisters; only do not use your freedom as an opportunity to indulge your flesh, but through love serve one another. 5:14 For the whole law can be summed up in a single commandment, namely, “*You must love your neighbor as yourself.*”

- ? 38 According to verse 1, what has Christ done for us?
- ? 39 What are we now waiting for through the Spirit?
- ? 40 What is the “only thing” that matters in Christ Jesus according to 5:6?
- ? 41 How are we to use the freedom that has been given to us in Christ?
- ? 42 What is Paul’s summary of the whole Law?

6.3.1 We have truly been set free.

This week we are going to explore two ideas that may seem strange to place together: *freedom* and *glory*. As we will hear, the whole creation is waiting to see

us, the children of God, finally revealed in our “glorious freedom” (see Romans 8:21). In the Scriptures, glory and freedom are linked together in some key passages. Here we will discover that true glory is produced when the children of God use their freedom to love and serve others (even our enemies).

In the Galatians passage that we have here, Paul is addressing a community of believers who are being plagued by false teaching. This false teaching is calling them to do certain things—get circumcised and keep the Mosaic Law—in order to be right with God and maintain a favorable relationship with God. Paul says that this type of teaching is contrary to the One True Gospel and is therefore accursed (see Galatians 1). In Christ we have all that is necessary to be right with God and with one another.

The Mosaic Law was composed of some 613 commandments (plus all the additions the Pharisees had added). Paul now considered that trying to keep all the law was a form of slavery. God does not intend his children to bear this burden any longer and has therefore *set us free* in Christ. We are right with God on the basis of faith, not rule keeping. Christ has set us free so that we might become mature—discerning between good and evil, pursuing righteousness and not just avoiding sin.

In Galatians 5, Paul repeats this truth to the Galatians: “*For freedom Christ has set us free!*” As those who are now in Christ, we are called to live in light of this freedom. Getting circumcised cannot help anyone become more mature in Christ. Keeping a long list of “Dos” and “Don’ts” can’t help us become mature in Christ. As Paul says, the only thing that matters is “*faith working through love.*” This is a critically important statement that we need to understand.

6.3.2 **We have been given a New Commandment by Christ.**

Jesus himself said,

John 13:34 “I give you a new commandment—to love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another.

In the same way that Jesus loved us, so we are to love another. This is a high standard. Yet this is exactly what Paul is calling the Galatians and us to in chapter 5. Christ has set us free from rule-keeping and sin *and from ourselves* so that we may love. Love does not flow from obligation but from pure desire and choice. Christ has set us free so that we can use that freedom to love.

6.3.3 We are called to use our freedom to love.

There is something else that we need to be aware of. Although we need to have freedom in order to love, *freedom does not guarantee that we will use it properly*. With freedom comes the temptation to use it for selfish ambition and selfish desires (remember Adam in the Garden). Christ has set us free and given us an example of how to use our freedom.

As Paul says, “You were called to freedom ... do not use your freedom as an opportunity to indulge your flesh, but through love serve one another.” Paul’s concept of the “flesh” is a large topic that we will cover at a later time. For now, simply understand that we are constantly tempted to put ourselves in the “center of the universe” without thinking about others. We are tempted to put our selves “first” rather than Christ and others. Our flesh is that part of us, still corrupted by indwelling sin, which calls us to please and satisfy ourselves, at the expense of others, at the same time denying what Father-God gives to us freely in Christ.

Jesus even takes this whole reality a step further:

Matthew 5:43-45 “You have heard that it was said, ‘Love your neighbor’ and ‘hate your enemy.’ 5:44 But I say to you, *love your enemy and pray for those who persecute you*, 5:45 so that you may be like your Father in heaven ...

We were all at one time enemies of God. Yet Father-God sent Christ the Son to sacrifice Himself for us so that we might come to know Him as He truly is. As we follow Jesus as our Savior and Master, we realize that we too are called to this radical, revolutionary and heart-transforming expression of self-sacrificial love. Christ has set us free indeed; He desires that we now use that freedom to show others the reality of His love. As we love others as He has loved us, we open the door for the power of the Gospel to do its life-transforming work.



Think about ways that you can use your freedom to serve Father-God and others. This week, plan to do something for someone that will give them a taste of love and/or grace.

WORDwork | Day 46.4 **You are (and will be) Glorified in Christ**

Take a minute to reflect on this passage that we have considered earlier:

Romans 8:28-31 And we know that all things work together for good for those who love God, who are called according to his purpose, 29 because those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, that his Son would be the firstborn among many brothers and sisters. 30 And those he predestined, he also called; and those he called, he also justified; and those he justified, *he also glorified*. 31 What then shall we say about these things? If God is for us, who can be against us?

? 43 Take note of all that is done for us and to us in this passage. Chart it out to get a view of how it all fits together.

6.4.1 **What is Glory? What Does It Mean to Be Glorified?**

“Glory” is a big idea in the Bible. If we start with God, glory is used to describe His very essence, His luminous and radiant perfection and beauty that is profoundly remarkable (The Hebrew Rabbis called this aspect of God’s glory His *shechinah*—His visible presence). Glory also speaks about God’s *holiness* and *splendor* as the source of all that is true, good and beautiful.

When we “glorify” someone we are *praising them* or ascribing *honor* to them because of who they are. When you apply these ideas to God, you can see how they fit. God is glorious and therefore worthy of our praise and honor.

The incredible news for us is that *Father-God has glorified us in Christ and will glorify us in the completion of our salvation!* God honors us *now* by giving us the greatest name He could: *His beloved children*. In the end, He will transform us completely (at the resurrection) so that even our bodies will be glorious—radiant, reflecting His glory. He is now shaping us spiritually to be His holy children, full of His grace and truth.

In the Romans passage above, notice that the verb “glorified” in this text is in past tense. Even though we do not yet share the full glory of Jesus (our “condition”), we are nevertheless “positionally glorified.” Because of God’s faithfulness

we will be finally glorified. God has set us apart for His purposes, He has called us, He has declared us to be in right relationship with Him by faith, and in the end He will glorify us—make us completely like His Son Jesus and then display us proudly as His beloved children.

Consider this passage:

Colossians 3:1-4 Therefore, if you have been raised with Christ, keep seeking the things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. 2 Keep thinking about things above, not things on the earth, 3 for you have died and your life is hidden with Christ in God. 4 When Christ (who is your life) appears, *then you too will be revealed in glory with him.*

6.4.2 **We Will Possess the Glory of Our Lord Jesus!**

One of the most profound truths that we learn in the Scriptures is that we will possess/partake/share in the glory of our Lord Jesus:

2 Thessalonians 2:13-14 But we ought to thank God always for you, brothers and sisters loved by the Lord, because God chose you from the beginning for salvation through sanctification by the Spirit and faith in the truth. 14 He called you to this salvation through our gospel, *so that you may possess the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.*

God is transforming us to “possess the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.” What an amazing idea! One day, we will be like Christ and possess His truth, goodness and beauty. This does not mean that we will take on Jesus “Godness” but it does mean that we will finally be restored to the standard of His Glory from which we have all fallen (see Romans 3:23). Right now, in the present, God has set us apart as His children and He is working this transformation process in us. It is a process that now takes place little by little, degree by degree:

2 Corinthians 3:17-18 Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is present, *there is freedom.* 18 And we all, with unveiled faces reflecting the *glory* of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another, which is from the Lord, who is the Spirit.

This passage should give us confidence. It reinforces the truth the God’s Spirit is working in us to bring freedom and to transform us into people who truly reflect His glory!

Notice how many times the idea of freedom is linked together with attaining God's glory in these passages that we have considered. In order for us to become "free indeed" as Jesus said, we will have to become people who are ruled by truth, goodness and beauty in all things. God is transforming us into people who are "gloriously free." Only when we are completely like Jesus will this be completely true of us.

God has glorified us by calling us His sons. He is now glorifying us as He transforms us to be conformed to the image of His Son Jesus. God will finally glorify us when we see Jesus face to face and become perfectly holy as He is. As God is transforming us, we are reminded that all we do should be motivated out of our desire to please Him for His glory:

1 Corinthians 10:31 So whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, ***do everything for the glory of God.***

We should also remember, as Paul says, "We have been bought with a price, let us then glorify God with our bodies" (1 Corinthians 6:20). Christ has bought us for Himself and His greatest desire is that we glorify God in the way we use our bodies. As we allow ourselves to be used as "instruments of righteousness" displayed in self-sacrificial love, we glorify Father-God by showing the world the reality of what we believe to be true.



How can you practically live out the truths you have considered this week?

Session 7

So, How Do We Walk in the Truth?

Core Truth: In Christ, we are deeply loved, fully accepted, empowered, and truly set free. It is important to understand all that has been given to us “In Christ.” These blessings shape the way we live as we walk with Christ and grow to become more like Him.

To Remember: “Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth. For you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God.” (Colossians 3:2-3)

Objective: In this last session, we pull together many of the major truths we have been exploring in this study and talk about how they prepare us for the next studies in this series. We discuss the importance of having a vision of who we are in Christ and keeping our eyes focused on Him. Our hope is that the more you understand these truth about yourself and your relationship with Father-God in Christ, the better equipped and encouraged you will be to share these Truths with others.

Prayer: *“Father-God, we thank you for the boundless and countless ways you have blessed us In Christ. Help me to understand what Christ as done for me more deeply. Help me to keep focused on Him and help me to realized all the ways you have empowered me to serve you. For Jesus’ sake, AMEN.”*

WORDwork | Day 1**7.1 How Do We Create a Vision for Walking in the Truth?**

Colossians 3:1-4 If then you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. 3:2 Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth. 3:3 For you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. 3:4 When Christ who is your life appears, then you also will appear with him in glory. {ESV}

? 44 What do you think Paul means by “if” you have been raised with Christ?

? 45 What are we to “seek”?

? 46 What are we to “set our minds” on?
What do you think this means?

? 47 Explain 3:3 in your own words.

? 48 What will happen to us when Christ appears?

This powerful passage from Paul’s letter to the Colossians sums up some of the central truths that bind all that we have been discussing in this study together. Paul begins with “If you have been raised with Christ...” The grammar of this statement indicates that Paul is more literally implying, “*Since* you have been raised with Christ...” As we heard earlier, Father-God has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavens and has raised us up there with Christ (see Ephe-

sians 1:3, 2:6). That is our new POSITION before Father-God, in His Kingdom: Raised with Christ in the Heavens!!!!

Because that is who we are, we are to seek the things *above*, and set our minds on things *above*. We are not to be captivated by the things of the earth. Paul explains this in the following verses:

Colossians 3:5–8 So put to death whatever in your nature belongs to the earth: sexual immorality, impurity, shameful passion, evil desire, and greed which is idolatry. 3:6 Because of these things the wrath of God is coming on the sons of disobedience. 3:7 You also lived your lives in this way at one time, when you used to live among them. 3:8 But now, put off all such things as anger, rage, malice, slander, abusive language from your mouth.

The Kingdom of the Heavens is not defined by these sinful things. Christ is not defined by these corrupt desires and actions. Before we trusted Christ, we were enslaved and defined by these things. But now, In Christ, we have the ability to put them to death. *This is a topic we will discuss in detail in our next unit Rooted and Growing in Christ.*

Paul goes on to say:

Colossians 3:9–14 Do not lie to one another **since you have put off the old man with its practices** 3:10 **and have been clothed with the new man that is being renewed in knowledge according to the image of the one who created it.** 3:11 Here there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcised or uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave or free, but Christ is all and in all.

3:12 Therefore, as the elect of God, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with a heart of mercy, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience, 3:13 bearing with one another and forgiving one another, if someone happens to have a complaint against anyone else. Just as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also forgive others. 3:14 And to all these virtues add love, which is the perfect bond.

Again, we are going to be studying this passage in detail in the next study unit. For now, we want you to see that as we receive and *realize* all the “birth-right blessings” we have been exploring, we are also called to be people who are shaped by these blessings. ***This is what it means to walk in the truth.***

Living with this VISION of who we *truly* are *in Christ* will transform our lives. As we keep our hope fixed on Jesus, we are purified by God’s power and

grace as we make our journey toward our conclusion in Him. As we think on Him and as we grow in His grace and Knowledge (2 Peter 3:18) we will become more and more like Him in the way we live our lives. We are making a choice to turn from our *old way* of life to follow *The Way of New Life* that is found in Christ.

Notice how Paul concludes the first part of this passage: “*You have died and your life is hidden with Christ in God.*” This one statement brings together some of our main themes: 1) In Christ, we have died to our old way of life, and 2) our lives are hidden “with Christ.” Remember what John said about this:

1 John 3:2 Dear friends, we are God’s children now, and **what we will be has not yet been revealed. We know that when He appears, we will be like Him because we will see Him as He is.** 3:3 And everyone who has this hope in Him purifies himself just as He is pure.

We are still waiting to see who we will truly be. We get a taste of it now. We get a glimpse of it now as we see Christ’s goodness and live that goodness out in the Church, the Body of Christ. But we still don’t see fully. We still have not experienced all that Father-God has in store for us. Take note of what Paul says about this:

Colossians 3:4 When Christ who is your life appears,
then you also will appear with Him in glory.

As we have already heard, we *are* and *will be* glorified in Christ. What does this look like? We don’t know for sure yet. We do know it will be far better than we can imagine now:

1 Corinthians 2:9 But just as it is written,
“Things that no eye has seen, or ear heard, or mind imagined,
are the things God has prepared for those who love him.”

Keeping these amazing truths in mind is a critical part of walking in the truth. Keeping the amazing destiny that Father-God has prepared for you In Christ and is now making real through the presence and power of His Spirit keeps us focused upward to where Christ is, to our true eternal lives hidden in Him.



Take a few minutes to turn back to the chart at the end of Session 3 (**page 50**). Read through all those blessings again and think about how these truths should shape the way you view yourself In Christ. Think about how these truths should shape the way you view your brothers and sister In Christ.

WORDwork | Day 2

7.2 How Does Father-God View Us In Christ?

Today we are going to take a step back again and look at the “big picture.” We are going to look at some key and core truths that flow out of all that we have been discussing in this study.

7.2.1 We are Dearly Loved (Beloved).

It is vitally important to understand that we truly and dearly loved by Father-God, in Christ. Take a look at these verses again:

Ephesians 2:4–5 But God, being rich in mercy,
because of His great love with which he loved us,
 even though we were dead in transgressions,
 made us alive together with Christ

We could add many more verses to this list; you may have some that come to mind immediately. In our formative years as humans, it is critically important that we receive and experience love. Knowing that we are “dearly loved” is important in our spiritual growth as well. If we are not convinced that Father-God truly loves us, we will lack the assurance we need to mature. Paul prays this very thing for the Ephesians:

Ephesians 3:16–19 I pray that according to the wealth of his glory
 He (Father-God) may grant you to be **strengthened with power
 through his Spirit** in the inner person, 3:17 **that Christ may dwell
 in your hearts through faith**, so that, because **you have been
 rooted and grounded in love**, 3:18 you may be able to comprehend
 with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and
 depth, 3:19 and thus **to know the love of Christ that surpasses
 knowledge, so that you may be filled up to all the fullness of God.**

Since our core exercise for this unit is Prayer, this prayer from Ephesians 3 is a great model for us. *Pray it once a day for a couple of weeks and see what happens!*

Because we come to know the love of God in Christ, we too are called to express that love by imitating God Himself:

Ephesians 5:1 Therefore, be imitators of God as **dearly loved children.**

7.2.2 **We are Empowered.**

Notice also in Paul's prayer above the way he begins: "I pray that according to the wealth of his glory, He (Father-God) may grant you to be **strengthened with power through his Spirit** in the inner person, ... (Ephesians 3:16). Because of all the blessings that we have received in Christ and the particular blessing of the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit, we are *now* empowered to live a life of peace and joy. Although we have only briefly touched on the role of the Holy Spirit in our growth so far, His empowerment is a very important truth that you need to understand more deeply. *These are the very topics that we will address in our next study units.*

Paul also prays this for the Colossians:

Colossians 1:11–12 **May you be strengthened with all power,**
according to his glorious might, **for all endurance and patience** with
joy, 1:12 giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified you to share
in the inheritance of the saints in light.

Paul prays that the Colossians would be strengthened with all God's glorious power/might so that they might endure, be patient, have joy, give thanks... Following Christ in a World hostile to Him and His Truth is not easy. We need to know who we are and what Father-God has given us in Christ in order to stand firm in our hope and faith and love.

7.2.3 **We are Accepted.**

In Romans Paul makes a powerful and profound statement:

Romans 8:1 *"There is therefore **now no condemnation**
for those who are in Christ Jesus!"*

Think back to our discussion of God's righteous wrath being turned away from us In Christ—*propitiation*. There we said that we do not have to fear either God's *present* or *future* wrath against unrighteousness. Paul sums up the implications of that teaching here in Romans 8:1: *"There is no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus!"* Now and when we finally see Christ face to face, He will not condemn us for *anything*!

One of the great benefits of understanding truths like *propitiation* and *forgiveness* is the reality that Father-God now treats us as His children in love and compassion, not in anger and wrath. You may have been brought up in a tradition that teaches that when "bad things" happen to you, it is because God is angry with you and punishing you for your sins. **This is a lie.** If we are In Christ, we are no

longer under any form of condemnation from Father-God. Read Romans 8:1 again!

Hard times will come to us as followers of Christ. Bad things will happen. But these never come upon one of God's children because He is wrathful and angry. ***When He allows pain and suffering in our life, it is not intended to beat us down but to build us up.*** And know this: He will allow or even purposefully plan suffering and affliction to come to us. These are, in fact, some of the primary tools that He uses to shape us into the likeness of Christ. Yet in all of this, He now treats us as beloved children, not as enemies. Consider this:

Hebrews 12:5-7 “My son, do not regard lightly the discipline of the Lord, nor be weary when reproved by him. 12:6 For the Lord disciplines the one he loves, and chastises every son whom he receives.” 12:7 It is for discipline that you have to endure. ***God is treating you as sons.*** For what son is there whom his father does not discipline?

Every good fathers disciplines his children in order to shape them into mature and good people. The author of Hebrews goes on to explain that our earthly fathers disciplined us as best they could, but ***our Heavenly Father disciplines us so that we may share in His holiness*** (Hebrews 12:13). The discipline of the our Heavenly Father may hurt us deeply, but we must be convinced that He does it because of how much He loves us. This is a difficult truth, but one that you need to know in order to stand firm in the difficulties *that will come to you* as a follower of Christ.

7.2.4 **We are Set Free.**

Romans 6:7 For one who has died **has been set free from sin.**

Galatians 5:1 **For freedom Christ has set us free.**

Stand firm, then, and do not be subject again to the yoke of slavery.

We have talked about being “set free” quite a bit in this study. Christ came to give us the Truth and set us free (John 8:32, 36). In several of these passages, we are *set free through our dying with Christ*. But what does this mean. That is the topic we will explore in our next unit: *Rooted and Growing in Christ*.



Take a look at all the verses mentioned today and notice how many of them contain a prayer. How could these prayers shape the way you pray?

WORDwork | Day 37.3 **Becoming a “Pierced Ear Bond-Slave.”**

John 8:31–36 Then Jesus said to those Judeans who had believed him,
 “If you continue to follow my teaching, you are really my disciples
 8:32 and **you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.**
 8:33 “We are descendants of Abraham,” they replied, “and have
 never been anyone’s slaves! How can you say, ‘You will become free?’”
 8:34 Jesus answered them, “I tell you the solemn truth, everyone
 who practices sin is a slave of sin. 8:35 The slave does not remain in
 the family forever, but the son remains forever.
 8:36 So **if the son sets you free, you will be really free.**

Picking up where we left off yesterday, Jesus has set us free. As we said then, we are going to be exploring more of what this means in our next study unit. Freedom, as it is developed in the Scriptures, is not “doing whatever we want to.” Instead, freedom is defined as being free *from* something in order to be free *for/to* something. Take note of what Jesus says: “everyone who practices sin is a slave of sin.” In Christ we have been set free from the power and enslavement of sin. This enables us to know the Truth and be truly free or “free indeed!”

If you look on the previous page at the Galatians 5:1, you see that the purpose of Jesus setting us free was for *freedom*. He then says to “stand firm” and not be subject to slavery again. This implies that Jesus has set us so free that we could abuse that freedom. *So what will we do with our freedom?*

In Deuteronomy, the Lord gives instruction about the releasing of debts and slaves every seventh year. In this cycle of seven years, the Lord was establishing His righteous and gracious way of dealing, so that no one in the nation of Israel would become enslaved to another forever. In this passage we hear:

Deuteronomy 15:12-17 “If your brother, a Hebrew man or a Hebrew woman, is sold to you, he shall serve you six years, and in the seventh year you shall let him go free from you. 15:13 And when you let him go free from you, ... You shall furnish him liberally... As the LORD your God has blessed you, you shall give to him. 15:15 You shall remember that you were a slave in the land of Egypt, and the LORD your God redeemed you; therefore I command you this today.

15:16 *But if he says to you, 'I will not go out from you,' because he loves you and your household, since he is well-off with you,* 15:17 *then you shall take an awl, and put it through his ear into the door, and he shall be your slave forever. And to your female slave you shall do the same.*

A slave who had been set free in this seventh year had the option of actually renouncing his freedom and becoming a permanent servant of the master (15:16-17). The master would then pierce the slave's ear with an awl to signify his permanent servitude. Take note of why the slave would give up his freedom voluntarily: *because he loved the master and the masters house (family)*. This type of "slave" was often called a "bond-slave."

"Slave" is not a particularly popular or politically correct term. However, the Scriptures use the term in a powerful way to communicate a powerful relationship. Because of negative connotations, many modern translations translate the term as "servant" instead of slave. There is nothing wrong with that. However, when we think of Jesus as Lord/Master and ourselves as "slave" we are stating something very powerful about our relationship with Him.

In Christ, we have truly been set free. The question before us is not, "*Are we really free?*"—We are! The real question is, "*What will we do with our freedom?*" Do we love our Master enough to trust Him if we give up our "freedom" *for* Him and turn our freedom over *to* Him?

Jesus has truly set us free. He has set us free to give you the opportunity to express your love and gratitude to Him by voluntarily choosing to become one of His bond-slaves. Remember, it is our ability to say "no" to God that makes our "yes" so meaningful.

The Apostles themselves use this term as a primary part of their identity: "Paul, *a slave of Christ Jesus*, called to be an apostle... (Romans 1:1), James, *a slave of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ* (James 1:1), Simeon Peter, *a slave and apostle of Jesus Christ*... (2 Peter 1:1), Jude, *a slave of Jesus Christ* and brother of James (Jude 1:1). These men had been set free and they were more than happy to be "enslaved" to Christ Jesus. As we too allow ourselves to be captivated by Christ, He truly sets us free indeed! (see John 8:34-38)



Becoming "enslaved" to Christ is not something that we can be *manipulated* or *forced* into. The only way to give ourselves fully to Christ is joyously out of our love for Him.

WORDwork | Day 47.4 **Where are We Heading Now?**

1 Peter 2:4–10 So as you come to Him (Jesus Christ), a living stone rejected by men but chosen and priceless in God's sight, 2:5 you yourselves, as living stones, are built up as **a spiritual house to be a holy priesthood and to offer spiritual sacrifices that are acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. ...**

2:9 But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people of his own, **so that you may proclaim the virtues of the one who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.** 2:10 You once were not a people, but now you are God's people. You were shown no mercy, but now you have received mercy.

? 49 In 2:5, what are we being "built up" as?

? 50 What is the purpose for this at the end of 2:5?

? 51 What does Peter call us in 2:9?

? 52 What is the purpose for us being identified with all these ideas according to the end of 2:9?

7.4.1 **In Christ, we are being built into a Spiritual House, a Holy Priesthood.**

In the Hebrew Scriptures, Israel never attained that goal that the Lord-God had for them: to be a Kingdom *of* Priests. Instead, because of their faithlessness, they were a Kingdom *with* Priests. In other words, not everyone could serve as a priest under the Old Covenant, only the descendants of Aaron could fill that role.

All this changes In Christ. Now, you and I are a new “building” and new Temple for the Lord. We are a “spiritual house” as Peter says. We are also a “holy priesthood” for the Lord offering “spiritual sacrifices.” We don’t offer animal sacrifices anymore; instead, we offer ourselves.

Peter also calls us, “a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people of his own.” These are all truths that we are going to explore in detail in the next two study units. All of these statements define who we are as the Church, the Body of Christ. This is a whole new work that the Lord is doing. As the Body of Christ, we each have a significant priestly role to fill. We are indeed a Kingdom of Priests.

Now take note of the purposes for this: “*so that you may proclaim the virtues of the one who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.*” As the ones who have experienced the love and grace and mercy of the Lord-God—some of His excellencies—it is now our privilege and responsibility to share our experience of Him with others. We proclaim all that He has done for us and how that has changed everything for us.

If we take these purposes seriously, it may mean that some things get rough for us. Anytime we begin to push deeper into our relationship with Christ, anytime we take our call to walk with Christ seriously, it draws the attention of our adversary, the Devil, also called Satan in the Scriptures.

7.4.2 It is time to wake up...

Romans 13:11-14 ... we know the time,
it is already the hour for you to wake up from sleep,
for now our salvation is nearer than when we first believed.
The night is far gone; the day is at hand.
So then let us cast off the works of darkness
and put on the armor of light.

13:13 Let us walk properly as in the daytime,
not in orgies and drunkenness, not in sexual immorality and
sensuality, not in quarreling and jealousy.

13:14 **But put on the Lord Jesus Christ,**
and make no provision for the flesh, to gratify its desires.

The longer we know Christ, the expectation grows that we should be walking closer to Him, growing in maturity—*Christlikeness*. The more we know Christ and the more we know about Him, the more we should be spiritually *awake*—realizing that we should have a greater and growing desire to live in a way that is

pleasing to Christ the closer we get to His return (*or our going to be with Him*). This is what Paul is generally talking about in the verses above.

In the verses leading up to Romans 13:11, Paul encourages and exhorts that church to love one another, not be lazy, rejoice, be patient, *be constant in prayer*, bless and not curse, live in harmony with one another, not seek vengeance, be subject to the governing authorities, and finally fulfill the Law by doing all things in love.


This whole passage comes to a conclusion with the statement, “**Put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh...**” We are going to spend a lot of time in the upcoming study units talking about how to do this. But before we can get there, it is vitally important that you understand what we have covered here. Much of what it means to “put on Christ” is to live in way that is shaped by all the birthright blessings you have received *in Him*.

As we move on from here, we should be aware of another of our Key Growth Stages:

Key Growth Stage: Becoming **AWAKE**. Once we are AWARE of Father-God’s work in Christ through the Spirit in our lives and ALIVE in Christ through faith, we have to wake up to the reality that our life now matters for eternity. Part of this “waking up” is understanding who we are In Christ as we have been exploring in this workbook. Part of this “waking up” is understanding that we are in a Spiritual War that can only be fought with spiritual weapons.

“So then, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation;
what is old has passed away—look, what is new has come!”
{2 CORINTHIANS 5:17}

 If you look back to “The MilktoMeat Map” on page 4, you will find an overview of our workbooks and the key growth stages. Take a minute to look at that chart think about all you have learned up to this point. Also take a look at where we will be heading in the remaining studies.

 Over the next several days, think back over some to the key truths that have stood out to you in this study. Think about people you know who need to know these things too. Spend some time praying, giving thanks for all that Christ has done for you. Spend some time praying for those you know who need to know the truths you know.

CONGRATULATIONS!

You have finished the THIRD workbook in MilktoMeat.

You are ready to continue on in **Phase 2**

Walking In The Truth Part 2: Rooted and Growing in Christ

You can go to

www.tsfmemphis.org/milktomeat

to order this next workbook
and find out more about MilktoMeat.

WE WOULD LOVE TO HEAR FROM YOU

If this study has been meaningful for you, or
if you have suggestions on how to make it better,

Send us a note at **connect@tsfmemphis.org**

End Notes

Digging Deeper: The “Problem” of Predestination

Your life journey has been pre-set by the Father.

In the New Testament, Paul explains at least two “mile-markers” that God our Father pre-determined that we would reach along our journey, that 1) we would be **adopted** by Him and that 2) we would be **conformed** to the image of His Son, Jesus. It is interesting to note that these two “mile-markers” mark the *beginning* and the *conclusion* of our New Life in Christ. These two pre-set “mile-markers” define our New Origin and Destiny.

>>You have Been Predestined for Adoption.

Romans 8:15 For you did not receive the spirit of slavery leading again to fear, but you received the Spirit of adoption, by whom we cry, “Abba, Father.”

In Ephesians 1, we hear that we were predestined for “adoption as sons.” Next week, we are going to explore what this means in detail. For now, simply realize that Father-God set this destination, this “mile marker” for you even before you were created. Father-God wanted you to be part of His family and determined beforehand that He would send the Gospel to you so that you could hear about Christ, trust in Him and be welcomed into His family. Now, as Paul says in the Romans passage above, the Spirit has been given to us, enabling us to call God “Pappa!!!” and “Father!!!”

>>You Have Been Predestined For Christlikeness.

In Romans, Paul also reveals another aspect of this predestining work of God. Consider the following passage:

Romans 8:28-30 And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose. 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.

God predetermined that we will be conformed to the image of His Son. What does this mean? This means that *Father-God has already determined that you will be made just like Jesus in truth, goodness and glory!!!* This will happen. It is part of your glorious inheritance in Him. And notice also that God does this “So that He (Jesus) will be the firstborn among many brothers.” Jesus is the first-born in our family and He has all the rights and authority of the firstborn son. But instead of hoarding these benefits for Himself, He will share all of them with us. We will consider this a little later.

****A note for all the women: the term “brother” is used in the New Testament not just to refer to men but also to women. Since women did not receive a share of the family inheritance in the cultures of that day, the Bible wants women to understand that they too have been included in the inheritance and have been given a share in the family blessings.***

Notice that this predestining speaks to the end of our journey – being conformed to the image of Christ. So what we see in these passages is that God has determined that we would reach two key mile-markers in our journey:

» **Father-God pre-determined** | that at some point after your physical birth, you would hear the Gospel, believe and thus be adopted as His child. This point covers your New Birth and New ORIGIN as God’s Son/Daughter.

» **Father-God pre-determined** | that on our journey after our Spiritual Rebirth and Adoption, we would come to our final Destination conformed to the image of Christ, perfect in His presence. This point covers your DESTINY as God’s Child.

Because God our Father has made the beginning and end of our spiritual journey certain in Christ, we can be confident that He will complete all that He has promised to us.

