

Chapter 1

Of the New Birth, the Inward Appearance of Christ in Spirit, and the Unity of the Saints with him

Q. Did Christ promise his disciples that he would come again?

A. I will not leave you comfortless; I will come unto you. [John 14:18]¹

Q. Was this just a special promise to his disciples? Or does it extend to all the saints?

A. God says that while he dwells in a high and holy place, with him is a contrite and humble spirit. [Isa. 57:15]²

You are the temple of the living God, and God says He will dwell in you and walk among you. [2 Cor. 6:16]³

Christ knocks at the door, and if any man hears him and opens the door, Christ will come in. [Rev. 3:20]⁴

Q. Does the apostle Paul speak of the Son of God's being revealed in him?

A. God revealed his Son in me so I could preach among the heathen. [Gal. 1:15-16]⁵

Q. Does this mean that we need to know Christ within?

A. Examine yourselves and whether you are in the faith. Don't you know that Christ is in you, unless you are reprobates? [2 Cor. 13:5]⁶

Q. Was Paul telling the truth when he said that the inward birth of Christ should be brought forth in believers?

A. My children, I am in pain until Christ is formed in you. [Gal. 4:19]⁷

Q. What does Paul say about the need of this inward knowledge of Christ, and of man becoming a new creature?

A. Because from now on we know no one in a worldly sense. Though we have known Christ in such a sense, we no longer do. If any man is in Christ, he is a new creature. [2 Cor. 5:16-17]⁸

When you learned of Christ, you learned to put away your old corrupt self, and to become a new, Godly person. [Eph. 4:20-24]⁹

Q. So this inward Christ is the hope that Paul was preaching about?

A. God would make known the riches of the glory of this mystery, Christ within you, to the Gentiles. [Col. 1:27]¹⁰

Q. Does Paul encourage undergoing this new birth anywhere else?

A. Put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and don't allow your flesh to fulfill its lusts. [Rom. 13:14]¹¹

Q. Does Paul write to any of the saints about getting rid of the old man and putting on the new?

A. Those of you who have been baptized to into Christ have put on Christ. [Gal. 3:27]¹²

You've put off the old man with his worldly deeds, and have instead put on the new man, renewed in the knowledge of God. [Col. 3:9-10]¹³

Q. What does Christ say about the necessity of this new birth?

A. Jesus said to him, "Unless a man is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." [John 3:3]¹⁴

Q. What seed does this birth come from?

A. We are born again of the everlasting Word of God, not some corruptible seed. [1 Pet. 1:23]¹⁵

Q. What does Paul say about this rebirth?

A. I am crucified with Christ, and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. [Gal. 2:20]¹⁶

Q. What does the cross of Christ preach?

A. To the damned, it is foolishness, but to us who are saved, it is the power of God. [1 Cor. 1:18]¹⁷

Q. How did the Cross affect the apostle Paul? And how much did he prefer this rebirth over any outward and visible ordinances and traditions?

A. God forbids me from glory, except the glory of the cross of Christ, for whom I disown the world,

and because of whom the world disowns me. In Jesus Christ, circumcision and uncircumcision don't matter, only a new man. [Gal. 6:14-15]¹⁸

Q. What does Christ say about His unity with the saints?

A. On that day, you will know that I am in my Father, and you are in me, and I am in you. [John 14:20]¹⁹

Abide in me, and I in you. A branch can't bear fruit by itself; it needs to be with the vine. You can only bear fruit if you abide in me. If a man abides in me, and I abide in him, he will bear much fruit, because without Me, you can do nothing. [John 15:4-5]²⁰

I don't just pray for these alone, but also for those who will believe in me through their words. They will all be in unity, and you, Father, are with me, and I with you, so will they be one with us, so the world will believe that you sent me. I have given to them the glory you gave Me, so that they can be one with us. I am in them, and you are in me, so they can be made perfect in unity, and the world will know that you sent me, and that you love them as you love me. [John 17:20-23]²¹

Q. What does Paul say about this unity?

A. He who sanctifies and those who are sanctified are all in unity, so He is not ashamed to call them brothers. [Heb. 2:11]²²

Q. What does the apostle Peter say about this?

A. We are given great and precious promises that we can partake in God's divine nature, escaping the corruption of the world. [2 Pet. 1:4]²³

Notes

¹I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you.

²For thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy; I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones.

³And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people.

⁴Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me.

⁵But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb, and called me by his grace, To reveal his Son in me, that I might preach him among the heathen; immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood:

⁶Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?

⁷My little children, of whom I travail in birth again until Christ be formed in you,

⁸Wherefore henceforth know we no man after the flesh: yea, though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we him no more. Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.

⁹But ye have not so learned Christ; If so be that ye have heard him, and have been taught by him, as the truth is in Jesus: That ye put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts; And be renewed in the spirit of your mind; And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.

¹⁰To whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory:

¹¹But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof.

¹²For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ.

¹³Lie not one to another, seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds; And have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him:

¹⁴Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.

¹⁵Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever.

¹⁶I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.

¹⁷For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God.

¹⁸But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world. For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature.

¹⁹At that day ye shall know that I am in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you.

²⁰Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me. I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing.

²¹Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word; That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me. And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one: I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me.

²²For both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one: for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren,

²³Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.