

Transforming Daily
“... in Christ ...”
Ephesians 1:3

One of the most significant verses in the book of Ephesians, perhaps in all of the New Testament, is Ephesians 2:8-9. However, Ephesians 2:8-9 would not be possible if it weren't for the phrase in verse three of chapter one, "in Christ." "In Christ" or "in Him," is the key Christological and theological proposition and doctrine of Ephesians. You can find this phrase or its derivation throughout verses 3-14 of chapter one (which by the way is one sentence in the Greek). Paul is clearly setting the foundation of salvation to rest squarely on the will of God through the life and works of Jesus Christ.

One scholar puts it this way. In Christ I am: blessed (v.3), chosen (v.4), predestined (v.5), adopted (v.5), accepted (v.6), redeemed (v.7), forgiven (v.7), enlightened (v.8-9), given an inheritance (v.11), sealed (v.13), and assured (v.15). In light of these verses, I always wonder why Christians want or need to pray for more as in "moving to the next level," (whatever that means) or for their "borders to be broadened" (according to Wilkinson's understanding of the prayer of Jabez). It is enough to be in Christ.

A good friend of mine lost sight of what he had "in Christ" and started on a journey to find "something more." At the end of his journey he found that it cost him his wife, family and career into which he had poured over twenty years of his life. Please don't miss understand what I am saying. He did not lose his salvation. Once saved, always saved. I believe in the security of the believer precisely because of Ephesians 2:8-9. I didn't and couldn't do anything to secure my salvation, therefore there is nothing I can, could or will do to "unsecure" my salvation. It rests squarely on the will of God through the life and works of Jesus Christ.

Paul is praising and encouraging the church at Ephesus for their position and ministry in and for Christ. The rest of the story, however according to Revelation, is that the church at Ephesus, in later years, did leave their first love. Meaning they allowed other distractions to get in the way of their service and ministry for Christ. Before we judge them too harshly, let's keep in mind just how easy that can happen. Daily responsibilities and competing agendas can insidiously creep up and strangle out fervency and commitment to God more quickly than you can identify their presence (frog and the boiling pot of water).

Do you daily rehearse your benefits in Christ? When was the last time that you thanked God for your salvation? Have you checked your commitment level to Christ lately? What about your present involvement in ministry and service, is it evident to you and others around you? If not, do something about it. Our ministry is to be about Christ, for Christ, in Christ.