

## IN CHRIST

Ephesians 1:1 "To God's holy people in Ephesus, the faithful in Christ Jesus. . ."

There are times, when reading the Bible, you may pass over important words or phrases. When reading Ephesians 1:1 this can easily happen. This verse is a basic greeting (salutation) by Paul to the Christians in Ephesus. There is in this greeting a phrase that has great importance. It is found in the latter part of the first verse, ". . .the faithful in Christ Jesus."

To be "in Christ" is one way of describing what it means to be a Christian. Those who are "in Christ" are spiritually united to and identified with Christ such that all the blessings and the benefits obtained by Christ by His life, death and resurrection belong to the believer. The book of Ephesians uses the phrase being "in Christ" to refer to those who are believers in Him.

"In Christ" is a proper phrase to describe any person who is a true believer in Him. In Paul's thirteen letters, he uses this phrase and others that are similar such as "in Him" or "in whom" over 170 times. Obviously, this is an important phrase because it describes the harmonious relationship a true believer has with Jesus Christ. As a believer in Him, your heart and soul are united with Him.

Your union with Christ came about at the time of your Baptism. Romans 6:3-4 ". . .don't you know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were therefore buried with Him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life." It is through your union with Christ you are a Christian.

You, because you are "in Christ," partake of everything Christ has accomplished for you by His redeeming work (His birth, perfect obedience of God's law, taking your sins upon Himself, dying on the cross in payment for them and His Easter resurrection.) "In Christ" means that God sees you through His Son and what His Son Jesus has done for you. "God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself." (2 Corinthians 5:19)

Prayer: Holy Spirit, through my baptism and the power of the Gospel thank you for uniting me with Jesus so it is no longer I who live but Christ who lives in me. Keep me united with Jesus even to life everlasting. Amen.

God's own child, I gladly say it: I am baptized into Christ!  
He, because I could not pay it, Gave my full redemption price.  
Do I need earth's treasures many? I have one worth more than any  
That brought me salvation free Lasting to eternity!

Sin, disturb my soul no longer: I am baptized into Christ!  
I have comfort even stronger; Jesus' cleansing sacrifice.  
Should a guilty conscience seize me Since my Baptism did release me  
In a dear forgiven flood, Sprinkling me with Jesus' blood.

Satan, hear this proclamation: I am baptized into Christ!  
Drop your ugly accusation, I am not so soon enticed.  
Now that to the font I've traveled, All you might has come unraveled,  
And, against your tyranny, God, my Lord, unites with me!

Death, you cannot end my gladness: I am baptized into Christ!  
When I die, I leave all sadness To inherit paradise!  
Though I lie in dust and ashes Faith's assurance brightly flashes:  
Baptism has the strength divine To make life immortal mine.

There is nothing worth comparing To this life-long comfort sure!  
Open-eyed my grave is staring: Even there I'll sleep secure.  
Though my flesh awaits its raising, Still my soul continues praising:  
I am baptized into Christ; I'm a child of paradise!

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