

In Christ

As Related In The New Testament



Garland Van Dyke

What Does That Mean?

According to Romans 8:1, we must be in Christ to receive forgiveness of our sins. God tells us, and I believe Him. You should, too. If you are in Christ, you are heaven-bound!

Romans 8:1

Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.

Sins are removed, as is guilt, a perfect relationship with Jesus is established, an abiding closeness where we cry out “Abba Father,” heaven with all its beauty and glory is ours; these are the blessings when we are in Christ.

Necessity

Ephesians 1:3

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ.

God blesses all Christians with the spiritual blessings that are in heaven. That’s fantastic news. But logically, there has to be an “out of Christ” if there is an “in Christ.” Perhaps you can see the value of being in Christ.

In Christ Means

1. Chosen by God

Before the world began, God purposed a people to belong to Him (Ephesians 1:4). This speaks of His initiative, not our merit.

Ephesians 1:4

just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we would be holy and blameless before Him

2. Adoption as sons (and daughters)

We’re not just forgiven outsiders—we’re brought into God’s family with full standing (Ephesians 1:5). That means belonging, access, and identity.

Romans 1:5

He predestined us to adoption as sons through Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the kind intention of His will

3. Redemption through Christ’s blood

Ephesians 1:7

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4. Forgiveness of sins

Not partial, not conditional—complete forgiveness according to God’s grace (also 1:7).

Ephesians 1:7

In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of His grace

5. Grace given freely

God’s favor isn’t earned. It’s “lavished” on us (Ephesians 1:8), meaning abundant, not measured.

Ephesians 1:8

which He lavished on us. In all wisdom and insight

6. Revelation of God’s will

God makes known His plan—to unite all things in Christ (Ephesians 1:9–10). We’re not left in the dark about His purpose.

Ephesians 1:9-10

He made known to us the mystery of His will, according to His kind intention which He purposed in Him

with a view to an administration suitable to the fullness of the times, that is, the summing up of all things in Christ, things in the heavens and things on the earth.

7. An inheritance

Believers are heirs—there is something eternal reserved, not just temporary blessings now (Ephesians 1:11).

Ephesians 1:11

also we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to His purpose who works all things after the counsel of His will

8. Sealed with the Holy Spirit

The Spirit is described as a seal and guarantee (Ephesians 1:13–14). That means security and assurance—God’s claim on His people.

Ephesians 1:13-14

In Him, you also, after listening to the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation, having also believed, you were sealed in Him with the Holy Spirit of promise, who is given as a pledge of our inheritance, with a view to the redemption of *God’s own* possession, to the praise of His glory.

9. Hope and future glory

All of these point forward—what God has begun will be completed in glory.

How We Get “IN Christ”

Isn’t that the question? If heavenly blessings are in Christ, then how do we do that? How do we get into Christ?

It’s the most important question anyone could ask, for being in Christ means salvation, all those heavenly blessings of a perfect life, and glory among the spiritual beings.

Well, of course, the Bible has the answer.

First, let’s look at God’s plan of salvation.

• Jesus certainly spoke of salvation.

John 8:24

“I told you that you would die in your sins, for unless you believe that I am he you will die in your sins.”

1. “You will die in your sins.”

Jesus is speaking to religious leaders who were confident in their standing with God. Yet He tells them plainly: remaining in sin leads to spiritual death. This isn’t just about individual mistakes—it’s about a state of separation from God.

2. “Unless you believe...”

Here is the turning point. Jesus presents belief—not effort, not heritage, not religious activity—as the decisive response. In the Gospel of John, “believe” means to trust, rely on, and commit yourself to Him.

3. “That I am he.”

This is the most profound part. The phrase “I am” (Greek: *ego eimi*) echoes God’s self-revelation in the Book of Exodus 3:14 (“I AM WHO I AM”).

Jesus isn’t merely claiming to be a teacher or prophet—He is identifying Himself with divine authority and identity. To “believe that I am he” is to recognize Him as the promised Messiah and more than that—the Son of God.

4. The repetition

“You will die in your sins” is said twice. That repetition isn’t accidental—it adds urgency. Jesus is pressing the seriousness of rejecting Him.

In simple terms:

Jesus is saying that the only way out of sin—and the judgment that comes with it—is to believe in who He truly is.

• Then, He spoke of the necessity of repentance.

Luke 13:3

“No, I tell you; but unless you repent, you will all likewise perish.”

This comes after people mention tragic events—some Galileans killed by Pilate, and a tower that fell and killed others. The common assumption

When Paul says these are “in the heavenly places,” he doesn’t mean they’re far away and unreachable. He means they come from God’s realm, are secured by Christ, and are not dependent on earthly circumstances.

Let’s Ask Ourselves These Questions.

- A. Did God choose us? Yes, He chooses all who would come to Him for salvation.
- B. Do we belong in God’s family? Yes, but only if we’ve followed God’s plan of salvation.
- C. Are we adopted only through Jesus? Yes, that’s true, we are saved only through Jesus. The plan was created before the earth existed.
- D. Did Jesus have to die? To enact God’s salvation plan, Jesus had to be the perfect sacrifice for all sins.

More About In Christ

1. A new position (standing before God)

“In Christ” means a person is no longer standing on their own record, but on Christ’s.

- Not judged by personal failure
 - Counted righteous because of Him
- So “no condemnation” isn’t wishful thinking—it’s based on a changed status.

2. A living union (connection, not just belief)

This phrase shows up often in the writings of Paul the Apostle. It points to being *joined* to Christ:

- Like a branch connected to a vine
 - Like being placed into a new life
- It’s more than agreeing with facts—it’s belonging to Him.

3. A new identity

“In Christ” answers the question: *Who am I now?*

- Not defined by past sin
- Not defined by failure or shame
- Defined by relationship with Christ

This is why condemnation is removed—identity has changed.

4. A new realm (spiritual location)

Paul often contrasts “in the flesh” vs. “in Christ.”

- “In the flesh” → ruled by sin and self
- “In Christ” → under grace, led by the Spirit

It’s like moving from one domain into another.

5. A practical implication

Being “in Christ” isn’t just theology—it affects daily life:

- Freedom from guilt’s control
 - Power to live differently
 - Assurance instead of fear
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in that culture was that *those people must have been worse sinners.*

Jesus corrects that thinking.

1. “No, I tell you...”

He rejects the idea that those who suffered were uniquely guilty. Tragedy is not proof that someone was worse than others.

2. “Unless you repent...”

Now, he shifts the focus away from *them* to *you*.

Repentance means more than feeling bad—it’s a turning; a change of mind that leads to a change of direction. Turning from sin and turning toward God.

3. “You will all likewise perish.”

Jesus isn’t necessarily saying everyone will die the same physical way, but that all face judgment without repentance. The warning is universal—no one is exempt.

How it connects with John 8:24

In the Gospel of John 8:24, Jesus says you must **believe**.

Here in the Gospel of Luke 13:3, He says you must **repent**.

These are two sides of the same response:

- **Believe** = who you trust (Jesus)
- **Repent** = how you turn (away from sin toward God)

Simple takeaway:

Don’t measure yourself against others—respond to God personally.

Jesus turns every “why did that happen to them?” into “what will you do about your own life?”

• Jesus speaks of confession.

Matthew 10:31-32

“So everyone who acknowledges me before men, I also will acknowledge before my Father who is in heaven,

but whoever denies me before men, I also will deny before my Father who is in heaven.”

There’s a clear contrast here—two responses, two outcomes.

1. “Acknowledges me before men.”

This means openly identifying with Jesus—by words, actions, and allegiance. It’s not just saying His name; it’s standing with Him when it costs something. In context, Jesus is sending His followers into a world that won’t always welcome them, so this is about courage under pressure.

2. “I will acknowledge before my Father.”

The picture is almost courtroom-like. To be acknowledged by Jesus before the Father is to be recognized as belonging to Him—accepted, known, and received.

But. Let’s look at other verses (top of next column).

3. “Whoever denies me before men.”

Denial can be overt (like Peter briefly did) or subtle, like not standing for Jesus when there’s a crowd, or more subtle—silence, compromise, or distancing oneself from Christ when it matters.

4. “I also will deny...”

This is the sober counterpart. Just as acknowledgment brings acceptance, denial brings rejection. Jesus is stressing that our response to Him now has eternal weight

How this fits with the verses you’ve been looking at:

- Gospel of John 8:24 → **Believe in who He is**
- Gospel of Luke 13:3 → **Repent (turn to God)**
- Gospel of Matthew 10:32–33 → **Confess Him openly**

Taken together, they form a complete response:

Believe → Repent → Confess

A grounded takeaway:

Faith in Jesus isn’t meant to stay private or hidden. It naturally shows itself. Jesus is calling for a loyalty that is visible—even when it’s uncomfortable.

If you’re working toward a sermon or teaching, this passage lends itself well to a theme like:

“A faith that is real will be revealed.”

And Baptism

5. He who believes and is baptized will be saved; he who does not believe will be condemned.

If Jesus were standing in front of you, right now and said,

“If you believe, then you will be baptized to remove your sin.” Would you argue with Him or give some excuse saying, “No Lord, baptism is not required for salvation.” What do you think His response is to you?

This leads directly into the next verse (Galatians 3:28), where Paul says distinctions like Jew/Greek, slave/free, male/female do not define status in Christ.

Then, Into Christ

Galatians 3:26-27

“For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus.

For all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ.”

What Paul is saying

1. “Sons of God through faith.”

Paul emphasizes that the relationship with God is not earned by law, heritage, or personal effort. It starts with **faith in Jesus Christ**.

- “Sons” here means **full heirs**, not just children in a general sense. In that culture, a “son” had legal standing and inheritance rights.
- So Paul is saying: *There’s no reason to be baptized unless you believe that Jesus is the true Christ, for there is no other.*

2. “Baptized into Christ.”

One is baptized *into* Jesus. This is why baptism is so important.

You can’t be in the church unless you are in Christ.

You’re not in God’s kingdom unless you are baptized into Him.

You are not going to heaven if you’re not baptized into Him

3. “Put on Christ.”

This is a vivid image, like putting on clothing.

- It means taking on a **new identity and way of life**.
- Christ becomes the defining “covering” of who you are—your character, your righteousness, and your standing before God.

The bigger picture (context)

In the letter to the Galatians, Paul is addressing a major issue: some people were teaching that believers must follow the **Old Testament law** to truly belong to God.

Faith in Christ is a starting point; faith alone, by itself, though, is not **enough**.

What it means for life.

- Your standing with God is **based on faith, repentance, confession and baptism.**

When you are baptized into Christ:

- Your identity is **rooted in Christ, not your past**
- You are **fully accepted and included** in God’s family
- Your life is meant to **reflect Christ**, like wearing Him daily

Our Invitation To You

If you have questions about God’s plan of salvation or what “in Christ” means and would like to study further, we invite you to contact us. We would be happy to study the Bible with you — online at <https://calendly.com/garlandtcm>.

Email: info@tcmmail.online

Jesus said, “If you continue in My word, then you are truly disciples of Mine; and you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free” (John 8:31-32).
