

Who is truly a Christian? And are there distinctions between being saved, born again, having eternal life and being “in” Christ and entering into God’s Kingdom?¹

In the original Greek (“Christianos”), “Christian” means: a follower of Christ. Who does *Jesus say* is truly a Christian? Someone who: 1) loves Him (Matthew 22:37; Luke 10:27; John 14:15; 21; 23-24); 2) believes² in Him and the Father and that He is who He says He is and does what He says He does (John 3:15, 18, 36; 5:24; 7:38-39); 3) is born again/indwelt by the Holy Spirit and becomes a new, spiritual creation (John 3:3, 5-7; 7:38-39; 14:17; Matthew 18:3); 4) abides in, keeps and does His/Father’s commandments and words (John 8:31-32; 14:15; 21; 23-24; 15:10, 14; Luke 8:15, 21); 5) hears His word and His voice (John 5:24; 10:16, 27; Luke 8:15, 21); 6) knows Him and is known by Him (Matthew 7:23; John 10:14, 27); 7) eats of His flesh and drinks of His blood (John 6:53); 8) denies himself – loses his worldly/fleshly life for His sake (Matthew 10:38; 16:24-26; Luke 9:23; 14:27); 9) takes up his cross daily (*Id.*); 10) follows after Him (*Id.*; John 10:27); 11) actually does the will of Father God (Matthew 7:21; Luke 8:15, 21); 12) is a disciple of His (Luke 14:27; Matthew 10:25, 38); 13) is a true vessel who abides in Him and in and through which His fruit is produced (Matthew 7:17-20; John 15:2; 5-6, 16; Luke 8:15); 14) shines forth His light in the world (Mathew 5:14-16); 15) endures³ to the end (Matthew 24:13).

And this is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent. John 17:3

“Everyone who is of the truth hears My voice.” John 18:37

“He who is of God hears God’s words; therefore you do not hear, because you are not of God.” John 8:47

“Know” means in the Greek to know absolutely and is used in a Hebrew idiom to mean union between a husband and a wife. It also means a process of gaining intimate knowledge over time, and to know one, his person, mind, character and plans. A knowledge grounded in personal experience not external impressions. It is knowledge based on close proximity and familiarity not intellectual knowledge – knowing about – by study or through others.

In the Hebrew culture at the time Jesus walked Earth as a human, being a disciple meant to shadow and mirror your master. It was a process over time of daily spending time with, learning, knowing and imitating one’s master and becoming like him – in essence, being transformed into his likeness through a process of learned intimacy and familiarity for the purpose of reflecting him like a mirror through internal transformation (i.e., outward *and* inward likeness). The original Greek word translated “disciple” (mathētēs) means a learner, pupil, disciple. Per Vines: “A ‘disciple’ was not only a pupil, but an *adherent* [one who “*sticks to*” his

¹ This paper does not address the distinctions between being merely born again and being an overcomer (Rev. 3:21)/mature son of God (Rom. 8:19)/part of the made ready bride of the Lamb (Rev. 19:7) – i.e., spiritual immaturity vs. maturity.

² Per Strong’s and Vine’s: to “believe” includes, “also to be persuaded of, and hence, ‘*to place confidence in, to trust, signifies, in this sense of the word, reliance upon, not mere credence.* [And] *to have faith directed to devoting and giving up one’s self to Jesus in intimate relationship, confidence, reliance upon and trust.*” [A mere mental acknowledgement, assent or belief without trust, devotion and dependence is not “believing” on Him and having faith in Him as Savior and Lord. We are to depend and lean on Him alone, fully trust Him with, and give over to Him the reins of our life. That is true belief.]

³ Per Strong’s and Vine’s, the original Greek word translated “endures” means: “to remain i.e. abide, *not recede or flee*”; “to persevere: under misfortunes and trials to hold fast to one’s faith in Christ”; “to cleave faithfully to”; “*to abide under*”; “to wait and endure and persevere patiently and trustfully.”

master/teacher]; hence they are spoken of as *imitators* of their teacher”; and those “who *manifest* that they are His ‘disciples’ *by abiding* in His Word.” [i.e., actual bonded followers, imitators and manifesters of His teaching and ways (nature and character)]. Accordingly, the Greek word translated “follow” in Matthew 10:38 (“He who does not take his cross and follow after Me is not worthy of Me.”) means: “to join as attendant; accompany Him, as in on a walk or journey; *to cleave steadfastly to one, conforming wholly to His example in living, and if need be, in dying also*”. (Strong’s)

But Jesus even went one step further than this. He said we are to be not merely imitator servants but rather true *friends*: “No longer do I call you servants, for a servant does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you *friends*, for all things that I heard from My Father I have made known to you.” (John 15:15)

Per Strong’s, the word translated “*abide*” in the Greek means: “a state and condition of remaining as one, not to become another or different”; “to be held, kept, continually”; “*to dwell within Christ, to be continually operative in Him by His divine influence and energy*”; “rooted in and knit to Him by the Spirit to spirit connection/unity”; “to cleave and hold fast to continually, endure and persevere in and with.”

From additional scripture: *Jesus must be the Lord of your life* (Romans 10:9, etc.). In the original Greek, Lord means: “he to whom a person or thing belongs; master; possessor and owner; one who has control of the person and about which has the power to decide.” The Greek word *kyrios* (kureos) comes from the root word *kuros*, which means “*supremacy*.” (Accord Romans 8:14, *only those led by the Holy Spirit are the sons of God.*)

Key Question: Are you lording over your life, or any part/aspect of it, or is He – who’s truly calling your shots and leading your life? In that connection, the Greek word used to describe someone who is truly, that is “spiritually,” in Christ, “*pneumatikós*,” is defined by Strong’s Concordance very biblically accurately and concisely this way: “*one who is filled with and governed by the Spirit of God.*” (1 Corinthians 2:15) Quite simply, if He is truly your Lord, He and only He is your government, not you or anything or anyone else. Hence, he who is in the flesh cannot know or please God. (1 Corinthians 2:14; Romans 8:8)

Also, a true follower is: someone who dies to self, the ways and mind/heart-set of the world, and of all other ways and states of being not of the Lord. (1 Corinthians 15:31; 2 Corinthians 5:17; Galatians 2:20; James 4:4; John 15:19; 1 John 2:15-17; Romans 8:14) Someone whose internal state of being and external expressions of that being reveal and represent the heart and mind and will of God. (1 Samuel 2:35; John 5:19; 12:49-50; 14:7-9; Matthew 7:21; Romans 8:14). Someone who no longer is of a fallen sin nature but of a new nature and life in the unity of the person’s spirit and the Holy Spirit. (2 Corinthians 5:17; Galatians 2:20; Ephesians 2:1-9; 1 Corinthians 6:19-20; John 17:20-23). Someone who has confessed past sins (as part of being saved) and confesses any new post-salvation sins. (1 John 1:9)

1 John 2:3-6: “Now by this we know that we know Him, if we keep His commandments. He who says, “I know Him,” and does not keep His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him. But whoever keeps His word, truly the love of God is perfected in him. By this we know that we are in Him. He who says he abides in Him ought himself also to walk just as He walked.”

John 8:31-32: “Then Jesus said to those Jews who believed Him, “If you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed. And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.”

**It is critical to understand that these are not mere suggestions, recommendations or goals. They are imperative instructions, commandments and requirements from the Lord. The consequence of not so being and doing is to not truly be His and to not enter into His Kingdom per His own words personally and through Paul and John.*

“Do you not know that you are the temple of God [if you truly are born again] and that the Spirit of God dwells in you? If anyone defiles the temple of God,

God will destroy him. For the temple of God is holy, which temple you are.
1 Corinthians 3:16-17

Accord Peter in Acts 5:32: “And we His witnesses in these things, and so also is the Holy Spirit, whom God has given to those who obey Him.”

Open Questions: Is it possible to be saved/justified but not born again – possibly meaning being spared condemnation/judgment and eternal punishment for sin but not entering into eternal life in Christ? Is it possible to be born again and/or saved but not to enter into His Kingdom – i.e., some outer realm of eternal life/salvation but not the Kingdom? There are also the issues of crowns, rewards, inheritances and eternal positions.⁴ In any event, I believe it is highly likely that there are very large numbers of people who believe they are Christians and will enter into Heaven who are not and will not.

Jesus provided a primary standard to use to discern whether someone is truly His/of Him – the manifestation of His fruit: “You will know them by their fruits... Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. Therefore by their fruits you will know them.” (Matthew 7:16, 19-20) It is critical to understand that Jesus was not talking about fruits in the sense of mere religious works, “successful ministry,” or other worldly/fleshly success, prosperity, achievement, attainment, position or the like. But rather, He was talking about manifesting the fruit of His nature and character – His life formed within and expressed through a person - vis-à-vis the presence within and inner working of and obedience to the Holy Spirit: love, joy, peace, longsuffering [patience], kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control, truth and righteousness. (Galatians 5:22-23 NKJV) Put another way, the standard to apply is: Does the outward manifestation of your character reflect the inner nature of Christ? If the answer is no, you are either not born again or you have so ***grieved***⁵ and/or ***quenched*** (in the Greek, meaning to have suppressed and even to the point of being extinguished/put out, as with a fire) the Holy Spirit (Ephesians 4:30; 1 Thess. 5:19) that you are living in the flesh and not in Christ, not keeping God’s Word, not doing His will and not producing His fruit. In the former case, obviously you will not enter Heaven according to the clear, unequivocal and repeated words of Christ. And in the latter case, you may be judged unknown by Him and risk losses ranging from denial of entry to loss of eternal position, crowns and inheritance, and possibly other eternal consequences. Accord Amos 3:3: “Can two walk together, unless they are agreed?” Of course, the answer is a resounding no.

Scripture is soberingly specific and definitive about who will not enter in to the Kingdom of God: “Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived. Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor homosexuals, nor sodomites, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners will inherit the kingdom of God.” (1 Corinthians 6:9-10 NKJV); “But the cowardly, unbelieving, abominable, murderers, sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death.” (Revelation 21:8 NKJV); “But I saw no temple in it [the New Jerusalem], for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are its temple. The city had no need of the sun or of the moon to shine in it, for the glory of God illuminated it. The Lamb is its light. And the nations of those who are saved shall walk in its light, and the kings of the earth bring their glory and honor into it. Its gates shall not be shut at all by day (there shall be no night there). And they shall bring the glory and the honor of the nations into it. But there shall by no means enter it anything that defiles, or causes an abomination or a lie, but only those who are written in the Lamb’s Book of Life.” (Revelation 21:22-27)

⁴ Crowns _____; Rewards, 1 Corinthians 3:14; Inheritances _____; Eternal Position _____

⁵ Accord Isaiah 63:10, God speaking through Isaiah about Israel: “But they rebelled and grieved His Holy Spirit; So He turned Himself against them as an enemy, and He fought against them.”

It is important to acknowledge that in 1 John 1:9 it states: “If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.” And to reconcile this with 1 John 5:8, which essential says (with some variation based on the translation) that one born of God does not sin. That reconciliation I believe lies in the linguistics and matters of the heart and mind. First, the tense of the original Greek word used here for sin means a continuing practice of sin, not a single act of sin. (See Vine’s Expository Dictionary; NLT). Secondly, I believe the essential meaning here is whether you are living in a fallen carnal state or a resurrected spiritual state. If in the latter, and you sin and confess your sins to God you are forgiven and retain your salvation. If in the former, you were either never born again or you were born again but you no longer “know” the Lord in a biblical and experiential sense and as a matter of the heart – i.e., love Him, keep His commandments, will what He wills (Philippians 2:13), do what He does, and walk in His truth.⁶ As such, you will not enter into His eternal Kingdom. You are, in essence, a stranger to Him.

Lastly, while this paper will not go into a deep analysis of scripture regarding whether God can take-back His Holy Spirit from a born again believer, I will point out here that there is not a single Bible verse that says He can’t or has promised not to; there are multiple instances in the Old Testament of God taking His Holy Spirit from a believer (King Saul for example, 1 Samuel 16:14); Jesus spoke in dictating the Book of Revelation about removing the church at Ephesus’ lampstand (symbolic of the Holy Spirit, Revelation 2:5; Isaiah 11:2) for falling away from Him in their hearts and blotting out the names of those who claimed to be Christian but did not walk it out from the [Lamb’s] Book of Life (Revelation 3:5); and most importantly, God is God and can do anything He wants to.

In that connection:

“For it is *impossible* for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted the heavenly gift, and have become partakers of the Holy Spirit, and have tasted the good word of God and the powers of the age to come, *if they fall away to renew them again to repentance, since they crucify again for themselves the Son of God, and put Him to an open shame*. For the earth which drinks in the rain that often comes upon it, and bears herbs useful for those by whom it is cultivated, receives blessing from God; *but if it bears thorns and briers, it is rejected and near to being cursed, whose end is to be burned.*” Hebrews 6:4-8

“Therefore consider the goodness and severity of God: on those who fell, severity; but toward you, goodness, *if you continue in His goodness. Otherwise you also will be cut off.*” Romans 11:22

“Moreover, brethren, I declare to you the gospel which I preached to you, which also you received and in which you stand, by which also you are saved, *if you hold fast [securely hold on to] that word which I preached to you—unless you believed in vain [without effect and purpose; “talk without heart and walk”].*” 1 Corinthians 15:1-2

The overriding theme regarding this issue is quite simple: true faith is a matter of the heart and you will know whether a heart is truly the Lord’s by the character and fruit that flows out of it – is it of Him or not? In that connection:

“For the eyes of the LORD search throughout the Earth to show His strength for those whose hearts are fully committed to Him.” 2 Chronicles 16:9

“I, the LORD, search the heart, I test the mind, even to give every man according to his ways, according to the fruit of his doings.” Jeremiah 17:10

⁶ Accord Ezekiel 36:27-28: “I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; I will take the heart of stone out of your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. I will put My Spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes, and you will keep My judgments and do them. Then you shall dwell in the land that I gave to your fathers; you shall be My people, and I will be your God.”

“Now He who searches the hearts knows what the mind of the Spirit is, because He makes intercession for the saints according to the will of God. Romans 8:27

“If thou believest in the Lord Jesus, if thou hast repented of sin, if thou hast been renewed in heart, thou art one of the Lord's people.” Charles Spurgeon

Open Questions: Are “carnal Christians” or “nominal Christians” Christians at all? Put another way, can you be of the world and of the Lord at the same time? Is not a friend of the world an enemy of God? (James 4:4-5) Can you be carnally minded and truly have the Holy Spirit? Is not carnal mindedness a sign of spiritual death and not the life of the Spirit within? (Romans 8:5-9)

In Closing: Enter by the narrow gate; for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leads to destruction, and there are many who go in by it. Because narrow is the gate and difficult is the way which leads to life, and there are few who find it. (Matthew 7:13-14)

“God’s harvest is not in the number of us but rather the fullness of Christ in us.” Bennett (Ephesians 4:13)

You will know them by their walk and fruit. Either they’re Christ’s or they’re not.

Additional Scripture Regarding Confirmation – Evidence of Christ’s Life, Testimony and Fruit

“I thank my God always concerning you for the grace of God which was given to you by Christ Jesus, that you were enriched in everything by Him in all utterance and all knowledge, even as the testimony of Christ was confirmed in you, so that you come short in no gift, eagerly waiting for the revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ, who will also confirm you to the end, that you may be blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. God is faithful, by whom you were called into the fellowship of His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. 1 Corinthians 1:5-9 NKJV [The Greek word translated “confirmed” here means, “to make firm, establish, confirm, *make sure; to prove its truth and divinity*” (Strong’s).]

“Then He spoke many things to them in parables, saying: ‘Behold, a sower went out to sow. And as he sowed, some seed fell by the wayside; and the birds came and devoured them. Some fell on stony places, where they did not have much earth; and they immediately sprang up because they had no depth of earth. But when the sun was up they were scorched, and because they had no root they withered away. And some fell among thorns, and the thorns sprang up and choked them. But others fell on good ground and yielded a crop: some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty. He who has ears to hear, let him hear!’” Matthew 13:1-9 NKJV

“And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.” Romans 12:2 NKJV

“He who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water.” John 7:38 NKJV

By Charles Spurgeon:

John 3:7

Ye must be born again.

Regeneration is a subject which lies at the very basis of salvation, and we should be very diligent to take heed that we really are "born again," for there are many who fancy they

are, who are not. Be assured that the name of a Christian is not the nature of a Christian; and that being born in a Christian land, and being recognized as professing the Christian religion is of no avail whatever, unless there be something more added to it-the being "born again," is a matter so mysterious, that human words cannot describe it. "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit." Nevertheless, it is a change which is known and felt: known by works of holiness, and felt by a gracious experience. ***This great work is supernatural. It is not an operation which a man performs for himself: a new principle is infused, which works in the heart, renews the soul, and affects the entire man. It is not a change of my name, but a renewal of my nature, so that I am not the man I used to be, but a new man in Christ Jesus. To wash and dress a corpse is a far different thing from making it alive: man can do the one, God alone can do the other.*** If you have then, been "born again," your acknowledgment will be, "O Lord Jesus, the everlasting Father, Thou art my spiritual Parent; unless Thy Spirit had breathed into me the breath of a new, holy, and spiritual life, I had been to this day 'dead in trespasses and sins.' ***My heavenly life is wholly derived from Thee, to Thee I ascribe it. 'My life is hid with Christ in God.'*** ***It is no longer I who live, but Christ who liveth in me.***" May the Lord enable us to be well assured on this vital point, for to be unregenerate is to be unsaved, unpardoned, without God, and without hope.

To say, "I hope so, I trust so" is comfortable; and there are thousands in the fold of Jesus who hardly ever get much further. But to reach the essence of consolation you must say, "I know." Ifs, buts, and perhapses, are sure murderers of peace and comfort. Doubts are dreary things in times of sorrow. Like wasps they sting the soul!

Lastly, regarding falling away, by the Apostle Peter:

"For if, after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, they are again entangled in them and overcome, the latter end is worse for them than the beginning." 2 Peter 2:20

He is to be Our Very Life

"And you He made alive, who were dead in trespasses and sins, in which you once walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience, among whom also we all once conducted ourselves in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, just as the others." Ephesians 2:1-3

"And you, being dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, He has made alive together with Him, having forgiven you all trespasses, having wiped out the handwriting of requirements that was against us [law and religion as to righteousness and salvation], which was contrary to us. And He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross. Having disarmed principalities and powers, He made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them in it." Colossians 2:13-15

"Love the LORD your God, that you may obey His voice, and that you may cling [in the Hebrew, adhere to/stick to like glue] to Him, *for He is your life.*" Deuteronomy 30:20 NJKV

[When Peter and others were in prison, an angel of the Lord appeared, opened the prison doors and said:] **"Go, stand in the temple and speak to the people *all the words of this life.*"** Acts 5:20 NKJV

[And of course Jesus said:] “I am the way, the truth and *the life*.” John 14:6. And, “It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh profits nothing. The words that I speak to you are spirit, and *they are life*.”
John 6:63

“I have been crucified with Christ; *it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me*; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me.” Galatians 2:20

“And God both raised up the Lord and will also raise us up by His power.” 1 Corinthians 6:14

“But if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who dwells in you.” Romans 8:11

Submission in Faith

[When Jesus was in the Garden of Gethsemane right before sweating great drops of blood knowing He was about to be imprisoned, beaten, scourged and crucified said to Father God:] “*Nevertheless, not My will but Yours be done*.” Luke 22:42

He who does not *take his cross daily and follow after Me* is not worthy of Me.” Matthew 10:38 & Luke 9:23

“Therefore *submit to God*. Resist the devil and he will flee from you.” James 4:7

“I *only* do what I see My Father doing and *only* say what My Father tells Me to say.” John 5:19 & 12:49-50

[Through the prophet Samuel:] “Behold, *to obey is better than sacrifice*.” 1 Samuel 15:22

“So then, *those who are in the flesh cannot please God*...For if you live according to the flesh you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live. *For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God*.” Romans 8:8, 13-14

“For the eyes of the LORD search throughout the Earth to show His strength *for those whose hearts are fully committed to Him*.” 2 Chronicles 16:9

To truly know Him, be filled with and overflow onto others His fullness, you must “*die daily*.” 1 Corinthians 15:31. You must sow your “self” to reap the life of Christ in and through you. *Id* at :36. That is the crucified life – fully submitted to the Father’s will. Matthew 10:38 & Luke 9:23

“Not that I have already attained, or am already perfected; *but I press on, that I may lay hold of that for which Christ Jesus has also laid hold of me*. Brethren, I do not count myself to have apprehended; but one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead, *I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus*.” Philippians 3:12-14

Intimacy – The Secret Place, Hearing His Voice & Being His Friend

“Then you will call upon Me and go and pray to Me, and I will listen to you. *And you will seek Me and find Me, when you search for Me with all your heart*.” Jeremiah 29:12-13

“Draw near to God and He will draw near to you.” James 4:8

“He who dwells in the secret place of the Most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty. I will say of the LORD, ‘He is my refuge and my fortress; My God, in Him I will trust.’” Psalm 91:1-2

“My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me.” John 10:27

We are to “learn” Christ by “hearing⁷ Him” and being “taught by Him.” Ephesians 4:20-21

“There is a friend who sticks *closer than a brother*.” Proverbs 18:24

“*Blessed are those who seek Him with the whole heart!*” Psalm 119:2

“*He is a rewarded of those who diligently seek Him*.” Hebrews 11:6

[The prelude verse to the list of Bible greats. “Diligently” in the Greek means to seek out, search for; to crave.]

“Now it happened as they went that He entered a certain village; and a certain woman named Martha welcomed Him into her house. And she had a sister called *Mary, who also sat at Jesus’ feet and heard His word*. But *Martha was distracted with much serving*, and she approached Him and said, “Lord, do You not care that my sister has left me to serve alone? Therefore tell her to help me.” And Jesus answered and said to her, “Martha, Martha, you are worried and troubled about many things. *But one thing is needed, and Mary has chosen that good part, which will not be taken away from her*.” Luke 10:38-42

“No longer do I call you servants, for a servant does not know what his master is doing; *but I have called you friends, for all things that I heard from My Father I have made known to you*.” John 15:15

“With him [Moses] will I speak *mouth to mouth*.” Numbers 12:8 KJV

“And the Scripture was fulfilled which says, ‘Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness. *And he was called the friend of God*.’” James 2:23

[The Shulamite (symbolic of the church) to her beloved (symbolic of Christ)] “His mouth is most sweet. Yes, he is altogether lovely. *This is my beloved, and this is my friend...*” Song of Solomon 5:16

“*If I regard (behold) iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear*.” Psalm 66:18

(In Hebrew, the word translated “iniquity” means “emptiness and vanity, especially with respect to idols; and of words (fraud, falsehood); wickedness.”)

“*God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble*.” James 4:6

(In Hebrew, the word translated “resists” was for military usage meaning “to range in battle against; oppose.”)

And if you have any doubt about God talking to His people:

“*Faith comes by hearing and hearing by the word of God*.” Romans 10:17 (the Greek word translated “word” here is *rhēma*, which means [God’s] living voice, speech and spoken word, as opposed to *logos*, which means [God’s] written word.)

⁷ The Greek word translated *hearing* means clearly and specifically to actually hear (perceive and receive with the faculty/sense of hearing). See Strong’s for “*akouō*”. And also note that those who do not hear and are not so taught, have their understanding darkened, blindness of their heart, and are living in the flesh and corruption of their old man. Ephesians 4:18, 22.

“He who is of God hears [by ear] God’s [*“rhēma,”* or spoken] words; therefore you do not hear, because you are not of God.” John 8:47

“I have heard of You by the hearing of the ear.” Job 42:5

“However, when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will *guide you into all truth*; for He will not speak on His own authority, but *whatever He hears He will speak; and He will tell you [in the Greek, to “utter a sound, emit a voice, make oneself hear, form words with the mouth; used to describe the utterances by which God indicates or gives proof of His mind and will, whether immediately or through the instrumentality of His messengers and heralds.” Strong’s] things to come*. He will glorify Me, for *He will take of what is Mine and declare [announce, make known, disclose] it to you. All things that the Father has are Mine*. Therefore I said that He will take of Mine and declare it to you.” John 16:13-15

“See that you do not refuse *Him who speaks*. For if they did not escape who refused Him who spoke on earth, much more shall we not escape if we turn away from *Him who speaks from heaven...*” Hebrews 12:25

Consequence of Not

“He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. And to the angel of the church of the Laodiceans write, ‘These things says the Amen, the Faithful and True Witness, the Beginning of the creation of God: *“I know your works, that you are neither cold nor hot. I could wish you were cold or hot. So then, because you are lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will vomit you out of My mouth.* Because you say, ‘I am rich, have become wealthy, and have need of nothing’—and do not know that you are wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked—I counsel you to buy from Me gold refined in the fire, that you may be rich; and white garments, that you may be clothed, that the shame of your nakedness may not be revealed; and anoint your eyes with eye salve, that you may see. As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten. Therefore be zealous and repent. *Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and dine with him, and he with Me.* To him who overcomes I will grant to sit with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne.” Revelation 3:13-21

[To the angel of the church of Ephesus:] “Nevertheless I have this against you, that *you have left your first love*. Remember therefore from where you have fallen; *repent and do the first works, or else I will come to you quickly and remove your lampstand from its place—unless you repent.*” Revelation 2:4-5

“Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep’s clothing, but inwardly they are ravenous wolves. You will know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes from thorn bushes or figs from thistles? Even so, every good tree bears good fruit, but a bad tree bears bad fruit. A good tree cannot bear bad fruit, nor can a bad tree bear good fruit. Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. Therefore by their fruits you will know them. *“Not everyone who says to Me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven. Many will say to Me in that day, ‘Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?’ And then I will declare to them, ‘I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!’”* Matthew 7:15-23

“*But why do you call Me ‘Lord, Lord,’ and not do the things which I say?* Whoever comes to Me, and hears My sayings and does them, I will show you whom he is like: He is like a man building a house, who dug deep and laid the foundation on the rock. And when the flood arose, the stream beat vehemently against that house, and could not shake it, for it was founded on the rock. But he *who is able to hear and does not do* is like a man who built a house on the earth *without a foundation*, against which the stream beat vehemently; and immediately it fell. And the ruin of that house was great.” Luke 6:46-49

[Written by Paul to Roman “beloveds of God,” “called,” and “saints”] “Therefore consider the goodness and severity of God: on those who fell, severity; but toward you, goodness, **if you continue in His goodness. Otherwise you also will be cut off.**” Romans 11:22

[God to Isaiah in His throne room]: “And He said, ‘Go, and tell this people [Israel]: Keep on hearing, but do not understand; keep on seeing, but do not perceive. Make the heart of this people dull, and their ears heavy, and shut their eyes; lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and return and be healed.’” Isaiah 6:9-10 (Quoted by Jesus in John 12:40)

[From Derek Prince] The first two verses of Deuteronomy 28 say this:

“Now it shall come to pass, if you diligently obey the voice of the Lord your God, to observe carefully all His commandments which I command you today, that the Lord your God will set you high above all nations of the earth: And all these blessings shall come upon you, and overtake you, because you obey the voice of the Lord your God.”

That’s a translation which I think is followed by most modern translations, but the Old King James used to say “*if you will listen diligently to the voice of the Lord your God.*” And in Hebrew, that phrase is formed by repeating the word listen. If you will listen listening—that’s emphatic—to the voice of the Lord your God, and do what He says. ***So very, very simply the primary cause of all blessings is listening to God’s voice and doing what He says.***

Now the primary cause of all curses is exactly the opposite. In verse 15 of the same chapter:

“But it shall come to pass, if you do not obey the voice of the Lord your God, to observe carefully all His commandments and His statutes, which I command you today; that all these curses will come upon you and overtake you.”

So what’s the cause of curses? Not listening to God’s voice, not doing what He says. So there basically you have the two root causes. The cause of blessing: listening to God’s voice, doing what He says. The cause of curses: not listening to God’s voice, not doing what He says.

“If anyone does not love the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be accursed.” 1 Corinthians 16:22

The use of *phileo* (for love) means: to love, to delight in as a brother, and befriend; and conveys the thought of ***cherishing the object above all else, of manifesting an affection characterized by constancy***, from the motive of the highest veneration (awe and respect out of dedication). (Vine’s)

Relationship & Hearing

“Truly our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ.” 1 John 1:3

“Be not satisfied unless you know much of Jesus Christ as your Friend, your Brother, your Husband, your all.” Charles Spurgeon

“The secret to fullness is intimacy.” Terry Bennett

The Greek word translated fellowship, *koinōnia*, means more than just what we call friends. It includes an intimacy likened to that of intercourse between a husband and wife. It includes a joint participation and association, communion, at the deepest, most familiar, trusted, personal and intimate level. It comes from the Greek word *koinōnos* meaning “in common” and partnership.

You cannot get to know someone and develop intimacy without spending time with them. And Jesus said we are to follow after Him *daily*. The “Secret Place” referred to in Psalm 91 is not a geographic location, a room at home or in a church building – it is a posturing of your heart and a commitment. It is a heart of true faith, a daily seeking, drawing near to, waiting on and listening and abiding under and in. How do we begin to hear and develop intimacy? By the aforementioned; and also by faith (believing, submitting and trusting) and by daily being in the Word of God: “***So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.***” Romans 10:17. As I have often heard preached, and as I believe is very biblical and as I have powerfully experienced, “you become what you behold.” Question: What are you beholding?

Proverbs 16:1: “Of man are the arrangements, or preparations, of the heart, but the answer, or response, of the tongue is from God.” In the Septuagint, “Let the heart of a man think justly, that his steps may be rightly ordered of God.” In essence, what this means is that the condition and positioning of our heart greatly affects our ability to hear from the Lord and receive His direction.

What is revelation? What does it mean? The Greek word for revelation, *apokalypsis*, means making bare, naked, unveiling; the divine making known of what before was not. If it does not come from God, it is not true revelation. God shows partiality/favoritism to no one (Romans 2:11) and Jesus did not say only some of My sheep hear My voice. Every single truly born again Christian has the same Holy Spirit living inside and the ability to hear God, see God, and receive revelation and understanding into the heart. The Bible says God has given us new hearts (Ezekiel 36:26) and the mind of Christ. (1 Corinthians 2:16) We must know how to position and use them as He desires us to. The more time we spend with the messenger and the more we become like Him, the more we are able to hear what He has to say. Like kind understands like kind. (Radio station tuning example)

Daily humility and dependence: “God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble.” James 4:6. The story of manna in the wilderness, ***daily dependence*** – from His hand to our mouth, literally. To the extent we are self-reliant and attempt to be self-dependent/sufficient (independence is rebellion to God) or work things out through fleshly or worldly means or methods we are being prideful and are limiting the development of intimacy with God and what the Holy Spirit can do within us to conform us to Christ and otherwise. What did Jesus Himself say? “***I can of Myself do nothing...I do not seek My own will but the will of the Father who sent Me.***” John 5:30. Pride = Rebellion (Nehemiah 9:16-17; Lucifer’s fall).

Abiding – How do we “abide” in God?: 1) Die daily to self/flesh and fully, humbly and faithfully submit to God (relinquish self-will and truly give yourself over to God and His government/lordship over every aspect of your life). 1 Corinthians 15:31; Galatians 5:24; Romans 8:13-14; James 4:7; 2) Spend time daily in the secret place of one-on-one communication, communion and intimacy with God. Psalm 91:1; James 4:8 (“Draw near to God and He will draw near to you.”); 3) Keep His commandments, including loving God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind and others as yourself (in deed and truth, not just word, 1 John 3:18). 1 John 3:24; John 14:21, 23; 15:10, 12; Matthew 22:36-40; Luke 10:27; 1 John 4:7; 4) Spend time in His Word (abide/remain in it and pray God causes it to abide in you). 5) Do not love the world or the things of the world. 1 John 2:15-16; 6) Walk as He walked – daily take up the cross and follow Him. 7) Do His will. 1 John 2:17; 8) Do not engage in sin; cleanse your hands and purify your hearts. 1 John 3:6; James 4:8; Psalm 66:18 (“If I regard iniquity in my heart the Lord will not hear.”)

Biblical Examples of Ones Who Truly Abided in God and had Intimate Relationship and Two-Way Communication with Him:

Daniel (“greatly beloved” of God): Had angelic encounters, dreams and visions; was given the skill to understand by God; literally single-handedly prayed the Jews out of Babylonian captivity: He prayed 3 times a

day; often gave thanks, confessed and repented; and “set his heart to understand and humbled himself” (Daniel 6:10; 9:3-13; 22-23; 10:12, 19)

David (“a man after God’s own heart”): God had the prophet Samuel hand pick David and anoint Him king of Israel when he was just a teenager, and decreed that his throne would rule over God’s people forever. 1 Samuel 13:14; Acts 13:22; David regularly spent time in God’s presence in the secret place; he wrote poetry of thanks and praise and expressions of love, trust and admiration to God (the Psalms); he was constantly praying and crying out to God; he sang and danced before the Lord in praise, worship and thanksgiving; regularly confessed, repented and humbled himself; and he faithfully waited on God before making a decision and taking action. 2 Samuel 6:14-15

Abraham (“a friend of God”): “Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness. And he was called the friend of God.” James 2:23; He was a man wealth, renown, great land and property holdings and extended family and regional heritage, and yet at 75 years old, he heard God’s voice, sacrificed his worldly comforts and status and left all he had to obey God’s command to leave his family and country without even knowing where he was going. In short, he fully trusted God and obeyed Him no matter what and no matter what circumstances appeared to be. He had faith and trusted without seeing or knowing what would happen. So much so did he trust and revere God that he was willing to sacrifice his only son, a miracle child, whom he loved very much simply because God asked him to. He loved his son Isaac, but his heart and loyalty belonged to God alone. And what was God’s explanation for His covenant with Isaac’s son Jacob *who became Israel* and the father of the twelve tribes and God’s chosen people: “because Abraham obeyed My voice and kept My charge, My commandments, My statutes, and My laws.” Genesis 26:5

Moses (a man who spoke with God “mouth to mouth”): God speaking: “And He said, hear now my words: If there be a prophet among you, I the LORD will make Myself known unto him in a vision, and will speak unto him in a dream. My servant Moses is not so, who is faithful in all mine house. *With him will I speak mouth to mouth*, even apparently, and not in dark speeches; and the similitude of the LORD shall he behold...” Numbers 12:6-8 KJV. Also: “So the LORD spoke to Moses face to face, *as a man speaks to his friend*.” Exodus 33:11 NKJB [*God clearly expresses that He does not speak with Moses because he is a prophet (or holds some other “special” status or position) but rather because he is a faithful servant and friend of God.* What scripture points out about Moses as leading to his personal-ness and intimacy with God and their “mouth to mouth” (original Hebrew)/“face to face” (other translations) communication and relationship is Moses’ *humility* (Num. 12:3), *faithfulness* (*id.*) and *keeping of God’s commandments/obedience* (*id.* & many other scriptures.)

Mary (Sister of Martha, loved by Jesus): “sat at Jesus’ feet and heard His word,” which Jesus called the one needed thing and the good part; anointed Jesus with very expensive, fragrant oil and wiped His feet with her hair; enjoyed great intimacy, communion and fellowship with the Lord. Luke 10:38-42; John 11:1-5;

In closing: *What is grace? It’s when God gets a hold of you. Fullness comes when you take ahold of God – and don’t let go.* Salvation by grace and faith is free, **but** intimacy and fullness will cost you. If you want some biblical support for that here it is:

Salvation: “For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; *it is* the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast. For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.” Ephesians 2:8-10

Fullness: Ephesians 4:13 (“*perfected*” to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.); the made-ready bride: “Let us be glad and rejoice and give Him glory, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, *and His wife has made herself ready*.” Revelation 19:7; Christ was “*made perfect*” through what He endured and overcame. Hebrews 2:10; “Not that I have already attained, or am already perfected; **but I press on** (*in the Greek, “to run*

*after/pursue swiftly to catch; or as in a race to obtain the goal”), that I may lay hold ([with zeal] to seize and take possession of; appropriate, own) of that for which Christ Jesus has also laid hold of me. Brethren, I do not count myself to have apprehended; but one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead, ***I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.***” Philippians 3:12-14; [To the “lukewarm” Laodicean church:] “I counsel you to buy from Me gold refined in the fire, that you may be rich; and white garments, that you may be clothed, that the shame of your nakedness may not be revealed; and anoint your eyes with eye salve, that you may see.” Revelation 3:18*

Sons: Teknon (saved children of God) and huioi explanation (led by the Spirit mature sons of God, Romans 8:14, etc.).

Ezekiel 47 Symbolism: An angel of the Lord shows Ezekiel water flowing from the temple. A trickle (in the Hebrew) at the beginning, ankle deep; about half a mile out, picking up, about waist deep; and about another half mile out, water too deep to stand or walk, must swim in a river that could not be crossed (rushing water). The river was of living waters that gave life to everything it touched except where it pooled, did not move and became stagnant (became swamps and marshes given over to salt – like the Dead Sea). The areas the living water flowed produced much continual fruit – “the trees’ leaves will not wither and their fruit will not fail – the fruit for food and the leaves for medicine.”

Accord a good piece by “I Saw the Light Ministries” (www.isawthelightministries.com):

“What Must I Do To Be Saved?”

Most people would say "Just believe in Jesus Christ as Saviour and ask Him in your heart". John 3:16 For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

But is that all there is to it? Just belief and asking?

Well certainly that is the beginning! That is your first step YES. You MUST Believe that Christ is the Son of GOD and that He is the Messiah Saviour and Ask Him into Your Heart and into Your life. But is there even more?

Let's take a look at the Greek Word for "believeth" in John 3:16:

Strong's G4100 - pisteuō πιστεύω Transliteration pisteuō Pronunciation pē-styü'-ō Part of Speech verb Root Word (Etymology) From πίστις (G4102)

Outline of Biblical Usage 1) to think to be true, to be persuaded of, to credit, place confidence in

a) of the thing believed

1) to credit, have confidence

b) in a moral or religious reference

1) used in the NT of the conviction and trust to which a man is impelled by a certain inner and higher prerogative and law of soul

2) to trust in Jesus or God as able to aid either in obtaining or in doing something: saving faith

3) mere acknowledgment of some fact or event: intellectual faith

2) to entrust a thing to one, i.e. his fidelity

a) to be intrusted with a thing

Authorized Version (KJV) Translation Count — Total: 248 AV — believe 239, commit unto 4, commit to (one's) trust 1, be committed unto 1, be put in trust with 1, be commit to one's trust 1, believer 1

The Amplified bible says it this way in John 3:16:

For God so greatly loved and dearly prized the world that He [even] gave up His only begotten (R4 unique) Son, so that whoever believes in (trusts in, clings to, relies on) Him shall not perish (come to destruction, be lost) but have eternal (everlasting) life.

James 2:19 (KJV) Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well: the devils also believe, and tremble.

The devils (fallen angels, demons) also believe in GOD and they know who Jesus is! Acts 19:15 And the evil spirit answered and said, Jesus I know, and Paul I know; but who are ye?

So it is NOT enough just to believe. You must rely upon, trust in, cling to Christ.

That means that you forsake your former way of life and become a new creature in Christ (2 Cor. 5:17). You become a new person. You give up doing it your way and start living GOD'S WAY. In other words, You Repent. You make a turn around. Many people believe the word "repent" means to confess. But actually it means to turn around, to make a change in lifestyle.

Acts 2:37 Now when they heard [this], they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men [and] brethren, what shall we do?

:38 Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.

So, you MUST believe in Christ,

Confess to Him your sins (Romans 10:9),

repent (stop what you were doing and start following Him) AND BE [BAPTIZED](#) and RECEIVE THE [HOLY GHOST](#)!

Jesus said in John 3:7 "Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again", which means that you must be [born from above](#), which means you receive the Holy Ghost and become a new person.

But then many people just go to church one time and get baptized and then stay home and think they are okay and that they are [onced saved always saved](#). BUT actually there is more they need to do!

Luke 10:25 And, behold, a certain lawyer stood up, and tempted (tested) him, saying, Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?

:26 He said unto him, What is written in the law? how readest thou?

:27 And he answering said, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; [and thy neighbour as thyself](#).

:28 And he said unto him, Thou hast answered right: this do, and thou shalt live.

Luke 18:18 And a certain ruler asked him, saying, Good Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?

:19 And Jesus said unto him, Why callest thou me good? none [is] good, save one, [that is], God.

:20 Thou knowest the commandments, Do not commit adultery, Do not kill, Do not steal, Do not bear false witness, Honour thy father and thy mother.

:21 And he said, All these have I kept from my youth up.

:22 Now when Jesus heard these things, he said unto him, Yet lackest thou one thing: sell all that thou hast, and distribute unto the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come, [follow me](#).

:23 And when he heard this, he was very sorrowful: for he was very rich.

So we see in the book of Luke that Jesus said we are to ***Keep the Commandments***! YES we are saved by Grace by the Blood of Jesus. But then we must do a work! We are not saved by works as it says in Ephesians 2:8-10.

Most people read verses 8-9 and then stop. But notice verse 10.

Ephesians 2:8-10:

8For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God:

9Not of works, lest any man should boast.

10For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.

James 2:14 What [doth it] profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath faith, and have not works? can faith (belief) save him?

:15 If a brother or sister be naked, and destitute of daily food,

:16 And one of you say unto them, Depart in peace, be [ye] warmed and filled; notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful to the body; what [doth it] profit?

:17 Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone.

:18 Yea, a man may say, Thou hast faith, and I have works: shew me thy faith without thy works, and I will shew thee my faith by my works.

:19 Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well: the devils also believe, and tremble.

:20 But wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead?

:21 Was not Abraham our father justified by works, when he had offered Isaac his son upon the altar?

:22 Seest thou how faith wrought with his works, and by works was faith made perfect?

:23 And the scripture was fulfilled which saith, Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness: and he was called the Friend of God.

:24 Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only.

:25 Likewise also was not Rahab the harlot justified by works, when she had received the messengers, and had sent [them] out another way?

:26 For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also.

James 1:21 Wherefore lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness, and receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save your souls.

:22 But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves.

:23 For if any be a hearer of the word, and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a glass:

:24 For he beholdeth himself, and goeth his way, and straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was.

:25 But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty,

and continueth therein,

he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed.

:26 If any man among you seem to be religious, and bridleth not his tongue, but deceiveth his own heart, this man's religion [is] vain.

:27 Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, [and] to keep himself unspotted from the world.

So, we cannot allow ourselves to become like the Laodiceans (Rev. 3:14-19) who THINK they are rich (saved) but actually they are lukewarm (without works). If we are lukewarm, without fruit, we wither away and die and will be thrown into the fire! (John 15:1-10)

AND also, We must CONTINUE in the Faith:

John 8:31

Acts 14:22

Col. 1:23, 2:6-7, 4:2

1 Tim. 2:15, 4:16

2 Tim. 3:14

And We Must Make ourselves Ready and Prepare to Meet Jesus by washing ourselves in His Blood. Rev. 7:14, 1 Cor. 6:11-20 and 2 Cor. 6:2-7:1

Conclusion: What Must I do to be saved?

Answer: Believe on the Lord Jesus & confess,

Ask Jesus into your heart and into your life, *surrender to Him*,

Forsake your lifestyle of sin and follow Him (repentance will continue, perfection will not be immediate),

Be Baptized in the Blood, Water and Spirit (be born again),

Continue in the Faith, Keeping the Commandments, obeying/respecting the Father, keeping ourselves spotless from the world, never go back, keep going forward. Salvation is immediate but it is also a process."

The purpose of God for us set forth in the Bible expressed in one sentence: To be born again, become new spiritual beings, and be transformed into the likeness, maturity and fullness of Christ through the inner working of the Holy Spirit and overcoming the ways of the flesh and other ungodliness by faith, and to be the hosts of God and His representatives throughout the creation.

"Jesus answered and said to him, 'Most truly, I say to you, unless one is **born again**, he cannot see the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Do not marvel that I said to you, you must be born again.'" John 3:3, 6-7

"You are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God lives in you. **Now if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ/God, he is not His.**...For if you live according to the flesh you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live. For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God." Romans 8:9, 13-14

"To them God willed to make known what are the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles: which is Christ in you, the hope of glory." Colossians 1:27

"Therefore, if anyone is **in Christ**, he is a **new creation**; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new." 2 Corinthians 5:17

[By the apostle Paul] "My little children, for whom I labor in birth again until Christ is formed in you...."
Galatians 4:18

Jesus is the brightness of God's glory and the **express image of His person**, and upholds all things by the word of His power. Hebrews 1:2-3

"For whom God knew beforehand would love and choose Him, He also appointed to be **conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brothers.**" Romans 8:29

"We all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being **transformed into the same image** from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord." 2 Corinthians 3:18

"[Jesus] Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists and some pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry and the building up of the body of Christ, until we all come

to the oneness of faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God, to a finished and complete man, to the measure of the maturity of the fullness of Christ.” Ephesians 4:11-13

God will strengthen your inner man through the power of His Holy Spirit so that Christ will make His home in your hearts as you trust Him through faith; that you, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to understand and experience the unlimited love of Christ which surpasses knowledge; that you may be filled with all the fullness of God. Ephesians 3:14-19

“For you are the temple of the living God. As God has said: ‘I will dwell in them and walk among them’” 2 Corinthians 6:16

[By the apostle Paul] “Not that I have already attained, or am already perfected; but I press on, that I may lay hold of that for which Christ Jesus has also laid hold of me. Brothers, I do not consider myself to have fully laid hold yet; but one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead, I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus. Therefore let us, as many as are mature, have this mind; and if in anything you think otherwise, God will reveal even this to you. Philippians 3:12-15

But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light. 1 Peter 2:9

“Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God calls through us.” 2 Corinthians 5:20

“[We are to] bring to light what is the fellowship of the mystery which for ages has been hidden in God who created all things; so that the manifold wisdom of God might now be made known through the church to the rulers and the authorities in the heavenly places. This was in accordance with the eternal purpose which He carried out in Christ Jesus our Lord, in whom we have boldness and confident access through faith in Him.” Ephesians 3:9-12

“To him who overcomes I will grant to sit with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne.” Revelation 3:21