

Christ in You Fundamentals

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Chapter I

Christ in You – Assurance

God has many ways of relating to us. He is like a King, in that He reigns over the universe. We relate to Him as King by worshipping Him and doing what He commands us to do. He is like a Servant because He does things for us all the time, like making food grow and causing the sun to rise every morning. We relate to Him as Servant when we pray and ask Him to do things for us. There are many other ways that God can relate to us, but His favorite relationship with a person is to live on the inside of them.

A person who is born again has asked Jesus into their heart. Once Jesus is on the inside, He never leaves. He lives inside of that person forever. John chapter three explains what it means to be born again. When we believe on the Son of God who died for us, He comes to live in our hearts by His Spirit.

He likes this kind of relationship. It is the closest, most intimate relationship that God and man can share. If a person has asked Jesus into their heart, then He goes with the person wherever they go, and they will never be alone again. It does not matter if they have a good day or a bad day, if they did something right or something wrong, or if they feel happy or sad. Jesus is always right there on the inside, closer than that person's own thoughts and feelings.

There are many special things about the Son of God living inside. First of all, somehow we just know that He is there, on the inside (cf. Jn. 14:20, I Jn. 4:13). We cannot explain it to anyone; we just know that it is true. This deep-down knowing is called "assurance".

Sometimes Christians make a mistake and think that there are more important things about being a Christian than Jesus living on the inside. They incorrectly assume that believing Jesus is in their hearts is just for babies and that in order to grow up spiritually, they have to leave that behind and search for other kinds of spiritual knowledge. The problem is that whenever we leave "Christ in you" behind to pursue other things, we lose touch with that deep-down knowing, or assurance. When we are uncertain about how close Jesus is on the inside, we worry about whether God is going to get angry when we do something wrong. We begin to believe the lie that God loves us when we do good things and hates us when we do bad things.

Jesus is still there on the inside, but we are working hard to make God happy because we are not participating in the "Christ in you" relationship! We do not have to work hard to make God happy because Christ living on the inside of a person is what makes Him happy.

It is best to trust the relationship that God has provided for us instead of trying to be so "spiritual" that we make a mistake. But if we do, all that is needed is to go back to the "Christ in you" relationship. We might have left it for a little while, but Jesus never will!

Christ In You – Jesus Satisfies

Have you ever been thirsty? It is a sensation we experience when our bodies are trying to tell us that they need more water. Thirst can be described as a longing or yearning for water. That long, cool drink gives pleasure and leaves us satisfied.

God made our hearts to need Jesus on the inside in much the same way as our bodies need water. Feeling thirsty is a signal from the body to the brain that a need must be met. Having longings or yearnings in our hearts is a signal that we need to be filled up with Jesus on the inside!

Jesus said it like this in John 7:37: *“If any man thirst, let him come to me and drink.”* Jesus does not just live inside, He satisfies! Taking a drink of Jesus is the answer to every longing of the heart.

Now this is the problem with a thirsty heart: when it tries to get our attention, we may not understand what the problem is. Since our minds might not fully understand the need to fill up on Jesus, they tend to misinterpret the “thirsty for Jesus” signal as being thirsty for something else. For example, some people try to make lots of money in order to feel satisfied. Other people turn to relationships. Still others think that accomplishing important jobs will fill them up. There are many other things that people try, but none of them satisfy, and they are all just substitutes for what our hearts really need.

Take the woman at the well, whom Jesus met in John 4:1-30. He promised her if she drank of His living water, she would never thirst again. The woman immediately responded by asking for what Jesus had offered her. She knew she needed something more than the well she was drawing from at that moment. She had a need inside for something she could not quite put her finger on. Once Jesus invited her to take a drink she knew she found what she had been looking for.

This woman is a perfect example of how we try to satisfy our thirst for Jesus with other things. John 4:18 tells us that she had been married five times and that she was currently living with a sixth man. She had misunderstood the signal her heart was giving her and thought that a person would satisfy her. When he did not, and her heart gave her the same signal, she misunderstood again and thought she needed a different husband. When she met the Living Water Himself, she realized what her heart had been trying to tell her the whole time.

If you are a believer, then Jesus is already in you, but sometimes we can still get thirsty. When you receive that signal, it is time to fill up on Jesus. Doing that will keep you full of His life and love. You will be sensitive to God and others. The things that used to seem so important – the things we just had to have – will not pull on us so much.

This is what the Bible calls “guarding your heart” (cf. Pr. 4:23). The life of Jesus flows from the heart. When we take of drink of Jesus, His life will flow freely. But if we take a drink of something else, it plugs up the life of Jesus. He is still on the inside, but He cannot come out.

Christ in You – Treasure

A treasure can be something that is worth a lot of money, like a chest full of gold. It can also be something that is so precious that the owner refuses to part with it for any price. Jesus on the inside is God's treasure! Jesus is the most precious, valuable thing God has, and He will never part with Him.

II Corinthians 4:7 says that God placed His treasure in earthen vessels. We are like clay pots because clay is a form of dirt, and Adam was formed of the dust of the earth, which is also dirt (cf. Gen. 2:7). This means that God shaped man as a kind of container. This was His purpose for making the very first man! It was always His intention that mankind would contain Christ.

The parable of the treasure and the field in Matthew 13:44 will make this clear. God is like the man, we are like the field, and Jesus is like the treasure. That treasure was hidden in the field when He died on the Cross. As He hung there, he carried all of our sin in Himself, separating Him from His Father whom He loved so much. This is why He cried, *"My God, my God, Why hast thou forsaken me?"* (Matt. 27:46).

When Jesus died, our sin died, too. Then the Father could have His Treasure back, so He raised Jesus from the dead. At that moment, something special happened. Since Jesus had joined Himself to us, we were raised, too! This is what it means when it says the man bought the field to obtain the treasure. God did not just receive His treasure back. He also received the field in which the treasure had been hidden.

The treasure was so important to that man that he was willing to buy the whole field! Likewise, Jesus redeemed us – purchased us – because He knew that as new creatures, we would have a treasure inside. It was so important to have Christ in earthen vessels that the Father paid everything He had to get it: He sent His Son to the Cross to die. That was the price of having a treasure in clay pots, and He was willing to pay it.

Christ being the treasure on the inside of clay pots tells us a few things. First of all, clay pots are not valuable or special in themselves. In Bible times, they were everyday vessels used for everyday purposes. It is what is inside the pot that makes it special. This does not mean that God does not love us or that He does not care about us. It just means that we are not the Treasure. We are Treasure containers, instead.

Sometimes people don't like this Treasure/vessel relationship because there is something on the inside of a person that wants to be more important than everybody else. We don't like it that someone else is the most important. However, if you think about it, you will have to admit that Jesus is the only one who could love us enough to die for us. This makes Him more valuable than anybody else. It is right that He should be the Treasure. Those who realize this don't mind that they are clay pots. In fact, they think it is a great privilege to be allowed to contain such a priceless gem!

II Corinthians 4:7 says just a little bit more: that the treasure in us is God's power. All that means is that Christ in us is the ability to live His life. God does not expect us to have the ability to be good Christians. That is like asking dirt to do something that only a person can do. Even so, expecting ourselves to live a good Christian life is asking a person to do something that only Jesus can do. Only Christ is God's treasure. Only Christ does the things the please the Father (cf. Jn. 8:29). Jesus on the inside is our ability to live the Christian life.

Christ in you – Temple

Everybody wants to have a home. It is where we feel like we belong. It is a shelter and a safe place, a place where we can relax and just be ourselves with others we know and love. When we asked Jesus to come into our hearts, He lives inside of us. We become His home!

The Bible has a lot to say about God having a home. In the Old Testament, Israel built Him a temple. They called it His house, and He lived there, right in the middle of His people (cf. I Ki. 8:10-13). Israel's life revolved around that temple. Everyone in the country went there to celebrate feasts and offer sacrifices. They had to work their everyday lives around the fact that God lived in them!

The Temple in the Old Testament was just a sketch or a pattern of what God really had in mind for a home (cf. Heb. 8:5). God does not really want to live in a manmade structure of rocks and wood but in a house that He made by His Spirit (cf. Eph. 2:22). In order to build the home He really wants, God uses us for His materials, and the Holy Spirit does the work.

We know that Jesus died on the Cross for the forgiveness of our sins. But did you know that there were also many other reasons for the Cross, one of them being that He might build Himself a house? When we were sinners, we were God's enemies. When Jesus died, He took everything about us that was against Him, so it died too. When He was raised from the dead, there was nothing left between us and Him that could make Him unhappy with us (cf. Eph. 2:15-16). Now He can live in us! That is exactly what Ephesians chapter two goes on to say. First, Jesus died to put our enmity to death. Now, we are His home (Eph. 2:22).

God is not angry with people for the things we have done. Anything that made us God's enemies was crucified with Christ. Now those people who have asked Jesus into their hearts are brand new, and He wants to be in a brand new relationship with them. We are God's home. We are the place where He belongs. We are the place He can come to relax and be Himself with the ones He knows and loves.

Do you remember how Israel's life revolved around God living in the Temple? That was just an example! God lives in us, and our lives can be all about Him – even the humdrum, everyday parts of our lives! Jesus does not just live in us on Sundays, or during special events. Now, everything we do and everywhere we go, He can be part of it.

We are God's house, and we belong to Him now. II Corinthians 6:16 says that no one else should get to live inside of us but Him. Idols are just things that want to be the boss instead of letting God be the boss. Why would we let other things boss God around in His own house? This verse says that He wants to live and walk in us. Jesus needs room to move around in there!

Christ in You – Seed

Another way that the “Christ in you” relationship works is by Jesus being the Seed and us being the ground. At new birth, He is planted in a person’s heart, and the heart is like the ground. Just like a seed grows up and produces a beautiful flower or something edible when it is mature, Jesus slips into our hearts in a small way, and everything that He is increases in us until we bear fruit.

The Bible says that the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering (patience), gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness (not making people to give us our way), and self-control (cf. Gal. 5:22-23). When Jesus is living big and strong on the inside, this is what He looks like.

In his letter to the Galatians, Paul told those people that Jesus is the seed (cf. Gal. 3:16). Later on in the same letter, he told them that the fruit they would bear is the Spirit’s fruit (Gal. 5:22-23). Jesus lives in our hearts by His Spirit, and it is the Spirit’s fruit that comes forth. It belongs to Him, not us! Before the seed is ever planted, it contains everything a plant will be and have: the roots, the stalk, the branches, leaves, blooms, and fruit. Planting a seed unlocks all of those things to develop and take shape. In the same way, Jesus has all kinds of attributes, but until He is planted in someone’s heart, nobody can see them. Jesus on the inside unlocks the fruit and gives it a chance to develop and be defined in us.

Sometimes believers get worried when they don’t see these beautiful attributes of Christ working in them. They make a mistake and think that the answer is to try harder to produce those qualities on their own. They believe the lie that they are responsible to make it happen and that God will be upset with them if they don’t. This is the wrong idea! We are only the ground. The ground does not have any fruit of its own, and nobody expects it to. Dirt does not grow or come to maturity, but the seed does! All the ground is supposed to do is let the seed come in and give it room to grow.

Paul was worried about the Galatians because they were working hard to be spiritual and holy, but Jesus just needed a chance to increase in them. All of the love, joy, and everything else were locked inside the seed of Christ the whole time. It takes time for a seed to grow up into a mature plant and bear fruit! This means that Christ has to be formed in us, which is what Paul told the Galatians (cf. Gal. 4:19).

Just like a seed needs rain and sunshine to grow, Christ in you needs the rain of the Word of God and the sunshine of His presence. The Galatians did not need a spiritual image or a lot of rules to follow. They needed to give Jesus a chance to mature and take shape. The growth of the seed is progressive. It does not happen all at once. Maturity happens one step at a time.

The seed of Christ is planted in the ground of our hearts, and in the right season, the ground brings forth the fruit on its own. That is what the Bible says! We do not know how it happens, but that is how Christ in you works (cf. Mk. 4:26-29). The seed and the ground do not need a whole lot of rules and regulations in order to do what they are supposed to do. We can trust Jesus in us will know what to do and how to do it.

Christ in You – Life

So far, we have seen how Christ is on the inside of a believer. But Jesus wants more than to just be inside of us. He wants to actually be able to live inside of us, to move, speak, and relate to people, using us as His instruments to do so. I John 5:11-12 tells us that whoever has the Son HAS life. In John 14:6, Jesus says that He is THE life. Colossians 3:4 says that Christ is OUR life. It is not something that we are responsible to produce; it is already inside of anyone who has asked Jesus into their heart.

Galatians 2:20 tells us that even though we died with Christ, we still live. But something has changed. Now Christ is the one living on the inside! When Jesus died on the Cross, He put our old life to death to make room for His life in us. We cannot have two lives at the same time! Each person either has the old life that they were born with, or the new Christ-life which they received at new birth.

Why should this matter? Because Jesus' life is very different from ours. My life puts me first. It thinks that everything should revolve around me. My life wants its own way. It wants to live an independent life, determining its own direction according to its own will. These tendencies might not sound so bad at first, but they are what the Bible calls "sin". Everything bad that anyone has ever done, whether big or small, has come from these tendencies.

These me-first, want-my-own-way tendencies push God away. There is no room for Him on the inside. This is why Jesus had to die in our place, to deal with these tendencies once and for all. Because of that, anyone who turns to receive Jesus gets to have His life on the inside.

In contrast, Jesus' life puts God and others first. This is what love is! I Corinthians 13:4-8 is the perfect description of the life of Christ when it is living in someone, putting God and others first. Jesus is patient and kind. He does not envy or boast. He is neither proud nor rude. He does not insist on having His own way, does not get upset easily, and does not think badly of others. He is unhappy when something else is living on the inside of His people, and celebrates when He gets to live. He puts up with difficult or unfair things, trusts God, expects Him to come through, and keeps going no matter what. He never quits or abandons God or others.

Is there anybody who can do all those things? Jesus can because that passage is a description of His life. Christians get worried when they think that God expects all of it from them because deep down they know that they won't be able to do it. Many Christians secretly don't like having to do those things, and they are afraid of God or others finding that out. What these worried Christians have failed to understand is that Jesus died to take away the life that doesn't want to live like that. Now He lives in us, and He is just like that without trying.

Christ living in us is so much more than not sinning. It is about being filled with Jesus so that others meet Him when they meet you. We don't know how to do that, so we have to trust that His life in us will know what to do and when to do it. Jesus' job is to live as big and as strong as He can inside of us. Our job is to rely on His life in us, that it will do what it is supposed to do.

Christ in You – Light

There are different kinds of light. During the day, the sun gives light to earth that we can see with our physical eyes. Our minds are enlightened when we begin to understand or realize something new. There is yet another kind of light that humanity needs, a light that will chase away the darkness of our separation from God. This is what Jesus came to do. Now He is the light that shines in our hearts (cf. II Cor. 4:6).

This world can be a very dark place because people who do not have Jesus in their hearts tend to avoid God. This way of living has cut them off from His light. They have lived separately from God for so long that the darkness feels normal to them. This is why so many who do not know Jesus think that they are basically good people. They are darkness, and they have no light with which to compare themselves. Compared to Jesus, nobody is good. But compared to each other, we can always look better than somebody else!

John says that Jesus is the light of the world because His life is the light of men (cf. Jn. 8:12, 1:4). His life shows us who God is (cf. 14:9). Jesus was even the light of the world when He was dying on the Cross because He was showing us His love, which is so different from our own. Who Jesus was and what He did was like a light in a dark place. People who receive Jesus and His words are able to see for the first time because they are seeing God for the first time.

In Matthew 5:14, Jesus says that we are the light of the world. We are not good enough to be a light all on our own. The only way for us to be the light of the world is for Jesus shine in our hearts. This is what the Bible says! God shines in our hearts (cf. II Cor. 4:6). In this way, we are like a lantern, and Jesus is like the candle that the lantern holds. In this way, Jesus conquers the darkness in us and show who God is to us and others.

There is a good example in the book of Judges about how Jesus is the light in us. In Judges 7:15-22, there was a man named Gideon whom God chose to lead Israel to fight against their enemies, the Midianites. Gideon instructed his soldiers to hold a trumpet in one hand, and a pitcher with a torch inside in the other. When they blew their trumpets and broke the pitchers, the light inside shone out. The Midianites, who were God's enemies and therefore used to living in "darkness" were terrified by the "light" on the inside. They turned on each other in confusion, and Israel won the battle.

Our wisdom says that if we want to fight someone and win, we need to be bigger, stronger, and carry better weapons. Gideon did nothing like this. He only had three hundred men with trumpets, pitchers, and torches. The best weapon against darkness is light! If there is darkness inside of you that keeps getting the better of you, then let the light of Jesus shine! He will chase away whatever is against God. If you are in a dark situation, let Jesus shine and see what happens. He knows how to overcome anything that is separate from Himself.

Christ in You – Hope of Glory

God wants to be known, or glorified. One of the reasons Jesus came to earth to live and die as a man is so that people could know who God was. His life of service and sacrifice demonstrated God's care for His people. Jesus' death on the Cross and the following resurrection shows us how His life always pours itself out to the very end and is raised up anew. John 1:14 says that those among whom Jesus dwelt were able to see God's glory because He was there.

Now Jesus lives in those who are believers, and His glory dwells in us. God's chance for being glorified – or known – is for others to be able to meet Jesus when they meet us. "Christ in you" is the relationship where God plans on being glorified (cf. Col. 1:27).

God still wants people to know Him. The best way for that to happen is to "see" what God is like for themselves. A believer – a person with Jesus living on the inside – can let Jesus express Himself in such a way that other people will know what He is like. They can watch as someone demonstrates the love of Jesus, how it is kind, patient, and always thinks of others.

When Jesus is given the freedom to live in His people, God is glorified. Sometimes Christians think that God gets the glory when they do good works or behave themselves, but this is not quite the right idea. If someone uses their own ability and willpower to behave themselves or do something nice for somebody, then all the glory goes to them. God gets the glory when Christ lives instead of me. He gets the glory because it is Him instead of me!

A perfect picture of this is Solomon's temple in the Old Testament. I Kings 8:41-43 is part of the prayer that King Solomon prayed after the temple had been completed. Notice that one of the reasons for having a temple for God to live in was so that people other than the children of Israel could come to know God. This is one way that God is glorified.

Another example is what happened to the apostle Paul. He was a Jew at first, and he did not like Christians because he thought that his beliefs about Judaism were right and that the Christians' beliefs about Jesus were wrong. He hated Christians so much that he killed as many as he could (cf. Acts 7:57-8:1). Then he met the Lord and received Jesus on the inside. After that, he changed so dramatically that other believers glorified God in Paul (cf. Gal. 1:23-24). Jesus living on the inside of Paul helped people see who God was, and that brought Him glory.

A person does not have to be famous like Solomon or Paul to bring God glory. Jesus says that He is glorified in anyone who belongs to Him (cf. Jn. 17:10). We do not have to do something important or be someone important; we just need to let Him live in us by putting God and others first in little ways every day. Letting Jesus live in us to the glory of God every day in little ways equals one long life that brings glory to God in a big way.

Christ living in His people is the eternal purpose God had planned for us long before any of us were born, and it will remain His purpose to the end of days (cf. Eph. 3:10).

Christ in You –Lives in our hearts by faith

Part I – Yielding

Through our many lessons, we have established that Jesus is actually on the inside of anyone who has believed in Him. We never need to be worried that He will want to leave us. He wants a “Christ in you” relationship with anyone who will have it.

Romans 6:11 says to consider ourselves alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord. “Considering” is another way to say that we are to conclude that it is so. God wants us to go about our daily lives, confident that Jesus is on the inside.

As wonderful as Jesus’ presence is, there is more to this kind of relationship than Jesus just hanging around somewhere inside of us; He wants to actually be able to live His life in us! He wants to be able to move and to speak, using His vessels as instruments to express Himself. He did not just get raised from the dead to sit around and not be able to do anything. He was raised so that He could live in us!

God has invited us to participate with Him when it comes to Jesus expressing Himself. Our part of the “Christ in you” relationship is faith. Ephesians 3:17 says that Christ lives in us by faith. This is more than just believing that Jesus is inside somewhere, and it is more than just a mental agreement. For Christ to live in our hearts, there must be a constant trust that His life is in there, that wants to come out, and that it will at the right time. We must trust that this is what He wants, or we will either be worried about not having that kind of relationship, or we will just forget about it. Hebrews 11:6 instructs us to come to God in faith, and that He will reward us with Himself if we do.

Part of trusting Jesus’ life in us is learning to yield when it wants to come out. When driving a car, yielding is simply letting someone else have the right-of-way. The other driver does not have to stop or slow down; they can just keep right on driving. The person who yields adjusts their speed so that the other driver can do that.

Think about what happens when the driver who is supposed to yield does not do it. If the driver goes ahead anyway, one of two things can happen: either there will be a car accident, or the driver who was supposed to be able to go will have to yield instead. We are supposed to yield to Jesus, but if we do not, He will yield to us. He will give up the things that He wants to do and wait for us until we give Him a chance. It is not the way it is supposed to be, but Jesus’ nature is to put others first.

Even if we do not yield, Jesus still loves us just as much. He will still be on the inside, and we will have assurance of that. He will still be all the things we have discovered about Him – the treasure, the indwelling presence, and the seed. What will be lacking is the outward expression of those things. His movements in us will be restricted. He does not condemn us if we limit Him because He wants us to yield to Him out of love, not because He commands it.

We yield to Jesus on the inside when we get an impression down in our hearts to do something. The thought might come to pray for somebody. Or we might feel an urge to read the Bible. There are many examples of this. We can yield to Jesus on the inside and let Him have the right-of-way. We can adjust to His desire to come out of us so that He can live the way He wants to live. This is what Romans 6:12 means. It says that we can yield ourselves to God as His tools because we are alive with Jesus’ life.

Christ in you – Lives in Our Hearts by Faith

Part II – Getting Out of the Boat

Jesus is always in our hearts, but He gets to really live when we trust Him to come out. The first part of trusting Jesus on the inside is to yield to His movements. Another part of trusting in Jesus' life is to actually put ourselves in a position that requires us to trust that God will come through for us. One of the best examples in the Bible is in Matthew 14:25-30, when Peter went to Jesus, walking on the water. Before he could walk on the water, he had to get out of the boat! He was not mysteriously lifted from the boat and carried over the waves. He had to swing his leg over the side, put his foot on the water, and trust that Jesus' encouragement to come was confirmation that somehow the water would support his weight.

Letting Jesus live in us is just like that. He does not magically take hold of someone's body and make it do what He wants. Instead, we must put ourselves in an impossible situation, like Peter did, and then the miracle of His life living in us happens. In fact, we do not even have to feel like Jesus is there. II Corinthians 5:7 says that we walk by faith, not by sight. This means that Jesus is there whether we feel Him or not, and He will come out if we trust Him – whether we feel like it is happening or not.

The Jesus who laid down His life at the Cross wants to relate to people right now. Sometimes He wants to love somebody. Or He may want to give something to someone in need, or reach someone with the gospel. The only way to give Jesus a chance to live is for His instrument to yield to the movement on the inside, step out of the boat, and start walking (cf. Rom. 6:12)! When we move like that, Jesus fills our actions with Himself, and He gets to live the way He wants to.

For example, what about the person who did something wrong to you? You think it is impossible to forgive them. If you decide to forgive them in faith, Jesus will actually do it in you, and you will be released from that old grudge. Or maybe an authority figure always makes you do things you think are unfair, things that you do not want to. If you choose to submit and trust Jesus to come out, Jesus in you will go the extra mile, and what is required of you will be easy (cf. Matt. 5:41).

How do we know when to get out of the boat? Sometimes we sense Jesus' movements within us, just like we talked about in the previous lesson. But we can get out of the boat anytime when we know things about Jesus' nature. He always forgives people. He always puts others first. Those things are right there in the Bible, so He should not have to give us special instructions on when to do those kinds of things. We can get out of the boat anytime we want!

Of course, it is impossible for anybody to walk on water, so it would have to be a miracle for it to happen. When Jesus walked the earth, He did the impossible: He died for us even when He did not have to (cf. Rom. 5:8). Likewise, doing the things that Jesus wants to do is impossible for anybody but Jesus. After all, who wants to love their enemies? Who is able to heal a sick person? Who is able to respect authority when they have done something wrong? Those things are about as difficult to do as walking on water! But Jesus can do it, and He can do it in you! If we are going to let Jesus live in us, we are going to have to trust Him.

When Peter was walking on the water, all the other disciples just stayed in the boat. This did not make them bad disciples. Jesus did not reject them or rebuke them. If a

believer chooses to “stay in the boat”, Jesus will be just as much on the inside. However, it is important to remember that only the disciple that had enough faith to get out of the boat experienced the privilege of walking on the water with Jesus. Furthermore, if that believer stops looking and Jesus and begins to sink, Jesus will save Him, right in that moment, and everything will be all right.

It takes faith to let Jesus live in us!

Christ in You – Rivers of Living Water

Jesus lives in a believer's heart, and John 7:38 tells us that when we trust Him, He flows out like a river and affects everything that comes into contact with Him.

A river is always moving away from its source, such as a mountain spring, endlessly gushing out water from hidden reserves. Jesus is like a mountain spring, in that His love never stops gushing out of His heart. We see that in how He lived while on earth. First He became a man so that He could live with us. Then he became a servant of men so that He could take care of us. Then He chose to die, so that He could redeem us. Then He chose to die the lowest kind of death, so that He could be raised up and we could receive His life on the inside (cf. Phil. 2:5-9). Now that He has been raised up to sit at God's right hand, He never stops praying for us (cf. Heb. 7:25).

He just never stops loving us, and He is happy to keep on loving! His love brings life, healing, hope, and purpose to our lives. He will never stop giving, no matter what.

When Jesus is on the inside, He is exactly the same way. He is the spring that gives endlessly. Now that Jesus is in our hearts, he wants to flow out of us in a river of life that touches everyone we meet. When we trust Him to do it, He will. Then He can use us to continue showing His love and care to others. What is especially interesting is that when the river of life touches someone we meet, they are ministered to and changed by the very life of Jesus.

Look at Revelation 22:1. Some people think this passage is talking about going to heaven someday, but it is actually talking about Jesus living in His people in any age. See how the river of life comes out of the throne of God and the Lamb. This means that wherever Jesus is allowed to be the boss, His life will come out. Revelation 21:10, 22-23 show how God and the Lamb live inside their city, the New Jerusalem. All of the people who trust Jesus to be Lord on the inside make up New Jerusalem. The river of life comes out of Jesus' throne in the heart.

This is such a better way to live than the old religious way of trying to be good. There is no Jesus or rivers of living water in behaving like that! If a person tries to be a good religious Christian without trusting Jesus on the inside, they will either become a legalistic old sourpuss that no one likes to be around, or they will give up on being a Christian because it is no fun and too hard.

We can never love and give like Jesus can, but we can trust Him to do it in us. When He has our hearts, our bodies will spring into action to demonstrate the life and love of Jesus.

Christ in You – The Holy Spirit Explains It

We have just concluded a very long study about what it means for Christ to be in us. It is just more than getting saved and waiting to go to heaven someday! Jesus wants to live in us right now, every moment. We have learned a lot, but there is one more step needed to really let Jesus live in us: the Holy Spirit must speak these things into our hearts.

It is all a matter of what kind of knowledge we use to know Jesus. Ephesians 3:19 says, “And to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fullness of God.” If we have just used our heads to gather information about Christ in us, then we are like a filing cabinet or a hard drive, or any other item that stores information. There is nothing alive about that! But there is a kind of knowledge that is of a higher quality than storage-space knowledge. It is knowing with our hearts, not with our heads. And when we have that kind of knowledge, we will be filled up with Christ, God’s fullness.

In the very first lesson, we discussed how we just know deep down that Christ is inside. That is the right kind of knowledge! But someone who loves Jesus senses that there must be more to it than that, and they begin to search in order to know Jesus more. This is what the Holy Spirit is for. Look at John 14:16, 20. Jesus tells us that our Father will send the Comforter – that’s the Holy Spirit – and that when He does, we will know some things. One of the things we will know is that Christ is in us. John 15:26-27 tells us that the Holy Spirit’s job is to talk about Jesus. And when He does, we will bear witness of Jesus. That is another way of saying that Christ will live in us when we receive the Spirit’s instruction. He gives us the right kind of knowledge.

On the other hand, if that believer does not understand how to trust the Holy Spirit to teach Christ to our hearts, they will get worried and try to do it on their own. That is the way we end up with lots of “files” about Jesus and no life! These kinds of people might know a lot about the Bible and God, and they might even love God, but they are very dry. This is how believers end up being religious and legalistic.

What if someone did not know any better and just learned about Christ with their heads? And what if later they realized that they should not have done it that way? Is it too late for them? Not at all! The Holy Spirit can take all that storage-space knowledge in that person’s head and change it into the right kind of knowledge inside their heart!

Look at what Jesus says in John 14:26. He was talking to His disciples the night before he was to be crucified. These men had walked with Jesus for 3 ½ years, and that whole time He had been telling them about Himself. But they did not have the Holy Spirit teaching them, so everything Jesus said to them became a sort of storage-space knowledge! Jesus says in this verse that the Holy Spirit would teach them about Himself by bringing all of the knowledge they had about Him to their remembrance and turning it into the right kind of knowledge. That means that there is always hope for knowing Jesus more, no matter who you are.

Maybe all the lessons in this series were just head knowledge when you learned them. It is not too late! If Jesus is in your heart, you already have the Holy Spirit, ready to teach you. Even so, you might need a little extra movement of the Spirit inside. You can always ask for Him to fill you up and teach you about Jesus. He loves those kinds of prayers and always answers right away. As the Holy Spirit guides you into all truth (cf.

Jn. 16:13), you will learn all these things deep down in your heart, and that will set Jesus free to live in you. You will no longer be a dry legalistic Christian, or a Christian who looks just like the world. You will be changed into a Christian who is full of life, joy, and peace. You will be so full of Jesus that He will spill over and touch others. This is what it means to be a Christian.