

# What Does It Mean to be In Christ?

*Romans 8:1-17*

Intro:

1. Most people in the world believe that salvation is achieved by keeping a certain standard of righteousness.
2. The Jews believed that standard was the Law of Moses.
3. Today the standard seems to be: don't hurt other people & don't be a crook!
4. At least the Law of Moses was absolute - today's standard is pretty much what you feel comfortable with!
5. The Law could show you what God's will for life is but did not provide forgiveness when you goofed.
6. The good news:
  - a. When Jesus went to the cross, the Law was made obsolete as far as establishing a relationship with God.
  - b. You can now choose a relationship to God through His grace & be in Christ instead of the old way of obedience to Law (or today's worldly standard) & be in sin.
7. So - what does it mean to be in Christ?

## I. v2-8 - Those in Christ are Set Free from the Law

- A. **v3a** - The Law of Moses was powerless to make people sinless because the flesh (the sin oriented life) was too weak.
  1. **v5** - When you are not in Christ you let sin control your life instead of God's Spirit - a sin oriented life.
  2. **v6-8** - The result of the sin oriented life is death - because:
    - a. The sin oriented life is hostile to God (**v7a**).
    - b. The sin oriented life is not submissive to God's Law - His intended way for you to live (**v7b**).
    - c. The sin oriented life is not able to obey the Law because it is too weak (**v3**).
    - d. The sin oriented life can't please God (**v8**).
- B. So - God did something about it. **Jn 3:17 - For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him.**
  1. The Law condemned - the Son saves!
  2. **v3b** - Lord Jesus was sent as a man; with human weaknesses. **ILL: "The Temptations (Matt 4:1-11).**
  3. **v4** - The Lord made it possible for the legal demands of the Law to be fulfilled in you. **How?**
    - a. The Lord fulfilled the Law by obeying it perfectly - as a man! **Heb 4:15 - For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are — yet was without sin.**
    - b. Then - The Law was nailed to the cross! **Col 2:13-14 - When you were dead in your sins and in the uncircumcision of your sinful nature, God made you alive with Christ. He forgave us all our sins, having canceled the written code, with its regulations, that was against us and that stood opposed to us; he took it away, nailing it to the cross.**
  4. Now - when you identify with the Lord Jesus - shown in your baptism - His victory over the Law's requirements becomes your victory!
    - a. You are made righteous (**Rom 3:21-22**).
    - b. You are justified by His blood (**Rom 5:9**).
    - c. You are free from sin's domination (**Rom 6:22**).
    - d. You are no longer under condemnation (**Rom 8:1**).
    - e. You become the people of God (**I Pet 2:10**).

## II. v9-13 - Those in Christ will Know They are in Christ

A. v9 - If God's Spirit is dwelling in you - then you are in the Spirit.

1. You can't be in the Spirit & in the flesh (the sin oriented life) at the same time! ILL: The Law of Aerodynamics supersedes the Law of Gravity on a properly shaped airplane wing.
2. When you become in Christ - the Spirit supersedes the flesh.
3. If the Spirit of God is not in you - you are not a Christian!

B. So - how do you know if you have God's Spirit?

1. You know when you are obeying God's word. Act 2:38-39 - Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. The promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off — for all whom the Lord our God will call.
2. You know when you surrender your life to the Lord.
  - a. This surrender is illustrated in your baptism.
  - b. v10a - Your body will be dead because of sin.
  - c. v10b - Your spirit is alive because of the Lord's righteousness. Rom 5:18 - Consequently, just as the result of one trespass was condemnation for all men, so also the result of one act of righteousness was justification that brings life for all men.
  - d. v11 - The indwelling Holy Spirit will raise you up & give you life - abundant & eternal life!
  - e. v12-13 - This indwelling Holy Spirit will help you kill the practices of your sin oriented life.

## III. v14-17 - Those in Christ are Adopted Children - Not Slaves of Law

A. v15 - You can have a personal relationship with the Creator of the universe - Almighty God!

1. **Abba** (Αββᾶ from Aramaic אבא) = "daddy", the most intimate word a child would use addressing his father.
2. From Vine's Expository Dictionary of Biblical Words: "In the Gamara (a Rabbinical commentary on the Mishna, the traditional teaching of the Jews) it is stated that slaves were forbidden to address the head of the family by this title. It approximates to a personal name, in contrast to "Father," with which it is always joined in the New Testament. Abba is the word framed by the lips of infants & betokens unreasoning trust; "father" expresses an intelligent apprehension of the relationship. The two together express the love & intelligent confidence of a child."
3. It was used in Mk 14:36 when the Lord asked for this cup to be taken from Him in the Garden.
4. It was used in Gal 4:6 - Because you are sons, God sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, the Spirit who calls out, "Abba, Father."

B. v14 & 23 - You can become an adopted child!

1. **Adoption** from Nelson's Illustrated Bible Dictionary: "Roman law required that the adopter be a male & childless; the one to be adopted had to be an independent adult, able to agree to be adopted. In the eyes of the law, the adopted one became a new creature, he was regarded as being born again into the new family."
2. v17 - as an adopted child - an heir - you receive all of God's inheritance!
  - a. Abundant life here & now.
  - b. Forgiveness of all your sins.
  - c. Eternal life with God in heaven.