

IN CHRIST AND CHRIST IN US

“For we are God’s workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works...” — EPHESIANS 2:10

In his writings, Paul often uses the terms “in Christ” and “Christ in us”. What does he mean and are there differences that distinguish the two?

To be “in Christ” is the other identity to our earthly one. It is the spiritual world to which we belong where two things happen when we become Christians. Christ comes to live in us and we come to be in Christ. In 1 Corinthians 12:13 Paul says, “By one Spirit we were all baptized into one body.” This is the body of Christ, but it is one thing for us ‘to be in Christ’, and another for ‘Christ to be in us’. They are complimentary, and we can’t separate them as far as the timing goes, but we can separate them as far as their meaning and purpose.

Before we became Christians, we were spiritually dead, but after becoming Christians, we received the indwelling life of Christ, and became spiritually alive. With Christ living in us, we now become members of one corporate body of which Christ is the Head. He is our source of power, but severed from Christ, there is no spiritual life or power. The emphasis of ‘Christ in us’ is not just that we have life, but we now have power. Christ in us gives power, but ourselves in Christ gives purpose. Christ in us gives resources, but us in Christ gives responsibilities. Christ in us is personal, but us in Christ is corporate.

As Christians, we are a part of the much bigger picture, and become the instruments (us in Christ), by which God does His work on earth. In addition, we have an inheritance in Christ, which is Christ, Himself, and

the unlimited resources that come with being in Him. Christ also has an inheritance in us in that He now has another body in union with His to live in and work through, which is what gives us purpose.

The actual thrust of the book of Ephesians is about the corporate relationship we have, operating interdependently with one another, and built together as Christ's church. It is where He lives by His Spirit, and uses our individual personalities to speak with our lips, love with our hearts and walk with our feet. Christ in us gives us the power, and us in Christ is a disposition of heart that says, "Lord, I'm available to You and your work in this world."

PRAYER: Lord, I understand that your life in me gives me power and unlimited resources, but I pray for myself to be increasingly more in You to help further your agenda in this world.

TO REFLECT UPON: Do I understand the difference between Christ in me and me in Christ?