

Abundant Life: Identity: Be In Christ

Even before he made the world, God loved us and chose us in Christ to be holy and without fault in his eyes.

Ephesians 1:1-3 New Living Translation

1 This letter is from Paul, chosen by the will of God to be an apostle of Christ Jesus. I am writing to God's holy people in Ephesus,[a] who are faithful followers of Christ Jesus.

- Because I am one of God's holy people in this city, and I am also a faithful follower of Jesus Christ.

2 May God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ give you grace and peace. 3 All praise to God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly realms because we are united with Christ.

- Every spiritual blessing in the heavenly realms is mine because by faith I am one with Christ!

The Spiritual Blessings

1 Peter 1:16 New Living Translation

16 For the Scriptures say, "You must be holy because I am holy." [a]

- Saw this on a church sign and heard it as a statement of the new creation, and not just a command.
- 2 Corinthians 5:17 King James Version

17 Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.

Ephesians 1:4-22 New Living Translation

4 Even before he made the world, God loved us and chose us in Christ to be holy and without fault in his eyes.

- Where is the only place we are holy and without fault in God's eyes? In Christ!
- "I am blessed to be loved by God, chosen in Christ, holy and without fault in His eyes."

5 God decided in advance to adopt us into his own family by bringing us to himself through Jesus Christ. This is what he wanted to do, and it gave him great pleasure.

- Even while living in the rebellion of sin, a force (His decision) was bringing us back to God (for his great pleasure.)
- “I am blessed to be adopted into God’s own family.”

6 So we praise God for the glorious grace he has poured out on us who belong to his dear Son.[b] 7 He is so rich in kindness and grace that he purchased our freedom with the blood of his Son and forgave our sins.

- How are we identified by God as those who belong to Him? He alone purchased our freedom we could not save ourselves.
- “I am blessed with God’s kindness and grace, He has purchased my freedom with the blood of His son and forgave my sins.”

8 He has showered his kindness on us, along with all wisdom and understanding.

- “I am blessed with God’s kindness, with all wisdom and understanding.

9 God has now revealed to us his mysterious will regarding Christ—which is to fulfill his own good plan. 10 And this is the plan: At the right time he will bring everything together under the authority of Christ—everything in heaven and on earth. 11 Furthermore, because we are united with Christ, we have received an inheritance from God,[c] for he chose us in advance, and he makes everything work out according to his plan.

- “I am blessed because I am united with Christ, I have an inheritance from God, He chose me in advance, and He makes everything work out according to His plan.”
- If things aren’t working out for you, “Come back to God in Christ”.

12 God’s purpose was that we Jews who were the first to trust in Christ would bring praise and glory to God. 13 And now you Gentiles have also heard the truth, the Good News that God saves you. And when you believed in Christ, he

identified you as his own[d] by giving you the Holy Spirit, whom he promised long ago. 14 The Spirit is God's guarantee that he will give us the inheritance he promised and that he has purchased us to be his own people. He did this so we would praise and glorify him.

Paul's Prayer for Spiritual Wisdom

15 Ever since I first heard of your strong faith in the Lord Jesus and your love for God's people everywhere,[e] 16 I have not stopped thanking God for you. I pray for you constantly, 17 asking God, the glorious Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, to give you spiritual wisdom[f] and insight so that you might grow in your knowledge of God. 18 I pray that your hearts will be flooded with light so that you can understand the confident hope he has given to those he called—his holy people who are his rich and glorious inheritance.[g] 19 I also pray that you will understand the incredible greatness of God's power for us who believe him. This is the same mighty power 20 that raised Christ from the dead and seated him in the place of honor at God's right hand in the heavenly realms. 21 Now he is far above any ruler or authority or power or leader or anything else—not only in this world but also in the world to come. 22 God has put all things under the authority of Christ and has made him head over all things for the benefit of the church. 23 And the church is his body; it is made full and complete by Christ, who fills all things everywhere with himself.

1 Peter 1 New Living Translation

1 This letter is from Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ.

I am writing to God's chosen people who are living as foreigners in the provinces of Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia.[a] 2 God the Father knew you and chose you long ago, and his Spirit has made you holy. As a result, you have obeyed him and have been cleansed by the blood of Jesus Christ.

May God give you more and more grace and peace.

The Hope of Eternal Life

3 All praise to God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. It is by his great mercy that we have been born again, because God raised Jesus Christ from the dead. Now we live with great expectation, 4 and we have a priceless inheritance—an

inheritance that is kept in heaven for you, pure and undefiled, beyond the reach of change and decay. 5 And through your faith, God is protecting you by his power until you receive this salvation, which is ready to be revealed on the last day for all to see. 6 So be truly glad.[b] There is wonderful joy ahead, even though you must endure many trials for a little while.

- We must stay focused on our joy with the Lord, so we can endure many trials, for a little while.
- What are the trials for?

7 These trials will show that your faith is genuine. It is being tested as fire tests and purifies gold—though your faith is far more precious than mere gold. So when your faith remains strong through many trials, it will bring you much praise and glory and honor on the day when Jesus Christ is revealed to the whole world.

8 You love him even though you have never seen him. Though you do not see him now, you trust him; and you rejoice with a glorious, inexpressible joy. 9 The reward for trusting him will be the salvation of your souls. 10 This salvation was something even the prophets wanted to know more about when they prophesied about this gracious salvation prepared for you. 11 They wondered what time or situation the Spirit of Christ within them was talking about when he told them in advance about Christ's suffering and his great glory afterward. 12 They were told that their messages were not for themselves, but for you. And now this Good News has been announced to you by those who preached in the power of the Holy Spirit sent from heaven. It is all so wonderful that even the angels are eagerly watching these things happen.

A Call to Holy Living

13 So prepare your minds for action and exercise self-control. Put all your hope in the gracious salvation that will come to you when Jesus Christ is revealed to the world. 14 So you must live as God's obedient children. Don't slip back into your old ways of living to satisfy your own desires. You didn't know any better then. 15 But now you must be holy in everything you do, just as God who chose you is holy. 16 For the Scriptures say, "You must be holy because I am holy." [c]

17 And remember that the heavenly Father to whom you pray has no favorites. He will judge or reward you according to what you do. So you must live in reverent fear of him during your time here as “temporary residents.” 18 For you know that God paid a ransom to save you from the empty life you inherited from your ancestors. And it was not paid with mere gold or silver, which lose their value. 19 It was the precious blood of Christ, the sinless, spotless Lamb of God. 20 God chose him as your ransom long before the world began, but now in these last days he has been revealed for your sake.

21 Through Christ you have come to trust in God. And you have placed your faith and hope in God because he raised Christ from the dead and gave him great glory.

22 You were cleansed from your sins when you obeyed the truth, so now you must show sincere love to each other as brothers and sisters.[d] Love each other deeply with all your heart.[e]

23 For you have been born again, but not to a life that will quickly end. Your new life will last forever because it comes from the eternal, living word of God. 24 As the Scriptures say,

“People are like grass;
their beauty is like a flower in the field.
The grass withers and the flower fades.
25 But the word of the Lord remains forever.”[f]

And that word is the Good News that was preached to you.

Galatians 3:26-28

New Living Translation

26 For you are all children[a] of God through faith in Christ Jesus. 27 And all who have been united with Christ in baptism have put on Christ, like putting on new clothes.[b] 28 There is no longer Jew or Gentile,[c] slave or free, male and female. For you are all one in Christ Jesus.