



Sunday October 24, 2021
Our Identity In Christ Series
Part 14: Living The In Christ Life (P1)

Living Out Of What Has Been Completed

2 Corinthians 5:17,18

17 Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.

18 Now all things are of God, who has reconciled us to Himself through Jesus Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation.

Because of simple faith in Jesus, God has done all these wonderful things for us, in us, to us—by bringing us into union with Christ. All that God has done for us in Christ are spiritual facts— spiritual reality. There is nothing more that we can add to it.

Some Questions to Consider

How do I experience in daily life what God has done for me in Christ? How do I live out of my identity, inheritance and life in Christ?

Born from Above to Live from Above

Jesus taught us about being born again in **John 3:1-13**.

To be "born again" also meaning born anew or born from above.

There are things (facts, information) about the natural world, and then there are things about the spiritual, heavenly world, the world "from above".

vs 13: Jesus had come down from heaven, was in His earthly body, and yet at the same time was "in heaven". (We realize that some manuscripts omit the "which is in heaven" part).

He is here on earth, but at the same time intimately one with the Father.

The earthly life Jesus life, He lived "from above", based on things of the spiritual, heavenly realm, based on Him being one with the Father.

As believers we are "born from above". We are spiritually one with Jesus and our new life, our real life is hidden in Christ (Colossians 3:3). In Him we live and move and have our being (based on Acts 17:28).



So, we as believers are also to live "from above". Literally it means that we live out of our life, our identity, our position in Christ and live in accordance to the ways and principles of God's Kingdom, as revealed to us in His Word.

As we keep living from above, then this way of living becomes our norm. It is normal for us to "live from above". It becomes natural for us to look at things, to handle things and to respond to things from our life, identity and position in Christ and in accordance to Kingdom principles.

We grow in learning to "live from above". It does not happen automatically.

The Spiritual and Natural Life of the Believer

Now lets deal with something that is theological, but yet is important.

God has completed things in the spirit and He calls us to live out of that in the natural. The work is "completed" in the spiritual realm, but is "still in progress" in the natural realm.

We see a dichotomy, an apparent paradox in these truths. Both are true at the same time.

Here are some examples:

- Complete, Yet "Work in Progress" : We are new creation, complete in Christ, and yet we are being changed from glory to glory into that same image (2 Corinthians 5:17, Colossians 2:10, 2 Corinthians 3:18, Hebrews 13:21)
- Perfected, Yet Being Perfected : We have been 'perfected' (made complete) by Christ's sacrifice and yet we are still being made perfect (Hebrews 10:14, 1 Peter 5:10, Colossians 4:12)
- Sanctified, Yet being Sanctified : We are sanctified and set apart to God in Christ, and we are still being sanctified unto Him (Hebrews 2:11, Jude 1:1, Hebrews 10:10,14, 1 Thessalonians 4:3-4)
- Hidden, Yet Visible : I am hidden in Christ, yet everything I do is visible to Him, both the good and bad. Nothing is hidden. (Colossians 3:3, Hebrews 4:13, 2 Corinthians 5:10, 1 Corinthians 4:5, Matthew 10:26)



- New Creation, Yet "Be renewed" : We are a new creation in Christ, and yet the new man and our mind is being renewed in the knowledge of the Lord (2 Corinthians 5:17, Romans 12:2, Colossians 3:10).
- Righteous, Yet be Repentant : We are righteous, without any condemnation, guilt and shame in Christ, and yet we are told to repent and have godly sorrow for sin (2 Corinthians 5:17, Romans 8:1, 2 Corinthians 7:9-10, Revelation 2:5,16,21,22, 3:3, 3:19)
- Raised with New Life, Yet be crucified : We have been raised to walk a new life, yet we need to crucify the flesh and die to self (Romans 6:4, Romans 8:13, Galatians 2:20).
- Possessing, Yet Pressing In : We are blessed with all spiritual blessings given freely as gifts, and yet we are to press in to possess what has been given (Ephesians 1:3, Luke 12:32, Matthew 11:12, Hebrews 6:12).
- Resting, Yet Laboring : We have entered into a spiritual rest in Jesus, yet we are to work out our salvation, labor in prayer, wrestle against the enemy, work our faith, do deeds of love and labor diligently for the Kingdom (Hebrews 4:3,9-11, Galatians 4:13, Ephesians 6:12, Philippians 2:12, 1 Corinthians 15:10, James 2:17,26, 1 John 3:17,18)

So how do we reconcile the "spiritual" and the "natural"?

We live out of the knowledge that the work is completed in the spiritual, which places us in a position of absolute confidence and certainty of victory, as we continue to co-labor with God and "progress" into living in the fullness of this in the natural realm.

Side Note:

If we only emphasize the 'spiritual' side of things, then we place no responsibility on the believer to co-labor with God and walk in spiritual discipline to live from above.

If we only emphasize the 'natural' side of things, then we place the entire responsibility on the believer, like living under the law instead of walking in God's amazing grace.

To "live from above" is to know what God has already completed for us in the spirit, and work with Him to live this out in our daily life.



The Power of Living from Above

God has declared that those of us who are born of Him, who have received His abundant grace and gift of righteousness will live victorious, as overcomers (1 John 5:4), rule, and reign in life (Romans 5:17).

Jesus the "Heavenly Man" (1 Corinthians 15:47-49) is our Model. Our life on this earth is the same as His (1 John 4:17).

We are born from above, to live from above. We live out of our life, our identity, our position in Christ and live in accordance to the ways and principles of God's Kingdom, as revealed to us in His Word.

This is the way to live as a believer.

This is the key to victorious Christian living.

There are two important practices that help us make the shift from "living from below" (i.e. from worldly, earthly ways) to "living from above": Renewing the mind and walking in the Spirit.

RENEW YOUR MIND

Ephesians 4:22-24

22 that you put off, concerning your former conduct, the old man which grows corrupt according to the deceitful lusts,

23 and be renewed in the spirit of your mind,

24 and that you put on the new man which was created according to God, in true righteousness and holiness.

Romans 12:1-2

1 I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service.

2 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.

do not be conformed to this world (don't live from below)

be transformed (live from above)

by the renewing of your mind - having a change in your way of thinking, reasoning, perspectives, etc.



Renewing our mind or being transformed in our mind is us letting go of our own thoughts and ways (which are from below), and embracing God's thoughts and ways (which are from above).

Isaiah 55:7-9

7 Let the wicked forsake his way, And the unrighteous man his thoughts; Let him return to the LORD, And He will have mercy on him; And to our God, For He will abundantly pardon.

8 "For My thoughts are not your thoughts, Nor are your ways My ways," says the LORD.

9 "For as the heavens are higher than the earth, So are My ways higher than your ways, And My thoughts than your thoughts.

Making choices and decisions based on the Word and the leading of God's Holy Spirit who brings the mind of God to us.

Practical scenarios

Please share examples relevant to your audience.

If we don't renew our minds, we end up as people whom the Bible refers to as being "carnally minded".

Romans 8:5-8

5 For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit, the things of the Spirit.

6 For to be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life and peace.

7 Because the carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, nor indeed can be.

8 So then, those who are in the flesh cannot please God.

carnally minded believers :

- have 'death' instead of life and peace
- cannot please God and actually find themselves doing things contrary to God's ways
- end up in bondage to sin and addictions
- find it difficult to understand the things of the Spirit
- behave like mere men

Being Spiritually Minded Yet Earthly Wise



Sometimes after hearing a message like this, we tend to swing to one extreme, where we disconnect from the practical aspects of daily life. We embrace spiritual principles, but then don't know how to correctly apply them to live our life here on earth.

Wisdom is the ability to take the principles of the heavenly realm and apply it correctly to daily life situations in a practical way.

It might seem contradictory (a paradox) to expect a believer to be "spiritually minded" and yet be "earthly wise", but this is what God requires us to do.

Matthew 10:16 "Behold, I send you out as sheep in the midst of wolves. Therefore be wise as serpents and harmless as doves.

WALK IN THE SPIRIT

Galatians 5:16,18,25

16 I say then: Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh.

18 But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law.

25 If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit.

As believers we are to walk in the Spirit, be led by the Spirit and to live in the Spirit.

To walk, be led and live in the Spirit is to order our lives under the leading, direction and influence of the Holy Spirit. We follow Him. We walk under His influence. We follow His guidance.

As we walk in the Spirit, we live out of the Spirit instead of according to the dictates of the flesh (Romans 8:13). As we walk in the Spirit we manifest the life of Christ expressed through the fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22-23). As we do so, we are transformed into Christlikeness. Jesus is formed in us and seen in us.

2 Corinthians 3:18

But 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.

So to "live from above" we must live with a renewed mind and must walk in the Spirit. This is a growth process as we mentioned earlier.