

The Assurance that Christ is In You

The Importance of Assurance

Nothing is more important in your relationship with God than having the personal assurance that Christ is in you. *Knowing* that Christ actually lives in you is the proper foundation of the Christian life. This foundation is characterized by hope as the Apostle Paul declared in Colossians 1:27: "To whom [the believers] God willed to make known what are the riches of the glory of this mystery among the nations, which is *Christ in you, the hope of glory*." In other words, knowing that Christ lives in you fills your daily life with the atmosphere of hope.

Let me start out by asking a vital question, Do you *know* that Jesus Christ is now living in you? Can you answer this question with assurance by saying, "Yes, Jesus Christ is now living in me"? Having such personal assurance in your relationship with the Lord is expected and promised according to the Word of God.

Through the years I have approached many people, asking them in different ways about their understanding of their relationship with God. Some I asked, "Are you a Christian?" Others I asked, "Do you know the Lord?" Sometimes I inquired, "Have you been saved?" It was very interesting to me that a number of people answered yes to the above three questions and then went on to explain what this meant to them - they had joined a church, their parents were missionaries, they believed in the doctrines of Christianity, they were baptized as a young child, they attended Sunday school, etc. In other words, their explanations really had nothing to do with whether Christ was living in them. Thus, I realized that some professing believers have only a vague understanding about their relationship with God and lack the definite assurance that Christ is living in them.

The one question, however, that I discovered always makes a person's standing with God clear-cut is simply this - *Do you have the assurance, right now, that Jesus Christ is living in you?* Those who are not clear and merely have an obscure, religious kind of answer can only say, "Yes, I think I do," or "I hope so," or "When I die, I hope the Lord will be fair with me," etc. On the other hand, those who are clear about their relationship with God can, without fail, answer confidently, "Yes, Christ *is* living in me."

Every believer should know with absolute certainty that Christ is in him. Why? Because it is through this certainty that we can experience Him in full - we begin to trust Him, to love Him and enjoy Him, and to allow Him to live and operate in us. Therefore, it is of primary importance that your heart be established with the kind of assurance that removes all doubts or vague thoughts about the fact that Christ lives in you.

Testing and Proving That Christ Is in You

The Bible invites us to test and prove ourselves regarding the assurance that Christ is in us. In 2 Corinthians 13:5 the Apostle Paul says, "Test yourselves whether you are in the faith; prove yourselves; or do you not recognize yourselves that Jesus Christ is in you, unless you are disapproved?" The Greek word for "test" in this verse literally means "to determine your condition." That is, we are exhorted to determine our condition before God and then prove ourselves that Jesus Christ is *in* us. To be "disapproved" means we don't really have the Lord. We don't have eternal life. We are not saved. Christ is not in us.

The significance of this testing and proving is that we should be able to answer yes to the following question, "Do you not recognize yourselves *that Jesus Christ is in you?*" Notice, it is not a matter of joining a church or simply going through baptism as a formal ritual. Neither is it merely agreeing with the doctrines of Christianity. Many people believe in the doctrines of Christianity and recite creeds and say prayers, but still do not have the assurance that Christ is in them. The question being asked is, Do you know that the Lord Jesus Himself is now living inside of you? Do you have that assurance? Can you positively testify, "Yes, Christ is in me!"

The Way to Know That Christ Is in You

If you are hesitating even a little bit about your assurance, you need to consider the way the Bible reveals that you can know Christ is in you. This way revolves around a definite act on your part. What is this act? It is the act of *receiving Him* described in John 1:11-12: "He came to His own, and those who were His own did not *receive* Him. But as many as *received* Him, to them He gave authority to become children of God, to those who believe in His name." In verse 11 the Lord came to "His own" people, the Jewish nation, inviting them to receive Him; but as a nation, they rejected Him. Then with verse 12 we move from the nation to the individual: "But *as many* as received Him." The phrase "as many" indicates individuals - any individual. Now, everything is on a personal and individual basis. Receiving Him is an action any individual can take. The personal act of receiving Him brings the assurance of His indwelling. John 1:12 describes this indwelling with the words, "to them He gave authority to become children of God."

The act of receiving is further amplified in John 1:12 by the word *believing*: "But as many as *received* Him . . . to those who *believe* in His name." Believing and receiving mutually explain each other. To believe *is* synonymous with the act of receiving, and the act of receiving *is* the same as believing. In fact, receiving Him is *how* we believe in His name.

To believe in the Lord is not merely giving mental assent to Christ; believing involves a personal act of receiving Him. The crucial matter is in the act of receiving. Have you received Him? Has there ever been a time in your life when you invited Jesus Christ to come into you? Your definite and positive "Yes" to these questions is enough to give you, by the Word of God, the assurance that Christ is in you.

Receiving Him Now

A great deal of importance is placed upon this one word "receive." You might ask, What does it mean to receive Him? When do I receive Him? At what point can I say I have received Him? John 1:12 doesn't mention joining a church or merely believing in some doctrines; neither does it demand going through a religious ritual. It just says one thing - "as many as *received* Him." Then it says, "to them He gave authority to become children of God." The word "become" here implies that we were not children of God, but by the act of receiving, an authority is directly imparted to us by Christ Himself to become children of God. It is by receiving Him that I *become* a child of God with the assurance that Christ is now living in me.

At this point may I ask, Have you received Him? Do you have the assurance that Christ is in you? If not, you can receive Him now. You can receive Him at any time or in any place. You can receive Him by yourself or with others. While you are reading this booklet, you can take the step to receive Him.

It's as simple as someone offering a pen to you. They can say, "This pen is yours. It's paid for; it's a gift." They can offer the pen to you all day long, but for the pen to become yours, you need to receive it and take it. Then it actually becomes yours. In a similar way the Lord Jesus offers Himself to us through the message of the gospel. But, He's like a gentleman. He waits for our act of receiving. Whenever anyone receives Him, He instantly comes into them.

It is a momentous thing to receive the Lord Jesus. When you confess with your mouth, "Lord Jesus, I receive You," He gives you at that moment the authority to become His child. There is more authority in your simply saying, "Jesus, right now I open to You, come into me," than in all the form prayers you have ever prayed and all the rituals you have ever practiced. Authority to become a child of God is uniquely yours in the act of receiving Him.

Calling on His Name

Receiving Him in John 1:12 is synonymous with believing in His name. In fact, believing in His name and calling upon His name is the practical way you can receive Him. Read carefully the following section from Romans 10:8-13 and notice how important calling upon the name of the Lord is:

8 But what does it say? "The word is near you, even in **your mouth** and in **your heart**" (that is, the word of faith which we preach):
9 that if you **confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus** and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved.
10 For with the heart one believes to righteousness, and **with the mouth confession is made to salvation.**
11 For the Scripture says, "Whoever believes on Him will not be put to shame."
12 For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek, for the same Lord over all is rich to **all who call upon Him.**
13 For "**whoever calls upon the name of the Lord shall be saved**" (emphasis added).

When you consider taking the step of receiving Christ, it is very simple. You confess with your mouth, "Lord Jesus." You call upon His name. You'll discover that He Himself is embodied in His name. He's available and tangible for you to receive by opening your mouth and calling upon His name. That's all! There are no hidden formulas. It's just calling "Lord Jesus!" "Lord Jesus!" By confessing His name, Jesus Himself comes into you.

The moment you receive Him, at that point you are born of God. You become a child of God. Christ *is* in you. Don't doubt it, don't question it, and don't be tempted to ask Him to come into you all over again. If you have asked Him in, then He is in you. Just say, "Thank You, Lord. Thank You that You are in me. Thank You, I *have* received You." In this way you can have the assurance that Christ is in you - by knowing that this act of receiving Him has transpired in your life.

Assurance by the Word

The assurance that Christ is in you is in the act of receiving and is backed by the written Word of God. Once the act of receiving Christ has taken place in your life, you then need to stand on God's own Word that Christ indeed is in you. First John 5:11-13 states, "And this is the testimony, that God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. He who has the Son has life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have life. **These things I have written to you** who believe in the name of the Son of God, **that you may know that you have eternal life**, and that you may *continue* to believe in the name of the Son of God" (NKJV). These verses show that the written Word is the means God uses to confirm and strengthen our assurance that Christ is in us with eternal life.

Notice that it says, "I write these things to you that you may *know*." It doesn't say, "that you may *hope* that you have eternal life" or "that you may *wish* that you have eternal life" but "that you may **know** that you have eternal life." God wants us to "know"! - not to be doubting and wondering whether Christ is in us. It's when you can say, "Thank You, Lord, that You are in me, thank You that Your life is in me," that the full enjoyment of Christ comes. But if in your mind you are questioning whether or not Christ is really in you, you'll not have the joy God wants you to have as His child.

After we have received the Lord, our feelings may fluctuate at times. We may even find some of the old temptations that we had prior to receiving the Lord trying to reappear. This kind of experience may cause us to doubt and waver about whether Christ is really in us. However, if we firmly stand upon the written Word of God, all the feelings and doubts will have to go.

Another assuring word giving us the security that Christ is in us is John 10:28: "And I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; neither shall anyone snatch them out of My hand." When the Lord says that no one shall snatch you out of His hand, He means no one, not even yourself. This means that once you

