

A MAN IN CHRIST
2Cor.5:17-19
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I. INTRODUCTION

1. Our text speaks of a man in Christ which accounts for our topic: A Man In Christ.
2. Our purpose is not only to develop our topic from this text alone but to broaden it to include a variety of truths, principles, and essential properties involved in the study of a man in Christ.

II. DISCUSSION

A. PERHAPS THE PLACE TO START IS TO DEFINE WHAT THE EXPRESSION “IN CHRIST”, AS USED IN OUR TEXT, MEANS.

1. Here, as is often the case in the N.T., this expression:
 - a. Is used to mean or describe a spiritual relationship or a spiritual union with Christ.
 - b. Means to be united with Christ, or to be a Christian.
 - c. Means to be in him as a branch is in the vine; i.e., so united to the vine, or so in it, as to derive all of its nourishments and life giving supports from it, and/or to be sustained by it.
 - d. Cf. Jno.15:1-8 as a proper description of the two.
2. Thayer, 211: “**en**” – “It is used **LOCALLY**...of that in which any person or thing is...implanted, or with which it is intimately connected; of a person to whom another is wholly joined and to whose power and influence he is subject, so that the former may be likened to the place in which the latter lives and moves. So used in the writings of Paul and John particularly of intimate relationship with God or with Christ, and for the most part involving contextually the idea of power and blessings resulting from that union;
“of Christ, Jno.10:37,38; 14:10,11;
“of believers, the children of God in the spiritual sense, i.e., of Christians, 1Jno.2:23,24; 4:13-15.
“of frequent use by Paul are the phrases ‘in Christ,’ ‘in Christ Jesus, the Lord’... “ingrafted as it were in Christ, in fellowship and union with Christ, with the Lord,” Rom.8:1; 12:5; 1Cor.15:18; 2Cor.5:17; Gal.1:22; Eph.2:6,10,13; 1Th.4:16; 1Pet.5:14.

B. OUR TEXT DECLARES SOME VITAL TRUTHS ABOUT A MAN IN CHRIST.

1. Our text declares that a man in Christ is “a new creature”.
 - a. He is so changed that he is called a “new creature”. But in what sense?
 - (1) Clearly not in any physical or constitutional sense, for in that case he would not be the same person after the change.
 - (a) The latter portion of the verse and the rest of the text explains the nature of the important process by which the change is effected.
 - (2) It is not the person that passes away, but his old things, his former guiding principles, motives, loves, aims, practices, and habits: and new ones have been put in place.
 - b. This change involves an entire reversal of the whole tenor and direction of the life of the man.
 - (1) Take for example the locomotive or the train.
 - (a) Its course is in a certain direction, but connected with it is the reversing gear.
 - (b) By the action of this reversing gear the engine that may be seen proceeding with one speed in one direction, may in a few minutes be seen moving with equal velocity in the opposite direction.
 - (c) The change in direction does not involve any change in its construction, but only in its course; every wheel, rod, and crank that worked before works now, only in reverse direction.
 - (2) This represents the change effected upon the believer through his relationship to Christ, i.e., being “in Christ.”
 - (a) There has been no change effected in his constitution (that is, in the aggregated of the physical and vital powers of the individual).
 - (b) Only the whole course of his thoughts and his activities have changes as to direction.
 - (c) And the change in these respects has been so entire as to justify the statement that he who has undergone it is a new creature.
 - (d) The new life lived by this changed person is so different from the old, so changed as to its aims and functions, as to be like the life of another person.

- (e) The apostle Paul himself is a striking exemplification of this truth!
 - c. As “a new creature” in Christ his character has undergone a radical change. There has been:
 - (1) A change of heart – an inward change.
 - (2) A visible, outward change – a change of life that all can see.
 - (3) A thorough change – “old things are passed away;...all things are become new.”
 - (4) A great and admirable change in thought, word, deed, and relationship to God, Christ, and the world.
 - d. This change involves the whole sphere of his activities.
 - (1) The whole fabric of his life becomes permeated by being “in Christ” and what that means to him.
 - (2) Such expressions as “in sin,” “in faith,” “in wisdom,” “in love,” “in the spirit,” mean that the particular things in which the person is said to be, form the sphere of his activity, the circle in which he moves, the atmosphere in which he breathes.
 - (3) And one’s devotedness of life in Christ and to Christ is not limited to the religious activities, but includes all secular employments and relationships; such as: home, business, recreation, friendships, associates of all kinds, etc.
- 2. Our text declares that being “a new creature” is conditional.
 - a. It is “If...in Christ.”
 - b. That is, if a man is to be a new creature he must be “in Christ.” And, if and only if he is in Christ is he a new creature. It is dependent upon his being in Christ.
 - c. If one is to experience this spiritual union with God and Christ; if one is to be saved; if one is to be a Christian; if one is to enjoy the power, the blessings, and the hope of eternal life, he must be in Christ.
 - d. How, then, does a man enter into Christ to become a new creature in Christ?
 - e. The following series of passages reveal the conditions: Rom.6:3-6; Gal.3:26,27; Col.1:12,13; 2:12; Mt.28:18-20; Mk.16:15,16; Ac.2:36-41; Rom.10:9-17.
- 3. Our text declares the basic consequences and/or results of being a new creature in Christ: “Old things are passed away; behold all things are become new.”

- a. The “old things” that “are passed away” pertain to the “old man of sin”, with all of his deeds, who has been put off by virtue of the process of entering Christ.
 - b. The “all things” that “are become new” pertain to the “new man” who has been “put on...which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness,” and “which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him,” Eph.4:24; Col.3:10.
 - (1) He is, in fact, a “new creation.” Cf. Eph.2:15.
4. Our text declares the divine power, source, and means effecting this:
It’s of God: “And all things are of God,” who does this:
- a. “In Christ,” as to place. Cf. Eph.1:10,11.
 - b. “Reconciles the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them” (Cf. Psa.32:1,2; Rom.4:6-8).
 - c. Does it by means of “the ministry of reconciliation” given to the apostles of Jesus Christ effected by “the word of reconciliation” committed to them. See V.20.

C. A MAN IN CHRIST HAS ACCESS TO ALL SPIRITUAL BLESSINGS WHICH ARE FOUND ONLY IN CHRIST, Eph.1:3; 2Tim.2:10; 1Jno. 2:24,25; 5:11-13,20,21; Jno.17:3.

D. THE MAN IN CHRIST, THE NEW CREATURE, IS UNDER A NEW SYSTEM OF SALVATION, THE FAITH IN CHRIST, RATHER THAN THE LAW OF THE O.T.

- 1. Gal.5:1-6; 6:14,15; 2:16; Rom.1:14-17; 3:20-28.
- 2. Heb.8:6-13; 9:15-17; 10:1-23.
- 3. Col.2:14-17; 2Cor.3:6-11.

E. HAS A NEW POSITION IN THE KINGDOM OF GOD AND OF CHRIST WITH A HEAVENLY CITIZENSHIP BY VIRTURE OF HAVING BEEN BORN AGAIN BY MEANS OF THE NEW BIRTH, Jno.3:3-5; Ac.2:36-41; Col.1:12,13; Phil.3:20,32; 2Pet.1:10,11.

F. HAS A NEW LIFE AS PART OF A NEW FAMILY, THE FAMILY OF GOD’S SPIRITUAL SONS AND DAUGHTERS, THROUGH FAITH IN AND OBEDIENCE TO THE GOSPEL OF CHRIST, Gal.3:26,27; 1Pet.1:22-25; 1Tim.3:14,15; Heb.2:9-14.

- G. HAS A NEW NAME DIVINELY GIVEN THAT ONLY THE ONE IN CHRIST CAN SCRIPTURALLY WEAR, Ac.11:26; 26:28; 1Pet.4:16; Jas.2:7; Cf. Isa.62:1,2; 65:15.**
- H. HAS A NEW SPEECH, Eph.4:24-26,29; Col.3:8-10; 4:6.**
- I. HAS A NEW LOVE AND LIVES BY A NEW SPIRITUAL STANDARD, RATHER THAN THE OLD FLESHLY, WORLDLY ONE, HAVING SET HIS AFFETIONS ON HEAVENLY THINGS, 1Jno.2:15-17; Gal. 5:19-21; Col.3:1-17**
- J. HAS A NEW SOCIAL STANDARD.**

1. The world and those of the world have a variety of such standards; such as: rank, wealth, social influence and position in society, and power of different kinds.
 - a. By these worldly standards it estimates, judges and appraises people.
2. The new creature in Christ regards such standards as false, evil, and evanescent or fleeting, transitory, short-lived. Cf. 1Jno.2:15-17.
3. The believer estimates man by his righteousness, not by his rank; by his principles, not by his possessions; etc.
4. On the principle of righteousness the believer will form his fellowship with men; that is, his full fellowship will be with godly people rather than merely the rich or influential, or cultural or worldly, powerful people. Cf. 1Cor.15:33; Psa.1:1.
5. With the believer it is godliness first; righteous principles before persons; spiritual considerations before material ones; Christ before men. Cf. Mt.16:24-26; 6:33.
6. When we are ruled by considerations of worldly interests or by the opinions of men, merely because they have secular influence or authority, or even some religious prestige or influence, we “judge after the flesh”... “and think of men more highly than we ought to think.” Cf. 1Cor.4:6.

III. CONCLUSION

1. The believer’s becoming a new creature, a saved man, in Christ; his putting off the old man and putting on the new man – is readily identifiable as to means, time and method.

2. There is a very definite, identifiable **PROCESS OF REGENERATION** in place, Tit.2:11-14; 3:4-7 – along with passages previously cited.
3. There is also a very definite, identifiable **PERIOD OF REGENERATION**, which is now, Mt.19:27,28.
 - a. This period began on Pentecost in Ac.2 and extends to the 2nd Coming of Christ – 1Cor.15:21-25.
4. The man who is a new creature in Christ is one who has been regenerated by that **process** and is presently living in that **period** of regeneration.