

You are in Christ

The New Testament is full of statements about what it means to be “in Christ”. How do these statements feed into our understanding of who we are, and how that impacts how we live in today’s world?

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**BIBLE
SOCIETY**
Live light

Scripture taken from *The Holy Bible: (ESV)*

Day	Readings	Reference	Reflection/Question	Prayer
1	“I do not ask for these only, but also for those who will believe in me through their word, that they may all be one, just as you, Father, are in me, and I in you, that they also may be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me.”	John 17:20-21	<p>We long to belong. We love to unite in a common cause and stand as one. As Jesus spends his final night with his disciples, he drops this beautiful bombshell: that just as he is united to the Father by the spirit, so too now the disciples will be united with him to one another, and to God. It’s mind bending, as well as mind blowing. In Christ, we are united to God.</p> <p>Does being united to God through Jesus change the way you think about yourself?</p>	Father God, thank you that in Jesus I have been united to you and made one with other believers. Help me to live in a way that shows I am united to Jesus. Amen.
2	Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him.	Ephesians 1:3-4	<p>What is the greatest gift you have ever been given? God knows exactly what we need better than any earthly friend. In Christ he has given us every spiritual blessing. Not just some of them, but every spiritual blessing. Not just what we need here and now, but every spiritual blessing <i>in the heavenly places</i>, so that we can be <i>holy and blameless</i> before our God and Father.</p> <p>Are you ever tempted to think that God is holding back blessings from you?</p>	Gracious Heavenly Father, thank you that in Christ I have every spiritual blessing. Thank you that in Christ I am holy and blameless. Help me to be thankful for the amazing gift you have given me. Amen.
3	From now on, therefore, we regard no one according to the flesh. Even though we once regarded Christ according to the flesh, we regard him thus no longer. Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come.	2 Corinthians 5:16-17	<p>In Christ, we are transformed. Our fleshly, sinful nature is left behind – it has passed away. Left instead is a new creation, brought to us in Christ. It doesn’t always feel like that though! While in Christ we are a new creation, we live in the broken and sinful world, and we still sin. But we need a mind shift, so we can think about ourselves and judge ourselves according to who we are in Christ.</p> <p>What is one thing you can do today to remind yourself that you are a new creation in Christ?</p>	Almighty Lord, thank you that those who are in Christ are a new creation. Please help me to no longer regard myself according to the flesh, but to remember that in Christ I have been made new. Amen.

You are in Christ (continued)

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4	For all who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God. For you did not receive the spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received the Spirit of adoption as sons, by whom we cry, "Abba! Father!"	Romans 8:14-15	<p>The Bible tells us that in Christ we are adopted as sons of God. That is, in Jesus, we are made a part of God's family and given the full rights and privileges that come with being a child. Instead of fear and slavery, we have the freedom of belonging and being able to enter into the most intimate of relationships with the Father.</p> <p>How does knowing that you are adopted as God's child make you feel?</p>	<p>Heavenly Father, thank you that in Christ I am now your child, with the full rights and privileges that come with that. Please help me to not fear this world and the slavery of sin, but to live as your child in this world. Amen</p>
5	But now that you have been set free from sin and have become slaves of God, the fruit you get leads to sanctification and its end, eternal life. For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.	Romans 6:22-23	<p>Sometimes it's good when things are not fair. Fair wages would mean that my actions towards God earn me death. My rebellion and rejection of God as king has significant, and damning consequences. But, in a joyful and merciful turn of events, rather than what I deserve, in Christ God gives me eternal life. He sets me free from sin and death, and gives me life.</p> <p>Does your freedom in Christ feel real to you, or do you still feel enslaved to sin?</p>	<p>Lord of all, I praise you for the gift of salvation, that sets me free from sin and death and gives me instead sanctification and eternal life. Help me Father to receive the gift of salvation with a thankful heart. Amen.</p>
6	For in Christ Jesus you are all sons of God, through faith. For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is no male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus. And if you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's offspring, heirs according to promise.	Galatians 3:26-29	<p>Not many of us are born a prince or princess, or heir to a huge estate. Yet in Christ, the distinctions that place one above the other are irrelevant. Whether rich or poor, north shore or westie, great or small, in Christ our identity is no longer found in our social, economic or ethnic status. Our identity and status is now found in Christ. Being united to Christ means that we become Abraham's offspring. We now share in the inheritance of God's promises - we are heirs who are set to inherit all that belongs to God.</p> <p>When are you tempted to judge others based on their social, economic or ethnic status? How does knowing that all who are in Christ are heirs of the promise change the way you look at others?</p>	<p>Father God, thank you that in Christ we are now all one. Thank you that through him we are heirs of the promises, not because of our standing, but because we belong to him. Please help us to treat others without discrimination, because our identity is found in you. Amen.</p>

You are in Christ (continued)

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7	All this is from God, who through Christ reconciled us to himself and gave us the ministry of reconciliation; that is, in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting to us the message of reconciliation. Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, God making his appeal through us. We implore you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God. For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.	2 Corinthians 5:18-21	<p>The message of the cross is amazing. It is the place where God reconciles the world to himself. In Christ, God takes on the sin of the world and brings about forgiveness and a right relationship with him. Even more amazing is the way that God chooses to share that message with the world. He uses faltering, frail sinners like you and me to make his appeal to the world. He makes us his ambassadors – his representatives in the world who appeal to those who are not yet reconciled to God to recognise who Jesus is and what he has done and be reconciled to God themselves. What a privilege.</p> <p>How might God be calling you to be his ambassador today?</p>	Almighty Lord, thank you for reconciling me to yourself through Jesus. Please use me to make your name known in this world. Give me boldness to live for you and declare the message of reconciliation to a world that so desperately needs to hear it. Amen.
8	There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. For the law of the Spirit of life has set you free in Christ Jesus from the law of sin and death.	Romans 8:1-2	<p>Sometimes the weight of our sin can weigh us down. That thing that we struggle with again, and again and again. There is a self-condemnation that can come as we lose patience with ourselves, and assume that God must feel the same way. While our sin is serious, and the need to struggle against it is real, the Bible also reminds us that in Christ there is now no condemnation. None at all. In his death and resurrection, he has set us free from the law of sin and death. We are now free to live for him and serve him in all that we do.</p> <p>How can this truth shape the way that you think about yourself today?</p>	Loving Father, thank you that in Christ there is now no condemnation. Please help me to remember that forgiveness is found at the foot of the cross. Amen.

You are in Christ (continued)

Day	Readings	Reference	Reflection/Question	Prayer
9	But God has so composed the body, giving greater honour to the part that lacked it, that there may be no division in the body, but that the members may have the same care for one another. If one member suffers, all suffer together; if one member is honoured, all rejoice together. Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it.	1 Corinthians 12:24b-27	<p>Do you ever feel like a nobody? Well the good news is that in Christ we are all the body of Christ, and no one is a nobody! Those parts that seem less important or honourable are to be given greater honour. Each part is to be cared for. For one part to suffer is for the whole body to suffer.</p> <p>How can you give a word of encouragement to another part of the body today?</p>	Father of all, thank you that in Christ you have united me to my brothers and sisters in Christ and made me part of the body of Christ. Help me to have eyes to see those who are suffering, and show them love and care. Amen.
10	In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace, which he lavished upon us, in all wisdom and insight making known to us the mystery of his will, according to his purpose, which he set forth in Christ as a plan for the fullness of time, to unite all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth.	Ephesians 1:7-10	<p>In Christ, we have been lavished with God's love. He has redeemed us by Jesus' death and resurrection and showered us with his grace and mercy. There is nothing stingy about the way that God redeems us – it cost him his very own son.</p> <p>Do you feel like God has lavished his love on you? How can you speak this truth to yourself today?</p>	Heavenly Father, I praise you for lavishing your love upon me in Christ, and redeeming me from my sin. Please help me to know the mystery of your will. Amen.

You are in Christ (continued)

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11	But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvellous light. Once you were not a people, but now you are God's people; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy. Beloved, I urge you as sojourners and exiles to abstain from the passions of the flesh, which wage war against your soul. Keep your conduct among the Gentiles honourable, so that when they speak against you as evildoers, they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day of visitation.	1 Peter 2:9-12	<p>Those who are in Christ have been set apart for a special task. We are a people that God the Father has shown mercy to and made his very own. Once we were not a people, now we are God's people. Once we had not received mercy, now we have received mercy. He has made us something that we were not before. Now that we have been made his, he calls us to live in such a way that shows that we are not the same as the rest of the world. He sets us apart. We no longer indulge the sinful nature, living in the darkness. Rather we live differently, so that others may come to know and trust Jesus.</p> <p>Does your behaviour cause others to glorify God?</p>	Gracious God, thank you for setting me apart in Christ, making me your child and a recipient of your mercy. Please help me to live in such a way as to bring honour and glory to your name, saying no to sin. Amen.
12	Even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him.	Ephesians 1:4	<p>God's choices are not like ours. God chose us in Christ before the foundation of the world, before the ages began. His choice was based not on what we have done (or will do), nor upon how good/beautiful/special we are. God chooses us in Christ and then makes us holy and blameless. He chooses us in accordance with his purpose and grace. And having chosen us, he then works in us to change us to be more and more like Jesus.</p> <p>Can you see how God is changing you to be more like Jesus?</p>	Sovereign Lord, we praise you for your work in us even before the world began. Thank you for choosing us in Christ, not because of what we do, but because of who you are. Help us to remember who we are. Amen/

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13	He has delivered us from the domain of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved Son, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.	Colossians 1:13-14	<p>Sometimes I think it is easy to forget just how bad our sin really is, and the depth of our rebellion. Here we are reminded that our sin leaves us stuck in the 'domain of darkness'. We are ruled by sin, unable to find our way out of the dark on our own. In Christ, God acts so that we no longer remain in the dark, but are brought into the light, into the Kingdom of Jesus, where we are redeemed and our sins are forgiven. He picks us up and rescues us.</p> <p>For what sins do you need to ask for forgiveness?</p>	Gracious Father, thank you that in Christ we have been perfectly forgiven of all our sin. Please help me to come before you for forgiveness, knowing that you are the Lord of all who longs to forgive. Amen.
14	And you were dead in the trespasses and sins in which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience—among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, carrying out the desires of the body and the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind. But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved.	Ephesians 2:1-5	<p>It's not a pretty picture here. Paul describes people as dead men walking. They may look alive as they live for the things of this world, but really they are dead. They are dead in their sins because they are under the condemnation of God's wrath, subject to the judgement that will rightly come upon them. But, God declares that he has made us alive in Christ. Those who lived under the shadow of death are now made alive in Christ. God's mercy is shown to us through Jesus' death and resurrection. Christ has saved us from our sin and given us real life – forever.</p> <p>How does being made alive in Christ change the way that you live now?</p>	Merciful Lord, thank you for bringing me from death to life in Christ. Please help me to turn from my sin and the desire to live in disobedience to you. Help me to instead live as your beloved child, who has been made alive in Christ. Amen.