

The Gift of Christ

by Chip Brogden

The Gift of Christ is the sum of all things, including salvation, deliverance, redemption, and spiritual blessings, and is the key to a life of abundance.

Scripture: John 1:16, John 3:16, John 6:35, Romans 8:32, Ephesians 1:3, Colossians 2:9

Topics: "Christ Our Source", "Spiritual Fulfillment"

Description

Chip Brogden preaches about the fullness of Christ dwelling in believers, emphasizing that Christ is the ultimate Gift of God, containing all spiritual blessings and treasures. He highlights the importance of recognizing Christ as the source of wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption, and the need to cease striving and allow Christ to live through us. Brogden stresses that seeking Christ Himself, not just His blessings, leads to true satisfaction and an infinite supply of spiritual nourishment. He encourages believers to abide in Christ, acknowledging their completeness in Him and seeking continual revelation of His fullness.

Transcript

"As the fullness of God - all that He is and all that He has - dwells in Christ, so the fullness of Christ - all that He is and all that He has - dwells in you (Colossians 2:9,10a)."

We have mentioned the need to recognize and appreciate the value, worth, and preciousness of the Lord Jesus. We would like to expand upon that and discuss The Gift of Christ. I pray that the Lord will grant us the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the full-knowledge of His Son as we ponder this.

I am afraid that we do not truly appreciate the fact that God has never given us things, but has summed up everything into Christ, having poured Himself into His Son. Having the Son, possessing the Son, being one with the Son, we have and possess everything God is. It never has been a question of seeking ten, one hundred, or one thousand different things from God. If we do not know from our experience, we should at least know from the Scriptures, that Christ is the Gift of God. Then our experience will come into line with God's Thought. If you are used to seeking spiritual "things" (love, joy, peace, anointing, power, blessing, etc.) then this message is particularly for you, but we all stand to benefit from being reminded constantly that Christ is God's One Gift.

It is the fullness of Christ that we are after, the revelation of Christ as He in fact is. For too many Christians the Lord Jesus is "merely" their Savior. Thank God He is our Savior, but there is a depth and a richness

bound up into the personage of Christ that goes far, far beyond "mere" salvation. Salvation is the narrow gate - coming into the fullness of Christ is the narrow path. The gate is only the entrance to something larger.

The principle we have in mind here is All Things In Christ. If we see this then we will be delivered from "things", from lack, from dissatisfaction, from inferiority, from defeat. The Lord has much to gain by us entering into His fullness now, as opposed to waiting for some future appointment with Him in heaven. It is here on the earth that we need to pray for His Kingdom and His Will to be accomplished. May the Lord illuminate our hearts as we explore these depths.

CHRIST IS THE BLESSING OF GOD

"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in heavenly places in Christ (Ephesians 1:3)."

All we have and all that we are as Christians is based upon our union with Christ. Apart from Him, we have nothing, and we are nothing. But in Him we are blessed with every spiritual blessing. Think upon the ramifications of that. If this is true then we have very little to ask God for, and very much to praise God about.

For most of my life as a Christian I sought God for things. When depressed, I would seek joy. When worried, I would seek peace. When weak, I would seek strength. When angry, I would seek self-control. When defeated, I would seek victory. Most Christians are taught to approach God and seek these things when they are conscious of some lack. For a time it seems they are given what they ask for, but soon they are back asking for more of the same thing. Today we ask for patience, and tomorrow we ask again, and the day after that we have to ask yet again. So it is with peace, joy, victory, and everything else.

Eventually we must learn that we have everything in Christ already. That thing called "patience" that we are so diligently seeking is not a thing at all, it is Christ. "Victory" is no longer a "thing", it is a Man. And so it is with everything else we need. It is certainly possible to seek spiritual blessings from God apart from Christ, or in addition to Christ. What a difference it makes to realize that He HAS (past tense) blessed us already - not with three or five or twenty blessings - but with every spiritual blessing. However many there may be, we have them all. Where and how has He done this? Thank God, it was done the moment we received Christ and entered into Him as our All in All. God would have us seek Him first, and not His things. To Him there is no "thing", for they are all summed up into Christ.

Again, it is the preciousness and extreme worth and value of the Lord Jesus that we have in mind here. May we see before God that God's Gift is Christ - not a lot of spiritual blessings that we must diligently seek after, one by one, until we accumulate them like a collection of virtues or special graces. That is not to say there are not many spiritual blessings we can obtain from God, only that they are all found in Christ. Having the Son we have all that pertains to the Son.

"If God did not spare His own Son, but freely delivered Him over to death on our behalf, how will He not also, with Him, freely give us all things (Romans 8:32)?"

Jesus says the Kingdom of God is like a man who found treasure buried in a field. With great joy he went out, sold all his possessions, and purchased that field. The point of the parable is this: the one who owns the field possesses all that lies buried within the field. It is not a matter of getting the individual pieces of

treasure, but of gaining the field. Once we have the field, we have the treasure.

The Scriptures tell us that hidden in Christ are "all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge (Colossians 2:3)", "every spiritual blessing (Ephesians 1:3)", and "all the fullness of God (Colossians 1:19)." Since this is the truth, we maintain before God that His Gift to us is Christ, and to the extent that we appreciate the value and preciousness of the Lord Jesus, to that same extent will we be satisfied spiritually. We will find fullness in the Son, and will not find it necessary to be continually pumped up or propped up as we go about our daily walk as Christians. Imagine the foolishness of asking God for a "few coins" to get you through until Sunday while wealth is buried just below your feet. Or, imagine the vanity of thinking we have to go "here" or "there" to get something from God (such as a "blessing", a "word", an "anointing", etc) when we already have everything He has. I will go so far as to say that when we know the preciousness and costliness of the Lord Jesus we will not ask God for anything else. The one who must ask God for "things" has not yet fully appreciated the treasure he has in Christ already.

Perhaps an illustration would be helpful at this point. When God wished to test Abraham, He did not ask him to sacrifice a sheep, a ram, or a cow. He did not ask for Abraham's gold or silver or tents or possessions. He went right to the heart of the matter and asked for Isaac, the son of promise. How gladly Abraham would have given anything and everything but his own beloved son. But in the willingness to give up his son, he was, in essence, laying everything down on the altar. When God owns what the man loves most, He owns everything the man has.

In the same way, the Father, wishing to demonstrate His great love for us, has not given us parts and pieces of things, but has sacrificed His only Son. By giving us His Son, He has, in essence and in fact, freely given us everything. When man possesses what God loves most, he owns everything God has. This is why I say we have little else to ASK God for, but much to PRAISE Him about: for IN CHRIST, God has freely given us all things.

GOD GIVES US NOTHING OUTSIDE OF CHRIST

"For God so loved the world that He gave His Only Son. Whoever believes in Him will not perish, but will have eternal life (John 3:16)."

To the casual observer this verse appears to be giving us a thing called "eternal life". But that is not what this verse says at all. God has not given us salvation; He has given us His Son as Salvation. This Scripture tells us that God loved the world, and this love prompted Him to remedy the situation by giving us His Only Son. What is the gift? It does not say, "For God so loved the world that He gave eternal life." If I may say it bluntly, it was not eternal life that we needed to begin with; we needed His Only Son. What good is eternal life without the Son? See before God that there is only One Son, One Gift. Now all who believe IN CHRIST have eternal life. At the moment of New Birth we did not receive salvation, we received the Son. Hence, we are saved. Salvation is not giving me eternal life, but giving me Christ as my Life. Hallelujah! Do you see this?

There is a difference between salvation and a Savior; between deliverance and a Deliverer; between healing and a Healer; between redemption and a Redeemer. The first is a "thing", the second is a Person. This may sound self-evident and elementary, but before God the difference is vast, and in actual experience the difference is incalculable. If we are not clear on the matter of His Son we will find the Christian life very difficult, if not impossible, to live. I have the "thing" because I have Him; having Him, I do not need to search for the "thing" anymore. What do you have? An experience? A word? A doctrine? A

belief? Or a Man? This is the difference between a living Christianity and a dead religion.

We have to come to know the height, length, breadth, and width of HIM, and may I say that we will never come to the end of Him. But we do not search for anything as if we do not have it, nor do we hope to gain some new thing, for what we call "new" is simply that which has been seen for the first time. Thus, revelation is critical, for it unveils what we already have. Having the Son, we have all.

"It is of God that you are in Christ Jesus, Whom God has made to us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption (I Corinthians 1:30)."

This is a very rich verse. We have already seen how the Lord Jesus is given to be our Life. Upon that basis we can lay claim to everything else. Here we see that to those of us who are in Christ, He is made to be our wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption. It does not say that He gives these things to us, but that He is these things in us.

Again, this is the difference between a living Christianity and a dead religion. Most of us are still trying to attain something and have not yet realized that we have already obtained it. We wear ourselves out in order to be Christ-like. We are hoping that through much effort we will one day reach some standard to which we can finally say we are living like Jesus. But this is not God's way. It is not a changed life that God seeks from you, but an exchanged life - that is, your life is to be given up in exchange for His life. "It is no longer I that live, but Christ that lives in me (Galatians 2:20ff)." That is the exchanged Life: my life for His Life.

We should have learned by now that we cannot change ourselves. Jesus says we cannot increase our stature by a single inch through worry and self-effort (Matthew 6:27). If we cannot make ourselves grow physically, how can we ever hope to make ourselves grow spiritually? Have you ever seen a brother or a sister try to act sanctified? They wear themselves and everyone else out. It is a burden to be around such a person. That is not Christianity. Christianity is this: not that I am trying to be wise, but that I receive the Lord Jesus as my Wisdom; not that I am trying to be righteous, but that I receive the Lord Jesus as my Righteousness; not that I am trying to be sanctified, but that I receive the Lord Jesus as my Sanctification; not that I am trying to be redeemed, but that I accept the Lord Jesus as my Redemption. Henceforth I cease trying to be anything, and I allow Him to be Who He is through me.

We must be clear: these things are not the "reward" for years of faithful service, or the fruit of walking with Jesus after a long period of time. If I have Him now, then I have all that pertains to Him now. My Wisdom, my Righteousness, my Sanctification, and my Redemption has a personality, for He is all those things in me. It is not a question of my behavior, or my conduct, or my feelings one way or the other - those things will come into line soon enough - but it is all based upon this accomplished fact. Christ is God's Gift. I repeat, we have much to praise God about!

CHRIST IS INFINITE SUPPLY

"The Father gives you the True Bread from Heaven... I am the Bread of Life (John 6:32b, 35a)."

The people were asking for Jesus to give them bread, but failed to recognize that He Himself is the Bread of Life. They worked and toiled for something which would perish, but were not willing to receive the True Bread that would not perish. Again, the significance of the Lord Jesus is not that He can give us bread, but that He is the Bread.

Why are we following the Lord? Is it for what He can do for us? Is it so we can enjoy His blessing? Is it because He supplies our needs? Do we want the gifts or the Gift? If our motivation is for blessings then we will soon be disappointed. Indeed, from this time forward, many of His disciples turned back and stopped following Him. How many of us will continue to follow when the Lord fails to respond to us in the way we have grown accustomed? The Lord may provide you with bread for a season, but there is a difference between looking to the Lord for bread and looking to the Lord as bread. May God show us the difference. The Gift of God is not what Christ can do for you, but Who He Himself is.

The ones who seek bread from the Lord will be temporarily filled, but all who seek the Lord as Bread will be constantly satisfied. What is more, they will have resources from which to feed others. It is a shame that many Christians only seek to be filled, and still they are never satisfied. They are content with a meager pittance, for a few crumbs from the table. They are constantly obsessed with being filled. To such ones we can only say that it is time to seek the Lord, not for what He can give you, but for Himself.

"Things", even spiritual things, cannot satisfy. Only Jesus can satisfy, and since all fullness dwells in Him, we need nothing else. Eventually we will learn that Christ is the Gift, and when we do, we will be enlarged. We will be able to minister Life to the Body. What are we giving people: bread, or Christ? If we are ministering bread then they will become dependant upon us to feed them all the time. If we point them to Christ, they will find in Him an infinite supply.

"If you knew the gift of God, and Who I am, you would have asked Me for a drink, and I would have given you Living Water... Jesus stood and shouted 'If anyone is thirsty, come to Me and have your thirst quenched! Anyone who believes in Me, as the Scriptures have said, will have rivers of Living Water flowing from within' (John 4:10; 7:37b, 38)."

As some pursue "rivers" and "watering holes" how refreshing it is to know that Christ is the Living Water. How can we know the difference between Christ and what is proclaimed as the manifest power or presence of God? It is quite simple: the one who drinks from a "meeting" must continually drink to stay full, but the one who knows Christ as Living Water has their thirst quenched altogether.

We are empty because we do not know the Gift of God. "If you knew the Gift of God, if you knew Who I am, you would have asked Me, and I would have given you." Those who hunger and thirst after Righteousness (Christ) are filled continually. Those who hunger and thirst after anything else must be constantly looking for their next fill-up. We repeat a thousand times, the question of abundance or lack in spiritual Life relates to how we see the Son. If we clearly see the Son then we see all that God has, and all that God is. In Him is fullness. To leave where we are and seek out some man or woman or ministry at the ends of the earth in order to be filled or blessed is a serious tragedy. How much time I have wasted in that pursuit, before knowing Christ as All in All! Broken cisterns cannot hold water for long.

We must know the Gift of God. The one who knows will not only be satisfied, but will have abundance of Life springing up from within. If we are mainly interested in being filled for ourselves then we will have little to offer anyone else. Yet when we know the Gift of God the Life will overflow. "You anoint my head with oil, and my cup overflows (Psalms 23:5b)." Are you an overflowing Christian, with all of God you can hold, and much leftover? Sadly, this does not describe many of us. To drink is a beginning, but God's goal is an overflow. How we need clear revelation into the Son! How we need to see just how precious and worthy He is!

Here is the glory of our union with Christ: when we come to Him to drink, we become what we are drinking. Jesus clearly says the streams of Living Water overflow from within the innermost being of the person who knows the Gift of God and has come to Him to be filled. To begin with it flows from Him to me, but eventually it flows from me outward. What can anyone possibly give me that, in Christ, I do not already possess? So the question is not are you "in the River", but is the River in you? In all things God directs us continually to His Son as All in All. May He give us grace to see Him.

ABIDE IN HIM

"Of His fullness have we all received, blessing upon blessing (John 1:16)."

Just how full is "full"? How many people does "all" include? We have to believe that full means complete, and all includes each one of us. "Of His fullness we have all received." No one, no matter how "anointed" they may appear, has more fullness than anyone else. And if we have received it already then there is nothing for us to do to get it. If I have already entered into a room and sat down in a chair then there is no need for me to try to get into the room anymore. I am there already. We entered into Christ when He entered into us: we do not have to enter into Him over and over again, we are merely abiding in Him.

I am frequently asked how do we partake of this fullness? How do we walk in it? What practical application exists for living according to this Truth? We see what God says, but we also see our situation. We see Jesus, but we also see ourselves. God says we are complete in Him, but we say we are incomplete. God says we are blessed with every spiritual blessing in Christ, but we say we still need this or that. What is the problem here? Is it not a glaring discrepancy between what God says and what we say? Whose word is more reliable?

The solution is not to look at one's self at all, but to look away to Christ. Then we will not have to worry about the practical side, it will develop of its own accord. Let us get a foundation first: then the Life will find a way to manifest. I am convinced that we have plenty of faith, we just have faith in the wrong things. Many Christians have more faith in the Law of Sin and Death than they do in the Law of the Spirit of Life in Christ. We are more conscious of what (we think) the devil is doing and how weak we are than we are cognizant of God's Son. But when we look away to Christ, He is increased. As He is increased, we are decreased. We must become lesser, He must become greater. When Christ looms larger in our vision than anything else, we will experience the fullness which is already ours in Him. Remember, the one who possesses the field possesses everything buried in the field. Meditate on that, breath it, live it.

We must ask God for revelation into His Son. Lord Jesus, reveal Yourself to us as All in All. Illuminate our hearts to see you. Bring us into the full-knowledge of Yourself. No matter our feelings or experiences to the contrary, we acknowledge that we are complete in You. You do all things well! Teach us to look away from all that pertains to man and to see You as You really are. Thank you Father for the Gift of Christ! Amen.

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