

# 'In Christ'

by Zac Poonen

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*The key to a strong Christian life is being rooted and grounded in what God has done for us in Christ.*

**Scripture:** Matthew 6:10, John 6:38, 2 Corinthians 1:20, Ephesians 1:4, Ephesians 3:17, Colossians 1:27, 1 John 4:19

**Topics:** "Union With Christ", "Salvation In Christ"

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## Description

Zac Poonen emphasizes that our salvation began in God's mind, as He chose us in Christ before the foundation of the world. The focus is on what God has done for us in Christ, highlighting the importance of being rooted in God's work before considering our actions for Him. Poonen explains the concept of being 'in Christ' as a foundational truth, where believers are united with Christ in His crucifixion, burial, resurrection, and ascension, experiencing the benefits of these spiritual realities through faith.

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## Transcript

Our salvation began in God's mind. It was He Who "chose us in Christ before the foundation of the world" (Eph.1:4). We love Him because He first loved us (1 Jn.4:19). In Ephesians, we are told first about what God has done for us (Chapters 1 to 3). Only then are we told as to what we must do for God (Chapters 4 to 6).

In evangelical circles, the phrase "accepting Christ" is very commonly used. Although the New Testament does speak about "Christ IN us" (Col.1:27; Eph.3:17), it speaks much more about our being IN CHRIST. Accepting Christ is what WE do, whereas placing us in Christ is what GOD does. It is not surprising therefore that a man-centred theology places much more emphasis on what we do rather than on what God does. If we want our Christian life to be strong, we must first of all be rooted and grounded in what God has done for us IN CHRIST. To illustrate what it means to be "in Christ", consider a letter that we mail in an envelope. We mail the envelope. But the letter goes with the envelope wherever the latter goes. Similarly, since we were placed in Christ before the foundation of the world, when Christ was crucified on Calvary's hill, we were crucified in Him too. When He was buried, we were buried in Him. And when He was raised, we were raised in Him. When He ascended, we ascended in Him. And where He is now, we are - IN HIM. Only if we believe this truth of God's Word, can we experience it - not otherwise. "According to your faith be it unto you", is a law of God. It is something like God having put millions of rupees in our bank account and then giving us blank cheque-leaves signed with Jesus' Name on them (2 Cor.1:20). All we have to do now is fill in the amount and go to the bank and claim our inheritance - in Jesus' Name.

The good news of the gospel centres primarily around what God has done for us in our Lord Jesus Christ. Because of what Christ has done for us, we can have a foretaste of heaven in our hearts right now. Heaven is a place of perfect peace and perfect joy. No-one is ever gloomy or depressed or sour or bitter in heaven. No-one is fearful in heaven, because there is no problem that God cannot solve. The gospel message is that we can have a foretaste of that heavenly life here on earth. As an old writer has said, we preach the gospel so that people might experience TWO heavens - one on earth now and the other after we leave this earth - in heaven itself. But why is heaven such a wonderful place? Basically because no-one does his own will in heaven. Everyone does the will of God. That is why Jesus taught us to pray: "Our Father Who art in heaven. Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven". When that is our sincere prayer too, the atmosphere of heaven will pervade every part of our hearts as well.

Those who pray that prayer will eagerly seek to find God's will in every area of their lives. And they will want to do God's will in its entirety. To such believers, the will of God will not be a burden, but a joy and a delight. They will never be depressed or gloomy or fearful, for they know that they can never face a problem that God cannot solve. When Jesus said, "I have come down from heaven, not to do My own will, but the will of Him Who sent Me" (Jn.6:38), He was saying that He had come to earth to bring the atmosphere of heaven to earth. And throughout His life on earth, He demonstrated what it was to live with the atmosphere of heaven ruling His life. Wherever Jesus went He was a blessing to others. This is the life that He now wants to give us too.

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