

# Unquestionably the Two Greatest and Most Important Words in Christianity

Examine yourselves to see whether you are in the faith; test yourselves. Do you not realize that Christ Jesus is in you – unless, of course, you fail the test? <sup>2Co 13:5</sup>

The most important and only reliable test of true Christian faith? Are we in Christ so that Christ is in us? We know this is all-important because *In Christ* appears 89 times in the *Bible* and like terms many more items.

• Remain in • In Me • In My • Through Christ • Through God • Through the Spirit • Walk in •

We would consider it weird (because it would be very bizarre!) for parents, after a child is 1, 2, 3, 20, 30 . . . to continue and only show baby pictures of their child on their *Facebook* page. They will always treasure the baby pictures, and occasionally look at them, but as the child matures we expect to see pictures of their development – learning to ride a bike, their first “artwork,” graduating from kindergarten, sports and scholastic achievements, graduation from high school, college, getting married, their children . . . God does the same – He displays pictures for others to see of His children growing and maturing.

In spite of a past act of supposed repentance, confession and acceptance of Christ being the primary basis of claiming to be “saved” (to be a Christian), this is not the emphasis and teaching of the *Bible* (or is it common sense!). We are told we should have an assurance of faith based on being in Christ NOW. It is obvious (even to many non-Christians) that people who have made past “professions of faith,” and as a result sincerely believe they are Christians, but are no different based on this profession – that they are not saved based on the clear and consistent teaching of the *Bible*.

But whoever lives by the truth comes into the light, so that it may be seen plainly that what he has done has been done through God. <sup>Jn 3:21</sup>

If there is no present tense reality we should suspect that any supposed past tense confidence is false.

Therefore, brothers, since we have confidence to enter the Most Holy Place by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way opened for us through the curtain, that is, his body, and since we have a great priest over the house of God, let us draw near to God with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled to cleanse us from a guilty conscience and having our bodies washed with pure water. Let us hold unswervingly to the hope we profess, for he who promised is faithful. And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds. Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another – and all the more as you see the Day approaching.

If we deliberately keep on sinning after we have received the knowledge of the truth, no sacrifice for sins is left, but only a fearful expectation of judgment and of raging fire that will consume the enemies of God. Anyone who rejected the law of Moses died without mercy on the testimony of two or three witnesses. How much more severely do you think a man deserves to be punished who has trampled the Son of God under foot, who has treated as an unholy thing the blood of the covenant that sanctified him, and who has insulted the Spirit of grace? <sup>Heb 10:19 - 29</sup>

So, there are two great challenges in life. First, how do we get *in Christ*? And the second is much like it, how do we stay and remain *in Him*? The answer is an unbroken chain (and when we find we have broken it, we humble ourselves, repent, return to, take up and continue in this chain to the end):

Grace • Humility • Grace • Repentance • Grace • New Birth • Grace • New Life • Grace • Material Provision • Grace • Light and Truth • Grace • Submit to God • Grace • Draw Near • Grace • Do the SPECIFIC Good Works God Prepared in Advance for EVERY True Christian • Grace . . .

For as Jesus makes clear, only:

. . . he who stands firm to the end will be saved. Mt 10:22, Mt 24:13, Mk 13:13

And our only confidence of doing this?

He who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus.  
Phil 1:6

He will keep you strong to the end, so that you will be blameless on the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. God, who has called you into fellowship with his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, is faithful.  
1Co 1:8-9

But this promise is ONLY for those who have been born again and are now in Him, in the Spirit. Depending on a past act or thought is passive – we know in contrast, by all that the *Bible* tells us, that grace is power and power only has meaning in the present tense.

The great promise of Jesus (coming with the grand *John 3:16* truth so many cling to for hope, while stopping there rather than reading to the end of the paragraph to hear what Jesus pledges as the evidence of a true faith and real new birth) is that:

But whoever lives by the truth comes into the light, so that it may be seen plainly that what he has done has been done through God. Jn 3:21

New birth means a new life – one *in Christ*. It is one growing in grace and truth.

We will in all things grow up into him who is the Head, that is, Christ. Eph 4:15

Not, some will, if we feel like it, if it doesn't interfere with the “important” things and desires of life . . . we WILL.

I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes. Ro 1:16

Power by definition is active. True grace is the power of God working through us – it will be plainly seen, even if only by us! It is what we see when we go to God's *Facebook* page. Are we doing the impossible? Maybe possible for others, but not to us – are we finding God's grace to do (and more important become) what is otherwise impossible for us to do and become? This is the power and miracle of grace.

Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen. Eph 3:20 – 21

This is the gospel of God's grace. Acts 20:24