

You And Jesus Christ

Introduction. Consider for a moment the most important question you will ever ask in your life: What must I do to be saved? And, consider the most important decision you will ever make in your life: Whether to become a Christian. Actually, the entire Bible theme centers on this question and this decision. The Bible theme is: "Salvation in Jesus Christ." The Old Testament theme is: "He is coming." The gospel theme is: "He is here." And, the theme of the book of Acts and the Epistles is: "He is coming again." The whole Bible deals with your relationship to Jesus Christ. What is your relationship to Jesus Christ today? You have one of four choices!

I. ***Without Christ (Ephesians 2:12): The State Of Death***

- A. What does it mean to be without Christ? It means you choose to sin and serve Satan (Colossians 1:13). You are under the power of Satan and in his kingdom. In this state you are alienated, an enemy of God (Colossians 1:21). In sin you cannot have fellowship with God. You are spiritually dead in sin and separated from God (Ephesians 2:1-4). In sin, you are an object of God's wrath (Romans 2:4-8; 2 Thessalonians 1:7-10).
- B. How do you enter into this state of death? You enter by committing sin. There are five different ways you can sin and disobey God. You do what God has said not to do (1 John 3:4; 5:17). You fail to do what God has said to do (James 4:17). You add to God's word (Deuteronomy 4:2), or you take away from God's word (Revelation 22:18-19). You substitute something else for God's word (Leviticus 10:1-3). Each sin will bring you into the state of death without Christ.

II. ***In Christ (2 Corinthians 5:17): The State Of Grace***

- A. What does it mean to be in Christ? It means you no longer want to live by the first choice above. It means you were once a sinner, but now you are a saved (1 Corinthians 1:2). You have redemption in Christ and the promise of eternal life (Romans 3:24; 6:23). You no longer stand in the condemnation of sin (Romans 8:1). You have the love of God (Romans 8:39). You are blessed and forgiven (Ephesians 1:3,7). You are reconciled to God and you belong to God's family (Ephesians 2:13-22). It is God's grace in Christ that allows you to be saved (1 Corinthians 1:4). This state of grace is the cause for great rejoicing (1 Corinthians 15:31). In addition to the blessings you have in Christ, you also have responsibilities in Christ. You are to be active in doing good works (Romans 16:3, 7, 9-10; Ephesians 2:10). You are to be unified with others in Christ and love them (Romans 12:5; Galatians 3:28; Ephesians 1:10; 3:6; 1 Corinthians 16:23).

B. How do you enter the state of grace in Christ? First, you are baptized into Christ for the remission of your sins (Romans 6:3; Galatians 3:26-27). Next, you choose to live as a faithful Christian. You let Christ live in you each day through His word (Romans 8:10; 2 Corinthians 13:5; Galatians 4:19; Ephesians 3:17; Colossians 1:27; 3:16). You get up each day and put on a Christ-like spirit (Romans 13:14). You begin as a babe in Christ, but you grow to maturity (1 Corinthians 3:1). You are obedient each day to the gospel of Christ (1 Corinthians 4:17; 9:21). You are an active member of a local church belonging to Christ (Galatians 1:22). You walk daily in the words of Christ (Colossians 2:6; 1 Peter 3:16). And, you abide in the doctrine of Christ without going beyond it (2 John 9-11).

III. ***Severed From Christ (Galatians 5:4): The State Of Apostasy***

- A. What does it mean to be severed from Christ? It means that you have stopped living by the second choice above. It means that while you are a Christian you choose to become unfaithful in your living and you refuse to repent of our sins. In this state, Christ profits you nothing (Galatians 5:2). All the blessings that you once had as a Christian are now gone. All the good that you once did has now gone to waste. You are severed from Christ and are fallen from grace (Galatians 5:4).
- B. How do you enter into the state of apostasy? You might fall through ignorance, like Simon (Acts 8:14-24). You might fall by following the wrong standard, like the Jewish Christians (Galatians 5:2-4). You might fall through worldliness, like Demas (2 Timothy 4:10). You might fall through false teaching, like other Christians (2 Peter 2:20-22; 3:17). You might fall by erring from the truth (James 5:19-20). Either way, you are in the terrible state of apostasy.

IV. ***With Christ (Philippians 1:23): The State Of Glory***

- A. What does it mean to be with Christ? It means you choose to live in Christ, and you choose to die in Christ. Do you desire to be with Christ as the faithful apostle Paul did (John 12:26; Philippians 1:23)?
- B. How do you enter the state of glory to be with Christ? You live a faithful Christian life and when you die, you fall asleep in Christ (1 Corinthians 15:18; 1 Thessalonians 4:14; Revelation 14:13). You become a partaker of His glory (Romans 8:17-18; 1 Peter 4:13). You enter the everlasting kingdom of Christ where you reign with Christ for all eternity (2 Peter 1:11; Revelation 20:4, 6). God desires the blessed state of glory for you.

Conclusion. The important question you need to ask is this: Where are you with Jesus Christ? Are you without Christ? Are you in Christ? Are you

severed from Christ? Will you die and be with Christ? Put off your indecision now and take hold of God's glorious blessings.