

Clothed with Christ

Text: Galatians 3:26-29

Certain phrases are used so often that we forget the meaning of them.

Not until someone asks does it take us back and then we have a hard time expressing what we know

That is why young children's questions of "why is the sky blue" or "how old is God" puts adults in a quandary. It is not that the answer is unknown, it is how do you express what you know in terms that a child will understand?

Take Galatians 3:26-29

What do the phrases "in Christ," "into Christ," and "put on Christ" mean?

How do you explain this to someone who has little Bible knowledge?

II. In Christ

- A. These two simple words appear 85 times in the New Testament
- B. Peter used it in a benediction to Christians - I Peter 5:14
 - 1. It refers to a state of being
 - 2. It occurs at a point in time - Romans 16:7
 - 3. It remains even after death - I Cor. 15:18; I Thes. 4:16
- C. It is state where Christians are found - Colossians 1:2
 - 1. This was Paul's point in Galatians 3:28-29
 - 2. It is a place where all are united together – Rom. 12:15
 - 3. The Gentiles were once excluded, but in Christ, they are brought into the relationship - Ephesians 2:11-13
- D. In this state, benefits are granted
 - 1. All spiritual blessings are in Christ - Ephesians 1:3
 - 2. Eternal life is in Christ - Romans 6:23
 - 3. Made alive in Christ - Romans 6:11
 - 4. Redemption in Christ - Romans 3:24
 - 5. Sanctified in Christ - I Corinthians 1:2
 - 6. Forgiven in Christ - Ephesians 4:32
 - 7. Hence there is no condemnation in Christ – Rom. 8:1-2
 - 8. We have liberty in Christ - Galatians 2:4
- E. It is a state contrasted to being in the flesh or being in the world
 - 1. Christians were once in the flesh, where sinful passions worked - Romans 7:5
 - 2. In such a state, a person cannot please God - Ro 8:8-9
 - 3. Ephesians 2:12 - Without hope, without God in the world - Ephesians 2:12

4. Though we remain in the flesh, that is in our bodies, our state of being does not remain in this physical realm
Philippians 3:3; I Peter 4:1-2
5. We must not love the world - I John 2:15-16
Because we have escaped the corruption that is in this world - II Peter 1:4

III. Into Christ

- A. With such magnificent blessings, we need, then, to learn get into this state
- B. Galatians 3:26 - Baptism puts us into Christ (see also Rom. 6:3)

Some, in an attempt to avoid the obvious meaning, try to say that we are immersed (baptized) in the spirit of Christ.

They confuse the element of the immersion with the resulting change of state. The element in which baptism takes place is something we go into and come up out of - Romans 6:3-7

If the claim is that the element is Jesus, then we arise out of Jesus!
But the change in state is more permanent.

Example of Moses - I Corinthians 10:1-3

To say that they were baptized into Moses does not say that Moses was the element, but that they changed the state of their relationship to one that joined with Moses.

The elements of their baptism was in the cloud and in the sea.

Example of the Church - I Corinthians 12:13

To be baptized in the body; the body is not the element, but the state in which we enter.

The Corinthians were baptized - Acts 18:8

They were washed - I Corinthians 6:11

The element of washing is water, with the effect of cleansing – Eph. 5:25-27

One is baptized in water, but one is baptized into Christ - Acts 8:35-39

Notice that the entrance into Christ changed the person

In Ephesians 5:25-27, the washing of water cleansed the church

In Romans 6:3-7, baptism joins the believer in the death of Jesus so as to come up in a new life. Those in Christ are a new creation. They have been reconciled to God - II Corinthians 5:17-19; Galatians 6:15

Through the gospel, we are begotten, or born in Christ - I Corinthians 4:15

John 3:3-5 - Born of water and the Spirit.

The word of God came to us by the Spirit - Romans 10:17; I Peter 1:23

We are raised up in Christ - Ephesians 2:6 (Remember Romans 6:3-7?)

This is why it was called a washing of regeneration - Titus 3:5

IV. Have put on Christ

A. The phrase literally means to clothe yourself with Christ, which sounds a bit strange.

Albert Barnes' New Testament Commentary, "The phrase to put on a person, which seems a harsh expression in our language, was one not unfrequently used by Greek writers; and means, to imbibe his principles, to imitate his example, to copy his spirit, to become like him. Thus in Dionysius Halicarnassus the expression occurs, "having put on or clothed themselves with Tarquin;" i.e. they imitated the example and morals of Tarquin. So Lucian says, "having put on Pythagoras;" having received him as a teacher and guide. So the Greek writers speak of putting on Plato, Socrates, etc., meaning to take them as instructors, to follow them as disciples. (See Schleusner.) Thus, to put on the Lord Jesus means, to take him as a pattern and guide, to imitate his example, to obey his precepts, to become like him, etc."

It is seen in Romans 13:11-14

Becoming a disciple of Christ crowds out all possibilities to follow the flesh.

Again, there is the idea of a change in the person who put on Christ.

C. Ephesians 4:20-24

The idea of learning from Christ

The laying aside of the old self and its sins

The taking on of a new self that was created for righteousness

Notice the closeness of terms to a rebirth or regeneration

D. Colossians 3:1-13

Having been raised up with Christ

a. How is that done?

b. Romans 6:4-5

The old self of sin is laid aside - Romans 6:6-7

A new, renewed self is put on - Romans 6:4 (there is that idea of rebirth, regeneration, or new creation again)

Putting on good characteristics, just like Romans 13:11-14

E. Galatians 3:27 says that transformation, the putting on of Christ occurs in baptism.

F. Colossians 2:10-13

The body of flesh (sin) is removed

We were dead, but made alive (rebirth!) by having our sins forgiven

How? By having been buried with Him in baptism and so raised with Him as well.

Note that we are clearly told that we are not baptized in the medium of Christ, but with Christ.

The medium, left unstated is still water for there is but one baptism (Eph. 4:5).

G. Hence, the idea of being created in Christ, the transformation of the sinner into a disciple of Christ is accomplished at baptism, so think of Paul's point in Ephesians 2:1-10

The pattern remains the same

We were dead in sins

We were made alive together with Christ (there's Romans 6:3-7 again!)

4. We were created in Christ Jesus (reborn!)

V. Who was transformed?

Romans 6:3 - All of us

I Corinthians 12:13 - All baptized into one body

Galatians 3:26-28 - All sons of God, all baptized, all one in Christ Jesus

Are you? Why not?

Hebrews 10:22-23

The washing in water cleanses the heart of an evil conscience

Peter 3:21 - That is why Peter says baptism now saves you.