

"TO BE IN CHRIST"

(IS TO BELIEVE AND TRUST ON HIM ALONE)

The First-Century Gospel Church/Philadelphia

(S91R) S204R

APRIL 28, 2021

(Rom. 8:1-2) "There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are 'in' Christ Jesus, who do not walk according to the flesh (sinful nature) but according to the Spirit. For the law of the 'Spirit of life' in Christ Jesus, has made me free from the law of sin and death." (That means, set free from trusting on efforts of self for things in life, rather, to be found(as God requires of us), trusting and believing in the 'Spirit of Life', Jesus Christ,... "the One whom God has sent" (Who delivers and redeems us from sins of a self-life). We cannot begin to estimate the importance of knowing what it means to be delivered from sin, and to be in Christ. We need to ask ourselves 'what is believing?' ... (and turn to the Scriptures for that explanation).

(John 14:1) Jesus expressed compassion for anxious believers troubled in spirit,... and, He then gave instruction for them to follow, ... "Let not your heart be troubled; you believe in God,... believe also in Me." (Wey. Says), "Trust in God, trust in Me also." To believe in Me (as Jesus commanded), or, to trust in Me both mean one and the same thing, which is to have faith in God for all things in our life). Jesus gave that instruction as a command for all believers to obey, (and it came from the only One who can save us from our sins of the self-nature) (which will always misplace our trust to some other person, remedy, or plan). Jesus' words were meant to be taken to heart (not to just read in passing), for those who want to be 'in Christ'.

The Bible teaches, that to be a believer in Christ is above all the one condition that God requires of everyone, (John 6:29) "This," replied Jesus, "is above all the thing that God requires --that you should be 'believers' in Him whom He has sent." So, it is most important for us to accurately and Scripturally 'define' what it means to "believe" on Christ.

To 'have faith in', or to 'trust on', someone, or something, or plan, is to 'believe in' that person, thing, or plan. Jesus wanted His followers to know that to be a true believer in Him, means to have true faith and trust in Him (instead of on a human plan or person). Only those who trust in His Name become children of God. (John 1:12 says), "But all who have received Him, to them,.. that is, to those who 'trust' in His Name... He has given the 'privilege' of becoming children of God;" That is the condition (requirement) Jesus gave to His followers (which includes us), (quote) "that you should be believers in Him whom He has sent."

The apostle Paul also emphasized the importance of being sure that we are true believers (2 Cor.13:5) "Test yourselves to discover

whether you are true believers: put your own selves under examination. Or do you not know that Jesus Christ is within you unless you are insincere?" He showed further concern (vs.9) "it is a joy to us when we are powerless, but you are strong. This we also pray for—the perfecting of your characters."

The apostle was praying for professed followers of Jesus Christ in his day, for fulfillment in their life of Jesus Words in His Sermon on the Mount', (Matt. 5:48) "Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect."

Scripture tells us repeatedly that it is only the true believer on the Atonement work of Jesus Christ, who will receive the Holy Spirit into their heart, to be led and guided by that Spirit of Christ, in a life of obedient faith on God's Word and Promises. (John 14:15-17) "If you love me, you will obey my commandments. And I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Advocate to be for ever with you—the Spirit of truth. That Spirit the world cannot receive, because it does not see Him or know Him. You know Him, because He remains by your side and is in you."

Many professed believers of the world are writing and publishing religious messages on a daily basis, but they do not trust God for health and healing of body, nor accept God's plan of trust on Him for provision of needed finances (instead of trusting on human financial plans and resources), nor do they accept insults cheerfully (or trust God to avenge wrongs done to them). Jesus told us plainly about unbelievers of the world, "That Spirit the world cannot receive, because it does not see Him or know Him." ... So, we must beware and know that their writings and messages will be full of false doctrine (that Satan is using to deceive multitudes of people and lead them away from faith and trust on God, and from the power of His Son's Atonement Blood sacrifice).

(Matt. 24:4-5) "Jesus answered and said to them: "Take heed (or 'watch out') that no one deceives you. "For many will come in My name, saying, "I am the Christ,' and will deceive many." [False doctrine embedded in writings of unbelievers who profess to be 'believers' (most are deceived by once saved always saved doctrine), is leading multitudes away from having any true acting faith on God's Word (Thus, they are not "being in Christ".)

God's inspired Word tells us, (Heb.10:38) "But it is by faith that My righteous servant shall live; and if he shrinks back, My soul takes no pleasure in him." (39) "But we are not people who shrink back and perish, but are among those who believe and gain possession of their 'souls'."

Those Spirit inspired words of the writer, fully support what Jesus' assured Martha (John 11:) that the 'soul' of a true believer never dies, (vs. 25-26) "I am the Resurrection and the Life," said Jesus; "he who believes in me, even if he has died, he shall live;

and every one who is living and is a believer in me shall never, never die. Do you believe this?" (He asked her).

To the unbelieving Jews who refused to trust in Him (and who persecuted Him because He healed a man on a Sabbath day), Jesus told them, "The man who withholds honor from the Son, withholds honor from the Father who sent Him." (John 5:23)

"Nor have you His word dwelling within you (He said John 5:38), for you 'refuse' to believe Him whom He has sent." (Vs 39-40), "You search the Scriptures, because you suppose that in them you will find the Life of the Ages; and it is those Scriptures that yield testimony concerning me; yet you are unwilling to come to me that you may have life."

Jesus was indicating the free-will choice that everyone of us has, to be willing to accept and believe His words and be led by the Holy Spirit to follow Him in obedient faith, ... or, to be (as Jesus said), 'unwilling', and "refuse to believe Him whom God has sent."

Even though Jesus knew that multitudes were unwilling and refused to believe in Him, He still expressed His deep concern for them to use their 'power of choice' to repent and be saved, (Luke 13:34) "How often I wanted to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, but you were not willing!"

(John 12:46-47), "I have come like light into the world, (Jesus said), in order that no one who believes in me may remain in the dark." (Rather, they will receive 'spiritual light', and that is 'being in Christ'). "And if anyone hears my teachings and regards them not, I do not judge him; (yet), ...for I did not come to judge the world, but to save the world." (He cautioned, however, (48), "He who sets me at naught and does not receive my teachings is not left without a judge: the Message which I have spoken will judge him on the last day." God inspired that Message to be written in order to guide us if we believe it, or to judge us if we do not believe it.

If we believe what someone says, we would be inclined to follow what they said. With words from Jesus Christ) we should be inspired to obey what He has told us to do, "Trust in God, trust in Me also."

Jesus reminded everyone (John 5:) of the reward He promises those who do honor and obey Him, because they believe His words and love Him, (and He warned those who "refuse to believe Him whom He has sent", (vs 28-29) "Wonder not at this. For a time is coming when all who are in the graves will hear His voice and will come forth— they who have done what is right to the resurrection of Life, and they whose actions have been evil to the resurrection of judgement."

The apostle's words Romans 8:1, to be "in Christ Jesus" (through believing' on Him), were supported by Jesus Christ during His ministry here. (John 5:23-24), "He who does not honor the Son does not honor the Father who sent Him. In most solemn truth I tell you, that he who listens to my teaching and believes Him who sent me, has the Life of the Ages, and does not come under judgement."

For believers to be given a promise to not come under judgement because they continue to trust on the Son of God for things in their life,.. that is indeed being "in Christ" (in the continuing love of Jesus Christ). (John 15:9-10), "As the Father has loved me, I have also loved you: continue in my love. If you obey my commands, you will continue in my love, as I have obeyed my Father's commands and continue in His love."

Believers are reminded (2 Cor. 13:5) to determine if they do continue to believe, "Test yourselves to discover whether you are true believers: put your own selves under examination. Or do you not know that Jesus Christ is within you unless you are insincere?"

When a true believer accepts God's Word about His only Son (which He gave to us through His Son), then they can receive His Spirit within their heart to reveal Christ to them. That will inspire a person to trust in Him in obedient faith for things in their life. (Acts 5:32) "And we are His witnesses to these things (meaning, to the resurrection of Christ), and so also is the Holy Spirit whom God has given to those who obey Him."

"He who has my commandments and obeys them... he it is who loves me; and he who loves Me will be loved by my Father, and I will love him and will clearly reveal myself to him." (John 14:21) (That is being 'in Christ Jesus'.)

For worldly-minded unbelievers, however, who have not believed nor accepted God's Word about His Son (so, they were unable to obey Him), (John 14:17) "That Spirit the world cannot receive, because it does not see Him or know Him. You know Him, because He remains by your side and is in you." Jesus said, "The 'Kingdom of Heaven' is within you" (His Spirit is within a 'true believer'). (Luke 17:21)

A believer receives the Holy Spirit after they make a total commitment to obey God's Word. Multitudes are saying they obey, but they do not (actually) obey God's Word on one, a few, or many major life issues. If we are not committed to obeying everything Jesus told us to obey, the Holy Spirit's power will be hindered, and we can find ourselves 'drifting away' from God's Truth (outside of God's will), or quite simply disobeying the Scriptures (and finding ourselves no longer 'in Christ' (through 'believing' in Him).

(Gal. 3:2 analyzes whether we are living by the Spirit of God) "Answer me this one question, 'Is it on the ground of your obedience to the Law that you received the Spirit, or is it because, when you heard, you believed?' "

In the case where we find that we have drifted from faith on God (vs 3 asks), "Are you so foolish? After beginning with the Spirit, are you now trying to attain your goal by human effort?" (Meaning, outward religion, or by trusting on human 'policies', plans', and 'places of trust', after having begun learning by trial and tests, to trust on the power of the Atonement Blood of Jesus Christ). (vs 4-6) "Have you endured such sufferings to no purpose—

if indeed it has been to no purpose? He who gives you His Spirit and works miracles among you— does He do so on the ground of your obedience to the Law, or is it the result of your having heard and believed: even as 'Abraham believed God, and his acting faith was placed to his account as righteousness'?"

If we are committed to obedient faith in Christ, we will be taught lessons of faith from trials we meet in our life, because God will be our 'Teacher', and the Bible is our textbook of instruction (He inspired to be written for us). God will teach us as He taught His Son through obedience, as example for us to follow in our commitment to be faithful to trust only in Him. (Hebr.8-9) "Although He was God's Son, yet He learned obedience from the sufferings which He endured; and so, having been made perfect, He became to all who obey Him the source and giver of eternal salvation."

As a faithful student (and God as our Teacher), we will want to sincerely commit ourselves to do God's will in our life (regardless of circumstances), which means sincere consecration of our heart to do God's will (in everything), and a true desire to be delivered from the self-will in our heart. That opens the way for the Holy Spirit to help us understand what Jesus Christ really and truly accomplished for us on the Cross of Calvary.

When (with the Holy Spirit's help) we do understand what that Atonement work of the Son of God has already done for us, then we can believe on the power of His Atonement Blood shed for us. (John 7:17), "If anyone chooses to do God's will, he will find out whether my teaching comes from God or whether I speak on my own."

Most importantly, ...because we believe on Christ's Atonement sacrifice, that is where we will automatically 'place our trust' (not turn to human plans) (the "arm of flesh"), in order to seek healing, financial insurance or security, protection from mishaps, or seek vengeance for wrongs done to ourselves and 'loved ones'.

When the Holy Spirit enables us to understand what Christ's Atonement work on the Cross has done for us, we will soon realize that 'where' our 'place of trust' is centered, ... really is an 'Eternal Life' issue.

Jesus explained what His Atonement Sacrifice would mean to everyone who 'believes' on Him. (John 3:15), "And just as Moses lifted high the serpent in the Desert, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, ...in order that... everyone who trusts in Him... may have the 'Life of the Ages'..." (Quite a promised reward for trusting in the 'Son of God').

To trust in the One whom God has sent instead of trusting in human plans for help, is each true Christian's responsibility, and a choice... as well as being God's requirement for a person to be "in Christ Jesus". "There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit." (Rom. 8:1).

Eternal Security people (Once Saved, Always Saved teachers), like to misquote that Scripture, by putting that verse in the 'past tense', saying, rather, 'there is no condemnation for those who 'have believed'—because putting trust in the past tense, is what supports their false doctrine, that a person cannot lose their Salvation after they have once said that they have accepted Christ into their life.

Jesus said, however, that a person will be cut off from the true Vine if they do not remain in faithful obedience to His Word. (John 15:4-6) "Continue in me, and let me continue in you." (His words "let Me continue in you" indicate that it must be our decision and a final choice to remain faithful to do God's will, and, to let Christ continue to lead us on the pathway of faith). "Just as the branch (that means us) cannot bear fruit of itself—that is, if it does not continue in the vine—so neither can you (the branch) if you do not continue in Me. I am the Vine, you are the branches. He who continues in me and in whom I continue bears abundant fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing. If any one does not continue in me, he is like the unfruitful branch which is at once thrown away and then withers up. Such branches they gather up and throw into the fire and they are burned."

A true believer who endures in a position of faith, however, is reassured of the Holy Spirit's presence in their life (2 Thess.2:13) "God from the beginning has chosen you for salvation through the Spirit's sanctifying influence, and your belief in 'the Truth'."

&&&&&&

The First-Century Gospel Church/Philadelphia

SOME MAIN POINTS:

1... For a 'believer' to endure in a position of faithful obedience to God's Word, is staying connected to the true Vine, Jesus Christ. "He who has my commandments and obeys them... he it is who loves me; and he who loves me is loved by my Father," (John 14:21). That is being 'in Christ' (for which there is no condemnation) (Rom. 8:1 tells us).

2... The sanctifying influence of the Holy Spirit, enables a 'believer' to understand what the atonement sacrifice of Jesus Christ on the Cross has accomplished for us, and that is where we will then place our trust (instead of on man's plans and policies) "I have come like 'light' into the world (Jesus said), in order that no one who believes in Me may remain in the dark."

3... Jesus gave a wonderfully great promise for true 'believers' who will listen to and follow Jesus Christ,... "In most solemn truth I tell you, that he who listens to my teaching and believes Him who sent me, has the 'Life of the Ages', and does not come under judgement." (John 5:24).