

ABIDING IN CHRIST

Study One: “In Him” Ephesians 1 – 2

Other than the Bible, the book that has most influenced my Christian Walk is *Sit, Walk, Stand* by Watchman Nee. It is a study of the Book of Ephesians: Seated in Him (1:3 – 2:6); Walking worthily, in the light (Ch4), walking in love (Ch5); Standing firm (6:14).

Background to the book of Ephesians – ‘*the Queen of the Epistles*’.

Paul is in prison in Rome, from where he writes (dictates) four letters: Philippians, Colossians, Philemon and this one. Without elaborating let me suggest what happened. Paul dictates to Tychicus a letter to be given to Philemon as Tychicus delivers the converted slave Onesimus back to his master. As Philemon lives in Colossae, a city familiar to Paul, the apostle writes another letter to be read to the church at Colossae after which they must pass it on to other churches in that region of Asia Minor. In turn, they are to also pass on the letter that is coming to them from Laodicea (possibly this letter to the Ephesians?) Paul is so thrilled with the thoughts expressed in *Colossians* that he decides to write another ‘circular letter’ to all the churches of that region – this letter, called the epistle to the *Ephesians* but with no internal evidence that it was written to his old church at Ephesus, where he had pastored for over three years. There is a great deal of commonality between Colossians and Ephesians (55 verses verbatim the same!)

In the original Greek, Paul’s excitement at his theme comes through in the long sections where he hardly stops for breath! eg; 1:3-14, 15-23; 2:1-9; 3:1-7 are each one long, meandering sentences!

Now back to our theme: In Him

In *Colossians* Paul expressed the glorious exaltation of Christ – ‘all the fullness of God dwells in Him’. He continues to expand on this in *Ephesians*, where the key verse is 1:10 – ‘the summing up of all things in Him’. All God’s purposes find themselves culminating in Him. Let us read Ch 1.

V 3: We are blessed with every spiritual blessing *in Him*

V4: We are chosen *in Him* to be adopted as sons

V6: We have grace freely bestowed upon us *in Him*

V7: We have redemption through His blood *in Him*

V9: The mystery of God’s will is *in Him*

V10: All things are ‘summed up’ *in Him*

V11: We have obtained an inheritance *in Him*

V13: We have been ‘sealed’ *in Him* by the Holy Spirit of Promise

[Now Paul, overflowing with what he has been teaching, begins a prayer for his readers, which he interrupts at v19 and restarts in 3:14!]

V20: God has done all that Paul begins to pray for, *in Him*, when He raised Him from the dead and exalted Him far above all.

Consider how God has exalted Him: Raised from the dead; seated at God’s right hand in heavenly places; far above all other powers; for all eternity; all things in subjection to Him, ‘under His feet’; head over all things.

Chapter 2: starts “and you Now Paul presents an amazing truth! We, who were dead in sins, walking in darkness, subject to Satan, by nature children of wrath, God **has** made us alive with Christ, has raised us up with Him, and seated us in heavenly places *in Him*!!

This is a completed work – we are now called to live out this reality – **to abide in Him**.