

**Keys to
Standing Strong**

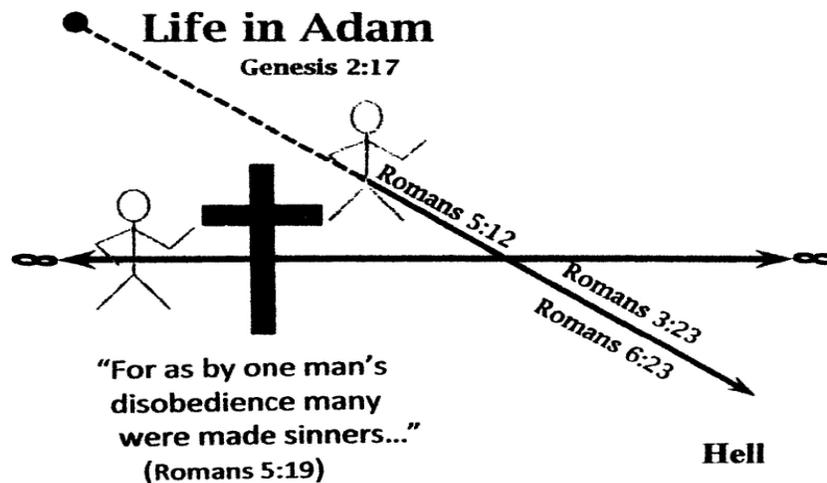


**In Union
With Christ**



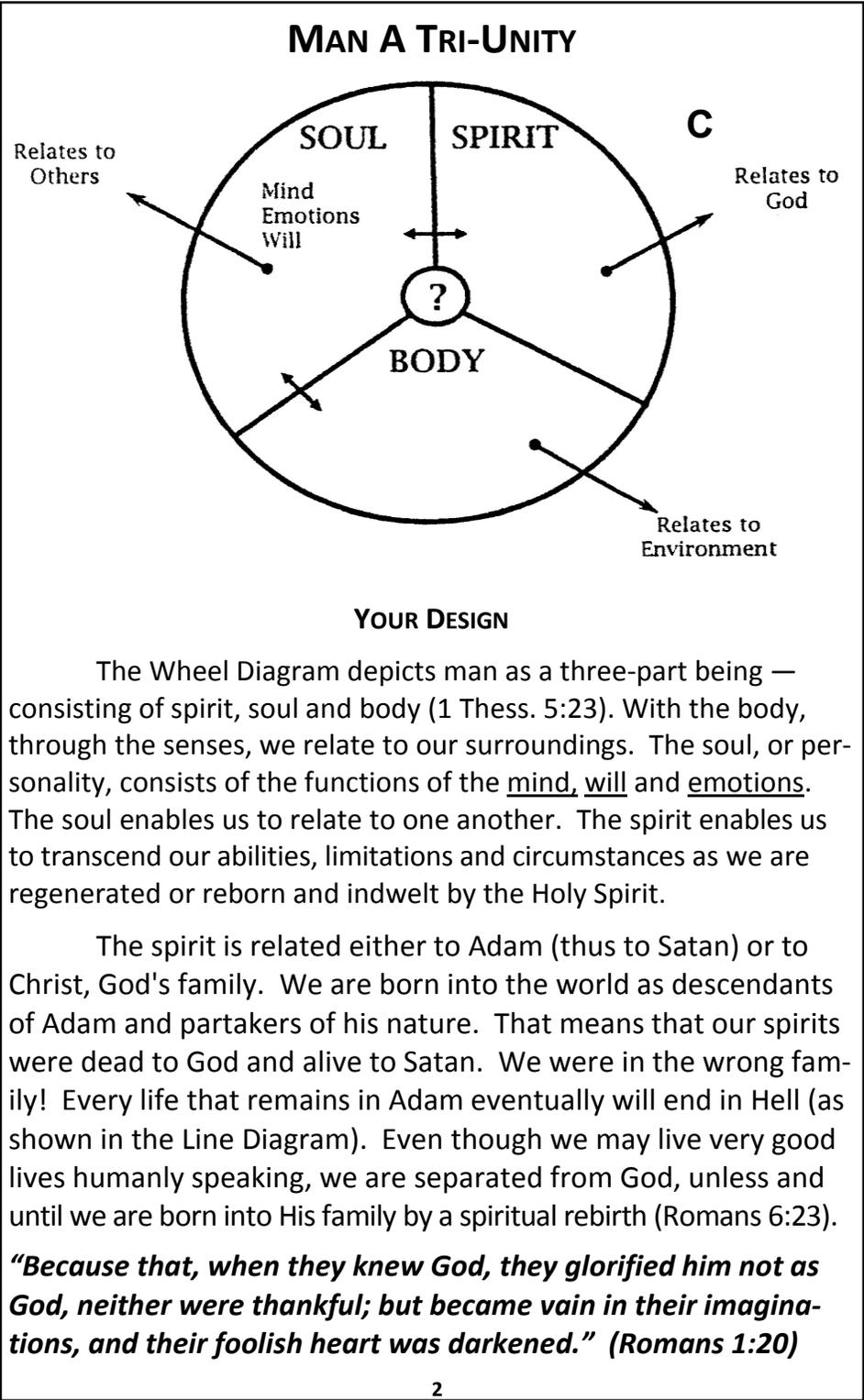
UNION WITH CHRIST

“But the natural man receives not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.” Do most of us in the Body of Christ have a sin problem, or do we have an identity problem?



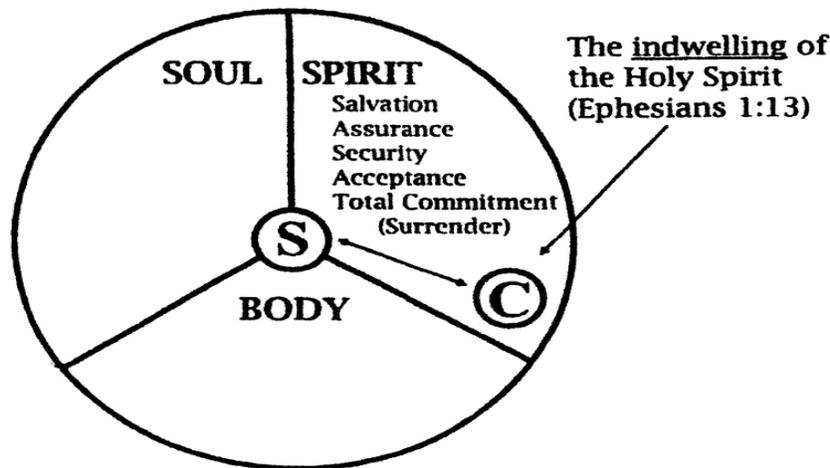
The horizontal line represents eternal life, the Life of Christ. Since Christ is God, He always has lived and always will. As portrayed at the left of the line, Christ “became flesh” (John 1:14) and lived in a human body for 33 years. Then, He was crucified, buried and raised from the dead on the third day (1 Corinthians 15:3 & 4). He continues to live today (Hebrews 7:25). When we receive Jesus Christ by faith, it means that his death on the cross counts as payment for our sins, but it means much more.

“And you, that were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled In the body of his flesh through death, to present you holy and unblameable and unproveable in his sight.” (Colossians 1:21-22)



UNIQUE, UNREPEATABLE MIRACLE OF GOD

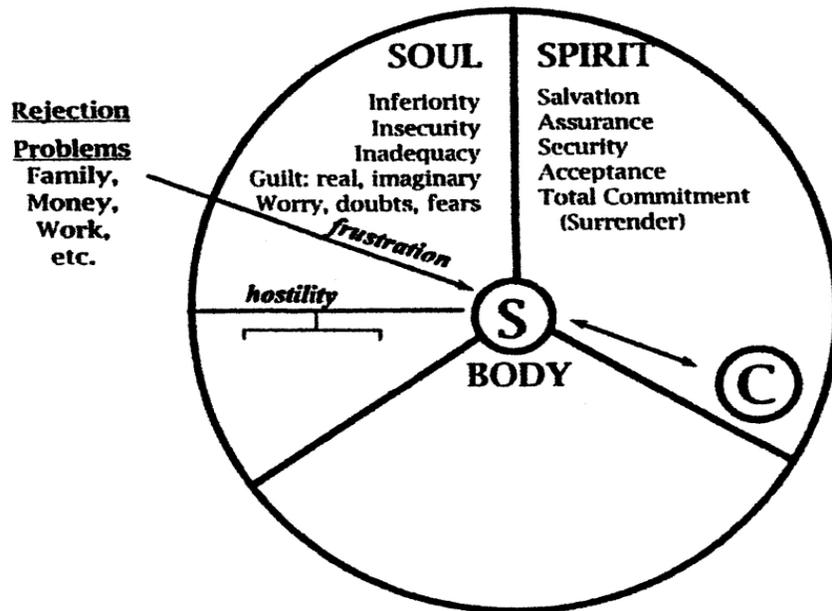
The REAL you is a spirit that lives in a body that has a soul (mind, emotion and will). The mind is your thinker, the emotions, your feeler and the will, your chooser.



It is a great victory to move into the reality of who we are in Christ. We have the privilege of seeing ourselves the way He sees us. When Christ comes into our spirit, we exchange our history in Adam -- the bad news -- for the good news -- our eternal history in Christ. We inherit a new "family tree"! By becoming partakers of Christ's life, we become participants in His death, burial, resurrection and ascension and are seated in the heavenlies (Romans 6:3-6; Galatians 2:20; Ephesians 2:6; 1 John 5:11-13).

Unless and until we know, by personal faith experience, that we were co-crucified with Christ, we will continue to live **FOR Christ's acceptance** rather than **FROM Christ's acceptance**. The conflicts stemming from our history in Adam will go on plaguing and defeating us. But when, by faith, we take our rightful place at the Cross in union with Christ's death and resurrection, then and only then, can we truly **walk in newness of life where all things become new** (2 Corinthians 5:17).

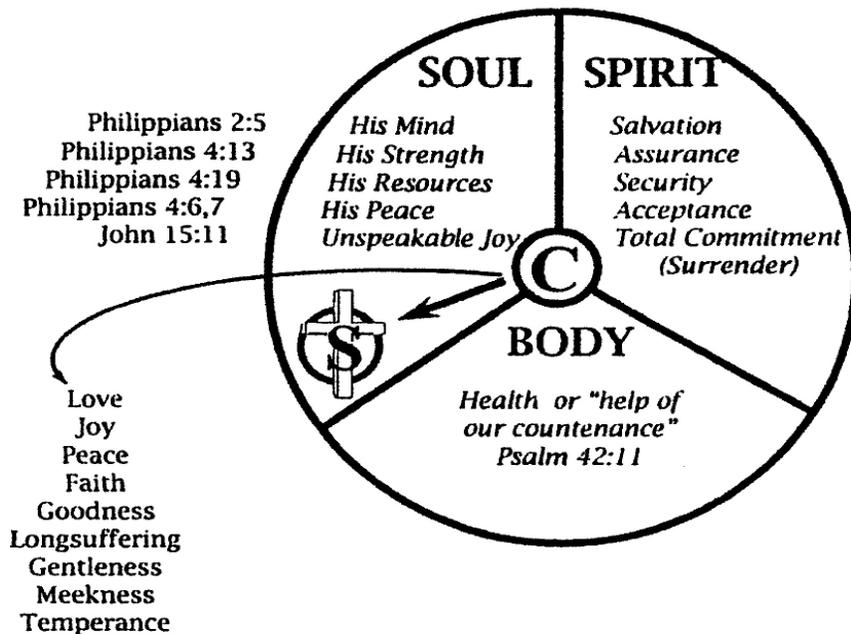
WALKING AFTER THE FLESH (SELF-CENTERED LIFE)



The (S) in the diagram is the self-trusting life. This is the life in which we learned to cope apart from God -- relying on trying to take care of ourselves without God in mind. We learn to live by idols. An idol is anything we turn to in order to meet our needs, instead of or outside of Jesus Christ. Even though we possess Christ's Life and our new identity is righteous and victorious, because of lack of understanding, we choose not to have Christ as the Center of our lives.

When the psychological conflicts drag on, hostility or anger often result in depression and/or anxiety in the emotions. These psychological and physiological symptoms begin to disappear when one truly understands how God can deal with root problems by dethroning the self-life. No longer are we left to our self-efforts to control the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes and the pride of life. The transforming power of the Holy Spirit is on the inside of us controlling us supernaturally from the inside out.

WALKING IN THE SPIRIT (CHRIST-CENTERED LIFE)



Walking in the Spirit begins by the Holy Spirit's renewing our minds and transforming our thinking. It begins by knowing that we are **IN** Christ. That is redemption. To know that Christ is **IN** us, that is sanctification! To be **IN** Christ makes us fit for Heaven. For Christ to be **IN** us makes us fit for earth! To be **IN** Christ changes our destination, but for Christ to be **IN** us changes our destiny! The one makes Heaven our home. The other makes this world His workshop.

The truths of our being **IN** Christ and His being **IN** us both become absolutes at the moment of our regeneration. However, we may not understand this reality and may try to live Christ's Life **FOR** Him. "***For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure.***" There is a very significant difference in doing what we do **FROM** Christ's acceptance, love and forgiveness, rather than **FOR** His acceptance, love and forgiveness.

WE ARE GOD'S INHERITANCE

God's plan was to bring into being a host of sons and daughters within whom His Spirit would dwell, through whom He would live and manifest Himself and in and through whom Christ would reign supreme. We are the beneficiaries of that plan. God, in His magnificent love and grace, has made us a part of His plan. BUT WE ARE NOT THE CENTER of it; Christ is! We are participants whom God loves, cherishes and nourishes, as a husband does his wife (Ephesians 5:25-32).

We are God's inheritance! In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of His grace, which He lavished on us. We tend to focus on what we inherit in Christ rather than on what He inherits. God's inheritance is His Body — the Body of Christ that is Holy and without sin. By faith in Christ, we have been saved from the PENALTY of sin. By faith in Christ, we will be kept from the POWER of sin. ***"What? Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own. For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and your spirit which are God's."*** (1 Corinthians 6:19-20) He is accomplishing His unique purposes in and through our spirits, which are holy and without sin. We are co-laborers with the Holy Spirit Who resides in our spirits. We are trusting Christ's Life residing in us. He demonstrates His Life being lived through us as us. **WE ARE GOD'S INHERITANCE!**

"Whosoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God, God abides in him, and he in God." (1 John 4:15)

We are God's inheritance and our spirits reside in Christ. ***"If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth. For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory."*** (Col. 3:1-4)

ETERNAL

UNSEEN

SEEN

TEMPORAL

This teaching tool is called “The Line.” “The Line” clarifies vital truth in a way that is easy to grasp. It is a teaching tool based on 2 Corinthians 4:18: ***“While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal.”***

The unseen and seen are two realms existing at the same time. As believers, we live in both the unseen eternal life and in the seen temporal world. Paul says that we are to focus on the eternal realm! Unless we understand that our true identity lies above “the line” in our spirit (the identity God gave us at our new birth), we will habitually draw our identity from our “below the line” performance, whether good or bad. Our focus will be on trying to look good enough for God and others to accept. That is where most Christians are living — “below the line.” We try to become something we already are!

In our daily lives as believers, the most important thing we can know from the unseen and eternal realm is that we are one with God, in union. That is exactly what the Bible says. ***“The one who joins himself to the Lord is one spirit with Him.” (1 Corinthians 6:17)*** God has permanently joined Himself to our spirits. Our spirits and God’s are one. The two operate as one unit. We live out of what is already true. We live in union with God. He operates in us uniquely as us.

Everyone of us who has believed in Christ as Savior is complete in Him (Colossians 2:10). We already are Holy (Colossians 3:12). We already are perfect (Hebrews 10:14). We are His righteousness (2 Corinthians 5:21). As we sincerely believe who we are according the Holy Scripture, God will turn what already is true in the unseen and eternal realm into a seen and temporal experience! It was the work of the Holy Spirit that initiated salvation. It is the work of the Holy Spirit that progressively sanctifies us.

THE SPIRIT-CONTROLLED LIFE

"Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh." (Galatians 5:16) We have power only over the NOW moment of our lives. By faith and the act of our wills, we choose to respond to the Holy Spirit's prompting us to will and to do of His good pleasure. By the power, direction, and guidance of the Spirit, we choose not to carry out the desire of the flesh. It's that simple. If we walk in the Spirit, we will not carry out the desire of the flesh. As our lives as Christians unfold, one moment at a time, one day at a time, each step is taken in the power and under the control of the Holy Spirit. It is a moment by moment decision to live **FROM** our identity in Christ, or to live **FOR** His approval and acceptance.

"Are you so foolish having begun by the Spirit, are you now being perfected by the flesh?" (Galatians 3:3) It is the work of the Spirit that initiates salvation. It is the Holy Spirit who convicts us of sin and righteousness and judgment. It is the Holy Spirit who produces in us repentance. God says, ***"Be holy as I am holy."*** This is an impossible standard for mankind without the Spirit of God. It is the Holy Spirit residing within us who motivates, empowers and prompts us to resist the multitudes of sinful temptations. The Holy Spirit produces humility, purity, contentment, faith, good works, love, light, wisdom and truth. The key to living the Christian life victoriously is found through ***WALKING IN THE SPIRIT, BY RECEIVING HIS POWER TO LIVE TRIUMPHANTLY***. Christ in us and us in Him conquers the remaining sin that contaminates our earthsuits.

2 Corinthians 2:14 says, ***"Now thanks be unto God, which always causeth us to triumph in Christ, and maketh manifest the savour of his knowledge by us in every place."*** It is the Spirit who does His work in and through us uniquely as us. Think on these things:

"Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report, if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things." (Philippians 4:8)

THE VICTORIOUS CHRISTIAN LIFE

The **first resource** God has given us is the Holy Spirit so that we can be victorious in Christian living. God contrasts the deeds of the flesh with the fruit of the Spirit in Galatians 5:16. As we walk in the Spirit, we avoid quenching the Holy Spirit's promptings and seek, instead, to be filled with the Spirit. There is evidence in Ephesians 5:18-21 that God chooses to fill those who are filling themselves with the Word of God. ***“Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.”*** (Colossians 3:16)

The **second resource**, the Word of God, the Bible, says that God has given us His Word to equip us for every good work (2 Timothy 3:16-17). It teaches us how to live and what to believe. It reveals to us when we have chosen wrong paths. It empowers us to get back on the right path and to stay there. Hebrews 4:12 tells us that the Word of God is living and powerful, able to penetrate to our hearts to root out and overcome the deepest sins' strongholds of our hearts and attitudes. The Bible is a resource that we too often treat lightly. We give token service to it by carrying our Bibles to church or reading a daily devotional or a chapter a day, but we fail to memorize it, meditate on it or apply it to our lives. We fail to confess the sins it reveals or to praise God for the gifts it reveals to us.

It is of utmost importance to make a habit of daily studying and memorizing God's Word. Some find it helpful to start a journal. Make it a habit not to leave the Word until you have written down something you have gained from it. Some record prayers to God, asking Him to work in them and change areas of their lives about which He has been convicting them. The Bible is vitally important and a major part of the armor that God gives us to fight our spiritual battles. ***“And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.”*** (Ephesians 6:17)

LIVING THE VICTORIOUS CHRISTIAN LIFE

“For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. Wherefore take unto you the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness; And your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace; Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God: Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints.” (EPHESIANS 6:12-18)

A **third crucial resource** in our battle to live victoriously is prayer. We have prayer meetings, times of prayer, etc., but seldom do we use prayer in the same way as did the early church (Acts 3:1; 4:31; 6:4; 13:1-3). The Apostle Paul repeatedly mentions how he prayed for those to whom he ministered. God has given us wonderful promises concerning prayer (Matthews 7:7-11; Luke 18:1-8; John 6:23-27; 1 John 5:14-15), and Paul includes prayer in his passage on preparing for spiritual battle (Ephesians 6:18). ***“Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints.”***

A **fourth resource** in our war to conquer fleshly strongholds is the Body of Christ - the fellowship of other believers. When Jesus sent His disciples out, He sent them out two-by-two (Matthew 10:1). The missionaries in Acts did not go out one at a time, but in groups of two or more. God’s Word commands us not to forsake the assembling of ourselves together but to use our time for encouraging and supporting one another in love and good works (Hebrews 10:24). The Lord tells us to ***“Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed.”*** (James 5:16)

ACCOUNTABILITY PARTNERS

Many Christians find that having an accountability partner can be a huge benefit in overcoming stubborn strongholds of the flesh. Having a person you trust to talk and pray with you, to encourage you and, even to rebuke you, is of great value. Temptation is common to us all (1 Corinthians 10:13). ***“There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it.”*** Having an accountability partner or an accountability group can give us the support, encouragement and motivation we need to overcome even the most stubborn, life-controlling problems.

Sometimes victory over fleshly, life-controlling problems will come quickly. At other times, victory comes more slowly. God has promised that, as we make use of His resources, He will progressively bring about His change in our lives. It is the Holy Spirit who produces in us faith and submission to Christ. We can persevere and trust in the Holy Spirit’s working in us to overcome besetting sins because we know that He is faithful to His promises. Jesus said, ***“I am the life. You take Me into you, and you have life. I live the life as you, just as the Father revealed His life as Me.”***

The body of a believer is a temple, the interior of which is sealed with the righteousness of Christ (Ephesians 4:30). We are accountable ***“to walk worthy”*** of the high calling in Christ Jesus.

“For, brethren, ye have been called unto liberty; only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another.” (Gal. 5:13)

“It is to freedom that you have been called, my brothers. Only be careful that freedom does not become mere opportunity for your lower nature. You should be free to serve each other in love. For after all, the whole Law toward others is summed up by this one command, ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’” (Galatians 5:13, Phillips Translation)

OUR CHALLENGE (1 CORINTHIANS 3:9-23)

- 9** - For we are labourers together with God: ye are God's husbandry, ye are God's building.
- 10** - According to the grace of God which is given unto me, as a wise masterbuilder, I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon. But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon.
- 11** - For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ.
- 12** - Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble;
- 13** - Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is.
- 14** - If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward.
- 15** - If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire.
- 16** - Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?
- 17** - If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are.
- 18** - Let no man deceive himself. If any man among you seemeth to be wise in this world, let him become a fool, that he may be wise.
- 19** - For the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God. For it is written, He taketh the wise in their own craftiness.
- 20** - Again, The Lord knoweth the thoughts of the wise, that they are vain.
- 21** - Therefore let no man glory in men. For all things are yours.
- 22** - Whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come; all are yours.
- 23** - And ye are Christ's; and Christ is God's.

FOR ME TO LIVE IS CHRIST

Out of Adam's Life He took us. (Rom. 6:6a)

Into Christ's Life He placed us. (1 Cor. 1:30)

Though we were condemned, (Rom. 3:23)

With glory He graced us. (Eph 2:8 & 9)

Since we are one with him, (Jn. 17:21)

We enjoy sweet communion. (1 Jn. 1:7)

Being crucified with Christ, (Gal. 2:20)

Our spirits now know union. (Rom. 8:16)

Since He died to sin, (Rom. 6:10)

And we, in Him, died too, (Rom. 6:6-7)

We can know the old man died, (Rom. 6:6)

And He bids us reckon it true. (Rom. 6:11)

Crucified, buried, and raised – (Rom. 6:3-5)

At His right hand we are seated. (Eph. 2:6)

We have entered into rest. – (Heb. 4:10-12)

Redemption has been completed. (Jn. 19:30)

Are you yet, my friend, in Adam –

Needing a second birth? Or (Jn. 3:3)

Having been born into Christ, (Rom. 5:1)

Do you know your worth? (1 Pet. 2:18-19)

In either case, the answer

Is to come to Him for rest. (Matt 11:28; Heb. 4:10-11)

You lose your life to save it (Matt. 16:24-25; Jn. 12:24-25)

And, In Him, are truly blessed. (Col. 3:1-4)

Corinthians 16:13

**“Be on your Guard;
Stand Firm in the
Faith; Be Men of
Courage; Be
Strong.”**

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PART TWO OF FOUR