

Timothy ... will remind you of my way of life in Christ Jesus, which agrees with what I teach everywhere in every church.

Paul - 1 Corinthians 4:17 (NIV)

# In Christ

Or don't you know that all of those who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death...burial...and resurrection.

Paul - Romans 6:3-5 (NIV)

David Kuykendall Ministries

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## thanksgiving from our "in christ" position

David Kuykendall

Obey the five commands listed below and experience your life "in Christ." Experience the abundant life through living by grace. Notice that each command is either to believe something or to choose to do something.

### THE FIVE COMMANDS

#### Believe

Romans 6:11

Reckon (believe) yourselves to be dead to sin but alive to God in Christ Jesus our Lord

#### Choose

Romans 6:12

Do not let sin reign in your mortal body that you should obey it in its lusts

#### Choose

Romans 6:13a

Do not present your members as instruments of unrighteousness to sin

#### Choose/Believe

Romans 6:13b

Present yourselves to God as being alive from the dead.

#### Choose

Romans 6:13c

[Present] your members as instruments of righteousness to God.

We can and should obey each of these commands because Romans 6:3-5 teaches that all believers have been baptized into Jesus and as a result all believers have been baptized into his death, burial, and resurrection.

Those who experience their crucifixion, burial and resurrection by living out their "in Christ" position observe thanksgiving in a more expansive way than we did before. When Jesus instituted the Lord's Supper, Matthew 26:27 quotes Him saying:

*this is My blood of the new covenant, which is shed for many for the remission of sins.*

Later Jesus said to his disciples:

*I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. However, when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth ...*  
John 16:12-13

Jesus knew that the Holy Spirit would reveal that He, Jesus, was the last Adam and would die and be raised to create a new race. It would be a race of people who were crucified, buried and resurrected.

When we thank the Lord that Jesus died for our sins, we are in the will of God. However, we are also in the will of God when we, in addition, thank God that the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus were as the last Adam. We thank Him that Jesus made the way for our spiritual crucifixion, burial and resurrection.

We thank God for the one who made possible our victory over sins in our lives and over the sin nature that is the source of our sins.

Consider what Paul wrote to the church at Corinth.

*Thanks be to God for His indescribable gift! 2 Corinthians 9:15*

When he wrote this, Paul knew that God's indescribable gift of sending Jesus was for more than the forgiveness of sins.

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In 2 Corinthians 2:15 Paul wrote:

*Now thanks be to God who always leads us in triumph in Christ, and through us diffuses the fragrance of His knowledge in every place.*

Notice the words "in Christ" in the verse above. As we live out our position "in Christ," we will always be led by and empowered by God to serve in victory.

We have the experience of Hebrews 4:10. We are saved from our own works. That is, we cease to attempt to serve God in our own wisdom and begin to make our lives available to God for Him to express Himself through us. Such a glorious change to victory in service prompts us to thank God.

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2 Corinthians 4:15 is a statement about the spread of grace through suffering. The passage reads:

*For all things are for your sakes, that grace, having spread through the many, may cause thanksgiving to abound to the glory of God.*

We thank God for the spread of grace whether it is through suffering or through living out our oneness with Christ. All of God's children need to live by God's grace rather than their own strength and wisdom.

Of all the statements in the Bible about thanksgiving, the one that seems to be the strangest is in Ephesians 5:20. It reads:

*... giving thanks always for all things to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ ...*

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We are more familiar with the statement on thanking God for all things found in First Thessalonians 5:18. That verse says:

*... in everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.*

It is not unusual to hear someone say that this means we are to give thanks to God in spite of all things.

However, the passage in Ephesians speaks of giving thanks *always for all things*.

Obedying that seems to be humanly impossible when we think of all the tough times we all go through.

It is humanly possible. It becomes possible when we place that statement in its context. Ephesians 5:18 is a command that we be filled with the Spirit.

There follows that command a listing of three results in the life of one being filled with the Holy Spirit. Thanking God always for all things is one of them.

The reason this fits in with our discussion of thanksgiving from our "in Christ" position is because we must live out our crucifixion, burial and resurrection to experience the filling of the Holy Spirit.

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Galatians 5:17 explains why all Christians are not filled with the Holy Spirit. It is because

*...the flesh lusts against the Spirit and the Spirit against the flesh ... so that you do not do the things that you wish.*

Something must be done about the flesh—our sin nature, our know-it-all attitude—to release the Holy Spirit to fill us. When that happens, He will guide and enable us to always thank God for all things.

We put the flesh out of power releasing the Holy Spirit to fill us by experiencing our crucifixion. When the flesh is out of power the Holy Spirit has free access to our lives.

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*We put the flesh out of power releasing the Holy Spirit to fill us ...*

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We experience the crucifixion of our flesh by obeying the five commands of Romans 6:11-13. As we continue to obey these commands and continue to keep the flesh out of power, we are filled with the Holy Spirit.

Philippians 4:6-7 explains the importance of our thanking God for all things. The passage says we can have peace of mind and heart by presenting our prayers and supplications to the Lord with thanksgiving.

The peace does not come because God answers the prayers. The peace comes when our prayers and supplications are presented to the Lord with thanksgiving.

This is a truth that blesses us all. We only have to believe that God is in control of our circumstances to pray with thanksgiving.

The process, then, to having the peace this passage speaks of begins with understanding and experiencing our oneness with Christ in crucifixion, burial and resurrection.

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With that understanding and experience we are filled with the Holy Spirit who will always guide us to thank God for all things.

May God give us all a wonderful thanksgiving season as we fully express our gratitude to Him in a way that brings Him glory and will bring blessings to each of us and those around us.

If you are a child of God and have not yet begun to experience your oneness with Christ, God wants you to do so. You are already in Christ. You only need to experience it.

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