

"In Christ"

In Ephesians 2, Paul gives us one of his classic "you used to be, but now you are" descriptions. He is talking to a church full of Gentiles and tells them the impact that faith and obedience to the gospel of Christ has had on them. This is what Paul says to them (and us) in chapter 2, verses 11 through 13:

¹¹ Therefore, remember that formerly you who are Gentiles by birth and called "uncircumcised" by those who call themselves "the circumcision" (which is done in the body by human hands)— ¹² remember that at that time you were separate from Christ, excluded from citizenship in Israel and foreigners to the covenants of the promise, without hope and without God in the world. ¹³ But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far away have been brought near by the blood of Christ.

The key phrase that he uses to explain what brought about the change is "**in Christ**" (verse 13). Outside of Christ, they were "without hope and without God." In Christ, they have been "brought near" to God and counted as one of His children.

In Ephesians chapter 1, Paul used the phrase "in Christ" or something similar to it at least 10 times, detailing what God has done for us. All of these things were accomplished according to God's plan for redemption, completed with the life, death, burial, resurrection, and ascension of Jesus Christ.

In Christ:

1. We have been blessed with every spiritual blessing. (v.3)
2. We have been chosen. (vss. 4 and 11)
3. We have been adopted as sons. (v.5)
4. We have received grace. (v. 6)
5. We have been redeemed through Jesus' blood. (v. 7)
6. We have had God's mystery revealed to us. (v. 9)
7. We have been given the hope of glory. (v. 12)
8. We have been included as one of God's children. (v. 13)
9. We have been marked with the seal of the Holy Spirit.
(v. 13)

And just how do we get "in Christ?" Galatians 3:26-27:

²⁶ So **in Christ Jesus** you are all children of God through faith, ²⁷ for all of you who were baptized **into Christ** have clothed yourselves with Christ. ²⁸ There is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free, nor is there male and female, for you are all one **in Christ Jesus**.

Realize that the change from being "separate from Christ" and being "in Christ" is acceptance of Christ and his ability to make that change.

Our faith, made complete by baptism, places us "in Christ" and assures us that God's blessings are ours.