

THE GREAT EXCHANGE

Who is the greatest Christian that ever lived? Only God knows that answer, but from our human viewpoint, the Apostle Paul certainly would be considered to be one of the greatest. His life and letters have had great impact on Christians in all generations. One of the reasons for Paul's greatness was his revelation of the great exchange that took place at the cross.

If we were to ask a church audience who died at the cross at calvary, most everyone would respond: JESUS! That is a true and most important answer. However, if we asked the Apostle Paul that question, he would most likely give an additional answer. He would say.... I did! We know this from a scripture he wrote that gives us the key to his life of devotion and sacrifice for the cause of the kingdom of God.

*'I have been crucified with Christ, it is **no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me**; and the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.'* - Galatians 2:20 NKJV

Through Paul's letters we see that he grasped the fact that Christians have been crucified, resurrected, ascended and seated with Christ. A significant term used in the New Testament to describe a Christian's position is the phrase..... **'IN CHRIST'**. Its use or equivalent is used 172 times in the N.T. and Paul uses it 97 times in his letters. There are only two types of persons in the world, those outside Christ or those 'In Christ'. Paul was a victorious Christian because he knew he was 'In Christ' and that Christ was in him! It begins with the first part of Galatians 2:20.

I died with Christ - Paul had some marks of a dead man.

- a. **He was making no plans of his own for the future.** (formerly he had lots of plans of his own....like killing Christians and being religious)

*He died for all, that those who live, should no longer live for themselves but for Him who died for them and was raised again. - 2 Corinthians 5:15
You are not your own, you were bought at a price. - 1 Corinthians 6:19,20*

- b. **He was facing only one direction.....forward.**

One thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining towards what is ahead. I press on towards the goal to win the prize.... Philippians 3:13-14

- c. **Dead to sin** - Romans 6:6-7,10,11,18,22 This is usually a progressive experience for Christians as they let Christ reign in their life.
- d. **Unaffected by dirt and insults** At a grave site I have never seen a dead person bothered by the dirt heaped on them. Paul was harassed

and attacked continually by his enemies but he did not let it affect his life and ministry. Paul had died to himself and let the life, light, love and power of Jesus flow through his life to the world.

*'But this **precious treasure** - this light and power that now shine within us - is held in a perishable container, that is in our weak bodies. Everyone can see that the **glorious power** within must be from God and is not our own. We are pressed on every side by troubles, but not crushed and broken. We are perplexed because we don't know why things happen as they do, but we don't give up and quit. We are hunted down, but God never abandons us. **We get knocked down, but we get up again and keep going**'. - 2 Corinthians 4:7-9 Living Bible*

Paul knew the exchanged life and the inheritance purchased at the cross.

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JESUS EXPERIENCED

Injustice, condemnation

Shame, humiliation

Scorn

Nakedness

Sorrow

Wounds

Broken heart

Rejection

Anxiety

Weakness

Curse

Wrath of God

Death and Hell

OUR INHERITANCE IN CHRIST

Justification

Dignity and honor

Acceptance

Robe of righteousness

Hope and Joy!

Healing

New Heart

Sonship

Peace

Strength

Blessing

Father's love

Eternal life and Heaven

Jesus became sin that we might become righteous.

Jesus bore the curse that we might walk in blessing.

Jesus was rejected that we might walk in acceptance.

Jesus took our sordid history and gave us a glorious future and inheritance in Him.

