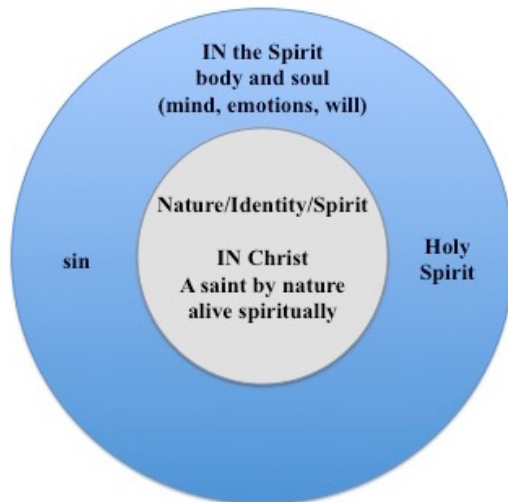


Keys to Discipleship #5

Who Has God Made You Now that You've Become a Christian? 2 Cor. 5:17



In Adam and In the Flesh



In Christ and In the Spirit

The top inner circle (IN Adam) is who every person is without Jesus. His/her 'nature/identity/spirit'—who the person is at the core of their being—is IN Adam, a sinner by nature, dead spiritually. You could also write 'son of disobedience, child of wrath, helpless, ungodly, unrighteous, enemy of God, hopeless, a slave of sin, with a hardened and deceitful heart, condemned, darkness' in that inner circle. Again, this is who the person is who doesn't know Jesus as Lord and Deliverer. To these individuals, our message is "Jesus is Lord!" As Christians, this is who we used to be!

In the top outside circle, we see the flesh and the walk of an individual without the Lord Jesus. Notice the word 'sin' at 9:00. **Rom. 7:1-25, Gal. 5:16-21, Eph. 4:17-5:7** deal with the 'walk' of the unbeliever. We'll learn more on page 3.

The bottom inner circle (IN Christ) is who every person is who knows Jesus as Lord. His/her 'nature/identity/spirit'—who every Christian is at the core of their being—is 'IN Christ, a saint by nature, alive spiritually'. You could also write 'son of obedience, adequate, godly, righteous, friend of God, slave of God, slave of righteousness, new heart, partaker of God's nature, Christ's dwelling place, God's workmanship, complete in Christ, a new creation, reconciled, dead to sin, alive to God, light, forgiven, clothed with Christ, part of Christ's one body, God's child, son, and heir, born again, placed into Christ, united with Christ in His death, burial, and resurrection, alive in Christ, raised up with Christ, seated with Christ'. Again, this is who the person is who knows Jesus as Lord and Deliverer. Jesus is the answer to my nature.

Spend some time reflecting on who you were without Jesus and now who you are with Him! Record your thoughts. Just think, since these descriptions are true (God says they are!), my liberating choices are to believe them and begin to act on them. If this has happened to me, what does this mean for my daily life when I face tests of faith? When I face temptations? Go through **Rom. 5:11-6:23** to see our new identity IN Christ.

"Father, these are facts I'm looking at. I may 'feel' like a sinner right now, but Your truth teaches me that I am new in Christ. I may not 'feel' like I'm dead to sin and its power, but Your truth teaches me that I am. I now have a choice not to sin and a choice to walk pleasing to You. These facts are grounded in Your Son's death, burial, resurrection. Jesus, You are now my life! Please teach me all these facts mean and how they impact my daily living. Thank You that You have created me the new person I am IN Christ. When applying these truths to my daily life, may I remember who I now am and walk in light of these liberating truths."

Look at the 2 outer circles. The top outer circle (IN the Flesh) is how every person ‘walks’ without Jesus and without the Spirit. His/her ‘body and soul (mind, emotions, will)’—how they think, act, speak—is affected by indwelling sin (at 9:00 in the circle). The unbeliever walks according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air. Unbelievers walk in the futility of their minds, are darkened in their understanding and excluded from the life of God because of their deliberate ignorance and because of the hardness of their hearts, giving themselves over to sensuality (living solely by the senses, without restraint). They are greedy, sensual, speak falsehood, practice sinful anger, steal, speak unwholesome words. Their walk reveals bitterness, wrath, anger, clamor (loud yelling), slander, malice (a desire to injure). They practice immorality, impurity, filthy talk, the unfruitful deeds of darkness. Their fleshly deeds are evident: pride, immorality, impurity, sensuality, idolatry, sorcery, enmities, strife, jealousy, outbursts of anger, disputes, dissensions, factions, envying, drunkenness, carousing. Their walk reveals they are idolaters or adulterers or effeminate or homosexuals, thieves, covetous, drunkards, revilers or swindlers, lawless, rebellious, ungodly, murderers, kidnappers, liars, wicked, filled with envy, strife, deceit, haters of God, insulting, arrogant, boastful, inventors of evil, disobedient to parents, without understanding, untrustworthy, unloving, unmerciful, foolish. These truths come from **1 Pet. 5:5b-7, Phil. 2:1-4, Eph. 2:2-3, 4:17-19, 4:25-5:11, Gal. 5:19-21, 1 Cor. 6:9-10, 1 Tim. 1:9-10, Rom. 1:29-31, Mk. 7:6,21-22** (it’s the heart that’s the issue!). We could also add the sins of **2 Tim. 3:1-7**. Pick out from this list what your non-Christian walk revealed (what are your ‘flesh patterns’?). Write those in the top outer circle.

Now look at the combination of the top inner and outer circles. That is the nature and walk of the non-Christian (you are IN Adam and IN the flesh). If you’re now a follower of Jesus, that *was* your nature and your walk. Your identity was a sinner, so your walk was sinful no matter how hard you tried or what your ‘laws’ were. Also notice, there is no indwelling Holy Spirit.

The bottom outer circle (IN the Spirit) is how every Christian “can/should walk”. Again, notice the word ‘sin’ at 9:00. Although we’re new creations, with a new nature, our flesh hasn’t changed. It is still indwelt by sin. It is still unredeemed (that wonderful day when our bodies will be redeemed is when Jesus returns for us or when we physically die). So at this time we have a new man in the old suit! *What is God’s provision for ‘walking’ as the new people we are in Christ?* Notice, at 3:00 in the bottom outer circle, the words ‘Holy Spirit’! He is where the God-pleasing walk starts. The Holy Spirit is our God’s abundant provision for walking in line with the new ‘man’ we are in Christ. What does that Christian walk look like?

It looks like walking in good works which God prepared beforehand, humility, gentleness, patience, being diligent to preserve the unity of the Spirit, serving, building up, truthing it in love, being rightly angry, laboring hard at your work, speaking building up words, kindness, tender-heartedness, forgiveness, being imitators of God, walking in love, goodness, righteousness, truth, exposing unfruitful deeds of darkness, walking wisely, making the most of our time, understanding what the will of the Lord is, being filled with the Spirit, singing, always giving thanks, being subject to one another, properly using the spiritual armor God has provided, love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control, gently restoring a sinning brother or sister in Christ, bearing one another's burdens, not losing heart in doing good. It looks like using your Spirit-given gifts in your Jesus-directed areas of service and trusting the Father for the results. It looks like not being jealous or envious, not bragging or being arrogant, not being selfish, but rejoicing with the truth. It looks like hating what is evil, clinging to what is good, being devoted to one another in brotherly love, giving preference to one another in honor, rejoicing in hope, persevering in the midst of pressure, devoted to prayer, contributing to the needs of the saints, practicing hospitality. It looks like blessing those who persecute you, rejoicing with those who rejoice, weeping with those who weep, not being wise in your own estimation. It looks like never paying back evil for evil to anyone, being at peace with all so far as it depends on you. It looks like not quarrelsome, but kind, able to teach, patient when wronged, with gentleness correcting those who are in opposition (**Eph. 2:10, 4:1-3, 11-16, 1 Pet. 5:5b-7, Phil. 2:1-4, Eph. 4:25-5:21, 6:10-17, Gal. 5:22-6:10, 1 Cor. 12:4-6, 13:4-8a, Rom. 12:9-21, 2 Tim. 2:24-26**). We could go on and on but you get the idea! It looks like Jesus' life being lived out on this earth through you and me, which is only possible as we 'walk by the Spirit'! The Holy Spirit turns the lights and power on (**1 Cor. 2:12-13**)! Choose which parts of the walk you struggle with, and realize a successful walk is possible as we walk in line with God's Word, by the power of God's Spirit, for the purpose of God's glory. I would encourage us to make sure we understand **Rom. 7:1-8:17a, Gal. 5:16-6:5, and Eph. 4:17-6:18**.

The key to understanding this walk is that we can't carry it out by our own strength or by law. It's only the Holy Spirit (who lives in every Christian's body) who can live the Christian life. *As we present, He produces*. Constantly review ECRAT; it will be a profitable exercise. Also spend some time reflecting on who you were without the Spirit and now who you are with Him! Record your thoughts. Just think, since this kind of walk is available to you (God says it is!), may you truly learn how to walk by the Spirit or be filled with Him or be led by Him. After all, He gives life, true life, to your mortal body. If this is what is possible, what does this mean for your daily life, when you face tests of faith or the temptation to sin? May we be learning to live by the Spirit who we are in Christ!