

Who are you in Christ?

The Good News of Jesus Christ is just that—"Good News!" While we know that, "*all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God*" (Rom. 3:23), we also know that we are "*justified freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus.*" (Rom. 3:24). When I reflect on my sinful self and then the Saviour who came to save me I joyfully echo the good news of the apostle Peter, "*Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In his great mercy he has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.*" (1 Peter 1:3). I was reading a great book called "*Be Who You Are*" when I found these wonderful truths of who we are in Christ.¹

You are part of a new family...

Just as a human being only comes into a family through the miracle of physical birth so the Christian only comes into right relationship with God and is adopted into His family through a "new birth." In a conversation with Nicodemus Jesus declared, "*I tell you the truth, no one can see the kingdom of God unless he is born again.*" Of course, Jesus wasn't describing a second physical birth but a spiritual rebirth. The theological word for this is *regeneration*. We are born again by the power of God's Spirit (John 3:5) and through the imperishable, living, and enduring word of God (1 Peter 1:23-25). What happens to us is the Spirit of God applies the Word of God to our mind and heart resulting in faith (Eph. 2:8-9). This new birth is a gracious gift through faith so that none of us can boast! This is how we become part of God's family. "*Yet to all who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God— children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband's will, but born of God.*" (John 1:12-13)

How you can know that you are part of the family...


John wrote his first Epistle to encourage new believers and assure them that they truly were part of God's family. He said, "*I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God so that you may know that you have eternal life.*" (1 Jn. 5:13). How did he assure them? He told them to look for their new birthmarks. Let's look at these and ask ourselves if we see them in our lives:

- *Practicing righteousness and not sin (1 Jn. 2:29 ; 3:9)*
- *Loving God and other believers (1 Jn. 4:7 ; 5:1)*
- *Overcoming the world (1 Jn. 5:4)*
- *Overcoming the devil (1 Jn. 5:18)*

Don't misunderstand John. He's not saying that we're perfect and "sinless." He recognizes that God provides provision for our sin through Christ (1 Jn 1:9, 2:1) but he also recognizes that we will sin "less." We have a new birth, a new nature, and our disposition is now empowered toward godliness, righteous living, and driven by promised victory. We will overcome.

Take heart fellow disciple of Christ! We have been given a precious inheritance for our future while in the meantime being called and empowered to run the race with integrity, to overflow with compassionate and gracious love, and to be assured of our destiny of ultimate triumph.

Thanks be to God for his indescribable gift! (2 Cor. 9:15)... Thank him for our new birth!

Blessings, 

¹ For a full study read: *Be What You Are*. Copyright 1988 by Warren W. Wiersbe; Tyndale House Publishers, Inc. Wheaton, Illinois