

His Fullness

John 1:16-17



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FOCAL Read Responsively John 1:16-17 And of his fullness have all we received, and grace for grace. {17} For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ.

An elderly woman walked into the local country church. The friendly usher greeted her at the door and helped her up the flight of steps, "Where would you like to sit?" he asked politely. "The front row please," she answered. "You really don't want to do that," the usher said "The pastor is really boring." "Do you happen to know who I am?" the woman inquired. "No." he said.. "I'm the pastor's mother," she replied indignantly. "Do you know who I am?" he asked. "No." she said. "Good," he answered.

My prayer today is that the pastor isn't boring, for we're going to talk about a very important truth, that is,

“How Do We Define The Word “Christian”?”

Around 98% of those interviewed in America say that they are “Christian”. I can say that I'm a duck but that doesn't make me a duck. What is a “Christian”?

A Christian Is A Converted Follower of Jesus Christ

That's the simplest definition of “Christian”. Christians are not just followers of Christ, but are *converted followers of Christ*. We are not converted through our own efforts, but through the efforts of our Lord and

Savior Jesus Christ. Jesus told the **woman of Samaria**:

John 4:14 But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life.

We are **wells of water**. A well does not supply its own water, but is merely a receptacle (a hole) that traps or taps into a water supply. Jesus Christ is the **Giver of Living Water (John 7:38-39)**, and Christians are **wells that hold the Water (the Holy Spirit)**. The Lord also describes the Christian as **little children**. He said:

Matthew 18:3 ... Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven.

We must **be converted and become as little children**. Once more we see the dependence of the Christian on the Christ. We are to be **little children**, totally dependent upon our Parents. The little child does not live very long if he is far removed from his parents. He cannot feed himself nor clothe himself nor house himself. The Christian is – like the little child – *desperately dependent upon God the Son*. Jesus told the Pharisees:

John 10:26-27 But ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep, as I said unto you. {27} My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me:

We who are Christians are **converted Sheep**, with Christ as our Shepherd. The sheep who wanders from the

Shepherd has absolutely no natural defenses. Its teeth are made for grass, not defense. Its legs are short making it unable to run away from predators. Wolves in sheep's clothing (**false teachers, Church troublemakers - Matthew 7:15**) come after sheep when they are away from the flock. The Shepherd must guide the sheep to the right pastures and to the right water, else the sheep will die. We who are Christians can say with confidence that:

Psalms 23:1-2 The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want. {2} He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters.

How many ways does God define us who are His. We are **God's Garden and God's Building (1 Corinthians 3:9)**. It is Christ Who gives us life, and Christ Who holds us together. A **Garden** without a **Gardener** quickly becomes filled with weeds, and a **Building** without a **Builder** is no more than an unorganized pile of bricks. We are **earthen vessels (2 Corinthians 4:7)**, fragile creatures that are easily broken. And yet God in His Grace has given us all the fullness of Christ. The day you realized that you were a sinner lost and undone with Christ as your only hope was a great day. For on that day you heard the promise of God unto all who believe:

John 20:31 But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name.

1. The Christian Is Fully Saved

FOCAL John 1:16 And of His fullness have all we

received ...

Our text states that “of His fullness have all we received”. Look first at the word “received”.

The word is not “receiving”, which would mean a *work in progress*, but it is “received” which means *something that has been given and accepted*.

The Christian – the moment He called on Jesus Christ – received the **fullness of Christ**. We received **everything that Christ has to offer**. We may not be using it. We may have wandered – sadly but true – but we have *everything* that we need.

We have received a complete forgiveness of sins.

When Peter and the other Apostles were commanded by the High Priest of Israel to quit preaching about Jesus, they quickly replied:

Acts 5:29-32 ... We ought to obey God rather than men. {30} The God of our fathers raised up Jesus, whom ye slew and hanged on a tree. {31} Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Savior, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins. {32} And we are his witnesses of these things; and so is also the Holy Ghost, whom God hath given to them that obey him.

Jesus Christ was killed and hung on the tree of Calvary. As the Word tells us:

Galatians 3:13 Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree:

Jesus was made a **curse in our place**. The Believer in Christ **has received His fullness**, a full pardon from sin.

Every sin committed is forgiven *for His sake*. How can we be saved? Only by believing in Jesus Christ. Only by trusting in the *full salvation* that we have received from Him. The Scripture says:

Acts 13:38-39 ... through this man {Jesus} is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins: {39} And by him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses.

We are **justified, declared innocent or without guilt FROM ALL THINGS**. There is no sin that is not covered by the Blood of the Lamb. There is no sin that will not be covered by the Blood of the Lamb. The Christian is **fully saved apart from the Law of God**. As the Apostles preached, “you could not be justified (declared righteous) by the Law of Moses”.

When the early Church was first formed on the Day of Pentecost the religious systems of the day – Roman paganism and misled Judaism – began to systematically and horrifically attack the local Church. One of the greatest attackers of the Church was a man named

Saulos Paulos Benjaminos. This man was “an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin” (Romans 11:1). He was born under the Law of Moses. He was – by his own admission - “circumcised the eighth day, a Hebrew of the Hebrews, as touching the Law, a Pharisee” (Philippians 3:5). This man converted *from* the Law of Moses to come to know God by Grace through the fullness that is in Christ Jesus. The Apostle Paul wrote:

Philippians 3:8-9 Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ, {9} And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith:

We who believe have received a full salvation through Him apart from the Law.

“Of His fullness we have received”. We are redeemed, cleansed, purified in the eyes of God because of the Blood of Christ. In Him and Him alone

Ephesians 1:7 ... we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace;

2. The Christian Is Fully Secured

FOCAL John 1:17 For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ.

We who believe have eternal security. What that means is we who are saved by faith in Christ *keep on being saved*. “Of His fullness we have received”. “The Law was given by Moses, BUT Grace and truth came by Jesus Christ”.

Listen Beloved: we were not saved by the Law, nor do we retain our salvation by *keeping* the Law. “The Law was given by Moses”.

The Law was given to Israel because God's people – whom He had already saved – would not rest in Him. Having been saved they fought against the Grace of God every step of the way to the Promised Land. God set the Law before Israel, not to save Israel, but to teach Israel – and us – that *we can never find fullness in our own power*. What does God say about trying to find fullness and salvation in our own power? Look at the Scripture:

Psalms 146:1-3 Praise ye the LORD. Praise the LORD, O my soul. {2} While I live will I praise the LORD: I will sing praises unto my God while I have any being. {3} Put not your trust in princes, nor in the son of man, in whom there is no help.

Oh, praise the Lord! Magnify His Name, for in Him alone is help. Put not your trust in princes, nor in the son of man, in whom there is no help.

Jeremiah 17:5 Thus saith the LORD; Cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm, and whose heart departeth from the LORD.

Our hearts must be focused upon the Lord, not on our own strength. It is God Who does the work.

It is God that avengeth me (2 Samuel 22:48). It is God that girdeth me with strength (Psalm 18:32). It is God that justifieth (declares righteous Romans 8:33). It is God Who worketh in us to will and to do of His good pleasure (Philippians 2:13). God saved us for His glory – and His glory He will not give to another.

God loves His glory, and for His sake we are saved *eternally*. **We are fully secured for His name's sake.** Look what the Psalmist David said:

Psalms 23:3 He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness FOR HIS NAME'S SAKE.

You who are Christians are saved *to the glory of God*. God took vessels that should have been cast away as unfit and unworthy and, Master Craftsman that He is, He saved them by His own Blood. He engineered the Gospel, then He moved to put in motion that which He engineered. Just as He saved a rebellious and unworthy Israel at the Red Sea:

Psalms 106:8 Nevertheless he saved them for his name's sake, that he might make his mighty power to

be known.

God saves the Christian – the person who has called upon the Name of the Lord – **that He might make His mighty power to be known.** Why are our sins forgiven?

1 John 2:12 ... your sins are forgiven you for his name's sake.

Your sins are forgiven **for His glory – because God would be glorified in you.** Dear friends,

Salvation is not a job that you can be called to and fired from. **Of His fullness we have received.** We do not glorify ourselves in our salvation, but glorify Him Who saved us. **There is no joblessness in God's Kingdom, for there are no jobs!**

We are told in the Book of Romans of **Abraham, a man who was saved long before the giving of the Law of Moses:**

Romans 4:1-3 What shall we say then that Abraham our father, as pertaining to the flesh, hath found? {2} For if Abraham were justified by works, he hath whereof to glory; but not before God. {3} For what saith the Scripture? Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness.

If Abraham were saved **because of his works** then he **he had something to boast of before God.** If we retain our salvation because of our works then we can get to

Heaven and one day stand before the Throne of the Lamb *boasting* as to how we overcame. Dear friends, this cannot be! But what saith the Scripture? **Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness.** Abraham trusted the Lord. He called upon the Name of the Lord, and was saved. Having believed on the Name of the Lord *the Lord saved – past tense – him.* He was saved with the result that he *kept on being saved.* Look a little further in the Romans text:

Romans 4:4-8 Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt. {5} But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness. {6} Even as David also describeth the blessedness of the man, unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works, {7} Saying, Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered. {8} Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin.

If salvation is a wage given for *working for God and being faithful* then – like any wage – God owes it to us. If God owes it to us the glory belongs to us and not God!

But God has said:

Isaiah 42:6-8 I the LORD have called thee in righteousness, and will hold thine hand, and will keep thee, and give thee for a covenant of the people, for a light of the Gentiles; {7} To open the blind eyes, to

bring out the prisoners from the prison, and them that sit in darkness out of the prison house. {8} I am the LORD: that is my name: and my glory will I not give to another, ...

God will not give His glory to another! He will be glorified! **John Piper¹ put it this way:**

“If you work for your justification, what you are doing is trying to put God in your debt. And if you succeed in getting God to owe you something, then you can boast before men and God. If you worked for justification and you succeeded, you would not get grace, but a wage. God would owe it to you. And when you got it, you would be able to say, “I deserve this”. And that, Paul says, is not what Abraham did.”

He is glorified in you, if you are saved by faith in Him. He will be glorified in the life you live, for **He will hold thy hand and keep thee, and give thee for a covenant to the people, for a light of the Gentiles.**

If you are born again Christians *you are a work in progress.* You are a trophy of Grace. You belong to God, for **of His fullness you have received, and grace for grace.**

3. The Christian Is Fully Separated

FOCAL John 1:16-17 **And of his fullness have all we received, and grace for grace. {17} For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus**

¹ In his book “Brothers, We Are Not Professionals”, page 25

Christ.

John Newton, the man who wrote the words to the beautiful song **Amazing Grace**, said:

“I am not what I ought to be — ah, how imperfect and deficient! I am not what I wish to be — I abhor what is evil, and I would cleave to what is good! I am not what I hope to be — soon, soon shall I put off mortality, and with mortality all sin and imperfection. Yet, though I am not what I ought to be, nor what I wish to be, nor what I hope to be, I can truly say, I am not what I once was; a slave to sin and Satan; and I can heartily join with the apostle, and acknowledge, “By the grace of God I am what I am.””

The Christian is not perfect, but **of His fullness we have received**. God saved you for His glory, but for His glory He will stay with you both now and throughout eternity.

If you are a Christian you are a **new creature in Christ**:

2 Corinthians 5:17 Therefore **if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.**

You have a new focus in life. You are not the center of your universe, but God is. You do not exist to lift up or magnify your Name, but you exist to give praise unto His. The **old way of doing business** is passed away – dead. Dear Christian, **you have been delivered from the**

power of darkness ..

Colossians 1:13-14 **Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son: {14} In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins:**

Along with **forgiveness of sins** you have a **certainty of citizenship**. You belong to Heaven. You are just *passing through* this life on the way to a better place. The Scripture says:

Ephesians 2:19 **Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God;**

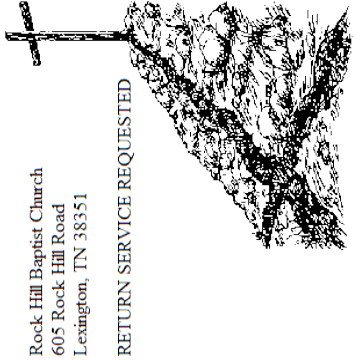
Philippians 3:20-21 **But our citizenship is in heaven. And we eagerly await a Savior from there, the Lord Jesus Christ, {21} who, by the power that enables him to bring everything under his control, will transform our lowly bodies so that they will be like his glorious body.**^{NIV}

We who are Christians belong to God. **We don't need to drive our tent stakes too deep into this earth, because this world is not our home – we are just passing through!**

An unbeliever is a person without God, a person without direction, a person without joy, and a person without

hope. **We who believe have of His fullness all received, and grace for grace.** God is at work in us. He will form **transform our lowly bodies so that they will be like Christ's glorious body.** He will keep working in us until we are what He wants us to be. He will do this, for His glory and His honor.

Blessed be the Name of God forevermore! May God touch your hearts with His Word!



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John 4:14; John 7:38-39; Matthew 18:3; John 10:26-27; Matthew 7:15; Psalms 23:1-2; 1 Corinthians 3:9; John 20:31 _____

1. The Christian Is Fully Saved

John 1:16; Acts 5:29-32; Galatians 3:13; Acts 13:38-39; Romans 11:1; Philippians 3:5; Philippians 3:8-9; Ephesians 1:7 _____

2. The Christian Is Fully Secured

John 1:17; Psalms 146:1-3; Jeremiah 17:5; Psalms 23:3; Psalms 106:8; 1 John 2:12; Romans 4:1-3; Romans 4:4-8; Isaiah 42:6-8 _____

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