

In Christ/Christ In
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John R. Gavazzoni with insights from biblical Greek by Jonathan Mitchell.

In support of the truth regarding the Seed of Christ in every man:

"In Christ," and "Christ in," are expressions that were central to the thought of Paul, the apostle of Christ, as he presented to the early church "the mystery which has been hidden from the past ages and generations; but has now been manifested to His saints." (NAS). He boldly claimed to be a minister of that mystery and to have been given cutting-edge insight that probed the deeper implications of that which had been previously hidden.

What did Paul understand regarding what was in Christ, and what Christ was in? The preferred translation of Col.1: 15,16 reveals that all things were created in, by (or through), and for Christ. Of course, a translator who consciously or unconsciously projected his own theology into the text, being influenced by his denominational bias, would be very reticent to affirm by translation that all things were created in Christ.

The first preference, by far, in the translation of the Greek preposition in question, especially as you read verse 16 in the complete context of all that precedes Paul's statement starting from the very beginning of the epistle, has to be "in." He writes of "in Christ," "in heaven," "in the word," "in all the world," "in you," "in truth," "in the Spirit," "in all spiritual wisdom and understanding," "in every good work," "in light," "in whom." In each case it is the same preposition.

Why then, we must ask, do many translations, accepted by Christian leaders and Christians in general, choose the option of all things being created merely "by" Him? Anyone else suspicious out there? Of course, all things being created by Christ, is included in the truth that all things were created in Him. But "by" indicates only causality and/or instrumentality, whereas "in" indicates the "where" of our, and all creation's Primal Origin. Within Him is the location, the place and realm of being/existence; "For within the midst of Him we

continuously live and are moved and are (or: exist)" (Translation by Jonathan Mitchell).

But to the conventional theological mind this truth is too suggestive of Christ being the Origin and Destiny of all things. But, of course, to allow by honest translation, that all things were created in Christ, opens up a glorious dimension of truth to those who are, or are being called, at least in spirit, out of the institutional church system, but for those who remain in it's clutches, such translation opens up---that is, in their estimation---a can of worms.

Now to the matter of "Christ in:" After affirming the origin of all things as existing in Christ, Paul declares that Christ is the cohesive element of all things. "...and in Him all things consist." (verse 17) Most of my readers are aware that the Greek word translated "consist" in the King James Translation means to hold together, or stand cohesively.

The idea of cohesion is definitely there, so that it is not stretching the truth to speak of Christ being the glue that holds all things together. Science bears witness to a inter-connectedness of all that makes up the cosmos with all things being joined together into what one writer called a "luminous web." What a wonderful choice of an adjective, "luminous," and we who have seen "the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ" know who makes all things luminous, or full of glory. The glory of Christ is the element within all things that binds all things into one great created expression of God Himself.

Let's approach the Christ-in dimension from another perspective, that pertaining to the subject of the seed in particularly the New Testament.

Combining Jesus' teaching with Paul's and John's, given to them by the Spirit of Christ, plus Peter's great confession of Jesus as "the Christ, the Son of the living God," and his understanding that we are born again by the incorruptible seed, the Word of God. we find the Seed=the Word=the Son=the Christ.

According to Jesus, the seed that the sower sowed was the word of God and John, in the prologue of his gospel, identifies the Word with the only begotten of the Father, while Peter identifies Jesus as Son of God who is the Christ, and Paul writes that Christ is the singular Seed

of God. Bearing that in mind, go with me to the fifteenth chapter of 1Cor.. verses 42 through the end of the chapter, but particularly 42 through 45:

Correcting the confusion within the church in Corinth regarding the resurrection in general, the resurrection of Christ and particularly the resurrection of the body, Paul writes that the body is sown (note the body spoken of as seed) a perishable body, but is raised a spiritual body. In verse 44 he writes that there is a natural body and there is a spiritual body. But he has already in the context identified them as one "it:" Verse 44, "It is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body."

The same body that goes into the ground (is planted as a seed) perishable, comes forth imperishable. There is a natural body and there is a spiritual body, but it is the natural body, transformed in resurrection, that becomes the spiritual body. Jesus didn't leave an old body in the tomb while coming out with another unrelated body. It is important to the gospel that there was no body in the tomb.

Our Lord "bore in His own body on the tree" our sins and the resultant perishability, but within Jesus was the imperishable Seed of the Christ, so that the imperishable swallowed up the perishable, transforming, reconstituting, and incorporating the former perishable into the imperishable. He did that as our representative. He was inclusive of us in the redemptive Christ event. Notice how Paul connects the dying and rising of the seed/body with the first and Last Adam.

Regarding that dying and rising of the body/seed, Paul writes, "So also it is written, 'The first man, Adam became a living soul'. The Last Adam became a life-giving Spirit." Did you get that connecting statement----"SO ALSO."

Brother J. Preston Eby has written with inspiration concerning the seed of Christ in every man. That thought is very disturbing to some who can only conceive of Christ or the seed of Christ being in Christians.

But here, clearly, we see that the same seed that goes into the ground in death, arises in life immortal, because every seed, every man, has within his corruptibility, incorruptibility lying hidden. The imperishable quality of life was not sent to the seed that died from a distant heaven. It was within the seed itself and it is Christ who is the summation, as THE SEED, of every seed that goes into the ground. All seeds are summed up in the one SEED of Pauline thought.

Thus also, Paul can write of the saving word of faith being "in your heart and in your mouth." God speaks the saving message, which is Christ, springing forth out from the midst of our own perishability. Incorruption within corruption, life within death, this is at the heart of the good news. That's why Jesus could say to dead religionists, "If you being evil know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall YOUR heavenly Father give good gifts to them that ask Him."

Do you see it, on one hand they are evil, yet God is their heavenly Father. Within them is the seed of Christ. Within them, awaiting the providentially chosen time of regeneration, the Seed lies. Protest has been made that says that it is illogical to speak of the seed of Christ being regenerated, since (it is supposed), that regeneration would imply that the Seed was perishable. But regeneration, first of all, pertains to the duplication in time of our eternal generation in Christ in eternity. If there is regeneration, there must needs first be generation.

The factors of sin and death are secondary to the purpose of the eternal reality being reproduced in the eons. That's how the kingdom of God comes to earth and God's will is done on earth as it is in heaven.

Christ, and we in Him, are the personification of the kingdom and are the desire, will and purpose of God. We, every man and woman, are born of God in and from eternity, but being injected into material space-time requires a rebirth, so that the created dimension shall be returned to its generated (eternally birthed) Origin.

The corruption that we all bear and that has been conclusively born on our behalf by Christ has within that body the eternal Body of Christ, the eternal Seed. How very sacred mankind is. Hidden within

even the most evil personality lies the glory of God, the glory that the prophets proclaimed as even presently filling the whole earth, yes, including our earthness. Man was formed of the dust of the earth, and that dust is glory dust; it is glory-incognito.

How differently extant evangelistic effort approaches the spiritually ignorant man when compared with the pristine gospel of Jesus and the apostles. The general stance of the present day evangelistic and missionary message has the preacher proclaiming that, in effect, he is generically superior spiritually to his sinner-audience. They admit no sense of Father-child relationship between God and the unbeliever.

How unlike Paul who approaches the philosophers on Mars Hill with a message that, at its heart, declares them, along with all men, to be the offspring of God.

"Hey, wait a minute," the self-righteous evangelical protests, "I got to be a child of God by obediently receiving Christ, so I will not hear of someone, much less everyone, being His child who doesn't do what I had to do to become one. Hruumph!"

But Paul's choice of word is very specific. "The Greek word translated, "offspring" clearly has to do with that which is birthed, that which has come into being, not merely as a creative act, but by a birthing process. This truth, is like springtime, as the song says, "bustin' out all over." A new day has come wherein we relate to all men as our brothers even though they may be still ignorant of their spiritual parentage.

We are sent to cause that remembering that comes by spiritual rebirth of every man's "roots." Spiritual elitism in all of its apparent and subtle forms is being seen as the sick thing that it is. We call out to men in their earthly existence, calling to them from among them, but also from our heavenly home, to come home, to come home to their home.

The old "invitational hymn" says, "Come home, come home; ye that are weary come home. Earnestly, tenderly, Jesus is calling; calling, O sinner, come home." Did we pay close attention to those words? The "sinner" has the same home as we, for he has the same Father.

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