

Presentation Handout

Value In/Through Someone Else

- One 1982 Baltimore Oriole rookie baseball card in mint condition is worth \$1,800-\$2,200 but not because of the two rookies pictured on it—Bob Bonner (short stop) and Jeff Schneider (pitcher) **but** because of the third rookie pictured—Cal Ripken, Jr.
- Cal Ripken, Jr was the hall of fame, all-star short stop for the Baltimore Orioles for 21 years, who was:
 - Rookie of the Year
 - American League MVP and All-Star Game MVP
 - The short stop who hit the most homeruns
 - A player who hit 3,000 plus hits
 - The player who played in the most consecutive games—2,632 games
 - One of the best short stops to play the game of baseball
- Just like Cal Ripken, Jr gave worth to this 1982 Bonner and Schneider rookie baseball card because he was on it, we have worth and salvation because of Jesus, not because of what we did or do!
- This truth is the focus of Paul’s Gospel teaching, which has been labeled the “in Christ” motif. What we have and are is in Jesus, not through us doing something to earn it.

In Christ Motif

- **In** Christ/Jesus/Him is the foundational truth for Paul’s Gospel understanding.
 - The idea of “in” something can imply helplessness, neediness, weakness, etc., hinting life or survival come from someone or something else, not the person or thing itself.
 - Yet, this doesn’t seem to “jive” with our idea of the Apostle Paul, this great Christian, witness and martyr, who wrote almost 50% of the New Testament Bible books along with being whipped almost to death five times, beaten with rods three times, stoned once, shipwrecked three times, plus severe treatment from the Jews & Gentiles, sleepless nights, hunger, cold, nakedness, threatened by robbers, weariness, etc.
 - How could this type of Christian focus on “in” Christ—helplessness, neediness, or weakness? That’s the beauty of the biblical gospel Paul shared and lived. It wasn’t about him, and neither is it about us {*1 Corinthians 15:9-10*; *2 Corinthians 12:9-10*}!
- Paul mentions this in Christ, in Jesus, or in Him idea at least 71 times in his New Testament books.
- Some examples are:
 - *Romans 3:24* ~ redemption (righteousness and salvation) are only *in* Jesus

- **Romans 6:3-6, 11** ~ when someone is baptized they are baptized *into* Jesus's death, burial, and resurrection in newness of life
- **Romans 6:23** ~ eternal life is only *in* Christ
- **Romans 8:1-2** ~ freedom from the law of sin and death is through the law of the Spirit of life *in* Christ
- **1 Corinthians 1:1-2; Galatians 1:210-22; Ephesians 1:1-2; Philippians 1:1-2; Colossians 1:1-2; 2 Timothy 1:1-2** ~ Christians are sanctified (set apart) *in* Christ, not through their good works. Our calling is *in* Jesus.
- **1 Corinthians 4:15-(17); 15:9-10; Philippians 3:8-9; Colossians 1:19-23, 27-(28); 2:5-7, 9-10; 2 Timothy 1:(13)-14; 2:1; 1 Peter 3:15-17; 1 John 2:3-(6)** ~ Christian lifestyle, obedience, and faithfulness are the fruit/outgrowth of being *in* Christ. This is how Paul could endure shipwrecks, beatings, whippings, persecution, etc. for God and the Gospel!
- **1 Corinthians 15:(18), 20-(22)** ~ our hope of a physical and spiritual resurrection is only *in* Christ
- **2 Corinthians 1:20-22 (21); 2 Timothy 1:13-14** ~ as Christians we are established *in* Christ by God through the Holy Spirit.
- **2 Corinthians 3:7-16 (14)** ~ correctly understanding the Old Testament can only happen *in* Christ—seeing Him revealed as the center and/or fulfillment of it.
- **2 Corinthians 5:17, 21; Galatians 3:13-14, 16-17, 26-29 (26); Ephesians 3:3-(6); Philippians 3:9; 2 Timothy 2:10; 3:15** ~ we become new “creations/righteousness of God” *in* Christ—becoming the sons and daughters of God through faith *in* Christ.
- Objective and subjective aspects of the Gospel
 - *Objective* – This is what God did *in* and through Jesus without our help, despite us. It's a historic fact, like credible news that has happened whether we believe it or not
 - *Subjective* - This is our response to what God has already done *in* and through Christ. We accept, receive it by faith, making it our own, allowing it to transform us.

Objective Gospel {**Ephesians 1:3-14; 2:4-6**}

- **Blessed already by God *in* Christ {Ephesians 1:3}**
 - God the Father has already blessed (past tense) all humanity with **all** spiritual blessings *in* Jesus!
 - What follows in **chapter 1** and parts of **chapter 2** are the blessings God has given us as human beings.
 - Some additional spiritual blessings outside of **Ephesians 1 & 2**:
 - Reconciliation of humanity with God, which He has accomplished already in Christ, not imputing their sins to them though they deserve the curse-result of them—eternal death {**2 Corinthians 5:18-19**}.
 - Life—physical and spiritual in Christ, which is spiritual light for all {**John 1:5, 9; Acts 17:25, 28**}.
 - Desire for God and His salvation—God draws all humans to Himself {**Jeremiah 31:3; John 6:43-45**}.
 - Repentance {**Acts 5:31**}—no one repents unless the Holy Spirit convicts and woos {**John 16:8-10**}.
 - Faith to exercise for salvation, blessing, and spiritual growth {**Romans 12:3**}.

- Grace {*Titus 2:11-12*}, which leads humans to accept God’s blessings and reject evil/wrong, giving them enmity for sin {*Genesis 3:15*}.
 - Obedience/righteous works {*John 14:10; Ephesians 2:10*}—no one obeys without the indwelling power of the Holy Spirit in their life.
- **In heavenly places** {*Ephesians 1:3; 2:4-6*}
 - All human beings are already *in* heavenly places—being *in* Jesus all humans have experienced, been blessed in His life events:
 - Christ’s death (implied) {*v. 5*}. We don’t have to live in sin anymore—dead people don’t sin or want to sin {*Romans 6:5-7*}.
 - Christ’s resurrection {*v. 5*}. We have divine, spiritual power to overcome sin and live a life that is holy and blameless, committed {*Ephesians 1:4; Romans 6:4; 1 Peter 1:3-5*}.
 - Christ’s ascension {*v. 6*}. We’re called to live a new life committed to God in Christ {*Romans 6:4, 12-14; Ephesians 1:4; 2:10; 4:17-5:21; 2 Peter 1:2-11*}.
 - Christ’s coronation {*v. 6*}. All humans are accepted and valued in Christ by God because God draws everyone to Himself in reconciliation {*v. 6; Jeremiah 31:3; John 6:43-45*}.
- **You’re special, valued, and wanted** {*Ephesians 1:4-5*}
 - The difference between biological birth and adoption is *choice*. An adopted child was chosen while the biological child was conceived. Yes, both are loved *but* one was consciously *chosen* by his/her parents.
 - The same with God. He chose *all* humans (yes all) *in* Jesus before the foundation of the world for salvation and holy living through Christ—we have been “predestined” to be saved (not lost) though all have a choice to accept, neglect, or reject His gift {*v. 11*}.
 - We are special to Him! God desires us to be with Him, saved for eternity, in His presence, if we choose to.
 - We have worth in Christ, not because of who we are or what we’ve done, but because God chose us in Christ Jesus, even if we feel like the “black sheep of the family.”
- **You’re redeemed** {*Ephesians 1:7*}
 - In Jesus, God has provided redemption from our sins through His blood and forgiveness of sins according to His unmerited, rich grace.
 - Let the beauty and reality of this soak in a minute, like parched, drought-laden ground drinking in life-giving water.
 - Everything we see in the Gospel paints a beautiful picture of a very extravagant, unwarranted salvation, which none of us have earned, nor deserve! Yet, the Godhead paid the ultimate price in Christ so that you could experience it.
 - They have already given it to us in Jesus, like a gift card given to us as a gift.
- **God is glorified and honored** {*Ephesians 1:6; 2:7*}
 - What God has done for us reveals He is much different than who Satan has maligned through his lies, starting in heaven to this earth. God is not like what Satan says!
 - God’s salvation in Christ Jesus reveals His true character of love, which reaches out to sinful human beings, purchasing salvation for them because of His rich grace.

- We are God’s “experiments” of grace that prove how much of a liar and deceiver Satan really is. His mask of deception is ripped off through the demonstration of God’s love, grace, and salvation for a “black sheep,” sinful human race.
- We can be part of God’s character vindication.

“To the praise of the glory of His grace, by which He made us accepted in the Beloved” *Ephesians 1:6, NKJV*

“That in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us in Christ Jesus.” *Ephesians 2:7, NKJV*

LIVING CHOICE: How does it make you feel to know you are so special to the Godhead, while not deserving any of it, nor the salvation they have purchased for you at a great cost to Themselves?