

## Complete in Christ

**An overarching question:** As believers in Jesus Christ, those in whom Christ lives, do we see ourselves as the Father sees us – complete in Christ?

We might go part way to finding an answer to this question if we listen to the nature of our prayers. Our prayers often express our view of what is happening to us or around us, incorporating our knowledge and understanding of God to whom we direct our prayers.

I think you may agree that very often we hear believers calling out to God, “Lord give me” ... more love, or more patience, or more kindness, or more of You Lord. You may say, “Well so what? What’s significant about praying like that?”

Well, let us kick off by looking at some scriptures regarding our current position in Christ, then we’ll come back to this and our overarching question.

Col 2:9-10 ... *“For in Him (Christ) all the fullness of Deity dwells in bodily form, and in Him you have been **made complete**.”*

Col 1:15 ... *“He (Christ) is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation”*

Col 2:3 ... *“(Christ) in whom are hidden **all** the treasures of wisdom and knowledge”*

A couple of things here are important.

Firstly, these three verses tell us that Christ is the **full and complete** revelation of the Godhead, and also that He is the revelation of man containing the divine nature.

Secondly, Col 2:9-10 tells us that in Him you and I have been made **complete**.

Now, “*made complete*” (πεπληρωμένοι) is more literally translated “having been filled” – perfect passive participle – which is ‘**a completed action with a resulting state of being**’. The primary emphasis of this tense is on the **resulting state of being**. In other words, you *have been filled* with the emphasis on the fact that you are **now full**. And full is full. Complete is complete. If you’re full or complete there’s no room for any more. So there’s no point in asking for more.

Eph 1:3 ... *“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with **every** spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ.”*

Every means every! There’s no more to be got.

Eph 1:22-23 ... *“and made Him (Christ) head over all things to the church, which is His body, the **fullness** of Him who fills all in all.”*

I think we get the picture now. As believers, as the born again, as the partakers of the divine nature, we’re containers filled to the full by Christ in all His fullness, so there’s no more of Him we can receive. We’re full. He fully occupies that part of us called “spirit”. 1 Cor 6:17 ... *“the one who joins himself to the Lord is one spirit.”* Gal 2:20 ... *“I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me.”*

That means that Christ and everything He is (all His communicable attributes included) was deposited in us the moment we believed in Him. He is love, peace, kind, good, gentle, patient, faithful, holy, pure, joy, merciful, gracious and more. And all of who He is, is in you. Christ in you, the hope of glory.

So asking for more of Him or His attributes may not be the right thing to ask for.

So the question we need to ask of ourselves is (and really there are a few questions):

1. While Christ in all His fullness lives in you and me, do you and I know what that means? Do we know who He is and all His attributes?
2. While Christ in all His fullness lives in you and me, do you and I intimately know Him? Do we know and understand the One, and all He is, who fills us? Or do we just know a little about Him? Have we spent time getting to know Him?
3. What are you and I doing with what has already been deposited in us and which fills us – Christ in all His fullness in you and in me.

**Example:** Let's look at an example to make this clearer. If I saw you were struggling to get about and went and bought you a nice new car and gave it to you along with lots of money for fuel, as a gift, and you said, "thank you" and then parked it up and didn't use it but kept on asking me for a lift here and there every time you needed to go somewhere, don't you think I may become a bit displeased with you? Would I not have the right to say to you that you have your own means of transport now and should use it rather than hassling me each time you need to go somewhere?

Well, is that not exactly what we are doing to our heavenly Father each time we pray and ask for more of Christ, or more love, or more patience, more ... ? We have been filled full, made complete, in Christ, but have we "parked Him up" and then ask for more?

Christ fills us so He can be intimately known by us, so that He and all His attributes can be revealed in and through us. He saw us struggling in sin and shame and unable to function as He desired for us to function, so He paid the price and with His own blood and life and gave us the free gift of Life, His life in all its fullness by which to live. But what have we done with that Life – the Life of Christ who fills us?

So, rather than asking for more love, or more kindness, or more of Christ, we should be asking the Holy Spirit to give us a revelation of the Christ in us so that we can intimately know Him and allow Him to be seen in and through us. That His attributes (love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, faithfulness, holiness, mercy, grace and so on) may occupy our thoughts and flow out and be seen in our attitudes and actions. We need to embrace the prayer of Eph 1:17-23.

We get to know Him by spending time with Him. There's no other way to get to know a person but by spending time with them. The more time we spend together the more we get to know Him.

**Our spiritual growth is not achieved by addition, but by nutrition.** Feed on His word assisted by His Spirit, who will bring you revelation of Christ in you. You've got all of Him, so just get to know Him.

**Example:** How do you become proficient at any occupation? Let's say you want to become a good motor mechanic, how do you do that? You spend time with a qualified mechanic watching and learning, you attend TAFE classes where you are taught the science behind motor vehicles, and then you apply what you're learning practically in the workshop. You do this over and over until you become

proficient, and even then you have to keep on learning as technology changes. If you learn well and work well you please your boss, you please the customers and you are blessed with a good wage and even bonuses, which makes you fulfilled and happy.

You can apply this example to any occupation. So every time you go into a bakery and see and enjoy a yummy cake or pie or whatever you so enjoy, be thankful that the baker or patisserie chef studied and practiced his/her trade so you could be blessed, and then apply this to your life in Christ and think on how important it is to know Him so He (and all His attributes) can be seen through you in bringing blessing to Him and others, and fulfilment to yourself.

So to pull this together, let's look at one more passage of scripture (Col 1:9-12) that helps bring all of this into the right perspective.

Col 1:9 ... *"For this reason also, since the day we heard of it, we have not ceased to pray for you and to ask that you may be filled with the knowledge of His will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding ...*

Here Paul prays for a specific reason ... *"that you may be filled with the (ἐπίγνωσιν = full or intimate knowledge) knowledge of His will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding..."* **"His will"** simply means ... **seeing things from His point of view**. So in whatever situation or circumstance you face it is important to intimately know Christ and see from His point of view – see what He sees and thinks and take on His attitude or response. Remember Col 2:3 which we read earlier which says of Christ, *"in whom are hidden **all** the treasures of wisdom and knowledge."* It's all in Him and He is in you, so learn of Him. Let Him flow from your spirit to your soul (mind, will and emotion part) and from there into your words and actions.

Col 1:10 ... *"so that you may walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, to please Him in all respects, bearing fruit in every good work and increasing (growing) in the knowledge (intimate knowledge) of God" ...*

If we intimately know Him who fills us and function in accordance with His point of view, we will please Him as we allow Him to be seen in and through our attitudes, words and actions. The fruit that will naturally flow out from our relationship, and be evident in and through our lives, is His fruit (His attributes) – love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness and self-control. The more we know Him and allow Him to be seen through us, the more revelation of Himself He will give us – and that's how we will grow in our knowledge of Him who is in us and fills us.

Col 1:11 ... *"Strengthened with all power, according to His glorious might, for the attaining of all steadfastness and patience with joy" ...*

This aligns with Paul's prayer for us in Ephesians 1:15-23, where he prays that we may have a revelation in the knowledge of Christ so that we may know Him and ... *"what is the surpassing greatness of His power to us who believe"* – the power that raised Christ from the dead and put Him above everything! This is the power that makes us *steadfast and patient with joy* in every, and any, situation or circumstance we face! And remember, **patience is the catalyst that brings forth the virtues of Christ in you**. See James 1:4.

Col 1:12 ... *"Giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified us to share in the inheritance of the saints in light."*

The end result of intimately knowing Christ who fills you and walking according to His point of view (His will), and all the blessing that brings, will be the joyful thanksgiving we will offer Him. As we patiently allow His will to be done in our lives and we walk in total peace and joy in Him, letting Christ be seen in all we think, say and do, we will be fulfilled and that brings joy and thankfulness. Thankfulness for the blessing of being qualified to share in the inheritance of those who are part of the Father's family – being made complete in Christ.

### **Finally**

So dear ones, let us not ask wrongly for more of what has already been fully deposited in us in Christ, but rather let's dig into that bucket of grace and see who He is and all He represents and allow Him to shine through us.

Remember, it's not by addition, but by nutrition that we grow. You can't add more – but you can grow in what you already have, you can 'put on' Christ who is in you. In accordance with Eph 4:13 you can grow in *"the knowledge of the Son of God, to a mature man, to the measure of the stature which belongs to the fullness of Christ."*

Remember Jesus' prayer John 17:3 ... *"And this is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent."*

So our goal, the direction we should be taking in prayer and meditation in God's word, is to **know Christ**. Know Him intimately, so He who fills us can be seen in and through us.

My final encouragement to us all is to:

2 Pet 3:18 ... *"grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To Him be the glory, both now and to the day of eternity. Amen."*