

Message Title: Opening the Gift of what is true about you

Date: 12-25-22 Christmas Day at the BC Chapel

- **Question: if there were something you knew would one day be true about you- you were certain this thing you hoped for would come to pass- would it be possible to claim this a reality NOW?**
- **Term for this idea is “Prolepsis”, and in simplest terms, it means ‘already, but not yet’. Websters says this: “the representation or assumption of a future act or development as if presently existing or accomplished”**
- **Today the term is primarily used in terms of a literary technique- where the author lets you know the ending in advance, but then walks you through the hopefully compelling details of the story without the stress of wondering how it’s going to end.**
- **For example- Big Star Wars fan- current series is ANDOR, about Cassian Andor and the birth of the rebellion. Plot is tense, we follow Cassian through great danger- but we’re never afraid of him dying because we know he was in ROGUE ONE, which happens after all the events of Andor! The entire story is a prolepsis- we see it through the lens of knowing the rebellions ultimate victory is assured.**
- **Can you think of a spiritual parallel? Of course you can. The idea of a prolepsis- already but not yet- is at the heart of the entire story of Christ’s incarnation- from Christ’s birth, through his life, and to his death and resurrection.**
- **THE WORD has already been made flesh! God has already come to us! The power of sin and death has already been defeated! Christ has already Risen! From God’s perspective- if we can even begin to grasp this- the ultimate victory and reconciliation of God’s people has ALREADY HAPPENED, because it was accomplished at the cross.**
- **But we, we still live in the NOT YET. We are in the midst of human history, living our part in the great story of God’s work to reconcile his creation back to himself. As Paul says in 2 Corinthians 5, we are ambassadors of God’s work of reconciliation RIGHT NOW, and if you go read Colossians 1, you’ll see God already accomplished this reconciliation through the Cross.**
- **You can go into deep theology with this concept, but it is also incredibly practical, and it is an incredible GIFT.**
- **This is the reality of our hope of Transformation as disciples of Jesus- as men and women who, IN CHRIST, have been brought from DEATH to LIFE.**
- **You see, from our perspective, we would look to scripture and proclaim- YES, through faith in Christ we have received forgiveness, we are now New Creations, and as a New Creation, our source of life is now the indwelling presence of Jesus Christ.**
- **This is a resounding New Testament truth! But it’s not just good doctrine- this is our hope of actually experiencing change and transformation in our SOUL- how we THINK, FEEL, and ACT. This is the process of BECOMING – in our lived experience- who we ALREADY ARE in our identity in Christ.**
- **There is a verse in Hebrews that describes this truth**
Hebrews 10:14...by one sacrifice he has made perfect forever those who are being made holy.
- **You see, as believers in Christ Jesus... we are on a journey. A journey from what already has been done to what is absolutely certain to be done.**

- **Think of it this way. Our journey of UNION WITH CHRIST started through the Grace and love of Christ.**
- **It will be brought to its complete conclusion through the Grace and love of Christ**
- **And RIGHT NOW, in the NOT YET, we are taught to REMAIN in the Grace and love of Christ. To ABIDE- to live, breath, and exist WITHIN- fully surrendered to- the reality of what is ALREADY TRUE, through our dependent faith in the presence and love of Christ.**
- **Author Bob George says that there are many people trying to live a life they don't have, (just look at social media) but also many who have a Life they do not live**
- **Friends, as believers- NEW CREATIONS in Christ- we have been given a new life, but often we do not live in the good of what we have been given.**
- **Over years I've shared a quote from a pastor named David Kuykendall- he his passed away- from Oak Cliff Texas. David was my father's mentor, and he dedicated his life to teaching the truth of our union with Christ. In his book on Romans 5-8, David said this:**
- **There are things that are TRUE OF US In Christ, that we will not EXPERIENCE as truth, unless we choose to BELIEVE that they are true and LIVE as if they are true.**
- **So, in the spirit of opening gifts at Christmas, lets take just a minute to unwrap this incredible gift of what God has said is TRUE OF YOU, In Christ. All these scripture references are on handout- take time to go back through them, consider them, wrestle with what they mean for you, in the reality of life as it really is!**
- **RIGHT NOW**
- † You have been justified- completely forgiven and made righteous In Christ- and you have been given complete peace with God. *(Romans 5:1)*
- † You have died to the power of sin's rule in your life. *(Romans 6:1-6)*
- † You are forever free of condemnation. *(Romans 8:1)*
- † You have been bought at a price. You are not your own. You belong to God. *(1 Corinthians 6:19-20)*
- † You are a child of God, and part of God's family. *(John 1:12, Romans 8:16)*
- † You are Christ's friend. *(John 15:15)*
- † You are a temple (home) of God. His Spirit (His Life) dwells in you. *(1 Corinthians 3:16, 6:19)*
- † You have been crucified with Christ, it is no longer you who live, but Christ lives His life through you. The life your are living is Christ's life in you. *(Galatians 2:20)*
- † You have been blessed with every spiritual blessing in Christ. *(Ephesians 1:3)*
- † You have been redeemed, forgiven, and are a recipient of God's lavish Grace. *(Ephesians 1:7-8)*
- † You have been raised up and seated with Christ in heaven. *(Ephesians 2:6)*
- † You have direct access to God through the Holy Spirit. *(Ephesians 2:18)*
- † I may approach God with boldness, freedom, and confidence.

(Ephesians 3:12, Hebrews 4:16)

† You have been made complete in Christ. *(Colossians 2:10)*

† You are a new creation, a new person. *(2 Corinthians 5:17)*

† You are righteous and holy. You are a saint!
(Ephesians 4:24, Ephesians 1:1)

† You are chosen of God, holy, and dearly loved. *(Colossians 3:12)*

† You have been given a spirit of power, love, and self-discipline. *(2 Timothy 1:7)*

† You are the light of the world. *(Matthew 5:14)*

- ***Every single one of these is the TRUTH of who you are, In Christ, according to scripture. So how do we EXPERIENCE this our truth? Well, that's the question isn't it? Our instinct is to say, "I need to try harder." There are libraries of Christian books you can but with all sorts of practices and techniques to produce these characteristics in our life. Some of these can be good.***
- ***But here's the deal. We can't produce these on our own. At least not in a sustained way, and not naturally.***
- ***The miracle of true transformation is that only CHRIST can produce His life in us, and so our great calling, our first place passion, is to KNOW HIM. As the author of Hebrews said, to "fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and COMPLETER of our faith".***
- ***Or, as Jesus said (John 15:5), "I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing."***
- ***And friends, to fix our eyes on Jesus- to abide and remain in him- surround ourselves with him- this is a CHOICE. This is the choice to:***
 - ***Truly believe who He is, and who He has made you. By faith, moment by moment, to agree with Jesus that THIS IS WHAT IS TRUE.***
 - ***Truly surrender all of your life to His purpose and work. This is ongoing posture, every day.***
 - ***HARD ONE! Inviting God to bring any part of you to brokenness so that you know no other God's before him. So that you hold no rights apart from him. So that we have no first place passions- or primary source of identity- other than Him.***
 - ***That you slow down enough, and take the time enough, to hear him, to listen to him***
 - ***To desire to experience the joy of resting in Him and living in obedience to him.***
- ***This is the gift of LIFE we have received from God- the LIFE OF CHRIST, within us - one step of faith at a time transforming us into Christ's nature and Character.***