

The Life of a Christian

Part 1

The founder of Christianity, Jesus the Son of God, through His life here on earth gave us the perfect example of what the life of a Christian should be.

The word Christian means little Christ, one who is a small example of Jesus Christ Himself [“ian” – little, Christ “*anointed one*”].

Just looking at one example of the life and teaching of Jesus Christ that is recorded by Matthew leaves us wondering has any human, other than Jesus Christ Himself, lived a life that conforms to such teaching?

Matthew 5:1-12 [NIV] *“Now when he saw the crowds, he went up on a mountainside and sat down. His disciples came to him, and he began to teach them, saying: “Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted. Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth. Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled. Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy. Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God. Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called sons of God. Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. “Blessed are you when people insult you, persecute you and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of me. Rejoice and be glad, because great is your reward in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.”*”

Who could of their own strength live up to such a standard, let alone the rest of Christ’s teaching?

The key to our being able to live this life as a “*little Christ*” is recorded by John in the final teaching Christ gave to His disciples.

John 14:1, 12-18 [NIV] *“Do not let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God; trust also in me.” ... “I tell you the truth, anyone who has faith in me will do what I have been doing. He will do even greater things than these, because I am going to the Father. And I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Son may bring glory to the Father. You may ask me for anything in my name, and I will do it. “If you love me, you will obey what I command. And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Counsellor to be with you for ever, the Spirit of truth. The world cannot accept him, because it neither sees him nor knows him. But you know him, for he lives with you and will be in you. **I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you.**”*”

Here is the key, Christ in us, living His life again in us.

Paul understood this basic principle.

Galatians 2:20 [New Jerusalem Bible] *“... the life that I am now living, subject to the limitation of human nature, I am living in faith, faith of [literal translation of Greek] the Son of God who loved me and gave Himself for me.”*

This is **not** something special or some high level of Christianity, but the normal life of a Christian.

How can this happen in our lives?

God makes it very clear in Holy scriptures that there is only One answer to every human need, His Son Jesus Christ.

In all His dealings with us, God works by taking us out of the way and substitutes Christ in our place.

The Son of God died instead of us for our forgiveness of sins.

The Son of God lives in us for our deliverance from sin.

The Son of God lives in us to enable us to receive the gift of eternal life.

So we are speaking about three substitutions.

Our understanding of these three substitutions is found in our understanding of the Blood, the Cross and the Resurrection of Jesus Christ our Saviour, High Priest and Master.

We are all born with a big problem, it is called human nature.

This nature originated with the disobedience of the first created human beings.

Romans 5:19 [NIV] *“For just as through the disobedience of the one man the many were made sinners, so also through the obedience of the one man the many will be made righteous.”*

Adam, helped on by Eve, caused the sin of disobedience to the Creator God to enter into human life.

This same attitude of disobedience has continued within human nature throughout all generations.

King David understood this.

Psalm 51:5 [NIV] *“Surely I was sinful at birth, sinful from the time my mother conceived me.”*

David was born into a sin-filled world that even influenced his nature within the womb.

Paul also understood this principle.

Romans 7:18-20 [NIV] *“I know that nothing good lives in me, that is, in my sinful nature. For I have the desire to do what is good, but I cannot carry it out. For what I do is not the good I want to do; no, the evil I do not want to do, this I keep on doing. Now if I do what I do not want to do, it is no longer I who do it, but it is sin living in me that does it.”*

Paul understood it was his Adamic nature inherited from Adam that caused him to sin, against his own will not to do so.

We are sinners NOT because of ourselves but because of Adam.

Because by birth I come out of Adam, therefore I am part of him.

There is a oneness in our human life.

Our life comes from the life created by God in Adam.

Consider this statement:

If my great-grandfather had died at the age of three years where would I be?

I would have died in him, for my existence is totally bound up in him.

In just the same way, the life experience of every one of us is bound up with that of Adam.

None of us can say “I was *not* in the garden of Eden when Adam and Eve sinned.”

Potentially we were all there when Adam and Eve yielded to the serpent's words. So we are all involved in their sin being born "in Adam".

We have received from Adam and Eve all that they became as a result of their disobedience, that is the nature of a sinner.

Romans 3:23 [NIV] *"for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,"*

Our trouble is in our heredity, not our personal behaviour.

So unless we can change our parentage there is no hope of deliverance for us.

Romans 5:12, 21 [NIV] *"Therefore, just as sin entered the world through one man, and death through sin, and in this way death came to all men, because all sinned" ... "so that, just as sin reigned in death, so also grace might reign through righteousness to bring eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord."*

Sin entered humanity through Adam, eternal sin-free life enters into humanity through Jesus Christ [the second and last Adam] by His physically entering into human life, and overcoming the world, that is the curse of the nature of humanity.

How does God bring about this change of parentage?

God is faced with two problems when He begins to bring about our conversion:

- a) Our sins
- b) Our sinful nature with which we were born

How does God deal with our sins?

Simply stated by the blood of His Son Jesus Christ.

Romans 5:8-9 [NIV] *"But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us. Since we have now been justified by his blood, how much more shall we be saved from God's wrath through him!"*

The blood is for an atonement [covering] of our sins.

First of all we need forgiveness for the sins we have committed, lest we come under the judgement of God and die eternally.

Romans 6:23 [NIV] *"For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord."*

What we deserve as a result of how we live is death, because of our rebellion against our Creator God.

Psalm 51:4 [NIV] *"Against you, you only, have I sinned and done what is evil in your sight, so that you are proved right when you speak and justified when you judge."*

It is against our Creator that we sin and He is justified to place on us the death penalty.

How does God justify NOT putting us to death, without compromising with His righteousness and holiness?

God looks on the Blood of His Son Jesus Christ as a substitute for our shedding our life blood.

Hebrews 9:11-12 [NIV] *“When Christ came as high priest of the good things that are already here, he went through the greater and more perfect tabernacle that is not man-made, that is to say, not a part of this creation. He did not enter by means of the blood of goats and calves; but he entered the Most Holy Place once for all by his own blood, having obtained eternal redemption.”*

Jesus Christ on His resurrection and ascension to the throne of God took His Own Blood with Him and it is now there before God’s throne as He and the Father sit on the “*mercy seat*”, his throne in heaven.

The Blood of Christ is therefore NOT primarily for us but for God the Father.

For us to understand the value of the Blood of Jesus Christ we need to understand the value that God the Father places on the Blood of His only Son.

The earliest recorded shedding of the blood of the lamb [Jesus Christ as the lamb of God] chosen by God is depicted in the original Passover conducted by the Israelites in Egypt.

A male lamb was chosen without any blemish and sacrificed, the blood was put on the lintel and doorposts of the house where the family was eating the flesh of the same lamb.

Exodus 12:23 [NIV] *“When the LORD goes through the land to strike down the Egyptians, he will see the blood on the top and sides of the door-frame and will pass over that doorway, and he will not permit the destroyer to enter your houses and strike you down.”*

When God saw the blood He passed over that house and the lives of those inside were saved.

The sight of the blood saved their lives.

The blood of Christ the Lamb of God totally satisfies God’s righteousness and holiness.

Our only part in this transaction is to confess we are sinners and to accept God’s evaluation of the Blood of His Son Jesus Christ.

1 John 1:8-10 [NIV] *“If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness. If we claim we have not sinned, we make him out to be a liar and his word has no place in our lives.”*

Confess our sins on a daily basis before God and we have his promise that the Blood of Christ will satisfy His righteousness and holiness.

John 3:16 [NIV] *“For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.”*

Accept in faith the Word of God.

Don’t be like Adam and Eve who allowed Satan to influence them and cause them to disbelieve what God had said.

Christ’s Blood deals with our past, present and any future sins but how does God deal with the rebellious nature that we have inherited from Adam and Eve?