

Your 101 Riches in Christ

by

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Your **101** Riches in Christ

“But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord.” - 2 Corinthians 3:18



One of my favorite stories about the power of identity is a story that comes from the pages of history. Helen of Troy often used to go out on campaigns of conquest with the ships of her mighty fleet. One day, while the fleet was in port to take on provisions, Queen Helen somehow became separated from the other members of her party. Through a series of terrible mishaps she lost all memory of who she was or where she had come from. In her confused state, she became easy prey for the evil elements on the waterfront, and soon she had been put to work as a prostitute in a filthy hovel. This powerful woman, who possessed the authority to command an entire navy to conquer nations, had absolutely no memory of her former great position of wealth and power! She looked at her current condition of degradation and despair, and took her personality cues from that.

The captain of the ship on which Helen of Troy had been traveling took a party of men and searched the city for the great queen. He finally discovered Helen in her squalid surroundings. The captain could scarcely believe his own eyes!

“Your Majesty,” he gasped in astonishment. The queen stared back with blank disinterest. The face of the man whom she used to command did nothing to jar her back to reality.

Recognizing that Helen had utterly lost her sense of identity, the captain spoke to her clearly and firmly: “*You* are the Queen, Helen of Troy!”

KNOWLEDGE

On hearing those words which defined the true nature of who she was, Helen of Troy's eyes cleared, and she rose to her feet. In spite of her incredibly foul surroundings, she stood tall and erect, every line of her body bearing witness to her royal posture. She stretched out her arm for the captain to take, and said calmly, "Let us go, Captain."

Before the captain had identified her **position** as a royal, regal queen, Helen's eyes had been focused on her current condition. She lived a defeated life because that was what her conditions told her she was.

Most of us have, by God's grace, been spared the kind of horrifying degradation that Helen of Troy fell into. But I see a strong parallel in our *spiritual* lives as Christians and Helen's shocking fall from her royal life. Far too many of us focus on our spiritual **condition**, rather than our spiritual **position**. It is our position as believers in Jesus Christ that I wish to focus on throughout this program.

When I am making a motivational presentation, I often talk to the audience about a journey of discovery that I call:

"See Me, Free Me, Be Me"

I like to encourage people to stand on a solid core of Christian doctrine and belief. My doctrine and my faith are like the pedestal that supports a statue. If my pedestal of doctrine and faith is strong and solid and wide, the statue will stand tall and straight, solid and secure. Children may climb upon the statue, heavy winds and rain may pound upon it, tree limbs might even come crashing down upon it, but the statue will remain upright, sturdy and formidable. But if the pedestal on which the statue rests is made of inferior materials, if it is weak or crumbling, a relatively slight push will cause the statue to topple over, possibly to shatter into pieces.

Our lives are very similar to that statue in the park. If our core of doctrine and faith is solid, the storms of life - the unexpected disasters of the deaths of loved ones, financial reversals, family problems, etc. - will leave us weathered but still

standing tall and straight. If, on the other hand, our pedestal is flimsy or rotten, it won't take much to topple us.

I believe that we, as Christians, have largely abdicated our authority in virtually every area of society - education, government, business - and we have done so because we don't really know who the Lord is and what He has done for us. We have toppled over into a sea of subjectivism because we have forgotten our spiritual roots, our doctrinal core. If we don't know what our doctrinal core is, we have no solid base to stand on! We can't possibly discern what is more important to us, what is less important, and what is not important at all. We often seem incapable of resisting the voices of militant humanism that seem so prevalent in our society. We lack the confidence in ourselves that we need to boldly proclaim truth and righteousness to a world which so desperately needs to learn about the Way, the Truth, and the Life.

In business, we attend time management seminars which teach us to prioritize our schedules. But until we know the core of truth, we will never be able to begin scheduling our priorities. If we haven't grasped the truth of our true position in Christ, we are merely "busy." We aren't engaged in meaningful, purpose-driven activity because we don't know who we really are! While our corporations may become profitable, we will not be engaged in the infinitely more important function of building lives and passing on a legacy, because we aren't entirely sure what that legacy is!

So it is vital for all of us to take a good, long look at what our position in Christ is. What is the pedestal on which we construct our lives? This is the point at which we move through this three-step discovery process: "See Me, Free Me, Be Me."

See Me is a process of illumination. God's Word tells us that, as Christians, we are "*a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.*" (2 Corinthians 5:17) As a new creation in Christ, I have been given a number of spiritual *possessions*, gifts that have been given me by my Heavenly Father. I have also been given several new *positions* as a child of God, perhaps the most glorious being that I have been **justified**, literally declared legally righteous outside of me in the mind of God. (*"But to him who does not work but believes on*

STRENGTH

Him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is accounted for righteousness, just as David also describes the blessedness of the man to whom God imputes righteousness apart from works ...” - Romans 4:5-6).

When I have studied and absorbed my positions and possessions in Christ, I can truly **SEE ME** for the first time. I am no longer focused on my condition (in which I may currently be suffering from disillusionment and defeat) as the basis of my acceptance before God. Rather, I rejoice in my rich spiritual heritage as a child of God.

I believe in what God declares me to be. I am no longer working **for** self-worth, I am working **from** imputed-worth. I have internalized those most important words: “I am somebody **in Christ!**” I am confident, but not arrogant. In fact, it is impossible to become arrogant, because my spiritual possessions are all gifts from the Father. (*“What do you have that you did not receive?”* Paul challenged the Corinthian believers in 1 Corinthians 4:7) At this point, I slide easily into the next exciting phase of the journey of discovery: **liberation**.

Free Me is that liberational step. As I come to believe in my new position in Christ, I am liberated from the personality parasites of self-effacement, self-castigation, and self-hatred. I no longer feel I must compare myself to others, compete with them, impress them, or prove anything to them. I am not intimidated by their beauty, brains, brawn or bucks! My one hundred and one positions and possessions in Christ make me a magnificent contributor to other people and to my environment, able to give and receive the very best in quality relationships and quality effort. I can step forth with strength and confidence, while, at the same time, I am also free to recognize the imputed worth of my fellow believers, as well! I now see you, not as a “human doing” (*“That’s Jane from the choir,”* or *“There’s Geoff, the music minister”*), but I see my brothers and sisters in Christ as magnificent creations: miraculous, “blood bought human beings!” New creations in Christ. (*“Therefore if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creature; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come.”* - II Corinthians 5:17).

If I have extricated myself from the prison of competition, I no longer need to incarcerate anyone else in that same dreary dungeon. I am now freely and joyously

able to be **me!** *“You shall know the truth and the truth shall set you free.”* John 8:32

Be Me is the final, transformational phase of growth. I am free to reach out, to celebrate others' accomplishments, to recognize their talents and strengths, without fear of being eclipsed by those talents. I can encourage them in their walk with the Lord. I am now operating from the mental model of **FROM EXCELLENCE TO EXCELLENCE**. *“But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkenss into his marvellous light...”*
I Peter 2:9

I am able to concentrate on celebration and contribution. Instead of eyeing people with the thought, *“What can I gain? What can I get from them?”* I now wonder, *“What can I give? How can I contribute to this person's continued growth in Christ? How can I share my joy with them?”* I have developed the mind set of servant leadership.

It all begins with our position as a child of God. When we look at the Pauline epistles, especially Ephesians, we see that we are being taught the essence of our Christian being. *“My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge.”* (Hosea 4:6) Just as Helen of Troy needed to define her identity in order to act like a queen, we, too, must stand on the solid pedestal of our Christian **position** before we can begin to set about changing our **condition**.

A Christian defines himself through Christian doctrine. Our doctrine is our root structure as believers. We need to learn the **doctrines** of Christianity before we can *practice* it. When you're talking to someone about the Lord, the distinctions of Christianity are doctrinal in nature. We can all talk about loving one another, and the Christian fruit of love is crucial, but until we understand the Christian doctrine, we have no understanding of why we are to love, or how we are to love! Our love would differ little from the love of worldly people. In his book, *What is Faith?*, J Gresham Machen wrote: *“We are taught the applications of Christianity without being taught the Christianity which is to be applied.”* We have all attended seminars which tell us what to *do* - how to live the Christian life - but there are precious few presentations of **who we are**. The fourth, fifth, and sixth chapters of

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the book of Ephesians only make sense in light of chapters one, two and three!

I call this the difference between **root** ministry and **fruit** ministry. A tree can bear beautiful, delicious fruit, but the tree's roots keep the tree standing. The roots provide the nourishments which allow the fruit to survive and thrive. Without the roots, the tree will fall and the fruit will die.

Please note that there are no applications in these 101 things. I am not going to tell you anything to *do* here. Rather, *Your 101 Riches in Christ* is an encouragement to believe something that has already been **done** on your behalf. These positions and possessions are our foundation.

Doctrine and Devotion

This is **doctrine**. There is nothing to *do* in these doctrinal truths. We are to believe and count as **true what God calls to be true. What God says about me is more real than what I see in myself!** These possessions and positions are to be apprehended by *faith*, not by feeling. This program is an unfolding and an explanation of what God has done for us in Christ.

Some people say, "give me devotion and not doctrine. Give me Christ and not creed." The **devotion is the fruit**, and **doctrine is the root**. These people fail to realize that there is no devotion without doctrine! The Christ we worship is the Christ of Scripture, not the Christ of our imagination. Doctrine without practice is dead, but practice without doctrine is blind! The truth of the Christian life is God's Word. Our focus should be on who and what God is, and what He has done. The focus of the Christian life is **not** on who and what we are, but on who God is and what He has done.

In Luke 10:19-20, Jesus said, "*Behold, I give you the authority to trample on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy, and nothing shall by any means hurt you. Nevertheless do not rejoice in this, that the spirits are subject to you, but rather rejoice because your names are written in heaven.*" I added emphasis to the second half of verse twenty to highlight the fact that our

LIBERATION

Lord was telling the seventy disciples that their joy should not be on their Christian experience (*“authority ... over all the power of the enemy”*). Although that was important, it was *more* important for them to rejoice in what had already been done for them (*“your names are written in heaven”*). Similarly, in chapter 11, a woman “said to Him, ‘Blessed is the womb that bore You, and the breasts which nursed You!’” Jesus corrected her, “More than that, blessed are those who hear the word of God and keep it!”

In both cases, I believe Jesus is telling us to focus on the doctrines of our faith first, and on the Christian experience second. Many of us have memorized Paul’s famous verse in God’s word, 2 Timothy 3:16-17 - *“All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.”* Notice that the first thing on Paul’s list of profitable things is **doctrine**, which will make us complete. When we have a proper understanding of that doctrine, then we are ready to go out and practice the Christian life.

Paul taught us to *“walk worthy of the calling with which you were called.”* (Ephesians 4:1) In order to do this, we must first understand what that calling is, we must discover the incredible spiritual pedestal that God has given us to stand on, *then* we can go out and do the things that God’s Word encourages us to do. As a Christian man or woman, I don’t need to run around looking for who I am. I have God’s **Truth** that tells me who I am! We are part of God’s royal family, yet so often we behave as paupers, because we don’t know who we are.

The Emasculation of Our Faith

We are confronted in the 21st century with a new breed of Christian teachers, men who are devoid of doctrinal and historical content. Oh, to be sure, what they are teaching is Christian, but they are teaching only the **applications** of Christianity without the **doctrinal and historical foundation** that supports those applications, the pedestal which keeps the statue standing solid and secure.

SECURITY

Unwittingly, the devotees of this false thinking are teaching a self-refuting philosophy, because apart from the historical creed, there is no Christ; apart from historical doctrine there is no devotion. We are told by the apostles that we are to believe on Christ as He is presented in Scripture, and to serve the Christ of Scripture on the basis of knowing His will for our lives as is revealed in Scripture.

Apart from these foundational truths, the applications of Christianity become empty shells, devoid of power and real meaning and its free grace uniqueness. Hence, these emasculated truths can be easily adopted by any pagan and integrated into their own religious system without any real conflict, because controversy arises only when we compare or contrast **roots**, not **fruits**.

Teaching that is centered around devotion and devoid of doctrine leaves a believer with no objective, historical defense of his Christian position, because his true defense is grounded exclusively in the historical and doctrinal truths of Christianity and **not** in his heart-centered experience.

The Christian who sings, "You ask me how I know He lives, He lives within my heart" is caught in a subtle trap of thinking he or she is accurately defending the claims of Christianity by comparing his Christian experience with the non-Christian's experience. This is not to say that the believer's experience with Christ, if it is a Biblical one, is not to be used as a valid testimony to the transforming power of Christ to change lives. However, our experience, as God honoring as it may be, is never the ground for our faith. It is only, and always, the **fruit** of our faith, not the **root**.

The problem with this rootless defense is that, sooner or later, doubts begin to surface from an ungrounded faith; and if the man's philosophy does not produce the desired results, then he will adopt something else that seems to work well for him emotionally. His motto thus becomes, "Whatever works."

A simple monetary exchange gives us a good illustration of the misjudgment of this kind of reasoning. When you hand a merchant a one hundred-dollar bill, he isn't concerned whether or not it will buy one hundred dollars worth of goods, but whether or not it is a **genuine** hundred-dollar bill. The question in his mind is not

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“Does it **work**,” but, “**Is it true?**”

However, if the merchant accepts a counterfeit bill in exchange for one hundred dollars worth of merchandise, then it “worked.” But just because it worked does not make it a **true** one hundred dollar bill. It was a **lie** that **worked temporarily!**

This example illustrates why we are never to say that we believe in Christ because it “helps,” or because belief in Christ has “changed me.” If these or similar reasons are our sole defense of the Gospel, we will be rendered shocked and defenseless when we meet anti-Christian religionists who can match us experience for experience. Therefore, we Christians are not called upon to compare our experience with another person’s, but to **contrast truth against error.**

Consequently, we do not believe Christianity because it “works,” but because it is **true**; i.e., God has revealed Himself to His people in Word and deed in history. We can unhesitatingly and unabashedly proclaim that **Christianity begins with a historical “DONE,” not an experiential “DO.”** Hence, the Gospel is a work of God for me in history and not the work of God in my heart. We are not to compare Christianity to other religions. Rather, we are to **contrast** them. Christianity is not grounded in experience, but in doctrine and history.

Satan wants today’s Christianity to make a clean break with the past. In making the break with history, Christian men and women are severing their only lifeline and source of objective truth. Apart from this objective and historical truth, we cannot say “I believe,” because what we believe is grounded in history, **HisStory.**

“*Come now, and let us reason together,*” says the Lord.” (Isaiah 1:18) Christianity is a **rational, reasonable** faith. Christianity is **so** rational, it is **so** reasonable, that I believe it is the only intellectually defensible system of thought on the planet! It is not a faith based simply on our emotional state.

If Satan can divest our minds of the historical relevancy of Christianity, then he has pulverized the very bedrock that supports the subject matter of all Christian doctrine. Namely, that God has entered into history, and gave to us a trustworthy body of revelation regarding His nature, purposes, and redemptive plan for His

WISDOM

people through His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ.

Therefore, if our link with this historical foundation is severed, then our beliefs are reduced to mere mythological imaginations, and we are left with our own religious emotions about God; which, in effect, is man creating another god (who is an illegitimate imposter), and not honoring and worshiping the true God Who has revealed Himself in His Word and history.

Our beliefs are not free-floating fancies, but are grounded in inscripturated revelation called the Bible, which is God's only infallible interpretation and explanation of all of His historical events. This is why we must constantly refer to the Christianity that we believe as **biblical** and **historical**.

The focus of our faith must be on what God says, not on what I see. In every other philosophy, the focus is on self, on what is inside of me. But in Christianity, the focus is **outside** of me. The focus is on what is spoken by God. We are honoring God's Word. Our focus is on His revelation. So our starting point should not be on what we're doing for the Lord, but on what He has done for us! "*We do not look at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen.*" (2 Corinthians 4:18) You become what you behold. You embody what you embrace. And as we study God's Word, and learn exactly what our identity in Christ is, we begin to take on the qualities that God has already given us. "*But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as from the Lord, the Spirit.*" (II Corinthians 3:18) The relationship begins with sitting down and beholding what our heavenly Father has done for us. He has given us a new, Christ-centered identity. We never have to work for a sense of identity again!

If I focus on myself, if my entire theology is centered around me, and my experience, I become *self*-centered, instead of God-centered. I will reproduce more of my own kind. But if my focus is on God, through His Word, then I begin to reproduce more of God's kind! Tragically, I see far too many defeated Christians today. Their focus is on themselves and on their sins and shortcomings. In other words they are concentrating on their spiritual **condition**. So many of our ministries today are focused on our sinfulness. We meet in groups to discuss our

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sinfulness, (this is not to say we should minimize our sin), and we spend little or no time discussing and learning about our spiritual **position**, which is the **legally imputed righteousness of Christ**. We don't learn about the imputed, legal righteousness that we have in Christ. We apprehend our spiritual position by **faith**, not by observing our current condition.

As a result, too many believers see themselves as the toenail clippings of the body of Christ. "God will never do anything with me," they murmur sadly. "I'll never really amount to anything." What they have completely missed - or, more likely, have never been taught - is what God has already **done** for them! **These 101 riches in Christ were given to us by God. This is a final, irreversible, historical fact.**

The great reformer, Martin Luther, used a phrase: "*Simul iustus et peccatum.*" The literal translation is "At once, at the same time, 100% justified, also 100% sinful." To paraphrase, it means that Christian men and women are simultaneously one hundred per cent sinful inside of themselves, in their flesh, and one hundred per cent righteous in Christ, outside of themselves, in the mind of God. Luther was pointing out the dichotomy between our **condition** as sinful human beings, and our perfect, sinless **position** as a member of God's family. If we're not careful, we can easily focus on our condition, instead of our position, as we should. We can allow the sinfulness of our condition as fallen human beings to totally eclipse our perfect, sinless position as a child of God!

Oak or Eyesore?

Imagine yourself standing in the middle of a field with a group of your friends. You are gathered around a magnificent, ramrod-straight oak tree, which towers to the sky and sports huge leafy branches which supply shade to passers by, and offer shelter and nourishment to the wildlife in that field. The tree has been flourishing there for hundreds of years - solid, formidable, and stately. You and your friends are admiring this magnificent giant, when suddenly one member of your group peers closely at the tree's trunk.

"My goodness," your friend sniffs critically, "look at the spots of fungus growing

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on that tree!” You look, and yes, there are some spots of fungus growing at the base of the tree. They *are* ugly, but really, if your friend hadn’t mentioned them you would never have noticed. But suddenly everyone in your group seems to have forgotten about the tree, and have begun to focus on the fungus!

“Isn’t it ugly!”

“The tree is absolutely ruined.”

“It’ll never be any good for anything!”

“Somebody should cut it down.”

Your friends have given the tree its identity from the fungus, instead of from the tree itself. The oak is royal, majestic, and magnificent. But rather than talking about the magnificence of the tree, all your friends want to talk about are the spots on the outside.

You, my dear brothers and sisters in Christ, are that oak tree. “*You are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people,*” 1 Peter 2:9 tells us. Your 101 Riches in Christ are gifts to you from our heavenly Father, and that gift will never be withdrawn. Never! “*He Himself has said, ‘I will never leave you nor forsake you.’*” (Hebrews 13:5) Your heavenly Father doesn’t see those fungus-like spots of sin that mar your outward condition. When he looks at you, He sees only the perfect righteousness of Christ!

Learning the Right Motive for Service

When I first became a Christian, everyone wanted to keep me busy **doing** things. Here I was, twenty years old, out running around, doing all sorts of things in the name of the Lord. But no one ever said to me, “Sit down, and let me tell you who you are.” That is my desire in the creation of this program: Let’s sit down together, you and I, and stop doing for a few moments, and let’s talk together about your position as a Christian man or woman, an adopted child of the living God. We need to trust God in these things, and bury them in our hearts. *This* is the renewing of our minds. *This* is 2 Cor 3:18, “*being transformed into the same image from glory*

HEALING

to glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord." This is the new man, the new woman, which is really Christ. The fruit of the Spirit is the fruit of Christ. The Holy Spirit of God is conforming us to our position in Christ.

What Your Positions and Possessions Have in Common

As we get ready to move into this study, let's take a quick look at the characteristics that all of your 101 Riches in Christ share in common.

1. They are known to us only through God's inspired, infallible, authoritative Word.

We become aware of these gifts only through God's revelation, by "sola Scriptura" - by Scripture alone. *"So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God."* (Romans 10:17) *"Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth."* (John 17:17)

2. They are the result of God's work, not by the efforts of men, churches, or governments.

They are solely and completely a work of God. They are the result of *monergism*, i.e., the work of One. They are NOT the work of *synergism*, or combined and cooperative effort and energy. *"But as many as received (Jesus), to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name: who were born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God."* (John 1:12-13)

3. They are the result of God's sovereign volition, not man's volition.

It was God who chose to give you these gifts. *"It is God who works in you both to will and to do for His good pleasure."* (Philippians 2:13) *"All that the Father gives Me will come to Me, and the one who comes to Me I will by no means cast out."* John 6:37

4. They are eternal gifts. They are not temporal. *"For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord."* (Romans 6:23)

5. They are irreversible gifts. They cannot be retracted, reversed, or revoked.

You cannot lose them or give them away. *"For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."* (Romans 8:38-39) *"...for the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable."* (Romans 11:29)

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6. **They are apprehended by faith, not by our feelings.** We do not realize the receipt of these gifts through our central nervous system. They are **non-experiential**. We honor these gifts through our faith. We do not validate them through our feelings. *“So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God. (Romans 10:17) “And without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is and that He is a rewarder of those who seek Him.” (Hebrews 11:6)*
7. **They are given to us instantaneously, not progressively.** These are not positions and possessions which we acquire or develop over time. *“Most assuredly, I say to you, he who believes in Me has everlasting life.” John 6:47*
8. **They are all for the glory of God, not for the praise of men.** *“For from Him and through Him and to Him are all things. To him be the glory forever. Amen.” (Romans 11:36)*
9. **They are perfect gifts.** We don't maintain them. We can't add to them or improve them. *“Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and comes down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow of turning. (James 1:17)*
10. **These gifts are the theory of our practice.** Theory without practice is dead, but practice without theory is blind! Your 101 Riches in Christ are the philosophy which lays the essential foundation for the walk of faith. *“For no other foundation can anyone lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ.” (1 Corinthians 3:11)*

If you study these ten points of commonality for Your 101 Riches in Christ, you will see that even these ten are subsumed under one vital glorious fact: they are all **the completed work of God**, and **have absolutely nothing to do with the work of man!** The apostle Paul explained in 2 Corinthians 4:18 that *“We do not look at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen. For the things which are seen are temporary, but the things which are not seen are eternal.”* My **condition** here in time (those “things which are seen”) is **imperfect**, it is **changing**, and it is **sinful**. However, my **position** (that which is “unseen” and “eternal”) is **perfect, unchanging**, and **sinless in Christ**. When I act according to the *“sin that dwells in me”* (Romans 7:17) and behave in a way which I know is contrary to the way that God would have me live, I can quickly and confidently go back to the place of my acceptance. Where does God focus? Does He focus on my current, fleshly, sinful condition? He does not! My acceptance is in Christ. Where, then, is

the focus of our transformation into new creations in Christ? Is it in my imperfect, changing, sinful **condition**? No, it is in my acceptance by God through Christ. It is in my perfect, unchanging, sinless **position**.

Why is it that so many of us in the body of Christ don't want to talk about the sins that we struggle with? All of us have them, but we never say anything about them to anyone. We stride into church with a wide smile pasted on our faces, telling everyone that "I'm fine, praise God, everything is fine." Meantime, my marriage is in trouble, my teenager is on drugs, and I've been having "a few" drinks to try and relax at night, but "Everything's just fine!"

The reason we're afraid to share our struggles and heartache with anyone is the awful fact that, for far too many of us, **the focus of the Christian life IS the Christian life!** So we feel we must maintain some kind of "perfect" existence.

The reason we teeter along this agonizing, performance-based tightrope is because we in the body of Christ haven't been taught where our acceptance lies. The focus of the Christian life is **never** the Christian life. Rather, **the focus is on God, Who He is, and on what He has done for us.** The focus is **outside** of me, it is **away** from my life, not on me!

Three Kinds of Christian Walks

In my ten years as a pastor, and in all the churches I have attended and taught in since, I have met three kinds of Christians: "Fake It" Christians; "Forget it" Christians; and "Faith it" Christians. I've already begun to describe the **Fake it** Christian. He's up there on the tightrope. He's the "Omni-being": omniscient, omnipresent, omnipotent. He is all-sufficient, all-seeing, all-perfect, in need of nothing - or at least that is the veneer that he allows the world to see. "I'm a Christian," he announces proudly, "and I'm just about perfect!" Oh, he might admit to his closest friends that he drives "a few" miles an hour over the speed limit, or that he got angry with his children ("once"), but he'll never, ever, admit to a soul the areas he's really struggling with.

UNDERSTANDING

“Fake It” works hard at developing his current **condition**. He reads his Bible, he prays, and he serves. He becomes highly visible to the body of believers. His Christian life becomes a kind of spiritual one-upsmanship, just like the Pharisee who went to pray at the temple and thanked God that he wasn’t like the tax collector! “Fake It” figures he has it all together, that his many works are the evidence of his great faith, and he is suspicious of those “pew-sitters” who don’t display his same level of commitment. “Mmm, Jack,” he murmurs to me dolefully. “I notice you weren’t at church Wednesday night. I’ll pray for you, brother.” The insinuation is clear. My level of commitment just doesn’t measure up to “Fake It’s” stringent standards.

This attitude actually becomes a kind of spiritual bullying, in which weaker members of the group are bludgeoned by the good appearances of the stronger ones! There is no one in “Fake It’s” group who will ever follow James’ instructions to *“Confess your trespasses to one another, and pray for one another, that you may be healed”* (James 5:17), because to reveal any sign of weakness to this group is like a chicken in a henhouse that gets a spot of blood on its body - all the other birds will come along and peck it to death. So everyone comes to church, puts on a smiling mask and tells anyone who inquires that “Everything’s great, I’ve got it all together.” They build walls around their true selves, and construct a bright, clean veneer for the world to see. Meanwhile, they’re dying inside! They actually believe that everyone else really is living a perfect life, and they are the only one who is floundering. They are caught up in the worldly game of trying to compare, compete, impress, and prove something to their fellow believers.

What “Fake It” either doesn’t realize - or refuses to consider - is that **none of us** ever “has it all together!” You see, **none of us will ever arrive at perfection in this life!** Don’t take my word for it, read about the imperfections of the greatest evangelist who ever lived - the apostle Paul. He freely admitted, *“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.”* (Romans 7: 18-19, NIV) Paul called himself the *“chief”* of sinners. (1 Timothy 1:15) The apostle Paul was no “Fake It” Christian! He knew full well that none of us, if God granted us one hundred years to live, and every single day was consumed with sacrifice and service, if our hearts were completely yielded and consecrated to Christ, that our

LIBERATION

condition would still never match our position! Our condition will always be **progressive and imperfect**. We all have an invisible sign painted on our foreheads that reads “**UNDER CONSTRUCTION.**” There will always be room for improvement. There will always be countless times when we fail to “*be perfect, just as your Father in heaven is perfect.*” (Matthew 5:48)

All of us know, intuitively, that we can never attain to the kind of sinless perfection that Jesus Christ exemplified during His life here on earth. Our condition as sinful human beings may improve, we strive to become “better,” as the Holy Spirit continues to sanctify us and conform us to the likeness of Christ, but we will never live sinless on this earth, not even for one hour! Paul said that he had not been made perfect (Philippians 3:12), so why should we expect to be?

Many Christians despair of living the “perfect” existence that “Fake It” and his crowd purport to maintain. Like Paul, they cry out to God from the privacy of their prayer closet, “O wretched man that I am!” They have struggled and prayed and gritted their teeth, but they just don’t seem to “measure up.” Furthermore, they’re beginning to suspect that “Fake it” can’t really measure up, either! They notice that “Fake It’s” wife never smiles, and she seems cold and distant. His teenage daughter rarely comes to church, and when she does, she looks bored and listless. Even “Fake It” himself, who is supposed to exhibit the fruit of the Spirit, such as love, joy, and peace, seems awfully aloof for a man who is supposed to be filled with joy!

This second group of disheartened Christians, men and women who have trusted in Christ as their Savior but just can’t seem to live the Christian life, are “**Forget It**” Christians. These folks just give up. “I can’t do it,” they confess. “I’m not as good as all these others. My goodness, they never sin! But I still have some bad habits. I smoke a few cigarettes, and I like a glass of wine from time to time. I still lose my temper, and when I do, I often curse. Sometimes, late at night, I check out the skin movies on the cable channels. If I told the people at church about this stuff, they’d never want anything to do with me!”

Once again, “Forget It” has put his focus on living the Christian life. Where “Fake It” Christians are living a life of phariseeism, “Forget It” Christians just give up,

SECURITY

and go back to living a life of carnality. Where “Fake It” Christians say that the Christian life is difficult, “Forget It” Christians say the Christian life is impossible! “Fake It” boasts in his deeds. “Forget It” doesn’t boast at all. While these two types of Christians might seem, at first blush, to be polar opposites, they are actually very similar. They are both focused on their current **condition**. We sit through sermon after sermon which is all about *our* lives and *our* actions and *our* walk with the Lord. Instead of seeking “*those things which are above*,” we set our minds on “*things on the earth*.” (Colossians 3:1-2) I call this “navel Christianity.” We sit around contemplating our navels, instead of fixing our eyes on Jesus “*the author and finisher of our faith*.” (Hebrews 12:2) We become inordinately **self**-absorbed, instead of delighting ourselves in the great things that God has done for us! And this is because no one has ever shared **positional** truth with us.

There is a third type of Christian, and this is the individual who is truly able to say with Paul that they have “been set free from sin.” (Romans 6:18, 22) This is the “**Faith It**” Christian. They have entered into God’s rest by **faith**. (Hebrews 4:3) The great “Hall of Fame of Faith” in Hebrews 11 is a glorious roll call of saints who lived by faith. They believed in “the evidence of things not seen.” (Hebrews 11)

When Paul cried out, “*Who will deliver me from this body of death?*” in Romans 7, he immediately answered his own question: “*I thank God - through Jesus Christ our Lord!*” (Romans 7:25) Then, in Romans 8:1, Paul elaborates, “*There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit.*” He knew that in spite of his failures to live the Christian life perfectly, day in and day out, he had been **justified** (declared righteous in God’s sight) by means of his **faith** in Christ. (Romans 5:1) He knew that God would never count his sins against him. (Romans 4:8) Paul took his eyes off himself and his **condition** (“this body of death”), and he placed his trust in his **position**, knowing that “*God imputes righteousness apart from works.*” (Romans 4:6) Likewise, Abraham didn’t look at his condition, at a body that was “as good as dead” (Hebrews 11:12), but instead he trusted in what **God said** about him, not in what he saw in himself.

The “Faith It” Christian knows that what God has done for him is far greater than anything he could ever do for himself. He doesn’t try to cover up his

EXCELLENCE

sinfulness with a flurry of good deeds. He has internalized the truth of 1 John 1:8, which acknowledges, *“If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.”* **There is no amount of righteousness that we can muster to cover over our sinfulness.** *“We are all like an unclean thing,”* Isaiah tells us, *“And all our righteousnesses are like filthy rags.”* (Isaiah 64:6) None of our *“righteousnesses,”* none of our good deeds, can possibly cover over the uncleanness of our sinful nature! Just as it was God who had to construct clothing to cover Adam and Eve’s nakedness in Genesis 3, He also is the only One who can declare us righteous. Realizing this, the “Faith It” Christian does not perform good works to improve his standing with God, because he knows that is impossible. The Christian life is not a difficult life to live, it is **impossible**, apart for the supernatural enabling power of the Holy Spirit!

The “Forget It” Christian is really right on the doorstep of becoming a “Faith It” believer, because they both, like the Roman centurion, would say, *“Lord, I am not worthy that You should come under my roof.”* (Matthew 8:8) “Fake It” Christians will tell you that the Christian life is difficult. The implication is that only a special few can successfully live it. The disheartened “Forget It” Christian says, “No, the Christian life is impossible.” The “Faith It” Christian joyfully agrees! “Yes,” he will exult, *“the Christian life is impossible!”* **The Christian life is a supernatural life lived by supernatural means. That way God gets the credit!** I can’t offer God my life, no matter how sinless I may like to think it is, as a sin offering, because my good deeds are **filthy rags**. Too many of us seek to wear our good deeds the same way the Pharisees wore their phylacteries, as a kind of badge of righteousness and purity. We seek to sew fig leaves of righteous living over our sinful condition. Filthy rags!

The “Faith It” Christian walks by faith, not by sight. He trusts that what God has said in His Word has already been done for him. He does not trust in what he sees in himself. This is how we are able to *“confess (our) trespasses to one another, and pray for one another.”* We can be open and transparent with each other on the basis of our position in Christ. Since he is walking in the Spirit, as Galatians 5 instructs us to do, he is able to truly display the **fruit** of the Spirit: *“love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control.”* (Galatians 5:22-23) His fruit is not the artificial variety which the “Fake It” Christian seeks to display so prominently.

WISDOM

In 1 Corinthians 5, a man was excommunicated from the church because of a sexual relationship with his stepmother, but in 2 Corinthians, they brought him back into the fellowship. Paul urged the Corinthians to “*forgive and comfort him,*” and to “*reaffirm your love for him.*” (2 Corinthians 2:7-8) They could deal with each other in this way based on the scriptural fact that they equally possessed Christ imputed righteousness as the legal ground upon which God accepts every Christian.

Please allow me to digress for just a moment to assert my very strong belief that we in the body of Christ are to practice accountability and church discipline. We cannot and must not allow members of the church to live in open and defiant sin. God gave us explicit instructions about church discipline for this very reason. Indeed, we are always to strive to grow in our knowledge of God and in good deeds done in His service. Peter urged his fellow believers to give “*all diligence,*” and to “*add to your faith virtue, to virtue knowledge, to knowledge self-control, to self-control perseverance, to perseverance godliness, to godliness brotherly kindness, and to brotherly kindness love.*” (2 Peter 1:5-7) Clearly, we are to “*walk worthy of the calling with which you are called,*” as Paul instructed the Ephesians. (Ephesians 4:1) **But our acts of righteousness are not the grounds for our acceptance before God.** We can’t parade our “virtuous” resumes past each other, because “*There is none righteous*” on the basis of living the Christian life, “*no, not one.*” (Romans 3:10) Absent God’s amazing grace, there would be no body of Christ! The only reason we can “*come boldly to the throne of grace*” (Hebrews 4:16) is through our position in Christ, not through our condition in ourselves. We are completed in Christ (Colossians 2:10), and accepted in Christ (Ephesians 1:6). The “worthy walk” that Paul describes in Ephesians 4-6 can only be understood when they are brought under the umbrella of the positional truths that are laid out in Ephesians 1-3.

Traveling Third Class with a First Class Ticket

I once heard a story about a young boy who was sent by his parents from his home in England to visit his grandparents in America. His parents couldn’t afford passage for the whole family, so it was agreed that the boy would travel alone on the ship to

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America. Every day during the voyage, the boy would pass by the first-class dining salon. He smelled the savory aromas from within and admired the mouth-watering dishes laid out at the buffet. The people at the table all seemed to be smiling and laughing - when they weren't filling their mouths with all manner of sumptuous foods! The boy knew he could never afford to pay for such glorious meals out of the tiny pittance his parents had given him for spending money on the trip. So he would stare longingly at the people seated at the brightly-colored tables, eating their food with gleaming silverware and drinking steaming cups of coffee and cocoa. Then he would go back to the third-class mess to a meal of thin porridge and powdered milk.

On the final day of the voyage, the boy ate his final meal in the mess, and then went up to take one last look at the beautiful, brightly lit oasis that was the first-class dining salon. He saw giggling children who clutched pastries and cakes that smeared sweetness across their faces. "Oh, what it must be like to eat such food," the little boy thought morosely. "What I wouldn't give to live like that!"

Suddenly a kindly steward stopped to talk to the boy, interrupting his mournful reverie. "I say, young man," the steward said pleasantly, "you look so sad! "Aren't you glad to be putting ashore?"

"Oh, yes sir," the boy replied shyly. "I was just wishing ... golly, that food in there sure looks delicious!"

"Well, why not go eat some?" the steward inquired matter-of-factly.

"Oh, no, sir," the boy objected sadly. "I just like to stand out here and watch the people enjoying themselves. I could never afford that kind of fine food!"

"Well, of course not lad," the steward rejoined cheerfully. "But perhaps your parents can! What kind of ticket did they get you?"

"My mum just told me to go to the mess," the boy replied. But he obediently held out his ticket for the steward's inspection.

"The mess!" The steward was amused and exasperated at the same time. "Yes, the

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first-class mess! D'you mean to tell me you've been standing outside here wishing you could go in? Your parents bought you a ticket that paid for your every meal in there! You should have been sitting in that dining room all along!"

Far too many of us live our lives in the same manner as that little boy. We never take advantage of a gift that has already been given us! We live as spiritual paupers, when we are actually wealthy beyond our wildest dreams! God has already paid for your ticket to a wonderful passage through life, with all the possessions and privileges that accompany a first class voyage! Your ticket to the finest of living is laid out for you on the following pages. And that ticket is stamped with bold red letters: "Paid in full by the blood of Christ." Jesus paid the full price for you to *"have life, and ... have it more abundantly."* (John 10:10)

So let us together behold our riches in Christ. Let's enjoy the beholding! Let us rejoice in the Lord, and worship Him in truth - a truth that is in harmony with who He is and who we are.

"But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord." II Corinthians 3:18

HEALING

Your 101 Positions and Possessions in Christ

**1. The Bible is God's gift to you.****The peg:** Pen.

The picture: A giant pen is writing in an open book (*Bible*). The pen is suspended in the air and is writing all by itself in the book, as if held by an invisible hand. The Bible has a large ribbon and bow around it, showing that it is a gift to you.

"Beloved, while I was very diligent to write to you concerning our common salvation, I found it necessary to write to you exhorting you to contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints." Jude 3; also see 1 Corinthians 2:16; 2 Timothy 3:16.

**2. You are united to the Trinity.**

I am in The Father, Son, and Spirit as a position. They are in me as a possession.

The peg: Swan.

The picture: Picture several wooden swans in the form of a carousel, like a child's merry-go-round at a country fair. The wooden swans are all held together by steel connecting rods. They are united to each other by the shiny pieces of steel.

Father in me: *"... one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all."* Ephesians 4:6.

I in the Father: *"To the church of the Thessalonians in God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ ..."* 1 Thessalonians 1:1.

Son in me: *"At that day you will know that I am in My Father, and you in Me, and I in you."* John 14:20.

I in the Son: *"There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus."* Romans 8:1.

The Spirit in me: *"Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, that we might know the things that have been freely given to us by God."* 1 Corinthians 2:12.

I in the Spirit: *"But you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you."* Romans 8:9a.

STRENGTH

**3. You have been justified.**

You have been declared legally righteous in God's sight.

The peg: Lips.

The picture: See a pair of lips in profile. Hanging down by them is the white powdered wig of a judge. Now you can begin to see the entire judge's face in profile. He is solemnly

banging his gavel, declaring "*Righteous in God's sight!*"

"But to him who does not work but believes on Him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is accounted for righteousness, just as David also describes the blessedness of the man to whom God imputes righteousness apart from works ..." Romans 4:5-6.

**4. You have been given the gift of faith.**

The peg: Boat.

The picture: Jesus is sleeping in the back of the boat. The storm is raging all around, and His disciples wake Him, and cry, "Lord! We are perishing!" Jesus replies, "O you of little faith."

"For to you it has been granted on behalf of Christ, not only to believe in Him ..." Philippians 1:29. Also see John 6:29; Acts 3:16; 1 Corinthians 4:7; Ephesians 2: 8-9; Hebrews 12:2; 2 Peter 1:1.

**5. You have been given a purpose for life, which is to give glory to God.**

The peg: Dog.

The picture: The dog is a sheepdog. See him circling around the herd of sheep, barking and nipping, keeping all the sheep together. "Well, that's his purpose in life," you think. The

sheep are all herded together now, and suddenly your dog rears up on his back legs and raises his paws to the sky! The sheepdog is giving glory to God! You realize he has a higher *purpose* after all, which is to *give glory to God*.

"Therefore, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God." 1 Corinthians 10:31. Also see Colossians 3:17.



6. You have been given power for life and godliness.

The peg: Monkey's tail.

The picture: Picture a huge, powerful King Kong. He flexes his muscles, showing off enormous biceps (*power*), but at the same time he has a halo over his head (*godliness*).

“... as His divine power has given to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him who called us by glory and virtue ...” 2 Peter 1:3; also see Ephesians 1:19; 3:20.



7. You have been made a bond servant of Christ.

The peg: Upside-down golf putter.

The picture: You are the *servant*, kneeling before Christ, your *Master*, presenting Him the golf club. It might help to picture yourself in the rough clothing that a slave would wear.

“... And a servant of the Lord must not quarrel but be gentle to all, able to teach, patient ...” 2 Timothy 2:24.



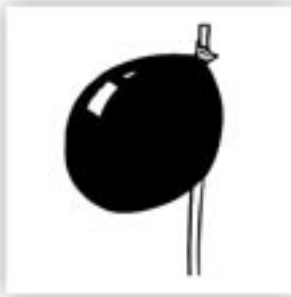
8. You have been delivered out of darkness into His wonderful light.

The peg: Snowman.

The picture: It is a dark night, and you are peering out the front door of your home. You see, dimly at first, a snowman approaching you out of the darkness. As he comes into the light streaming out your front door from the house behind you, you see he is holding a package out to you. The snowman is *coming out of the darkness into the wonderful light* from your home to bring you a *delivery*.

“He has delivered us from the power of darkness and conveyed us into the kingdom of the Son of His love ...” Colossians 1:13.

UNDERSTANDING

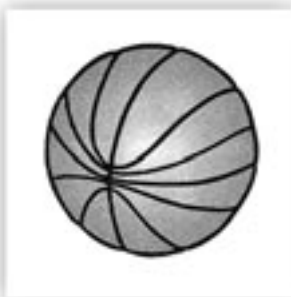


9. You have been brought into the kingdom of the Son He loves.

The peg: Balloon on a stick.

The picture: Disney's Magic Kingdom, the castle, with hundreds of balloons streaming up in front of it.

"He has delivered us from the power of darkness and conveyed us into the kingdom of the Son of His love ..." Colossians 1:13.



10. You are an heir.

The peg: Basketball.

The picture: Michael Jordan, who is also known as "Air" Jordan, is sailing through the air, soaring at an impossible altitude, preparing to slam-dunk a basketball into the hoop.

"Wow," marvels an awestruck spectator, "he's really catching some air!" (*Heir.*)

"The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, then heirs - heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ ..." Romans 8:16-17a.



11. You have been given spiritual gifts through Christ.

The peg: Pen and pencil set.

The picture: Someone has given you the pen and pencil set as a gift. They didn't bother to wrap it, but they did put a bright ribbon and bow around the clear plastic case, letting you know it is a *gift*.

"But to each one of us grace was given according to the measure of Christ's gift." Ephesians 4:7



12. You are the light of the world.

The peg: Desk lamp.

The picture: If the lamp alone is not enough to remind you, picture yourself squinting up into the light from a desk lamp, muttering "Gosh, this *light* is bright!"

"You are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hidden." Matthew 5:14.

LIBERATION

**13. You are the salt of the earth.****The peg:** Butterfly wings.

The picture: A large Monarch butterfly is flying along, holding a salt shaker in a pair of legs that look remarkably similar to a bird's legs. The salt shaker is heavy, so the butterfly is really laboring to stay airborne! It is holding the

salt shaker sideways, so *salt* is spilling all over the ground below.

"You are the salt of the earth; but if the salt loses its flavor, how shall it be seasoned? It is then good for nothing but to be thrown out and trampled underfoot by men."

Matthew 5:13.

**14. You are seated in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus.****The peg:** Upside-down chair.

The picture: Flip the upside-down chair right-side up, and pull up a *seat next to Jesus in the heavenly realms*.

"... and raised us up together, and made us sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus ..." Ephesians 2:6.

**15. You have been adopted.****The peg:** Stapler.

The picture: Think of all the paperwork that would need to be filled out and signed in order to complete a legal *adoption*. In order to save all those adoption papers, when the whole stack was completed, you might take them all and staple them

together. You'd probably have to lean pretty hard on the stapler to get the staple to go through!

"... having predestined us to adoption as sons by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will ..." Ephesians 1:5

SECURITY



16. You have been made a citizen of the kingdom of heaven.

The peg: Tape dispenser.

The picture: Once you received a certificate of citizenship, you'd want to display it proudly, wouldn't you? So take your tape dispenser and tape your certificate of *citizenship in the kingdom of heaven* to the wall.

"For our citizenship is in heaven ..." Philippians 3:20.



17. You have fellowship with the saints.

The peg: Drinking straw.

The picture: Back in the *"Happy Days,"* students used to visit the ice cream shop, where a boy might share an ice cream soda with his sweetheart. Picture these two lovebirds sitting together in the booth, sipping their ice cream soda together, each from their own straw. They're having *fellowship*.

"...but if we walk in the Light as He Himself is in the Light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus His Son cleanses us from all sin." 1 John 1:7



18. You have been made perfect for eternity.

The peg: Hourglass.

The picture: The hourglass keeps perfect time. Because there are no moving parts in it to break, it will always keep perfect time. *Perfect for eternity*.

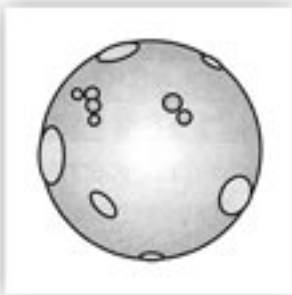
"For by one offering He has perfected forever those who are being sanctified." Hebrews 10:14.

EXCELLENCE

**19. You have been redeemed.****The peg:** Lollipop.

The picture: The word redemption means, in the original Greek, to free on the release of a payment. The payment was that Christ had to die. So the picture is going into a store to buy a lollipop. Paying for the lollipop is to *redeem it*.

"... knowing that you were not redeemed with corruptible things, like silver or gold, from your aimless conduct received by tradition from your fathers, but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot." 1 Peter 1:18-19.

**20. You are a citizen of the new Jerusalem.****The peg:** Full moon.

The picture: You gaze up at the night sky at a beautiful full moon. It is one of those spectacular harvest moons, appearing to be so close that you can clearly see the skyline of a city there on the moon, the city that is *the new*

Jerusalem.

"Then I, John, saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from heaven saying, 'Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people. God Himself will be with them and be their God.'" Revelation 21:2-3, also see Hebrews 11:16b.

**21. You are a king.****The peg:** Tree.

The picture: Picture a tree with a giant, glowing crown perched at its peak. It is a *king's* crown.

"... and has made us kings and priests to His God and Father, to Him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen."

Revelation 1:6.

WISDOM

**22. You are a priest.**

The peg: A pair of swans.

The picture: Old Testament priests used to offer up various animals as a burnt offering. Picture a *priest*, holding one swan under each arm, approaching a giant stone altar.

“... and has made us kings and priests to His God and Father, to Him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.” Revelation 1:6.

**23. You have peace.**

The peg: Frog:

The picture: Your frog is a real 1960's hippie frog, with long hair, wild-looking fluorescent colored clothes, maybe a guitar hanging around his neck, and he's flashing the “*peace*” sign at you.

“Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ ...” Romans 5:1.

**24. You share in the death of Christ.**

You share in the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ.

The peg: Flower.

The picture: At a funeral, there are usually lots and lots of flowers, particularly around the casket. You approach a large casket, you are surprised to see that there are two people in the

casket. One of them is you, and the other is Jesus. You are *sharing in the death of Christ*. *“Or do you not know that as many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death? Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been united together in the likeness of His death, certainly we also shall be in the likeness of His resurrection, knowing this, that our old man was crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves of sin. For he who has died has been freed from sin. Now if we died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him, knowing that Christ, having been raised from the dead, dies no more. Death no longer has dominion over Him. For the death that He died, He died to sin once for all; but the life that He lives, He lives to God. Likewise you also, reckon yourselves to be dead indeed to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus our Lord.”* Romans 6:3-11.

FREEDOM

**25. You are a steward.****The peg:** Rabbit.

The picture: Picture a giant cauldron, and there, plopped in the center of it is a poor, helpless rabbit. His ears are sticking straight up out of the pot, like a cartoon rabbit's ears. He is looking around nervously, because he knows he is about to be

“stewed”! (*Steward.*)

“As each one has received a gift, minister it to one another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God.” 1 Peter 4:10

**26. You have hope.****The peg:** Tadpole.

The picture: The tadpole's hope is to become a frog. He is looking forward to the day when he will be able to swim around with the other frogs. The tadpole has a great hope.

“... because of the hope which is laid up for you in heaven, of which you heard before in the word of the truth of the gospel ...” Colossians 1:5

**27. You have been forgiven.****The peg:** Duck.

The picture: You are a farmer, and you have a beautiful wooden henhouse, a safe haven for chickens and ducks. A wily fox has tried to get into the henhouse to get at your pet duck, but you've caught him in the act. The fox is cringing and cowering at your feet, expecting you to react vengefully. But as you hold your duck protectively under one arm, you point out towards the open fields and tell the fox gently, “Go in peace. You are *forgiven.*”

“In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace ...” Ephesians 1:7.

KNOWLEDGE

**28. You are a soldier for Christ.**

The peg: Lily pads.

The picture: Picture a *soldier* in full combat gear, moving with determination through neck-deep water in a swamp. The soldier begins to climb up out of the water, and he is covered with lily pads from the swamp water.

“You therefore must endure hardship as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. No one engaged in warfare entangles himself with the affairs of this life, that he may please him who enlisted him as a soldier.” 2 Timothy 2:3-4.

**29. You are more than a conqueror.**

The peg: Praying mantis.

The picture: A giant praying mantis is flying over your city or town. He’s so huge, he actually blocks out the sun! He’s coming to *conquer*.

“Yet in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us.” Romans 8:37.

**30. You have been made acceptable in God’s sight.**

The peg: Bagel.

The picture: You order a bagel at a restaurant. You take a bite out of it, only to discover that it is completely rancid! In fact, it might just be the most horrible thing you’ve ever tasted in your life! Immediately, you spit it out, ignoring the wide-eyed

stares of the other diners. You look up at the waitress, and say, “Ma’am, this bagel is just not *acceptable*.”

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

HEALING

**31. You are a stranger to the world.****The peg:** Lipstick

The picture: A woman from a foreign land has come to visit the United States. It is the custom of her country to wear an extremely garish, fluorescent colored green lipstick. As she walks through the streets of the city, people keep staring at her strange makeup. She is a *stranger to this world*.

“Beloved, I beg you as sojourners and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts which war against the soul ...” 1 Peter 2:11.

**32. Your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit.****The peg:** Spaghetti.

The picture: You are eating a huge bowl of pasta because it’s good for you. You want to give yourself the best nutrition, because *your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit*.

“Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own? For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God’s.” 1 Corinthians 6:19-20; also see 1 Corinthians 3:16-17.

**33. You are a letter of Christ.****The peg:** A choir.

The picture: A choir is singing. But instead of words coming out of their mouths, large white envelopes are floating out of their mouths! They’re floating out like bubbles and filling up the room! Each envelope has a large, black cross printed on it. They are *letters of Christ*.

“... clearly you are an epistle of Christ, ministered by us, written not with ink but by the Spirit of the living God, not on tablets of stone but on tablets of flesh, that is, of the heart.” 2 Corinthians 3:3

STRENGTH

**34. You are a laborer for Christ.****The peg:** Fork.

The picture: You're a dishwasher, dressed in a white kitchen worker's uniform. You are poised over a huge sink, washing a giant pile of forks. "Wow, this is hard *labor*," you tell yourself. You are *laboring for Christ*.

"Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth." 2 Timothy 2:15.

**35. Angels minister to you.****The peg:** A piece of bread.

The picture: Picture a piece of bread, wafting through the air towards you on large white *angel's* wings. If it helps you, instead of a flying piece of bread, make it a flying piece of *angel-food* cake.

"Are they not all ministering spirits sent forth to minister for those who will inherit salvation?" Hebrews 1:14.

**36. You are the bride of Christ.****The peg:** Saxophone.

The picture: A *bride* is playing the saxophone at her wedding. She looks a little odd, in her long, flowing wedding gown and veil, with those cheap, dark sun glasses!

"Then one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls filled with the seven last plagues came to me and talked with me, saying, 'Come, I will show you the bride, the Lamb's wife.'" Revelation 21:9



37. You are God's workmanship.

The peg: Candy cane.

The picture: Two *workmen* dressed in overalls and painters hats (or whatever garb helps you think of a workman) are busily working on a giant candy cane, hammering, sanding, and polishing. The candy cane is their *workmanship*.

"For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them." Ephesians 2:10.



38. You have liberty in Christ.

The peg: Pretzel.

The picture: You are feeding pretzels to the Statue of *Liberty*.
"Now the Lord is the Spirit; and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty."

2 Corinthians 3:17.



39. You have authority over Satan.

The peg: Microphone.

The picture: Actually, you aren't using a mere microphone, you are using a megaphone to thunder at Satan, *"Get behind me, Satan!"* The blast of wind and sound coming out of the megaphone knocks Satan off his feet. You have real *authority in Christ* over Satan!

"... But Paul, greatly annoyed, turned and said to the spirit, 'I command you in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her.' And he came out that very hour." Acts 16:18.



40. You have eternal life.

The peg: Life ring.

The picture: A life ring saves you. In Christian parlance, when you are saved, you have *eternal life*.

"Most assuredly, I say to you, he who believes in Me has everlasting life." John 6:47

UNDERSTANDING



41. You are a minister of reconciliation.

The peg: Fishing rod.

The picture: “Follow me,” Jesus told Peter and Andrew, “and I will make you fishers of men.” (Matthew 4:19) A *minister* should be a “fisher of men.” So the fishing pole makes you think of the *minister of reconciliation*.

“Now all these things are from God, who reconciled us to Himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation,...”

2 Corinthians 5:18.



42. You are an object of God’s love.

The peg: Worm.

The picture: An earthworm has raised his head up out of the ground and is staring up into the sky. A bright spotlight is shining down on the worm, and within the beam of light, large hearts are floating down and covering the worm. The

worm is *an object of God’s love*.

“But God, who is rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved) ...” Ephesians 2:4-5.



43. You are standing on the rock of Jesus Christ.

The peg: Seagull.

The picture: A seagull is standing securely on a large black rock, jutting out of the middle of the bright blue ocean.

“... and all drank the same spiritual drink. For they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them, and that Rock was Christ.”

1 Corinthians 10:4; also see Matthew 7:24, 1 Corinthians 3:11.

LIBERATION

**44. You have eternal security.****The peg:** Harbor.

The picture: Ships at sea are always looking for a *safe harbor*. What safer harbor can there be than the *eternal security* that comes by means of faith in Jesus Christ?

“And I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; neither shall anyone snatch them out of My hand. My Father, who has given them to Me, is greater than all; and no one is able to snatch them out of My Father’s hand.”

John 10:28-29.

**45. You are an ambassador for Christ.****The peg:** Whale.

The picture: God used a great fish (whale) to deliver Jonah to Nineveh. Jonah was sent to Nineveh to deliver a message from God, or to be *an ambassador for Christ*.

“Now then, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were pleading through us: we implore you on Christ’s behalf, be reconciled to God.”

2 Corinthians 5:20.

**46. You can glory in all tribulations.****The peg:** Fishing hook.

The picture: You have a fishing hook caught in your arm. If the pain wasn’t bad enough already, a tribune (Roman soldier) in full battle dress is tugging on the hook in your arm with two hands, pulling like a man in a tug-o-war. Yeeow!

Nevertheless, because of your positions and possessions in Christ, you remain calm. In fact the *glory* of God is shining around the whole situation. Your arm, the hook, and the tribune (“*tribulation*”) are all glowing with a dazzling light. You can *glory in all tribulations*.

“... we also glory in tribulations, knowing that tribulation produces perseverance; and perseverance, character; and character, hope.” Romans 5:3-4.

SECURITY



47. You have been circumcised, but not by human hands.

The peg: Harpoon.

The picture: You thought you had it bad with a fish hook in your arm! Now you've been *circumcised, but not by human hands*, but by a harpoon!

"In Him you were also circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, by putting off the body of the sins of the flesh, by the circumcision of Christ ..." Colossians 2:11.



48. There is no condemnation for those who are in Christ.

The peg: Two coils of rope.

The picture: A hangman in a black hood is fashioning the rope into a hangman's noose, preparing a rope to hang you. Suddenly, Christ appears, holding out one nail-scarred hand to restrain the suddenly frightened executioner. "No

condemnation," Jesus tells the executioner firmly.

"There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit." Romans 8:1.



49. You have access to God through Christ.

The peg: Periscope.

The picture: The periscope is poking up out of the water, with its lens focused towards heaven. A beam of light is shining from the periscope, pointing like a searchlight towards heaven. Midway between the periscope and heaven, Christ is

poised in mid-air, and the light is shining through Him. Your light has *access to God through Christ*.

"For through Him we both have access by one Spirit to the Father." Ephesians 2:18.

EXCELLENCE



50. You are an object of God's faithfulness.

The peg: Frisbee.

The picture: You are throwing a frisbee to your *faithful* retriever dog. No matter how many times you throw the frisbee your dog is always *faithful* to retrieve it.

"He who calls you is faithful, who also will do it." 1 Thessalonians 5:24.



51. You are crucified to the world.

The peg: Dog bone.

The picture: Two dog bones have been fastened together in the shape of a cross. The dog bone cross has been erected at the top of a globe of the earth, signifying that you have been *crucified to the world*.

"But God forbid that I should boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world." Galatians 6:14.



52. You are a runner.

The peg: Water hose.

The picture: It is a brutally hot day, and you are standing by a runners' track, watching the long distance runners go by. You are using a water hose to spray them with cool, refreshing water.

"Do you not know that those who run in a race all run, but one receives the prize? Run in such a way that you may obtain it." 1 Corinthians 9:24; 2 Timothy 2:5

WISDOM

**53. You have been glorified.****The peg:** Broken eggshell.

The picture: As you watch, the broken eggshell is put back together by a pair of hands that come down from heaven. When the hands from heaven pull away, the egg is not only perfectly whole, with no sign of even a single crack, but it is also a glowing gold color. The light that is shining from the golden, *glorified* egg is so bright, it hurts your eyes!

"Moreover whom He predestined, these He also called; whom He called, these He also justified; and whom He justified, these He also glorified." Romans 8:30.

**54. God has given you a love for Him.****The peg:** Balcony.

The picture: As you look at the balcony, suddenly a stream of hearts comes flowing down from heaven, landing on the balcony. As each heart hits the balcony, it bounces, boomerang style, straight back towards their Source in heaven. God has *given us love*, the love we give back to Him.

"Now hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who was given to us." Romans 5:5

**55. We are living stones.****The peg:** Two dogs in a doghouse.

The picture: Instead of the traditional wooden dog house that you might imagine, think of a doghouse made of stones, a doghouse that looks more like a stone castle, built with *living stones*.

"... you also, as living stones, are being built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ." 1 Peter 2:5.

FREEDOM



56. You are an object of God's eternal comfort and consolation.

The peg: Dog whistle.

The picture: A little boy's dog is lost. The disconsolate child has gone out in the back yard, and continues to blow and blow on the dog whistle. But the dog doesn't come. The boy's head drops, and his eyes begin to fill with tears. Just at that moment,

Jesus suddenly appears at the boy's side. The Lord puts His arm around the child, and tenderly begins to give him His *eternal comfort and consolation*.

"Now may our Lord Jesus Christ Himself, and our God and Father, who has loved us and given us everlasting consolation and good hope by grace ..." 2 Thessalonians 2:16.



57. You are a saint.

You have been set apart as a saint for God's purpose.

The Peg: Cane.

The picture: An old, old saint is leaning on a cane. It may help you to think of the saint as a kindly old man, with a long, white beard, dressed in white robes, hobbling along on an old

blackthorn walking stick.

"To the church of God which is at Corinth, to those who are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints, with all who in every place call on the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, both theirs and ours ..." 1 Corinthians 1:2.



58. You are in the much more care of God.

God is my provider.

The peg: Dog food dish.

The picture: A dog is waiting, staring fixedly at the ground in front of him. The hand from heaven reaches down, with the dog dish, and places it gently in front of the dog. The dog happily

begins to chomp away at his food, and the heavenly hand affectionately pats and strokes him while he eats.

God is providing the dog with his sustenance and with affection.

"For if when we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life." Romans 5:10.

KNOWLEDGE

**59. You have been set free from the law.**

The peg: A leash and collar.

The picture. You have been bound with a collar around your neck, and a chain leash holding you fast. Suddenly, a pair of bolt cutters appears behind you. There is the feel of cold steel at the back of your neck, you hear a “snip,” and the collar and

leash fall to the floor. You hear the metallic “ching” sound of the chain hitting the floor, and you have been *set free*.

“For sin shall not have dominion over you, for you are not under law but under grace.”

Romans 6:14.

**60. You are a gift from the Father to the Son.**

The peg: Coconut.

The picture: The heavenly hands are giving a coconut to Jesus. Jesus accepts it with a grateful smile, because it is *a gift from the Father to the Son*.

“All that the Father gives Me will come to Me, and the one who comes to Me I will by no means cast out.” John 6:37; also see John 17:2, 6, 9, 24.

**61. You are a branch, He is the vine.**

The peg: Vine.

The picture: Picture a vine with one prominent branch hanging from it. *I am the branch, He is the vine!*

“I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing.” John 15:5.

HEALING

**62. You have victory over death.****The peg:** Cobra.**The picture:** You are standing with your foot on the cobra's neck. The serpent is down, he is defeated, he is completely at your mercy. You have achieved *victory over death*.

"Inasmuch then as the children have partaken of flesh and blood, He Himself likewise shared in the same, that through death He might destroy him who had the power of death, that is, the devil, and release those who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage." Hebrews 2:14-15; also see 1 Corinthians 15:54-55.

**63. You have been given the gift of repentance.****The peg:** Banana peel.**The picture:** I am a mischievous child who has just placed a banana peel out for someone to slip and fall on. Sure enough, an elderly man comes along, walking slowly and carefully, and takes a horrible fall on my banana peel. I thought it

would be funny, but suddenly I feel very badly about what I did. "I've changed my mind about that," I tell myself. "That was the wrong thing to do." I have suddenly been given *repentance*.

"... in humility correcting those who are in opposition, if God perhaps will grant them repentance, so that they may know the truth, and that they may come to their senses and escape the snare of the devil, having been taken captive by him to do his will." 2 Timothy 2:25-26; also see Acts 11:18.

**64. You have an eternal dwelling place prepared for you in heaven.****The peg:** Tree hut.**The picture:** The tree hut is suspended in the air, bathed in radiant light, far above the clouds. It is an *eternal dwelling place in heaven*.

"In my Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you." John 14:2; also see 2 Corinthians 5:1.

STRENGTH

**65. You are an enemy of Satan.****The peg:** Lion.

The picture: The scripture verse tells us that *Satan* is a lion who looks to destroy us. He is our *enemy* (as the NIV translates it), and we are to resist him.

“Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour.”

1 Peter 5:8; also see Revelation 12:10.

**66. You are a brother or sister of Christ.****The peg:** Barrel of monkeys.

The picture: The monkeys are all circled around the inside of the barrel, arm in arm in a picture of brotherhood and fellowship. They are all gazing upward at the Cross of Christ above them.

“For both He who sanctifies and those who are being sanctified are all of one, for which reason He is not ashamed to call them brethren ...” Hebrews 2:11.

**67. You have been given wisdom in Christ.****The peg:** A ledge.

The picture: The ledge is actually a very steep cliff, with sharp rocks at the bottom, and buzzards circling, waiting for their next victim to fall over the steep drop. I am walking along carelessly, and, indeed, I am about to plunge

over the edge, when a wise old owl up in a nearby tree warns me. “Yoouuu,” he hoots at me. “That would not be wise. Yoouuu need to *get wisdom!*”

“But of Him you are in Christ Jesus, who became for us wisdom from God - and righteousness and sanctification and redemption -” 1 Corinthians 1:30.



68. You are God's inheritance.

The peg: Open clamshell.

The picture: The clam shell slowly swings open, to reveal a huge pile of pearls, jewels and gold coins! All these riches are spilling out of the clamshell, seemingly an inexhaustible supply. They are *God's inheritance*.

"... that you may know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints ..." Ephesians 1:18b.



69. The Holy Spirit intercedes for you in prayer.

The peg: Bees' nest.

The picture: Clumsy, you've stumbled over a bees' nest! Now you are fleeing for your very life, and being chased by a dark swarm of angry bees. But above the swarm, *the Holy Spirit is interceding in prayer for you*, asking, "God, save him from all

those bees."

"For we do not know what we should pray for as we ought, but the Spirit Himself makes intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered." Romans 8:26b



70. God has made known to us the mystery of His will.

The peg: Golf ball.

The picture: If you golf like I do, you'll remember this one easily! You tee up your ball and take a mighty swing, thinking you'll hit a long drive, but instead your ball hooks sharply into the trees that line the fairway. "Oh, no," you groan miserably. "Where could my ball possibly have gone to? Its a real *mystery*."

"... having made known to us the mystery of His will, according to His good pleasure

which He purposed in Himself ..." Ephesians 1:9.

UNDERSTANDING



71. You are a partaker of a heavenly calling.

The peg: Golf tee.

The picture: You've teed up for another drive down the fairway (hopefully a better one this time!), but now you see that there are other golfers moving down the fairway. You don't want to hit them, so you start calling to them: "Fore!

Fore!" The other golfers in your party start doing the same thing, calling "Fore" to the other party. They are *partaking in a calling*.

"But may the God of all grace, who called us to His eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after you have suffered a while, perfect, establish, strengthen, and settle you." 1 Peter 5:10.



72. You have been baptized by the Holy Spirit, placing you in Christ.

The peg: Sprinkler.

The picture: You are kneeling beneath the sprinkler to be baptized by sprinkling.

"For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body - whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free - and have all been made to drink into one Spirit." 1 Corinthians 12:13.



73. You have entered God's rest.

The peg: A pair of sunglasses.

The picture: You slip on a pair of sunglasses, and then ease back into a huge, comfortable hammock to enjoy some *rest*.

"For we who have believed do enter that rest, as He has said ..." Hebrews 4:3a.

LIBERATION



74. You are standing in His grace.

The peg: Golf flag.

The picture: You are standing with your feet planted firmly on the green, and one hand holding the golf flag. You are standing there with complete confidence, because *you are standing in His grace.*

"... through whom also we have access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God." Romans 5:2.



75. You are His sheep, He is your Shepherd.

The peg: Golf cart.

The picture: A sheep driving a golf cart and a shepherd leading the sheep.

"I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd gives His life for the sheep." John 10:11



76. Christ is your defense attorney. He is your advocate.

The peg: A driver.

The picture: They look kind of odd, but a group of lawyers are getting ready to tee off. The reason they look so strange to you is that they're all wearing their three piece suits. The only golf gear they have is their golf shoes and clubs. You look a

little more closely, and, yes, there Jesus is among them, dressed in a very dapper three-piece suit, Himself. *He is my defense attorney.*

"And if anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous."

1 John 2:1b.

SECURITY



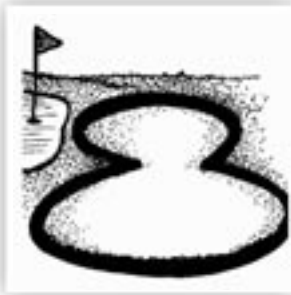
77. You have been given the Holy Spirit as a deposit.

The peg: Golf bag and clubs.

The picture: As you look at your golf bags, suddenly a beautiful, glowing diamond engagement ring floats down from heaven and nestles in amongst your golf clubs. The diamond on the ring is so huge, and it sparkles so brilliantly, it is clearly visible there amongst the clubs. The ring is *the Holy Spirit, given to you as a deposit.*

"... the Holy Spirit of promise, who is the guarantee of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, to the praise of His glory."

Ephesians 1:13b-14; also see 2 Corinthians 5:5.



78. God works all things together for your good.

The peg: Sand trap.

The picture: You've hit a another dreadful shot! Your ball sailed straight into a sand trap. You walk towards the sand trap, muttering about what a lousy day of golfing it's been. As you get closer to the sand trap, you suddenly see that it is filled, not with sand, but with hundreds and hundreds of thousand dollar bills. You've struck it rich! *God worked all things together for your good.*

"And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose." Romans 8:28.



79. You are a member of Christ's body.

The peg: A skinny caddy.

The picture: The ridiculously skinny caddy suddenly begins to pose in front of you like a weight lifter! He bends, he stretches, and he flexes his biceps. "What a *body*," you jeer. "But I have tremendous power," the skinny caddy replies confidently, "because *I'm a member of Christ's body.*"

"For we are members of His body, of His flesh and of His bones." Ephesians 5:30.

EXCELLENCE



80. You have been predestined to be conformed to the likeness of God's Son.

The peg: Snowball.

The picture: A snowball is rolling down a hill, gathering size and momentum. It keeps getting bigger and bigger and rolling faster and faster. It is inexorable, unstoppable, it was *predestined* to happen! At the bottom of the hill, it comes to a stop, and a snow sculptor immediately begins work with her tools, *conforming* the snowball to the likeness of your Son.

"For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren." Romans 8:29.



81. You are partners with Christ in suffering.

The peg: Thermometer.

The picture: You're sick in bed, feeling miserable with a cold and fever. But Jesus is "a friend who sticks closer than a brother," (Proverbs 18:24), so He is there in bed with you. Your mother has popped a thermometer in both of your mouths, to take your temperature. Jesus is right there with you, *partners in suffering*.

"For to you it has been granted on behalf of Christ, not only to believe in Him, but also to suffer for His sake ..." Philippians 1:29.



82. You are a son of Abraham.

The peg: A snow sled.

The picture: You are bundled into a sled with the great patriarch Abraham. You're seated together, wrapped up in a nice warm blanket, sailing down a snowy hillside, with Abraham's long white beard trailing out behind him like a banner.

"Therefore know that only those who are of faith are sons of Abraham. And the Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, preached the gospel to Abraham beforehand, saying, 'In you all the nations shall be blessed.'"

Galatians 3:7-8; also see Galatians 3:29.

WISDOM

**83. You have been made complete in Christ.****The peg:** A mitten.

The picture: Therein lies the problem. There is only ONE mitten! You need a pair to go out in the cold, and you can't find the other one. Jesus walks up to you and hands you the other mitten. Now the pair has been *made*

complete in Christ.

"... and you are complete in Him, who is the head of all principality and power."

Colossians 2:10.

**84. You possess all spiritual blessings.****The peg:** Shovel.

The picture: You need a shovel to scoop up all the *spiritual blessings* you have in Christ. The blessings are raining down like manna from heaven, and you're out in the street, like a kid in a snowstorm, shoveling up *all spiritual blessings*.

"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 ..."

Ephesians 1:3

**85. Your have been given a sound mind.****The peg:** Ice hook.

The picture: Someone trying to pick up an expensive vase with an ice hook, and you think to yourself that is not the behavior of a sound mind. But *you've been given a "sound" mind.*

"For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind."

2 Timothy 1:7

FREEDOM

**86. Your name is written in the Book of Life.**

The Peg: Stocking cap.

The picture: The stockings are all hanging by the fireplace, each one with the owner's name written on it. This is a Christian family, so their names are written on the stockings, and also *in the Book of Life*.

"And I urge you also, true companion, help these women who labored with me in the gospel, with Clement also, and the rest of my fellow workers, whose names are in the Book of Life." Philippians 4:3; also see Luke 10:20, Revelation 13:8, 20:12.

**87. Christ is our propitiation.**

The problem of God's wrath has been solved by Christ's death.

The peg: Hockey stick.

The picture: A professional baseball pitcher is standing on the pitcher's mound in his baseball uniform, winding up to throw a pitch to a batter. But what he throws is not a baseball, but a hockey stick. The stick sails by the batter's head, just missing him. The batter is furious. The batter charges the mound, screaming, "You're a pro pitcher! What are you doing?" But the batter's path to the mound is blocked by the Cross of Christ. He looks up at Christ, and his anger evaporates. *The wrath has been solved by propitiation ("pro pitcher-ation").*

"In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins." 1 John 4:10.

**88. You have been sealed with the Holy Spirit.**

The peg: An igloo and a pair of snow people.

The picture: Just as a giant stone was used to seal Christ's tomb, a giant stone has been rolled in front of the igloo to *seal* it. I hope the snow people got out of the way in time!

"... in whom also, having believed, you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise ..." Ephesians 1:13b; also see 4:30, 2 Timothy 2:19.

KNOWLEDGE

**89. You are a new creation in Christ.**

The peg: A pipe.

The picture: See a Christian pick up a pipe and begin to light it and then they think to themselves, “I am a new creation in Christ, therefore I need to give up smoking a pipe.”

“Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.” 2 Corinthians 5:17.

**90. You have been elected.**

The peg: Birthday cake.

The picture: Picture a giant birthday cake, brightly decorated in red, white, and blue colors. Uncle Sam is on the center of the cake, dressed in his traditional red, white, and blue top hat and tails, pointing his finger at you, saying firmly, “I WANT YOU!” You have

been *elected* by Uncle Sam.

“... just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love ...” Ephesians 1:4.

**91. You have been delivered from the coming wrath.**

The peg: Candle.

The picture: I once heard a radio broadcast in which Dr. Tony Evans addressed those people who say, “I’d rather go to Hell, because that’s where all my friends will be. We’ll party!” Dr. Evans responded, “If you want to find out what that will be like, turn the burner on your

stove on high heat. When it’s good and hot, sit on the burner and try to party!”

You intend to try Dr. Evans’ experiment in a less dangerous way, by sitting down on a burning candle. Just as you are about to sit on the candle, Jesus appears, grabs you by the hand, and pulls you away from the candle before you burn yourself. You *have been delivered from the coming wrath*.

“... and to wait for His Son from heaven, whom He raised from the dead, even Jesus who delivers us from the wrath to come.” 1 Thessalonians 1:10; also see 5:9.

HEALING

**92. You have been given the whole armor of God.****The peg:** Coat hanger.

The picture: You open the closet door to hang up a coat, and inside the closet you see, hanging from a hanger, a full set of armor! It looks a little strange there, but you're glad to know that you have been given full battle dress, which is the *whole*

armor of God.

“Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places. Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. Stand therefore, having girded your waist with truth, having put on the breastplate of righteousness, and having shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace; above all, taking the shield of faith with which you will be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God; praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, being watchful to this end with all perseverance and supplication for all the saints ...” Ephesians 6:10-18.

**93. You are a vessel of mercy.****The peg:** Teacup.

The picture: A teacup is a *vessel*. If you picture a teacup with a large red cross (such as you'd see painted on the side of an ambulance) painted on the side, you are picturing a *vessel of mercy*.

“... and that He might make known the riches of His glory on the vessels of mercy, which He had prepared beforehand for glory...” Romans 9:23.

STRENGTH

**94. You are a wild olive tree.****The peg:** Shopping cart.

The picture: You went to the store to buy an olive tree. You are walking through the store with the tree in your shopping cart. But it is a “wild” olive tree! It is jumping all around the cart, trying to get out. Branches are whipping your face, and the other patrons are staring. “My goodness,” you think to yourself. “This is really a *wild olive tree*.”

“And if some of the branches were broken off, and you, being a wild olive tree, were grafted in among them, and with them became a partaker of the root and fatness of the olive tree ...” Romans 11:17.

**95. You are a wrestler with the powers of darkness.****The peg:** Unicycle.

The picture: Two enormously obese Sumo wrestlers are riding unicycles, prepared to grapple with each other. These two men are so very large, you can barely see the unicycles they’re pedaling!

“For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places.” Ephesians 6:12.

**96. You are a partaker of the new covenant.****The peg:** Party favor.

The picture: You can see Mount Zion on the horizon, and at the peak there are a number of people, celebrating, wearing party hats and loudly tooting their party favors. They are rejoicing in *partaking in the new covenant*.

“And for this reason He is the Mediator of the new covenant, by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions under the first covenant, that those who are called may receive the promise of the eternal inheritance.” Hebrews 9:15.



97. You have received reconciliation through Christ.

The peg: Stick horse.

The picture: You are a child who was playing with your friend's stick horse. You got carried away with your roughhousing, and suddenly the stick horse broke into pieces. Your friend's father is furious with you, yelling and shouting

epithets. In the midst of all this, his son (your friend), comes up next to his father, and gently takes his hand. Surprised, the father stops his shouting and looks tenderly down at his son. Your friend says to you, "I want you to be *reconciled* to my Dad."

"For if when we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life. And not only that, but we also rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received the reconciliation."

Romans 5:10-11; also see 11:15, 2 Corinthians 5:18, Ephesians 2:16.



98. Jesus prays for you.

The peg: A pair of cookies.

The picture: Jesus is sitting down to eat two cookies, but first He bows His head in *prayer* over His food. As He gives thanks to God for the food, He also prays for you.

"Therefore He is also able to save to the uttermost those who come to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them."
Hebrews 7:25.

UNDERSTANDING

**99. You are a special person, a holy nation.**

The peg: A pair of balloons.

The picture: Actually you have one huge balloon, shaped just like the outline of the United States. The balloon is held by a happy, smiling child. A nasty prankster comes along and pops the child's balloon. You cringe, assuming the child will burst into noisy tears. Instead, she keeps on smiling graciously. "What a *special person* that child is," you think to yourself. "She lost her balloon of the *nation*, and she didn't even cry!"

"But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light ..." 1 Peter 2:9.

**100. You are God's building.**

The peg: A bag full of baseballs covered with ink.

The picture: At a baseball stadium, there were bags of balls for the players to sign. But the pens that were supplied for the players to sign their autographs fell into the bags of baseballs, and ink has spilled all over the balls. What a mess! A bat boy is dragging all the bags of inky baseballs into the stadium (building). He keeps dragging in more and more bags of inky balls into the stadium, until the *building* is filled.

"For we are God's fellow workers; you are God's field, you are God's building."
1 Corinthians 3:9.

**101. You are God's field.**

The peg: A baseball bat covered with ink.

The picture: A baseball player stands in the batters box holding his baseball bat covered in ink. The pitch comes in, and the batter lines a hit out into a beautiful green *field*, the baseball field.

"For we are God's fellow workers; you are God's field, you are God's building."
1 Corinthians 3:9.

Now that you have completed the program I want to encourage you to continue to go over and over these

101 Riches in Christ

until you have not only memorized the names of the 101 positions and possessions in Christ but also the scriptures that go with each one and please share this knowledge with other Christians.

Learning these 101 Riches in Christ will be one of the greatest things you can do for your growth in the grace and knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ. I also pray that this program will strengthen your faith in your Lord and thereby cause you to walk worthy of the calling with which you were called.