

forgiveness of sins. Paul says in Ephesians 5:8, "For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Live as children of light."



DEAR HEAVENLY FATHER, thank You for rescuing me from the domain of darkness. Because of Your great grace, I announce that I am no longer a child of darkness but a child of light, and I choose to walk in the light and ask that You would enable me to do so. I renounce the lie that I am just a product of my past, and I announce the truth that I am a product of Christ's work on the cross. I ask You to reveal to me anything in my life that would keep me in bondage to my past or to the lies of Satan. I ask for the grace to renounce all former activities of darkness and the lies of Satan. I now commit myself to You for all eternity. In Jesus' precious name and through His shed blood I pray. AMEN.

# 12

CHAPTER

# 12

## I Am Complete

*"For in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily; and you are complete in Him, who is the head of all principality and power."*

COLOSSIANS 2:9,10 (NKJV)

Suppose a brand new car rolled off the assembly line in Detroit, advertised as the most luxurious and powerful automobile ever made. It had a spark of life in it because of the battery, but it had yet to be filled with gas. A tribesman from a remote part of the Amazon was flown in to inspect this beautiful car. Having no previous knowledge of cars, he wondered about the purpose of this object.

Observing the beautiful lines—the symmetry, the chrome, the paint job—he thought it might be for the sake of beauty, like a statue. As he sat in the bucket seats and tilted them forward and up and down, he wondered if it might be for comfort, like a small dwelling. He turned on the quadrasonic sound and thought the car might have been created for the enjoyment of music. When he turned on the headlights and the dome lights, he thought the car was for light. Honking the horn, he thought the car was to give a warning. Then someone filled the car with gasoline, put it in gear and the vehicle began to move forward.

Finally, the tribesman understood the real purpose for which the car was created.

The purpose of an automobile is to provide transportation, but it can never fulfill its purpose without gasoline. The body and accessories may be luxurious, but they won't move on their own. Nor does the engine itself have any power of its own; its only purpose is to convert the gasoline into a usable energy force. Then, and only then, can the automobile fulfill its purpose.

### *Fulfilling Our Purpose*

We were never designed by God to function independently of Him. God created Adam and Eve spiritually alive; their souls were in union with Him. Only in this way could they fulfill the purpose for which they were created. But man, because of his rebellion, has chosen to live his life independent of God. Through sin, he has separated himself from God. However, God's plan is to present us again complete in Christ, for without Him we are incomplete. The following testimony from a young woman illustrates this:

The word "handicapped" described my family. My mother had muscular dystrophy, my father polio, and my brother cerebral palsy. Though I had no physical problem myself, I saw the stares and glances of people, always feeling like somehow our family was weird.

My father was very abusive, beating us regularly. One time in a fit of anger, he grabbed my mother's head as she sat in her wheelchair, and pounded it against the kitchen counter. He was enslaved to pornography and often called me horrible names, such as "slut" and

"whore." He tore the dress I made in sewing class off me, saying only a whore would wear a dress like that. Often I heard my mother weeping and crying out to the Lord for strength. I was slowly losing hope. By the seventh grade I was escaping through alcohol, and then through sex, which resulted in an abortion. When I was 17, my mom died, and at 18, I was out of the house and supporting myself.

I thought I could finally find some peace, but instead I felt empty and full of guilt. I didn't know what to do with my life, but I knew I needed help. I stumbled into a church one day and heard about God's forgiveness and love. I sobbed as I responded and asked Jesus into my life. A huge weight lifted from my heavy heart, and I experienced indescribable joy. I was on a spiritual high for months as I went to Bible studies and met other Christians. But my non-Christian boyfriend kept saying I was getting weird. I was intimidated by him and didn't know much Scripture yet. Besides, I was living with him and felt I needed him, though I was really supporting him. We got married and everything became worse. He gambled, and I resumed drinking. I hoped our first child would somehow bring the fulfillment I craved, but that didn't happen. By the time our second baby was six months old, my husband had gambled away all of our money, and I left him.

I went through months of depression and darkness. Then one night I decided to "start living again" and began partying and seeking attention from men. It didn't matter to me whether they were married or not; I just wanted someone to tell me I was okay. But after another

devastating relationship, I heard the Lord saying to me, "You don't need men to make you happy; you only need Me." But I didn't listen to God's gentle call back to Himself.

Then I met a wonderful man and married. I was sure life would be great now. But the first years of our marriage brought out all that was ugly in both of us. Eventually, I realized my drinking was not helping my alcoholic husband, and I turned to the Lord for strength to quit. I sensed that His love had preserved me in spite of all my wrong choices and rebellion. I felt He was telling me that if I would just start concentrating on Him, abiding in Him as my All Sufficient One, that He would be responsible for my husband.

I found a little church with a wonderful pastor, and my husband was willing to attend with me once in a while. The pastor's wife became my friend and discipler. One day, I realized that my husband had changed; he was kinder and more at peace. I asked him about it, and he told me he'd received Christ a few weeks before at our church. But it was another year and a half before I heard him praying one night for God to deliver him from alcoholism. The Lord graciously did just that.

About that time, I attended a Freedom in Christ conference and later prayed through the Steps to Freedom with a friend. What an eye-opening, heart-revealing, truth encounter! Forgiving my father from my heart opened a new revelation of what my true Heavenly Father is like. I realized I no longer need to be bound by my past, that my identity is now in Christ, and I am made complete and fulfilled in Him. I was chosen in Christ be-

fore the foundation of the world to be holy and without blame. The armor of God is put on daily in this "temple," and I praise God that by His grace I am what I am.

Perhaps like this dear lady, you have gone from experience to experience seeking fulfillment and completeness. I hope you see that no other person or material things can fill the vacuum you feel. You were created to relate to God in soul-union, and you can only find rest and purpose in your life when you put your total dependence upon Him.

Paul says in Ephesians 5:18, 19, "Do not get drunk on wine, which leads to debauchery. Instead, be filled with the Spirit. Speak to one another with psalms, hymns and spiritual songs. Sing and make music in your heart to the Lord." We can go joyfully down the road of life, fulfilling our purpose, if we will only be filled with the Spirit of God. Wherever I am in my process of maturity, if I am not operating by the power of the Holy Spirit, I can accomplish nothing. I am complete only in Christ.

When you first became a Christian, you were like a small engine for a lawn mower. You could accomplish a needed task and fulfill a worthwhile purpose. However, your goal is to mature into a giant tractor, and accomplish even greater things. Even as you mature, never forget that neither the small engine nor the giant tractor can accomplish anything without the gasoline. The only time we can fulfill our purpose for being here is when we are filled with the Holy Spirit.

### *Living Complete in Christ*

My entire concept of discipleship is that we work toward the goal of presenting everybody complete or established in Christ (see

Col. 1:28). According to Colossians 2:10, we are already complete in Christ. The idea is that we are incomplete without Him. The Greek word for "complete" is different in Colossians 1:28. Here the idea is to bring everybody to a maturity in Christ. Discipleship is being firmly grounded and rooted in Him, and then going on to be built up in Him and continuing to live in Him.

God's gracious provision and offer to all Christians is that they might have a full assurance that they are, *right now*, complete in Christ. Paul says in Colossians 1:27-29, "To them God has chosen to make known among the Gentiles the glorious riches of this mystery, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory. We proclaim him, admonishing and teaching everyone with all wisdom, so that we may present everyone perfect in Christ. To this end I labor, struggling with all his energy, which so powerfully works in me."



DEAR HEAVENLY FATHER, I thank You for Your love and for making me aware that I was incomplete without You. I thank You that I am now complete in Christ. I choose to no longer seek my purpose in life in any way independent of You. I put no confidence in the flesh. I now declare my dependence upon You and seek to fulfill my purpose by asking You to fill me with Your Holy Spirit. I renounce every occasion when I have sought power or fulfillment from any source other than You. I choose to be strong in You, Lord, and in the strength of Your might. In Jesus' precious name I pray. AMEN.

# Part Two

# OUR

# SECURITY

# IN CHRIST

*"By wisdom the Lord laid the earth's foundations,  
by understanding he set the heavens in place;  
by his knowledge the deeps were divided,  
and the clouds let drop the dew. My son,  
preserve sound judgment and discernment,  
do not let them out of your sight; they will be  
life for you, an ornament to grace your neck.  
Then you will go on your way in safety, and  
your foot will not stumble; when you lie down,  
you will not be afraid; when you lie down, your  
sleep will be sweet. Have no fear of sudden disaster  
or of the ruin that overtakes the wicked, for  
the Lord will be your confidence."*

PROVERBS 3:19-26