

Hard questions

- ✓ **Is the Biblical story credible?**
- ✓ **Does the Christian God make sense?**
- ✓ **Do the Christian claims pass the test of life experience?**

1.
Our expectations, observations, & experiences
DO NOT ALWAYS LINE UP



**If all things became new in Christ
why am I still a mess?**

2 Corinthians 5:17

“Therefore if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creature; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come.”



**If I still sin does this mean
that I am not a Christian?**

1 John 3

“9 No one who is born of God practices sin, because His seed abides in him; and he cannot sin, because he is born of God 10 By this the children of God and the children of the devil are obvious; anyone who does not practice righteousness is not of God, nor the one who does not love his brother.”



Popular topics in many churches

- ✓ **How to make it work for you?**
- ✓ **Understanding why it is not working for you.**

A powerful implication

Does Christianity work?

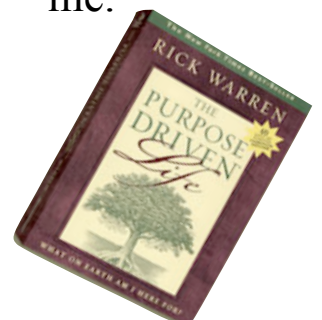
**Is Christianity falsified
by human experience?**

Is Christianity all about me?



Rick Warren

“It’s not about
me.”



2. The Christian story is not all about me!



- ✓ my faith
- ✓ my faithfulness
- ✓ my fruitfulness
- ✓ my fulfillment

“Me” centered religion is preoccupied with:



- ✓ Spiritual experience
- ✓ Holy Spirit power
- ✓ Ministry results
- ✓ Ethics in action
- ✓ Practical application

The Christian story is about God’s action in Christ that affects me!



- ✓ Creator
- ✓ Redeemer
- ✓ Lord
- ✓ Revealer

What changes

when a person becomes a Christian?

- ✓ **Some things may change immediately, completely, and irrevocably.** (our position in Christ, our direction in life)
- ✓ **Some things may not change at all.** (personality, physical body, formative circumstances, etc.)
- ✓ **Some things may change gradually and incompletely.** (wisdom, spiritual maturity, moral perfection, character, etc.)

Our relationship with God:



Subjective
Communion
Experienced Love
Willful Obedience
Dynamic



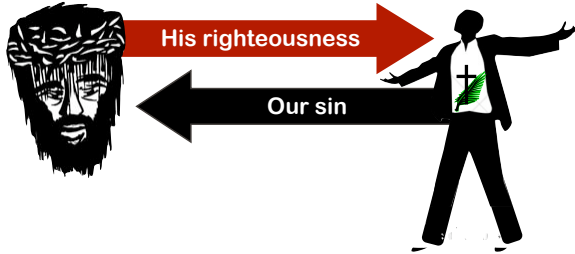
Objective
Covenant
Legal Position
Radical Grace
Static

3.
Our position
“in Christ”
is about the finished
work of God for us.

The great exchange

2 Corinthians 5:21

“He made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.”



Two aspects of holiness



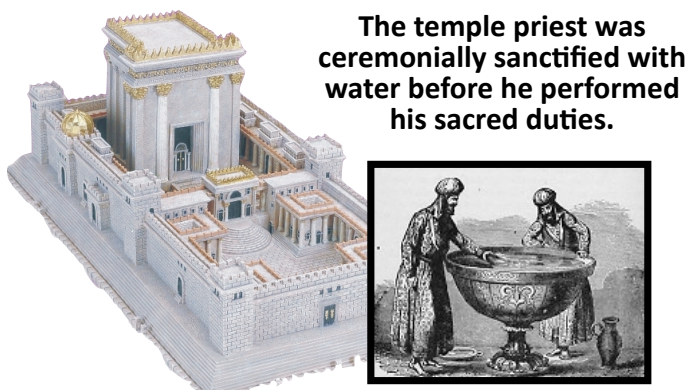
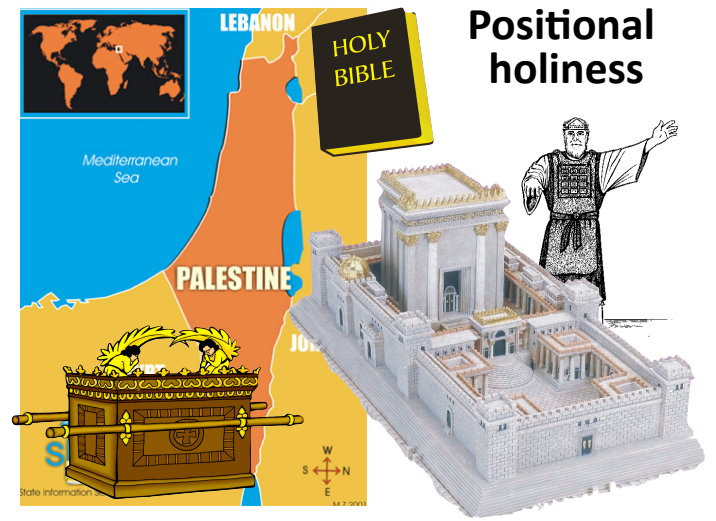
Ephesians 2:8-10

“not of works . . but . . for good works,”

Two aspects of holiness



- ✓ a **child** of God
- ✓ **fixed** position
- ✓ based on **faith**
- ✓ my **identity**
- ✓ a **disciple** of Christ
- ✓ **dynamic** posture
- ✓ based on **faithfulness**
- ✓ my **calling**



The temple priest was ceremonially sanctified with water before he performed his sacred duties.

This had to do with his official position not his personal character.

The two aspects of holiness



The pattern of Paul's letters



Our position in Christ means that we share in Christ's -

- * election, Eph. 1:4.
- * destiny, Eph. 1:5,11.
- * sonship, Eph. 1:5; Heb. 2:10; Gal. 3:26.
- * righteousness, 2 Cor. 5:21.
- * inheritance, Rom. 8:16,17; Gal. 4:7.
- * holiness, 1 Cor. 1:30.
- * priesthood, 1 Pet. 2:5,9.
- * Kingdom, Col. 1:13; 2 Pet. 1:11.
- * resurrection, Eph. 2:6.
- * life, Eph. 2:5; Col. 2:13; 1 John 5:11,12.
- * redemption & forgiveness, Eph. 1:7; Col. 1:14.
- * Body, the church, Gal. 3:27,28.
- * perfection in the sight of God, Col. 2:9,10.

Positional truth

- ✓ It is a legal declaration & not experiential.
- ✓ It is not progressive but perfect & complete.
- ✓ It must be learned through teaching.
- ✓ It is acknowledged through faith.
- ✓ It is not related to human merit.
- ✓ It is not related to human moral reform.
- ✓ It fully satisfies the demands of a perfectly holy God.

4.

Our position in Christ frees us from fear.

Romans 7-8

“²⁴ Wretched man that I am! Who will set me free from the body of this death? ²⁵ Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord! . . . ¹ There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. . . . ³ For what the Law could not do, weak as it was through the flesh, **God did; sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and as an offering for sin,** He condemned sin in the flesh,”

5.

Our position in Christ empowers us to obey.

1 Corinthians 1:18

“For the word of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.”



6.

Water baptism is your “positional” washing as a believer priest.

