

16. The Standing of God's People

This chapter looks at the position or standing of God's people in relationship to God. Probably the most basic aspect of this is simply that they are God's people and so belong to him. As such the relationship between believers and God is both a strong one and a close one. This is underlined by the teaching that God's people are now "in" Jesus Christ.

Belonging to God

God's people belong to him

[PAUL, TO BELIEVERS:] You put your faith in Christ and were given the promised Holy Spirit to show that *you belong to God*.
EPHESIANS 1:13 CEV

They are God's people

[PAUL, TO BELIEVERS:] God loves you and has chosen you as *his own special people*. So be gentle, kind, humble, meek, and patient.
COLOSSIANS 3:12 CEV

God is their God

[ABIJAH, KING OF JUDAH:] But as for us, *the LORD is our God* and we have not rejected him. 2 CHRONICLES 13:10A NET

Being God's Family

Each believer belongs to the family of God

[PAUL, TO NON-JEWISH BELIEVERS:] *You belong to God's family*. EPHESIANS 2:19B NCV™

God is the Father of his people

[PAUL, TO BELIEVERS:] Grace and peace to you from *God our Father* and the Lord Jesus Christ! ROMANS 1:7B NET

God's people are his children

But *to all who did accept him [Jesus] and believe in him he gave the right to become children of God*.¹³ They did not become his children in any human way—by any human parents or human desire. *They were born of God*. JOHN 1:12–13 NCV™

Those who accept Jesus Christ and believe in him (v. 12a) are enabled to become God's children (v. 12b) – born of God (v. 13) into spiritual life.

Being "in" Jesus Christ

God's people are "in" Jesus Christ

From Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, to the saints [believers], *the faithful in Christ Jesus*. EPHESIANS 1:1 NET

Being "in" Jesus Christ involves the association of believers with Jesus Christ. Through this association they participate with Jesus Christ in such things as: his victory over sin and death; his life; and other blessings he has won.

"In" Jesus Christ they are redeemed and forgiven

[PAUL, TO BELIEVERS:] *In him we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins*. COLOSSIANS 1:14 ISV

Note that "redemption" or being "redeemed" refers to the concept of being bought by God, with Jesus Christ's death, from enslavement to sin.

Through Jesus Christ God's people have access to God

[PAUL, TO BELIEVERS:] Yes, *it is through Christ we all have the right to come to the Father in one Spirit*. EPHESIANS 2:18 NCV™

Verses such as this which speak of God's people relating to God (e.g. praying to him) "through" Jesus Christ, appear to have in view one or more of the following three concepts: Jesus Christ's death opening the way into God's presence; Jesus Christ's priesthood; and God's people being "in" Jesus Christ. All three of these are aspects of Jesus Christ's role as a mediator in a believer's relationship with God.