

“Christ In Us: Let’s Make A Deal”

Growth Group Guide

July 13, 2025

WELCOME *(Connecting with each other)*

Some game shows have moments when a contestant can trade their current prize for a hidden prize behind a door or in a box. Sometimes the hidden prize is much better than the one they currently have, but sometimes...they find a lesser, disappointing prize. Ever participated in a White Elephant Gift Exchange? The experience can be identical! Tell about a time you made a trade and came out better than you expected or about your best or worst White Elephant gift.

WORSHIP THROUGH PRAYER *(Connecting with God)*

Read these verses below. Take some time to praise and thank God that all He gives us in Christ is far better than anything we had apart from Him.

Isaiah 63:7 (NCV)

“I will tell about the LORD’s kindness and praise him for everything he has done. I will praise the LORD for the many good things he has given us and for his goodness to the people of Israel. He has shown great mercy to us and has been very kind to us.”

2 Corinthians 5:17 (NCV)

“If anyone belongs to Christ, there is a new creation. The old things have gone; everything is made new!”

WORD *(Letting God speak to us)*

1. Through our “us in Christ” verses for this study, we will look at 3 trades that God is willing to make with us if we will take Him up on His offer. Before reading the verses together, discuss why sometimes, to us, God’s promises or offers sound too good to be true. What do we know about Him that assures us His promises and offers are real?
2. **Read 2 Corinthians 5:17-21.** The 3 trades listed in this passage are: 1) He takes our old life and gives us a new one, v15. 2) He takes away our estrangement with Him and restores a friendly, peaceful relationship between us (reconciliation), v18-20. 3) He takes our sin and gives us His righteousness, v21. When we are in Christ, this is all true of us and all truly done by Him. Which one pops for you today?
3. **Look at v15 again.** The new creation we’ve become doesn’t come and go. It has staying power. The old creature was traded to God, and He’s not giving it back. Sometimes we don’t act like the new creation though, even though it’s truly who we are. Consider this quote from the sermon, “What this is like is when parents buy their kids clothes that are bigger than they are so they can grow into them. When you became a Christian the new creation you became is big, but as you grow up in Christ, it will fit better and more naturally, and your actions will be more consistent with the new and less like the old.” Do

you find this statement encouraging and have you seen this happen in your own life? Discuss.

4. **Look at v18-20 again.** Paul was passionate here that the Corinthian Christians live reconciled (v20) to God since they were already saved. How are reconciliation (a completely restored and friendly relationship, see question #2) and salvation different?
5. Why is living reconciled so important for a Christian? How does living reconciled to God change our daily experience of Him?
6. In v20, Paul says, “...we are ambassadors for Christ.” Based on this verse, what does that mean to you? Like Paul, have you ever been God’s ambassador to someone “hostile?” If so, how did you see God at work? What was the outcome of that encounter?
7. **Read v21 again.** This is the clearest of all the trades. It can be difficult to believe because we’ve tied our righteousness to our performance. When we try to earn it, it’s not God’s righteousness, but self-righteousness. How do we get out of the trap of earning it?

WALK *(Living out God’s purposes)*

- ✓ **One Big Idea: In Christ, we are new creations, at peace with God, and possess His righteousness.** These gifts come to us by grace, and since we are in Christ, they are factual. Now we can let the facts influence our actions as we depend on Christ to put them into practice. How might you practice these facts in your day-to-day? Talk to God about it this week. It might be as easy as reminding yourself “I WAS that, but now I’m THIS” anytime you’re tempted to believe a lie about yourself and allowing the Spirit to empower you to act like the real you (at peace, spiritually new in every way, and accepted). Whatever He tells you, go with it! You can trust Him completely.
- ✓ Are there ways you can reinforce the facts of your changed life in Christ? Maybe write about or tell someone your testimony (the story of your changed life) this week. Or praise God each day for changing you completely and growing you more and more into a person who can live like He made you in Christ. He is amazing and so are you!

WORLD *(Embracing God’s heart for others)*

*In Haiti, in a place called Simonette, two people in one of Haitian Christian Mission’s churches “had an idea: What if we walked through the streets and prayed at every corner? That idea became a reality. Wearing white...believers and neighbors joined together in a prayer march, stopping at every intersection to pray for their community...This was not just a walk, it was a public declaration of faith and unity...Since the march, new guests have been attending church services, drawn by the bold witness of faith on display.” Wow! Praise the Lord! Please continue to pray for the summer VBS’s that every church in the HCM network will put on, for churches serving in dangerous and difficult areas, and for leaders and volunteers who are faithfully walking beside their people.

*(from HCM July 2025 Newsletter Update)

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