

Words That Describe Me Now

By John Isaac Edwards

In time past, I “...walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience; Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others” (Eph. 2:2-3).

I am not who I was. My life has taken a different direction; that I “...no longer should live the rest of time in the flesh to the lusts of men, but to the will of God” (I Peter 4:2).

I would like to share with you some words that describe me **now**:

1) ALIVE. I was “...dead in trespasses and sins” (Eph. 2:1,5), but have been “quicken...” (Eph. 2:1,5; Col. 2:13). Now, I am “...dead indeed unto sin, but **alive** unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord” (Rom. 6:11).

2) LOVED. I was “...by nature the children of wrath...” (Eph. 2:3). Now, I am the object of “...his great love...” (Eph. 2:4). John wrote, “And from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, and the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth. Unto him that **loved** us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood” (Rev. 1:5).

3) SAVED. I was among “...them that are lost” (2 Cor. 4:3). Now, “...**saved**” (Eph. 2:5,8). Paul wrote, “...God our Savior; Who will have all men to be **saved**, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth” (I Tim. 2:3-4).

4) IN. I was “...without Christ...and without God in the world” (Eph. 2:12). Now I am “...**in** Christ...” (Eph. 2:10,13). God’s blessings have always been **in**: **in** the ark (Gen. 6:7), **in** the house (Ex. 12:22), **in** the city (Num. 35:25,28), **in** the ship (Acts 27:31), and now “**in** Christ” (Eph. 1:3)!

5) RECONCILED. I was “...far off...” (Eph. 2:13). I have been “...made nigh by the blood of Christ “ (Eph. 2:13). “And that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby” (Eph. 2:16). Romans 5:10 says, “for if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being **reconciled**, we shall be saved from wrath through him.”

6) CITIZEN. I was a stranger and a foreigner (Eph. 2:19). I have been “...translated into the kingdom of his (God’s dear Son” (Col. 1:13). Now, “...fellow **citizens** with the saints, and of the household of God” (Eph. 2:19).

7) BLESSED. Paul penned, “...**Blessed** are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered. **Blessed** is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin” (Rom. 4:7-8). Galatians 3:8-9 teaches, “And the scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, saying, in thee shall all nations be blessed. So then they which be of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham.” Thus, I am “...**blessed**...with all spiritual blessings...” (Eph. 1:3).

8) REDEEMED. Peter wrote, “Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not **redeemed** with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; But with the precious blood of Christ...” (I Peter 1:18-19). As one who has been **redeemed**, I have been “...purchased...”

(Acts 20:28) or “...bought” (I Cor. 6:20).

9) NEW. The Holy Spirit revealed, “*Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a **new** creature; old things are passed away, behold, all things are become **new***” (2 Cor. 5:17). The Galatians were taught, “*For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision, but a **new** creature*” (Gal. 6:15). Ephesians 4:24 records, “*And that ye put on the **new** man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.*”

10) FREE. Jesus said, “*And ye shall now the truth, and the truth shall make you **free***” (John 8:32). He further stated, “*If the Son therefore shall make you **free**, ye shall be **free** indeed*” (John 8:36). The Romans were reminded, “*But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you. Being then made **free** from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness*” (Rom. 6:17-18).

11) FORGIVEN. What a blessing to be forgiven! “*And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having **forgiven** you all trespasses*” (Col. 2:13). Paul said, “*in whom we have redemption through his blood, the **forgiveness** of sins, according to the riches of his grace*” (Eph. 1:7).

12) WASHED, SANCTIFIED, JUSTIFIED. I Corinthians 6:9-11 records, “*Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God! Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abuses of themselves with mankind, Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of god. And such were some of you: but ye are **washed**, but ye are **sanctified**, but you are **justified** in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.*”

I am a believer; a Christian, a disciple, a saint. What made the difference? God’s grace. My faith, “*For by grace are ye saved through faith, and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God*” (Eph. 2:8).

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“Too many people think **service** means **serve us**.”

“Self praise is no recommendation.”

Is It Worth It?

Being a genuine Christian demands denial of self and “*daily*” cross bearing (Luke 9:23). Inspiration plainly reveals that “*all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution*” (2 Tim. 3:12). There are times when every Christian, like Moses of old, must choose “*rather to suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season*” (Heb. 11:25). It is a fact that everyone, who in gospel obedience has named the Name of Christ, is called upon to unashamedly “*suffer as a Christian*” (I Pet. 4:16). To sincerely say that being a genuine Christian and faithfully serving the Lord is never difficult and is always easy is to misunderstand the religion of Jesus Christ. Knowing these facts, we ask “**Is it Worth It?**”

In reply, we recall the question Jesus asked “*the twelve*” after “*many of His disciples went back, and walked no more with him;*” He asked them, “*Will ye also go away?*” To that probing question Peter instantly replied, saying, “*Lord, to whom shall we go? **Thou** hast the words of **eternal life***” (John 6:66-68). Peter knew, as we should, that man has no other safe course to follow, but that consistent, conscientious discipleship

carries one over difficult terrain, and that it could very well cost a person his life! But he also knew that the **dividends** of following Jesus Christ far exceed the cost thereof!

It is vastly better to “*suffer as a Christian*” than to “*suffer...as an evildoer*” (I Peter 4:15,16), and it is readily apparent that we must “*suffer*” in one of these two categories. The Christian only suffers in time, whereas the “*evil doer*” suffers in both time **and** eternity. Furthermore, notwithstanding the self-denial and “*daily*” cross-bearing that are a part of being a true Christian, the Christian (in life) is able to know “*the peace of God, which passeth all understanding*” (Phil. 4:7), experience the “*joy of faith*” (Phil. 1:25), and happily live “*in hope of eternal life*” (Titus 1:2),.

It is a source of great consolation to a faithful child of God to truly be able to say “*Abba, Father,*” to “*boldly*” approach the throne of God through Jesus Christ, our “*Advocate,*” and to know that “*the Spirit helpeth our infirmities,*” making “*intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered*” (Rom. 8:26; cf. Gal. 4:6; Heb 4:16; I John 2:1, etc.). It is a source of great joy to know that in Christ there is “*victory*” over sin (I Cor. 15:57) and that “*we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us*” (Rom. 8:37), and that there awaits every faithful child of God an eternal dwelling place in that celestial city where all tears are wiped away, where “*there shall be no more death, or sorrow, nor crying,*” and “*no more pain*” (Rev. 21:4), and where one can bask eternally in the presence of God the Father, Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit, the angelic host, and the redeemed of all ages! Does it pay to be a Christian? Is it really worth it? You know the answer! In view of these facts, one is made to wonder why any intelligent, informed person would dare hesitate to become a Christian and to faithfully serve the Lord throughout life!

—B. Witherington