

Therefore as you have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in Him.

*Colossians 2:6*



Caspar David Friedrich (adapted)

# SOULIVE

**H**uman memory is a fragile sense. Some things we remember with certain clarity because we so often replay them: a first kiss, the affection of a favorite pet, our first car, the time we were humiliated in public, a favorite childhood toy.

Some things we are sure we remember, but really don't, and some things we are sure we have forgotten, but really haven't. Memory is slippery; to resurrect a thought or event can be like trying to grasp a wet apple seed between two fingers. But then memory can also be painfully tenacious; we pray for release from an unpleasant but persistent recollection.

But when the kindness of God our Savior and *His* love for mankind appeared, He saved us, not on the basis of deeds which we have done in righteousness, but according to His mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewing by the Holy Spirit, whom He poured out upon us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior.

*Titus 3:4-6*

It is common to those of the human condition that after we are saved by Christ we live as if we have forgotten how. Trapped for a time in the same flesh with which we were clothed in our unjustified state, we forget that the rules have now changed for the soul and the spirit. The strictures of that previous life

no longer apply. We are now free, but we live as if still enslaved.

But now that you have come to know God, or rather to be known by God, how is it that you turn back again to the weak and worthless elemental things, to which you desire to be enslaved all over again?

*Galatians 4:9*

The conduct of the believer's life is to reflect the manner in which that life was established in Christ,

...having been firmly rooted *and now* being built up in Him and established in your faith, just as you were instructed, *and overflowing with gratitude.*

*Colossians 2:7*

We did not earn or deserve His salvation, so we are to live a life filled with gratitude and appreciation, every day giving thanks to the Lord for it.

We received Him by His grace, so we are to *live* by His grace. On this earth one usually works for, one earns, what is gained. But salvation in Christ is other-worldly; it is not temporal, but spiritual. The rules and logic of earth do not apply. We did absolutely nothing to gain salvation in Christ, and that is to be the picture of our earthly life. We are to stop trying to earn God's favor;

we already *have* it—in Christ.

We received Him with confession, so we should continue to confess Him—in both senses of the word. We are to keep short accounts on our transgressions, confessing immediately whenever we fail Him. But we are also to confess *Him*, eagerly, joyfully witnessing to His lordship over our lives.

We received Him because He loved us, so we are to every day love Him back. Call it whatever you like—worship, praise, adoration—our love for Him should be ever on our lips. God is our Father, Jesus is our Brother; we have been adopted into their family with full privileges and rights. God’s love for us came before our love for Him. Because of that alone, our lives should be dedicated to loving Him back.

We received His forgiveness, so we should live every day *in* His forgiveness. Yes, being still flesh we still do fleshly things, and some of them are against the Lord. These are to be confessed in a timely fashion to restore the purity and sweetness of our relationship with Him. But this will never change the fact that we dwell—and will always dwell—in the sphere of His gracious forgiveness. All that was covered at the cross, so those who are in Christ live also in His forgiveness.

We received His sanctification, so every day we are to grow deeper in

that gift. There are two kinds of sanctification: the first occurred once and irrevocably at our conversion; the second is a gradual transforming of our lives into the picture of the Son. Every believer *is* sanctified, but every believer is also to commit to growing deeper, more profoundly closer to the image of Christ—a life of faith that never stops maturing.

Christ's sacrifice turned away God's wrath, so we are to live every day under a loving Father who knows us as His children. The cross was the turning point for all mankind, presenting the ultimate gateway of choice. Reject Christ, and God's consuming wrath remains on you; receive Christ, and that wrath is removed, replaced by a boundless forgiveness and love.