

Ralph Robinson

Sufficiency in Christ

Christ is all, and in all - the words are a Proposition. In which we have the Subject, Christ; But Christ; and the Predicate, He is all, and in all. He is all things that are necessary to salvation and that in all persons, who do believe in him, who are renewed and regenerated by his grace. - Christ is all by way of merit. Jesus Christ is meritoriously all in all to believers. Whatsoever they are, whatsoever they have, whatsoever they do, or can expect, is only upon the score and account of his purchase and merit. They enjoy no good thing upon any other terms, but only upon the consideration of Christ's merits. Because he hath done and suffered for them, and in their stead, therefore do they partake of those blessings which make them happy to all eternity. The Patriarchs in the Old Testament, Christians in the New Testament, have pleaded with God for all blessings only upon the account of Christ. "Now therefore, O our God, hear the prayer of thy servant, and his supplications, and cause thy face to shine upon thy sanctuary that is desolate, for the Lord's sake." {Dan.9:17} Of this the Apostle speaks, when he saith, that Christ is made unto us of God, wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption. {I Cor.1:30} Christ doth bestow upon us, and God is pleased to accept for us the merit of Christ's Passion, Death, Obedience, and Righteousness. 2. Christ is all in all to them by way of conveyance. As he hath merited all for them; so 'tis from him and through him that all good things are communicated to them. "Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life." {Jn.14:6} As we have all propter Christum, so we receive all we have per Christum through Christ. He is not only the Fountain, but the Medium and Conduit through whom all a believer hath is conveyed to him. Jesus Christ is a believer's Root. "I am the vine, ye are the branches; He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit; for without me ye can do nothing." {Jn.15:5} Now as all the sap which is in the branches is communicated through the root, so all the good which a believer hath is derived through Christ. God hath put all that good he intends to bestow upon his Elect into Christ's hands as a Feoffee in trust, and from him as the great Lord-steward is all communicated unto them. Of this the Apostle speaks; from Christ the Head, the whole body by "joints and bands having nourishment ministered, and knit together, increaseth with the increase of God." {Col.2:19} Jesus Christ is, as it were, the hand of God, through which all good things are sent in to us. He is the door; "Verily, verily, I say unto you, I am the door of the sheep." {Jn.10:7} 3. Christ is all in all to them, by way of efficiency and causality. He it is that works all in all in his Saints; "there are diversities of operations, but it is the same God which worketh all in all." {I Cor.12:6} This our Saviour bears witness unto, when he tells us, that without him we can do nothing. {Jn.15:5} The soul is the principle of all action in man, Jesus Christ is the principle of all motion and spiritual action in his Saints, for he is the soul of their soul. Not a good desire, not a good thought but what is inspired by Jesus Christ. The Apostle doth freely acknowledge this. "I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me;" {Gal.2:20;} so "work out your own salvation, &c. for it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure." {Phil.2:12,13} 4. Christ is all in all to them virtually; he is instead of all things to them. Solomon saith that money answereth all things, for it is meat, drink, clothes, house,

lands, &c., {Ecles.10:19,} all things that are vendible may be procured by money. Jesus Christ is virtually all things, for he makes up all things that are wanting. Hence it is that he is in Scripture compared to all things, to food, to clothing, to physick, to gold, to health, &c., because he stands for all these things unto the souls of his Saints. Hence is that promise; "he that overcometh shall inherit all things. {Rev.21:7} Jesus Christ is for all uses and purposes. This is in the text; he is Circumcision to the Gentile, wisdom to the Barbarian, &c.

5. Christ is all in all to them by way of benediction and sanctification. It is from him that any good they enjoy becomes a blessing to them. He makes everything effectual for those ends for which they are appointed. No good thing would be good to us without the benediction of Christ; yea were it not for his blessing, every good thing would prove a snare, a cross and a curse to us, as they do to them, who have no interest in Christ. This is that which Solomon saith, "the blessing of the Lord, it maketh rich." {PV.10:22} Thy health would be thy greatest sickness, thy wealth would be thy ruin, thy parts and abilities would be a snare to thee, did not Jesus Christ sanctify them by his blessing. All the good the Saints enjoy depends upon Christ's blessings to make them good to them. The Application follows: Use 1. How injurious to Jesus Christ are they who mingle other things with Jesus Christ as the causes of their salvation. The Papists mingle their own merits, and righteousness, indulgences, the sufferings of other men, with the merits of Christ, as the causes of their justification and salvation. What else is this but to deny the all-sufficiency of Jesus Christ? If he be all in all for justification and salvation, he needs not have his merits eked out with such kind of helps as these are. If Christ be all in all, then these are superfluous; yea, the addition of these doth derogate from, and destroy the fullness and all-sufficiency of Christ. Yea, Christ who is all in all to believers, will be nothing at all to them who are not contented with him alone. "Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace." {Gal.5:4} Consider this you that are self justifyers. Use 2. If Christ be all in all, then is nothing anything at all without Jesus Christ. All the world, the riches, pleasures, honors of the world is but emptiness without Christ. "Vanity of vanities, saith the Preacher, vanity of vanities; all is vanity;" {Ecles.1:2;} that man hath just nothing, that hath not Christ who is all things; the world is but complete loss without Christ. Thy wisdom, thy parts, thy children, thy offices, thy preferments, thy lands and revenues, all thou hast, if thou want him that is all things, can amount to nothing. They are but cyphers without a figure. O that men would consider this! Use 3. What rich inheritance have all those who are truly interested in Jesus Christ! My God and My All. They possess him that is all in all, and in possessing him they possess all. I have all things my brother, saith Jacob to Esau, {Gen.33:11,} for he that hath him that is all in all, cannot want anything. All things are yours, {saith the Apostle} whether things present, or things to come, and you are Christ's. {I Cor.3:22,23} A true believer, let him be never so poor outwardly, is in truth the richest man in all the world; he hath all in all, and what can be added to all? Use 4. It shows the reason why the Saints are so fearful of losing Jesus Christ. They value all things at a low rate in comparison of him. They would rather lose all than Christ, they are contented to part with liberty, estate, life, rather than with Christ. Is there not cause for it? Christ is better than all things else. Riches are something, liberty is something, life is something, but Christ is all in all. There is nothing besides Jesus Christ that is good for all uses. Garments are good to cover, but not for food; meat is good to feed, but not to warm, &c., but Jesus Christ is good for every use, for all persons, for all times, for all sexes, for all conditions. They know if they lose Christ, they lose all things. If a

man had all his estate in one jewel, you would not blame him to be very careful of keeping that. Jesus Christ is their all, they seek him when they are deprived of him, with greatest care; they keep him when they have him, with the greatest diligence. "I found him whom my soul loveth; I held him, and would not let him go;" {Cant.3:4;} do not wonder at it; for he is their all in all. Use 5. That no soul esteems Christ aright, that doth not esteem him all in all. To esteem anything equal to Christ is to disesteem Christ. Thou dost never truly account him anything, till thou do account him all things; yea, better than all things, and all things as nothing in respect of him. If thou canst not make up all things in Christ, thou makest him but a poor Christ. If thou canst not make him a friend in the want of a friend; an habitation in the want of an habitation; if thou canst not make him riches in poverty; if there be any condition in which Christ will not suffice thee; if Christ be too little to satisfy thee, thou dost but undervalue him; he is never truly accounted anything, till he be accounted all things. Use 6. Learn hence, the misery of those that want Christ. He that wants Christ, wants all things. "Lord GOD, what wilt thou give me, seeing I go childless," saith Abraham. {Gen.15:2} Abraham had much, and yet because he wanted a child, he wanted everything. The soul that wants Jesus Christ hath indeed nothing. The Apostle possessed all things when he had nothing; "as having nothing, and yet possessing all things;" {II Cor.6:10;} having Christ he possessed all things. Those that want a saving interest in Christ possess nothing, though they seem to have all things; all they have is emptiness; yea, all they have is a curse, because they have not Christ. O that God would convince men of this truth! Ralph Robinson {Christ All in All; or Several Significant Similitudes by which the Lord Jesus Christ is Described in the Holy Scriptures, 1660}

Note: Ralph Robinson {1614-1655} was of the Presbyterian persuasion, and this book, {Christ – All in All,} which contains many blessed considerations of the Glory of Christ was published after his death, under the direction of Simeon Ashe, Edmund Calamy & William Taylor, who had this to say, in the preface of the book: This field is full of Gospel treasures dug out of Scripture mines, for thine enriching in the knowledge of Christ; and what knowledge is so necessary, excellent, or profitable? For from hence do issue all things which pertain unto life and godliness. Hereby our love to Christ is enflamed, our longings after him enlarged, our faith in him confirmed, our joys in him raised; yea, by the knowledge of him he is possessed and improved, both for growth in all graces, augmenting of all spiritual comforts, and preparation for everlasting glory. The volume contains fifty-three sermons on Christ as the true believer's: Life, Food, Righteousness, Protector, Physician, Light, Shepherd, Vine, Salvation, Ointment, Consolation, Fountain, Way, Truth, Rock, Passover ...