

**THE SERMONS, LECTURES, AND SONGS OF
SIDNEY EDWARD COX**

Message: The "In Whoms" of Ephesians
Part III

Editorial Note: This message was delivered by Sidney Cox to an undoubtedly small church congregation as one of a series. I do not know the exact date or the congregation to whom the message was delivered; however, from some references in these sermons, it was likely delivered sometime between 1962 – 1972 when Sidney and Violet Cox lived in retirement in the Eventide Residence in Detroit, Michigan.

In the introductions, he occasionally refers to 'we' in describing his original thoughts in preparing this series. This was a habit of his that indicated the degree to which he considered his beloved wife, Violet to be a partner with him in his ministry. This would further date the delivery of this series to prior to Violet's death in 1967. Further, in Part III, he refers to Hendersonville, North Carolina, "Where Mrs. Cox and I used to live" – implying that she is alive.

In this particular message, Part III of the series, one of the text verses is Ephesians 2:13, "But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ." This text became the source for a popular chorus written by Sidney Cox earlier in his ministry entitled, *Far Off Made Nigh*. Below is the original manuscript for this chorus.

J. Douglas Cox, grandson of Sidney and Violet Cox. August 5, 2010

...considered already three appearances of this phrase, 'In whom' and we have noticed that in each case, or practically every case, we have also observed the words, 'We have' – 'In whom we have'; and in these three points that we have already considered, we have noticed this: that out of that great center of 'In whom' these things have appeared.

One: redemption and forgiveness. "In whom we have redemption. In whom we have forgiveness." Verse 7 of Chapter 1 – Epistle to the Ephesians. The second thing we noticed has already been mentioned tonight: our inheritance; and not only our inheritance in Him, but His inheritance in us, which is a truth that you do not find except occasionally; and in certain places in the New Testament do you ever find that truth of the inheritance that He has in us. Our inheritance in Him is mentioned over and over again, but His inheritance in us is something that is not so frequently mentioned; but we found it, "In whom we have an inheritance."¹ And then in Verse 13 you will remember that we paused long enough to look at the unbelievable thing that is there, that God in Him has sealed us as belonging to Himself. He's put His own particular mark of ownership upon us – His mark of safe delivery; His guarantee that because we have trusted in Christ; and one of the precious things that we observed was that, not only have we trusted in Christ, but God the Father trusts in Him too; and it's the point where God rests as well as the point where we rest; and we have found this wonderful thing about the sealing of the Spirit.

Now, those were the three main things that we did.

Now as we go into Chapter 2 here, because you find the words, 'In whom' – you find them twice at the end of the chapter. Now we've been looking at the appearance of these words and the streams of blessing that flow into them and then flow out of them, particularly, but this time we have to go all the way through a chapter and find the words 'In whom' as the destination. This is the Grand Central Station where the truth of Chapter 2 is leading us. And you will find, and I think it's worthwhile stopping for a minute or two, you will find that there is a little change in the pattern of things.

Let's observe this to start with: that in Chapter 1, the blessings that came from this center that we speak of and the word speaks of as, 'In whom' – out of that center the blessings flowing came to the individual Christian. It's the individual believer who is in view when we speak of 'redemption' and 'forgiveness.' It's the individual believer who is in view when we speak of the inheritance. It's the individual believer, "We have an inheritance." And it's the sealing of the Spirit upon the individual believer. In Chapter 1 you've got the believer as an individual in view. But the moment that you turn into Chapter 2, you find there's a change in the figure, because in Chapter 2, that which is before us is not the individual believer only, it's the individual believers gathered together into the Body of Christ; and the believer is in view in Chapter 1 and the Body is in view in Chapter 2; and when you get into Chapter 3 you find a change again, for here the total body of believers now become the temple of God and the habitation of God by the Spirit, and you see the picture of a building. And so you've got three things that follow in order. One: the believer in Chapter 1. The Body in Chapter 2 and the Building in Chapter 3.

Now you find again that you have before you here an example of something that we've spoken of a good many times: that the subject of one chapter is mentioned at the end of the previous chapter. Supposing we turn to the end of the Epistle to the Ephesians and look at the end of Chapter 1 and see what word begins to appear here. What word do we see in the 23rd verse of Chapter 1, the Epistle to the Ephesians? "Which is His," what? "His body." Now, the word is there indicating the subject of the next

¹ Ephesians 1:11.

chapter. And when you get to the end of Chapter 2, you find the picture has changed again, and you've got a building, you have a building that is a temple, a building for worship automatically becomes a temple; and you've got the habitation of God by the Spirit, before you is a building. Now when you come down into Chapter 3 you find all the way through you are meeting building terms – height, depth, length, breadth; and all the way through you can see the picture of a building. In Chapter 1: the believer. In Chapter 2: the body. In Chapter 3: the building.

Now, before we go any further, let's just stop a moment or two and take a long look. It won't hurt us, in fact it will do us good if we take a look at those two words, 'In whom' – because as we've been going along, we should have been seeing more clearly than ever what is held, what is contained in those words, 'In whom' – what do we mean when we talk about 'In whom?' The believer 'In whom'; the body 'In whom'; the building 'In whom' – and we have this word before us all the time. What do we mean by 'In whom?' Is it becoming clearer to us just what we mean by that and what the world means when we find ourselves facing these two great words – not something, someone - 'In whom.'

Now, 'In Him,' the believer is given four different positions of blessing. Now let me mention them to you and then I'll tell you from what source this little bit of information comes. First of all, 'In Him' the believer has a position. Second: the believer 'In Him' has a privilege; and third: the believer 'In Him' has a possession; and fourth: the believer 'In Him' has a practice.

Now, let me repeat those words. We'll go over them again so that you'll be able to take them down if you want to: a position, a privilege, a possession, a practice.

A position 'In Him?' What do we mean by that? Well, put into the simplest possible words, it just means this, that our position 'In Him' is just this: where He is, we are.

Now, what about our privilege? It's just as simple. What He is, we are. This is what it means to be 'In Him.'

What is our possession? What He has, we share. And you can make that stronger if you wish. You could say, all that He has, we share.

And our practice is simply this: what He does, we do.

Now that's what it means in the simplest possible terms to be 'In Christ' - 'In Whom.' Our position: what He is, we are. Our privilege: what He is, we are. Our possession: what He has, we share. Our practice: what He does, we do.

Now, you can reverse that, so we can put the other side to it if you wish, and it won't hurt us one little bit to take a look at it this way. Where He is not, we are not. What He is not, we are not. What He has not, we have not. What He refuses, we refuse. What He does not, we do not.

Now, that in the simplest possible words is what it means to be 'In Him.'

Now, from Ruth Paxson's beautiful little commentary, or big commentary on the Epistle to the Ephesians, I copied that the other night and my heart just sang glory songs all the way through. It's just

wonderful – her book *The Wealth, Walk and Warfare of the Christian* – the most practical, the most beautiful commentary on the Epistle to the Ephesians that I know anything about.² Ruth Paxson – one of God’s great servants; lived in Hendersonville, North Carolina there, and I knew her quite well; lived not far from where Mrs. Cox and I lived in that interesting little town.³

Now, let’s go a step further and see if we dare to do this. When you talk about ‘In whom’ and you speak of us being ‘In Him’ – because you find that thought over and over again, it means something more than just location. Now when we move into a building, it’s simply a change of location. That’s all. We move from one place to another. But it’s not merely a change of location when we speak of ourselves as being ‘In Christ.’ It’s something that’s far more than just a location. It’s something that is so wonderful that the relationships that now exist, that which now exists ‘In Christ’ is spoken of as a ‘new creation.’

It isn’t just a change from an old to a new, it’s a new thing altogether. The old has passed away and ‘In Him’ all things have become new. It implies my dear, not merely that He has moved into an area of my life and taken control of certain things, it means that He and I have become so united that we are actually one together - so that it isn’t two hands, His hand and my hand. My hand is gone. My hand was crucified on the cross. His hand is now in evidence. It isn’t just my feet and His feet. My feet were crucified on the cross - if it’s true that we were crucified with Christ. “Nevertheless, I live” and we hear it and say it over and over and over again; and so seldom do we enter into the deep thought of it. My feet were crucified. It’s His feet that move now, not mine at all. And if it’s His feet moving, where will they go and where will I go with them? It solves a lot of problems, doesn’t it? The unifying of life – my will and His will. It isn’t His will controlling my will, it’s my will crucified and His will in evidence. It’s mine gone entirely, His is in there. That’s what ‘In Him’, ‘In Christ’ means, and ‘In whom’ means. That’s what it means.

By the way, when we mention that word about ‘my will’ I wonder if you would let me quote two lines out of a very familiar hymn and then you tell me what hymn I’ve been quoting from. And this is what it says.

Let my soul look up with a steadfast hope,
And my will be lost in Thine.

Now, what hymn was I quoting from there. Somebody tell me right quick. *I Am Thine O Lord*, exactly; one of the ones that we know the best, and sometimes pay least attention to it.

I wonder how many times...., did you hear me stop to think of the implication of it? – when we sang that old familiar word, and we do it over and over and over again, *And my will be lost in Thine?* I wonder,

² Ruth Paxson (1889 - 1949) graduated from the State University of Iowa and afterward studied at Moody Bible Institute. From 1913 – 1931, she served as a missionary to China where her Bible lessons to pastors, evangelists, and teachers in the 1920s were well received. Later in life, she settled in Hendersonville, North Carolina where for the final 10 years of her life she was in demand as a speaker and writer and was closely associated with the American Bible Society. Perhaps her best known book is *Life on the Highest Plane* which she wrote in 1928. Sidney Cox was associated with the Moody Bible Institute from 1922 – 1927.

³ Sidney and Violet Cox resided in Hendersonville, North Carolina from 1947 – 1956, at which time Sidney joined the faculty of the Miami Bible Institute. While in Hendersonville, North Carolina, they lived in semi-retirement; however, Sidney remained in great demand as a preacher, evangelist and Bible teacher. He traveled extensively while furthering his ministry during this time.

did we stop to think of the implication of that? My choices as to what I'm going to do, lost in His. That's what it means to be 'In Christ.' That's what 'In whom' means. It means this man died and in Him, rose again! And it's a new life entirely and so different that the Word of God speaks of it as a 'New Creation' – old things have passed away and behold, all things have become new.

Now my dears, when you turn to this 2nd Chapter of Ephesians and find at the end of the chapter the words 'In whom' appearing twice, and pathways of teaching and truth flow all the way through Chapter 2 and coming to a climax in those two appearances of 'In whom' at the end of the chapter. What great truths do you see? For instance, when you read the first verse of Chapter 2, what great truth do you see, that times its answer 'In whom' at the end of the chapter; and the only answer, there is no other answer except that which we find 'In Him' – there is no other answer to this.

Let me mention this. There are three great words that describe the pathway from the beginning of the chapter to 'In whom' at the end, and each one of them give to us the thought of a problem that can not be solved any other way, except 'In Him.'

Now the first one is death. Now you don't have to look far do you to find that. There it is staring you right in the face, right at the beginning, "And you hath He quickened who were dead in trespasses and sin."⁴ And there it stands. There's the problem. Now, 'In Him' at the end, there's the answer, and all the way through you find this tremendous thing flowing on through Chapter 2 - the believer dead in trespasses and sin as he was originally, and the answer to his deepest need, 'In Him.' Now notice if you please that the word, 'Hath He quickened' are in italics, which means they were not there in the original; and the dogmatic statement is there, "You were dead in trespasses and sin." What is the answer to death? There isn't but one. There's no other answer to it but one, and that's resurrection. That's the only answer, His resurrection. And when you turn to Verse 6 of this same chapter, what do we find in Verse 6? "And hath raised us up together and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus." The other two words that you find in here, one stated and the other implied all the way through, and all begin with the letter "D" – the first one is death; the second one is distance and the third one is disobedience. And if you want to go into the 5th chapter, you can find that you can add another one, and that's the word, darkness.

Here is the sinner, he becomes the believer. Here is the way in which God finds him, "Dead in trespasses and sin" and his need must be met 'In Christ' or it is not met at all. God doesn't deal with us either for our secondary needs or our primary needs, if there is any such thing, but God doesn't deal with us at all except in His son. Whatever God gives to us, comes to us from that great center 'In whom' – we have everything that God is to give to us.

Now this is the thing that is before us. Let's take the first one, you look at the second, the one that we spoke of as distance, you'll find it there, "Ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ,"⁵ and that's so important it is repeated twice. You find the words 'far off' twice⁶ and in between the disobedience that caused both the death on the one side and the distance on the other, for both of them were the product of disobedience.

⁴ Ephesians 2:1.

⁵ Ephesians 2:13.

⁶ See also Ephesians 2:17.

Now let's look at the pattern in which this truth is given to us. First of all, you find the fact of it is stated. "You were dead in trespasses and sin." – the statement of it. It is stated.

Then there's the reason for it. The reason for it is that we were walking, "According to the course of this world,"⁷ and in the walking according to the course of this world, we were actually walking dead folks. Now that's the truth that is there, and the result of it was that we became, and note these two things, we became, "Children of disobedience,"⁸ and, "Children of wrath,"⁹ and the only cure for it all is resurrection.

Now, here's the truth that's flowing through Chapter 2, heading right straight into the two times that you find the words 'In whom.' "Quickened with Christ" – Verse 5. "Raised in Christ" – Verse 6. "Seated in Christ" – Verse 6. "We walk in Christ Jesus" – Verse 10. And so we've got the statement made and then the description of the difficulty. Here is death and this is what it means.

Now, the second one is equally clear, when it speaks of the sinner who afterwards becomes the believer by the grace of God is at a far distance, and the words, 'Afar off' – "Ye who sometimes were afar off," and this is a distance that can not be spanned, even by anything that we hold in our hands or even in our minds. We have no tape measure that can span that distance, and not only that, but we don't have a tape measure even in our finite minds that can span the distance when God speaks about 'far off.' How far off our Holy God is from a sinful man is something that is only known to God, Himself. He gives us the words of it in order that we may have some kind of comprehension, but the distance remains a secret in the heart of God; only He knew how far off Sidney Cox was; only God knew. But the wonder of it is that God spanned the distance and provided the remedy.

What do you mean by 'afar off?' Well, you don't have to wonder. The answer to our questions is not found in our cogitations either by old or young. The answer to our questions is found in the Word of God, not only somewhere else. It isn't what we think about it, it's what the Word of God says about it. There's the answer to our questions. What does the Word of God; how does the Word of God describe 'far off' – that distance that's there that separates Holy God from sinful man. Well, we've got it right before us. It's here in Verse 12, this is what it says, 'Afar off' means, "Without Christ; we were aliens; we are strangers; we have no hope; we are without God." Now, that's what it means to be 'afar off.'

Now, when we are 'Made nigh by the blood of Christ' – what it means to be 'made nigh' is also told us. What a difference it is because 'made nigh' simply means this: that instead of turmoil, there's peace – Verse 14. Instead of enmity, there's unity. And, instead of strangers, we are citizens.¹⁰ That's what it means to be 'made nigh.'

Now dear, the great climax of it all is seen at the end, because the body of believers that has been appearing before us in this chapter is not merely gathered together as a pleasant company even for the delight and satisfaction of God. But, the Body of Christ is to be used. It's to find its place in the purpose of God and when that is done, then the figure necessarily changes – the body becomes a building. It's the same thing exactly, only the building is the place where the body functions. It's not just the fact of

⁷ Ephesians 2:2.

⁸ Ephesians 2:2.

⁹ Ephesians 2:3.

¹⁰ Ephesians 2:15–19, paraphrased.

the body, it's the functioning of the body that we can see before us and we've got three blessed things from which we see the functioning of the Body of Christ.

First of all, we are, "His household." Now that's a building term. Verse 19: that is a family relationship. But we've got more than that because the central fact of a family relationship, and I'm talking about a Christian family relationship and not merely the family to which you belong, the family to which all of us belong. The great central fact of it all is not that we might enjoy each other or even please God – the great central fact of it all is that as a body, we might worship God! – that's the great thing that God is after.

And worthy to worship God, my dear? We leave our home in the morning and we go somewhere where we say the purpose is to worship God; and wherever we go, it becomes God's temple; and the temple is the place where the body of Christ worships – the great central thing that's there.

Now, the third one is, "The dwelling place," and here we find the ultimate in revelation regarding the truth of His indwelling. We not only dwell in Him and He in us, but in the mystery of God's arrangement, God Himself becomes the inhabitant of this building, this dwelling place where the believers, one in Christ are in the center of it; and it becomes the dwelling place of God.

And you've got three great things here: a household for the family, a temple for worship and a dwelling place for the Spirit's indwelling in us and God's indwelling in the total body of those who are His.

We've been through an interesting chapter and it all comes from those two simple little words, 'In whom.' Let's turn to the end of the chapter and verse 21, and will you read them aloud with me please. "In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth into an holy temple in the Lord." Again, "In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit."