

Title: Two Peoples – One Way (Part 7)

Passage: Galatians 2:20

Theme: Union with Christ

Number: 0125Ga2.20(21)

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[i] **Scripture Reading and Prayer** (my translation)

**15 We [are] Jews by nature and not sinners from among the Gentiles. 16 Yet we know that a man is not justified by works of the Law but through faith in Jesus Christ. And we have believed in Christ Jesus so that we may be justified by faith in Christ and not by works of the Law, since by the works of the Law no flesh will be justified. 17 But if while seeking to be justified in Christ, we ourselves were found to be sinners, is Christ then a minister of sin? May it never be! 18 For if I rebuild what I once destroyed, I prove myself to be a transgressor. 19 For through the Law I died to the Law, so that I might live to God. 20 I have been crucified with Christ – and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me. 21 I do not nullify the grace of God: for if righteousness [comes] through the Law, then Christ died for no purpose.**

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[ii] **Clarifications from last week on the law (intro)**

Talked about looking at t/Law from 2 categories:

1) Universal; 2) Provisional.

Whether we are referring to law in gen. or t/M.L. {explain}

We talked about how univ. laws are integral to G's nature.

What about provisional laws? How do they relate to G's N?

All of G's demands flow from His nature.

G. does nothing that's not consist. w/who He is.

However, universal laws are essential to G's nature.

That's why they have to remain in any alternate world.

God's command to worship Him is essential.

Even b4 t/creation of anything, there was mutual adoration among t/3 Persons of t/Ghead.

Worship flows from His nature & is essential to it.

However,

G's provisional command for Israel to keep Sabbath flows out of His nature; it's not essential to it.

Why that law can change. (add many other O.T. Laws, such as t/wearing of tassels & phylacteries; circumcision; levirate marriage; death penalty for adultery; ect.)

**[iii] Another clarification related to law and sanctification**

I said that we are not justified by any law. True.

I also said that "in its purity we are not sanctified by law"

Big nuance there that surrounds t/word "purity."

Affirm that obedience to G's right. requirements is essential to our sanctification. I'm not an antinomian. {define}

To be sure, we're not sanctified by keeping t/provisional laws of t/M.C. They were given to Israel. But we are sanctified through keeping t/mandates of Scripture that do apply to us.

Bible is key to our sanct. (reading/studying/obeying/delight.)

To echo t/words of t/great Anglican theologian J.C. Ryle => It is thoroughly scriptural and right to say, "Faith alone justifies." But it is not equally scriptural and right to say, "Faith alone sanctifies." [Holiness, Introduction]

Not "let go and let G." We see this, for instance, when someone says, "I didn't help that brother or sister in need; it was t/H.S. who did it." Not accurate.

It would be fine to say that you did something good in t/power of t/H.S. Yes. But you still did it.

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As believer's under t/N.C. gospel, t/Bible is our guide. So in that sense, law is important.

Sanct. transcends simply having a list of "do's and dont's"

#### **[iv] River Illustration**

Picture a river w/2 solid banks. The law is like those banks. Xn living is t/flowing river. T/law (river banks) keeps us contained; it informs our direction. Like a map; we are to only go where t/river banks direct us. Found. role of Script. It is t/voice of God (vox Dei) that directs us. T/H.S. works w/the river banks to fuel our progress.

There are obstacles in t/river I must avoid. Fallen branches, rocks. These represent our sin. Those obstacles slow or even stall progress.

T/banks tell me not to do certain things (lust, covet, lie, mistreat others, make idols) & what things to do (meditate on Script.; work hard; provide for my family; love G. & others). It informs our doctrinal understanding of t/great themes of Scripture (who God is; what is salv.).

It's about a life of worship, love & joy.

**[v] Think about Jesus' affirmation that the law is fulfilled in loving God & neighbor**

Mark 12:28–31 28 One of the scribes came . . . [and asked Jesus], “What commandment is the foremost of all?”

Jesus answers him w/2 essential statements:

First ==>

29 Jesus answered, “The foremost [command] is, ‘HEAR, O ISRAEL! THE LORD OUR GOD IS ONE LORD;

That is, you have to know who God is. Theology proper.

Can't serve just any G. of your choosing; you have to serve t/right G., the G. of t/Bible.

30 AND YOU SHALL LOVE THE LORD YOUR GOD WITH ALL YOUR HEART, AND WITH ALL YOUR SOUL, AND WITH ALL YOUR MIND, AND WITH ALL YOUR STRENGTH.'

Once you know who He is, you have to love Him w/all your being.

Then ==>

31 “The second is this, ‘YOU SHALL LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF.’ There is no other commandment greater than these.”

Love G. Love your neighbor.

Could even say that each of these represents t/2 river banks.  
Love God / Love your neighbor = fulfill t/law.

This is walking by t/Spirit (or, to keep t/analogy, t/river of your life flowing by t/power of t/H.S. under t/guidance of G’s Word).

**[vi] This is sanctification (growing in Christ-likeness)**

This is progressive. We move forward in progress.

Not to say that we don’t encounter back-currents; stagnation; whirlpools; obstacles . . .

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**[vii] Union with Christ is central to both our justification and our sanctification**

This is objective truth. Does not change.

If you are united to JC that’s a fact that cannot change.

What about our experience?

Is there an experiential side to this union? Yes.

While t/truth never changes, R exper. as it rel. to truth does.

Jerry Bridges →

“We can distinguish [the] two aspects of our union with Christ this way: Our legal union with Christ entitles us to all that Christ did for us as He acted in our place, as our substitute. Our vital union with Christ is the means by which He works in us by His Holy Spirit. The legal union refers to His objective work outside of us that is credited to us through faith. The vital union refers to His subjective work in us, which is also realized through faith as we rely on His Spirit to work in and through us. Though our union with Christ has two aspects, it is one union. We cannot have legal union without also having vital union. If through faith we lay hold of what Christ did for us, we will also begin to experience His workings in us.” [Jerry Bridges, Gospel for Real Life. © 2002, 39]

While truth never changes, R exper. as it rel. to that truth does. Challenge of walking by faith & not by sight.

Don't discount emotion. We don't rely on emotion as our foundation, but it's imp. that we feel something of t/truth. If truth transforms, there's going to be an experiential aspect. We tend to shy away from that — esp. in our circles.

**[viii] I've often said: “It's easier to talk about doctrine than devotion”**

IOW – it's easy to talk about what we know than what we do // what we understand than what we feel. Why? Need both.

Again to quote Ryle ==>

“We must seek to know something of heart-felt, experimental communion with Him. Never, never let us forget, that "union" is one thing, and "communion" another. Thousands, I fear, who know what "union" with Christ is, know nothing of "communion.”

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So w/that in mind . . . Reorient you to what we've been looking at t/last sev. wks. →

***I. Essential Elements of the Gospel in Galatians (vv. 15-21)***

***A. The Universal Nature of Sin (v. 15-16a)***

***B. Justification Is by Faith Alone (v. 16)***

***C. The Believer's Union With Christ (vv. 17-20)***

***1. To be "In Christ" is not to be "In Sin" (17)***

***2. To be "In Christ" is to have died to sin and the Law (18-19)***

***3. To be "In Christ" is to have been crucified with Christ (20)***

**20 I have been crucified with Christ—and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me.**

**[ix] The implications of our union with Christ are far-reaching**

Why we've been stalled here for so many wks. (cf. a tropical storm).

Drink in t/words of A.W. Pink →

“The subject of spiritual union is the most important, the most profound, and yet the most blessed of any that is set forth in the sacred Scriptures; and yet, sad to say, there is hardly any which is now more generally neglected. The very expression “spiritual union” is unknown in most professing Christian circles, and even where it is employed it is given such a protracted meaning as to take in only a fragment of this precious truth.” [A.W. Pink. *Spiritual Union and Communion*, Baker, 1971. 7]

This is an important doctrine. We have called it an essential element of t/Gospel in t/BOG. Speaks to its imp.

We find the words “in Christ” used 4 times here.  
“faith in X” x2 || “believed in X” x1 || “justified in X” 1x.

**[x] We’re going to spend the rest of our time looking at the greater implications of our union with Christ**

## **II. Six Implications of our Union with Christ**

*A. Salvation*

*B. Sanctification*

*C. Satisfaction*

*D. Sin*

*E. Suffering*

*F. Security*

That's a lot to cover – only get thru t/first 3 pts.

### **A. Salvation (We are Justified in Christ)**

**1. This goes back to v. 16 →**

**16 Yet we know that a man is not justified by works of the Law but through faith in Jesus Christ. And we have believed in Christ Jesus so that we may be justified by faith in Christ and not by works of the Law, since by the works of the Law no flesh will be justified.**

**2. This is the second essential element of the Gospel we’ve looked at: Justification is by Faith Alone**

**a. The Jews had the Law — that was a good thing**

But t/Law could only do what it was designed to do.

It was not designed to be salvational.



Salvation was always by faith. (Rom. 4) – Abraham was justified by faith b4 t/Law was given - even b4 circumcision.

Law had its purposes, one of which was to prepare God's people — Jews & Gentiles-for t/coming Savior.  
Point Paul drives home later in chap 3.

### **3. Remember: Justification means to be declared righteous**

We're not MADE righteous in X (that's prog. sanctification).  
When it comes to our salv., we're declared righteous.  
Legal term.

### **4. The heart of the Gospel**

#### **a. Remember the words of Luther**

He called t/doctrine of justif. “the most principal and special article of Christian doctrine.” Without it, “Christianity is just another religion—an endless effort to get right with God through self-discipline and ritual.”

#### **b. Justification is a declarative act by God (it's not a process or something we do)**

Whenever works are part of t/equation, salv. becomes a process that is lost, but never gained.

It's not something we do; it's something God does.

### **5. We are justified by faith alone - but we stand justified by virtue of our union with Christ**

We're regenerated unto faith (B.A.). That's when our UwX become for us a living reality.

2 Cor 5:21 He made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him. (in union w/Him).

2 Cor. 5:17 . . . if any man is in Christ, he is a new creature; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come.

## **6. Something else that's relevant here . . .**

### **a. Substitutionary atonement (PSA)**

#### **(1) Jesus was our substitute — He took our place**

That was prefigured in t/OT. Many examples.

In Lev. 16 we see Aaron, t/H.P., take two goats. Upon one of those goats, chosen by lot, he confessed all t/sin of Israel.

That goat was then set free symbolizing freedom from sin.

“Scapegoat.”

We see in t/OT sacrificial system this substitution of t/innocent for t/guilty.

That was a shadow of t/reality of Jesus, the lamb of God who was sacrificed for all who would believe in Him for eternal life. He is our Scapegoat.

As Hebrews reminds us, t/blood of sacrificial animals cannot take sin away. They were a temporary stay of execution.

Jesus was t/final sacrificial substitute for sinners.

Substitutionary Atonement. Penal substitutionary Atonement

#### **(2) What about the extent of that atonement?**

Does every person alive get equal benefit of X's death, regardless of whether they believe?

Put another way, did Jesus die for everyone t/same way? For those will never believe in Him as well as those who will?

**(a) I don't think so**

This is perhaps t/most controv. aspect of t/theol. system known as "Calvinism" — is t/doctrine of L.A. (better P.R.).

**(b) Jesus did not die for everyone in the exact same sense**

If He did, then everyone would be saved & we'd be univers.

There is a special, specific "partic." way that He died for those who would believe in Him (elect).

We see that in this idea of our UWX – specifically what it means to be crucif. w/X.

Are those destined die in their unbelief "crucif. w/X"? No. To say otherwise is to claim that no one was crucif. w/Him at t/time.

You're only crucif. w/Him retroactively when you believe.

B.A. believers were not only chosen b4 t/found. of t/world – they were crucif. w/X. That's a reality of t/past that is only true of God's elect bride, all believers who comprise t/true CH.

**7. Without our union with Christ there is no gospel (good news) — no salvation**

Col. 1:27 . . . Christ in you, the hope of glory.

Because you are “in X” you cannot be separated from Him in His life, death, burial, resurrection.

Rem. t/Father treated t/Son on t/cross as you deserved. He poured His wrath out upon Him.

In X's perfect sacrif. t/Father now sees you as He sees t/Son. Why? Because your existence is in Him.

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***A. Salvation (We are Justified in Christ)***

***B. Sanctification (We Live in Christ)***

**1. Sanctification relates to our life lived in Christ**

Connected to personal holiness // growing in X-likeness.

***A. Justification (We are Righteous in Christ)***

Position.

***B. Sanctification (We Live in Christ)***

This is our Practice.

**2. Justification and sanctification are distinct - but not inseparable**

A changed life always follows true salvation.

*2 Cor. 5:17 . . . if any man is in Christ, he is a new creature; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come.*

Augustine (5th c.) stated that t/true CH consists of those who have believed & who are spiritually united to X.

Result: they live changed lives which evidence their union with Him.

Those who do not demonstrate a transformed life, he characterized as Xns in name only. [adapted from Philip Hughes in Tabletalk, p. 14, June 2004, Ligonier Ministries] I call those sorts of ppl. “CRINO’s”

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### ***B. Sanctification (We Live in Christ)***

**3. As a result of union with Christ - Paul could say ==> 2:20b . . . And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me.**

#### **a. We have been crucified (dead) to sin**

Romans 6:6-7,11 6 knowing this, that our old self was crucified with Him, that our body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves to sin; 7 for he who has died is freed from sin.

11 Even so consider yourselves to be dead to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus.

#### **(1) Christian – you have been crucified!**

Do not come down from t/cross! Reckon yourself dead. Pride – I'm dead to that. // Lust/Envy/Anger/

Not easy; takes t/eyes of faith & discipline.

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**4. To show the depth of this reality I think of Paul’s words in 1 Cor. 6:15–16**

15a Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ? . . .

Paul points us to our UwX.

He goes on to give a disturbing example.

15b . . . Shall I then take away the members of Christ and make them members of a harlot? May it never be!

16 Or do you not know that the one who joins himself to a harlot is one body with her? For He says, “THE TWO WILL BECOME ONE FLESH.”

17 But the one who joins himself to the Lord is one spirit with Him.

18 Flee immorality. Every other sin that a man commits is outside the body, but the immoral man sins against his own body. 19 Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and that you are not your own? 20 For you have been bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body.

That is t/flowing river of our sanctification.

## ***II. Six Implications of our Union with Christ***

### ***A. Salvation (We are Justified in Christ)***

### ***B. Sanctification (We are Sanctified in Christ)***

### ***C. Satisfaction (God is Satisfied with us in Christ)***

#### **1. Why does God accept us?**

##### **a. Because we're good people?**

Eccles. 7:20 Indeed, there is not a righteous man on earth who continually does good and who never sins.

Rom. 3:9 . . . both Jews and Greeks are all under sin;  
Gal. 3:22a ... the Scripture has shut up everyone under sin ...  
1 John 1:10 . . .  
Habakkuk 1:13a Your eyes are too pure to approve evil, And  
You can not look on wickedness with favor. . . .

T/holiness of G. brings fear to those who appear before Him.

**b. The O.T. Prophet Isaiah saw God (recorded in the 6th chapter of the book by his name)**

Isa. 6:1–7 1 In the year of King Uzziah’s death I saw the Lord sitting on a throne, lofty and exalted, with the train of His robe filling the temple. 2 Seraphim stood above Him, each having six wings: with two he covered his face, and with two he covered his feet, and with two he flew. 3 And one called out to another and said, “Holy, Holy, Holy, is the LORD of hosts, The whole earth is full of His glory.” 4 And the foundations of the thresholds trembled at the voice of him who called out, while the temple was filling with smoke.

What was his response? Write a book? Go on a speaking circuit?

5a Then I said, “Woe is me, for I am ruined! WHY?”

5b Because I am a man of unclean lips, And I live among a people of unclean lips;

For my eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts.”

**c. Judges 13**

After G. appeared to Manoah & his wife to announce t/birth of Samson, Manoah cries out:

“. . . We will surely die, for we have seen God.”

#### **d. Genesis 32**

Patriarch Jacob wrestles w/the AOL whom I believe to be X incarnate. Afterward, he names t/place Peniel (face of G.), for he said, “I have seen God face to face, yet my life has been preserved.”

#### **e. Luke 5**

After a night of unsuccessful fishing, Jesus directs Peter where to cast t/nets resulting in a great catch, so great that t/nets began to break. Peter realizes that this is something only t/Divine Creator could do. His response?

8 . . . he fell down at Jesus’ feet, saying, “Go away from me Lord, for I am a sinful man!”

Anyone who thinks that they can stand b4 G. some day clothed only in their sinful nakedness is insane.

Not sane to think that G. will overlook sin. He is holy!

John Piper ==>

“The word ‘holy’ is the little boat in which we reap the world’s end in the ocean of language. The possibilities of language to describe God come to an end they spill over into a vast void of silence. Holiness carries us to the brink, and from there on all our experience of God is wordless. . . . Every time you try to define the word ‘holy,’ you simply wind up by saying this, ‘God is holy means, God is God.’” [John Piper, “Going Hard After the Holy God,” Cassette



Message on Philippians 3:2-16, Jan. 8, 1984 a.m., ©  
Desiring God Ministries, 720 13th Ave. South, Minneapolis,  
MN 55415]

***1. Why does God accept us?***

G.accepts us & is satisfied w/us only bc we R in X.

***C. Satisfaction (God is Satisfied with us in Christ)***

JC lived for us/died for us/lives for us/ascended to heaven  
for us/intercedes for us.

R connection w/Him is so definite that it can be said of us –  
Eph 2:6 [we are] raised . . . up with Him, and seated . . . with  
Him in the heavenly places, in Christ Jesus.

Jerry Bridges →

“When Jesus died, He died as my representative, and I died  
in Him; when He arose, He rose as my representative, and I  
arose in Him; when He ascended up on high and took His  
place at the right hand of the Father in the glory, He  
ascended as my representative and I ascended in Him, and  
today I am seated in Christ with God in the heavenlies. ==>

I look at the cross of Christ, and I know that atonement has  
been made for my sins; I look at the open sepulcher and the  
risen and ascended Lord, and I know the atonement has been  
accepted. There no longer remains a single sin on me, no  
matter how many or how great my sins may have been.”  
[Jerry Bridges, *The Bible and Its Christ*, Revell, n.d., p. 107-  
108]

## **2. This is the depth of God's love**

Psalm 149:4 For the LORD takes pleasure in His people . . .  
Zeph. 3:17 talks about G. rejoicing over His people  
w/shouts of Joy.

Ultimately, that can only be true because of our relationship  
w/JC, our union w/Him.He is in us and we are in Him.  
Therefore [^]

## **3. In Christ - God is satisfied with you**

Can't improve your position. You don't have to "perform".  
G.'s love for you isn't grounded in how good you are or how  
well you perform for Him!  
That's t/fickle way t/world bases love & acceptance.

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Union with X: Those who belong to X are in X.

What is true of Him is true of them.

This should put to death issues of guilt. Paralyzed by fear of  
t/past or fear of somehow living up to some "standard."

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Many of you are familiar with Steve Brown.

Steve was known for his Xn radio program, "Key Life."

He was a pastor for 25 yrs & later taught at Ref'd. T.S.

He tells the story about his daughter who was asked to take  
an honors course in High School. She didn't want to take  
t/class – knew it would be very difficult & she was  
concerned that she would do poorly and ruin her GPA. Steve  
went to get her excused from it because she had such  
anxiety. The teacher said "look, I know she is far more  
capable than she knows. Here's the deal I want to make. I'll  
give her an A for the course right now, if she just shows up

and tries. This will take all the pressure off her so all she has to do is jump in and enjoy taking the class.”

Brown says that's the way it is with the imputed righteousness of Christ. God has guaranteed you an A.

Ties in to what Paul says in 3:3 “having begun by the Spirit are you now being perfected by the flesh?”

That’s what some of you are trying to do; attempting in vain to perfect yourselves.

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Three more points -save those for next time.

Last quote by Martin Luther ==>

“When we look at ourselves we find plenty of sin. But when we look at Christ, we have no sin. Whenever we separate the person of Christ from our own person, we live under the Law and not in Christ; we are condemned by the Law, dead before God. ==>

Faith connects you so intimately with Christ, that He and you become as it were one person. As such you may boldly say: “I am now one with Christ. Therefore Christ’s righteousness, victory, and life are mine.”

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The eleventh-century theologian Anselm wrote *Cur Deus Homo*—“Why God Became Man.” He worked out the logic of the atonement in the following way: Human beings owe a

debt to God that they cannot pay, but must pay it; God, who is owed the debt and can pay it, takes on human nature in the form of Christ so that, as man, he pays the debt that we owe; Christ takes our place and offers compensation (“satisfaction”) to God as God on our behalf.

In his book *The Cross of Christ*, John Stott reflected on Anselm’s model, noting that the essence of sin is man substituting himself for God while the essence of salvation is God substituting himself for man. Get that? [^]

Are you substituting yourself for God? Don’t kid yourself, you’re not in control. Not ultimately.

Rem. Jesus’ parable in Luke 16 about t/rich man?

This man was blessed with wealth in t/form of agriculture. He thot to himself, “I need to build bigger barns to hold all this wealth!”

19 ‘And I will say to my soul, “Soul, you have many goods laid up for many years to come; take your ease, eat, drink and be merry.” ’

20 “But God said to him, ‘You fool! This very night your soul is required of you; and now who will own what you have prepared?’

21 “So is the man who stores up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God.”

You think you’re in control when all is well. But what about loss? // sickness? // tragedy? // death?

*“. . . the essence of sin is man substituting himself for God while the essence of salvation is God substituting himself for man.”*

That G. did on t/Cross. Believe in Jesus, t/sinless Lamb of G. who died for sinners like you and me.

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The Valley of Vision: A Collection of (anonymous) Puritan Prayers and Devotions. “The Life Look”

O GOD, I bless you for the happy moment when I first saw your law fulfilled in Christ, wrath appeased, death destroyed, sin forgiven, my soul saved.

Ever since, you have been faithful to me:

daily have I proved the power of Jesus' blood,  
daily have I known the strength of the Spirit,  
my teacher, director, sanctifier.

I want no other rock to build upon than that I have,  
desire no other hope than that of gospel truth,  
need no other look than that which gazes on the cross.

Forgive me if I have tried to add anything to the one foundation, if I have unconsciously relied upon my knowledge, experience, deeds, and not seen them as filthy rags, if I have attempted to complete what is perfect in Christ

May my cry be always, Only Jesus! only Jesus!

In him is freedom from condemnation,  
fullness in his righteousness,  
eternal vitality in his given life,  
indissoluble union in fellowship with him;

In him I have all that I can hold; enlarge me to take in more.

If I backslide, let me like Peter weep bitterly and return to him;

If I am tempted, and have no wit, give me strength enough to trust in him;

If I am weak, may I faint upon his bosom of eternal love;

If in extremity, let me feel that he can deliver me;

If driven to the verge of hope and to the pit of despair, grant me grace to fall into his arms.

O God, hear me, do for me more than I ask, think, or dream.