

## Rejoicing in Christ by Michael Reeves A Book Review by Jesse Smothers

Jesus does not just give us life, He is our Life. Jesus does not just give us gifts, He gives us Himself. Jesus does not just give us salvation, He *is our very Salvation* (Acts 4:12). Reeves helps us see that we are not just saved because of Jesus, but that we are saved in the very person of Jesus; which is why we can truly *rejoice in Him*.

In a succinct and focused manner, Reeves magnifies Jesus and the real beauty of the gospel in a way that is easily understood, yet brilliantly profound. He does not write about new concepts or cutting-edge techniques, but brings to light the gospel truths of old that seem to have been forgotten in an age of such inward focus.

Taking it all the way back to the creation of the world, Reeves makes it clear that we do not just have a sin problem, but rather, an utterly helpless dilemma of being born into Sin in Adam. This is why the Word became flesh, because our very identities needed to be transformed in Him. As Reeves puts it, “The Son of God became human, that we humans might become sons of God.” If we share in the Sonship of Jesus through the power of the Holy Spirit, then we can actually know God as our Father and live as His children.

### **Re-creation**

Christ is in the business of re-creating the world, and In Jesus we are born again into a new humanity to become a new creation (2 Cor. 5:17). This is why Reeves writes, “The virgin birth is an almighty No! To all our silly attempts at earning salvation.” Our striving for salvation, grace, and peace, will be endless and vain if we do not take hold of Jesus for all He is. Far too often Jesus’s work and His person are separated, but this distinction is only draining and hurtful to us; for every spiritual blessing is found *in Christ* (Eph. 1:3).

The gift of righteousness is ours by being joined to the Righteous One. The gift of holiness is ours by being joined to the Holy One. Most assuredly, every good and perfect gift is from above (James 1:17). If we think of having these gifts apart from Christ, we make the gifts an abstraction, obscure the glory of our Triune God, and incidentally worship the gifts over the Giver. However, Christ is our gift and we have been re-created in Him.

### **Life in Christ**

Reeves goes on to talk about this incredible life in Christ that is offered to us; the full and abundant life. Jesus not only became one of us, but became one with us through the power of the Spirit. This wonderful truth is spoken of throughout the Scriptures; “*Christ in you, the hope of glory*” (Col. 1:27), “I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but *Christ who lives in me*” (Gal. 2:20), “For you have died, and *your life is hidden with Christ in God*” (Col. 3:3), “and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, that *you may be filled with all the fullness of God*” (Eph. 3:19), “For to me *to live is Christ, and to die is gain*” (Phil. 1:21).

The fullness of the gospel is that we are actually joined to Jesus! Reeves says, “Our joy, our prayers, our mission, our holiness, our suffering, our hope: all are a *participation* in the life of the Son.” The fact that we participate in the life of the Son through the power of the Spirit is some of the most joyful news we could ever receive, and this is what Reeves highlights throughout his book. He writes, “Others can offer ‘God’ or ‘salvation’ but only when someone offers Jesus do they offer the same thing as the gospel.”

The most glorious news of the gospel is that Christ has given us Himself, and this is truly worth rejoicing in. If you want to understand and rejoice in this exceedingly great news more and more consider reading this masterpiece by Michael Reeves.