



Union with Christ Lesson 1

Lane Cohee
Fall 2023

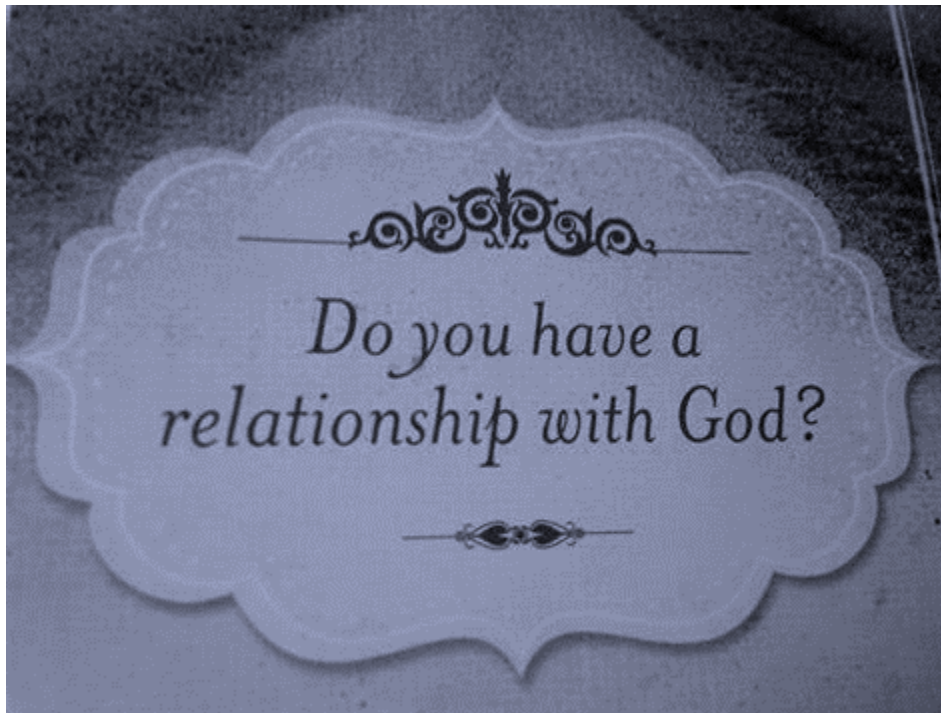
Union with Christ

Course Overview

- ▶ Lesson 1 – Union with Christ – What is it?
- ▶ Lesson 2 – Identity, Purpose, and Direction in Christ, Part I
- ▶ Lesson 3 – Identity, Purpose, and Direction in Christ, Part II
- ▶ Lesson 4 – Union with Christ and the Body of Christ
- ▶ Lesson 5 – Abiding in Christ, Part I
- ▶ Lesson 6 – Abiding in Christ, Part II

Getting Started

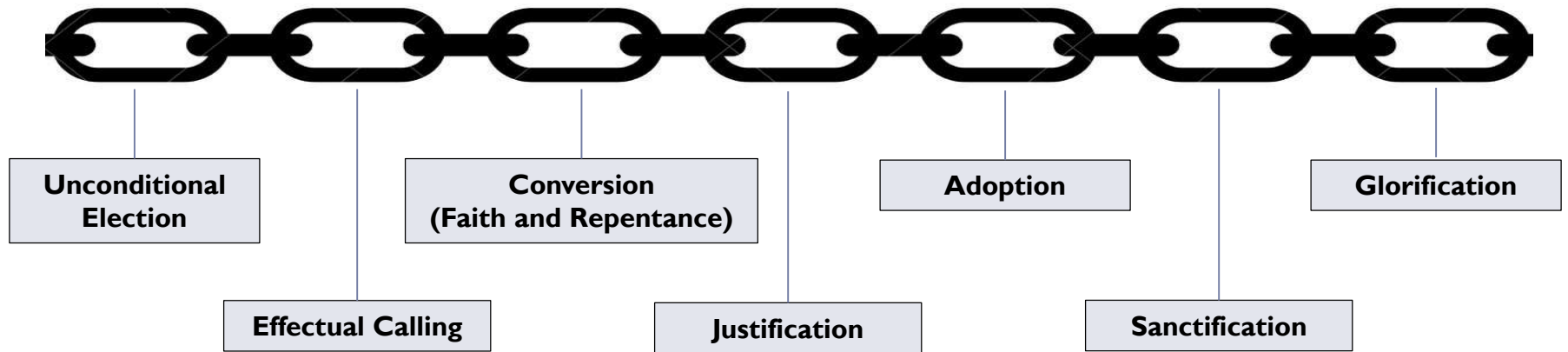
- ▶ What does it mean to “have a relationship with God?”



We can best answer this question by understanding our union with Christ

- ▶ Our union with Christ is the provision by which our eternal, legal, familial, and living communion with God is secured
- ▶ Our union with Christ is the basis of every element and benefit of our salvation
- ▶ The most common biblical reference to our union with Christ is the term “in Christ” (or “in him”)

A refresher on the order of salvation aka “Golden Chain” or “ordo salutis”



Link 1: Unconditional Election

By the decree of God, for the manifestation of His glory, some men and angels are **predestinated unto everlasting life**; and others foreordained to everlasting death.

Those of mankind that are predestinated unto life, God, before the foundation of the world was laid, according to His **eternal and immutable purpose**, and the secret counsel and **good pleasure of his will**, hath chosen in Christ, unto everlasting glory, out of His **mere free grace and love, without any foresight of faith, or good works, or perseverance in either of them**, or any other thing in the creature, as conditions, or causes moving Him thereunto: and all to the **praise of his glorious grace**.

- *Westminster Confession of Faith Chapter 3:3,5*

Link 2: Effectual Calling ^{1 of 2}

- ▶ All those whom God hath predestinated unto life, and those only, He is pleased, **in His appointed and accepted time**, effectually to **call, by His word and Spirit, out of that state of sin and death**, in which they are by nature to grace and salvation, by Jesus Christ; **enlightening their minds spiritually and savingly to understand** the things of God, taking away their heart of stone, and giving unto them an heart of flesh; **renewing their wills**, and, by His almighty power, determining them to that which is good, and effectually **drawing them to Jesus Christ**: yet so, as they come most freely, being **made willing by His grace**.
- ▶ *Westminster Confession of Faith Chapter 10:1*

Link 2: Effectual Calling ^{2 of 2}

- ▶ This effectual call is of God's free and special grace alone, **not from any thing at all foreseen in man**, who is altogether passive therein, until, being quickened and renewed by the Holy Spirit, he is thereby **enabled to answer this call** and to embrace the grace offered and conveyed by it.
 - ▶ *Westminster Confession of Faith Chapter 10:2*
- ▶ Effectual calling is the **work of God's Spirit**, whereby, convincing us of our sins and misery, enlightening our minds in the knowledge of Christ, and **renewing our wills**, he doth **persuade and enable us to embrace Jesus Christ**, freely offered to us in the Gospel.
 - ▶ *Westminster Shorter Catechism, Q 31*

Link 3: Conversion (Faith)

- ▶ The grace of faith, whereby ***the elect are enabled to believe to the saving of their souls***, is the work of the Spirit of Christ in their hearts, and is ordinarily wrought by the ministry of the Word, by which also, and by the administration of the sacraments, and prayer, it is increased and strengthened.
- ▶ *Westminster Confession of Faith Chapter 14:1*

Link 3: Conversion (Repentance)

- ▶ By [repentance], a sinner, out of the sight and sense not only of the danger, but also of ***the filthiness and odiousness of his sins, as contrary to the holy nature, and righteous law of God***; and upon the apprehension of His mercy in Christ to such as are penitent, so ***grieves for, and hates his sins***, as to ***turn from them all unto God***, purposing and ***endeavouring to walk with Him*** in all the ways of His commandments.
- ▶ Although repentance be ***not to be rested in, as any satisfaction for sin***, or any cause of the pardon thereof, which is the act of God's free grace in Christ; yet it is of such necessity to all sinners, that ***none may expect pardon without it***.
 - ▶ *Westminster Confession of Faith Chapter 15:2-3*

Link 4: Justification

- ▶ Those whom God effectually calleth, He also freely justifieth: not by infusing righteousness into them, but **by pardoning their sins, and by accounting and accepting their persons as righteous**; not for any thing wrought in them, or done by them, but **for Christ's sake alone**; nor by imputing faith itself, the act of believing, or any other evangelical obedience to them, as their righteousness; but **by imputing the obedience and satisfaction of Christ unto them**, they receiving and resting on Him and His righteousness by faith; which faith they have not of themselves, it is the gift of God.
- ▶ *Westminster Confession of Faith, Chapter 11:1*

Link 5: Adoption

- ▶ All those that are justified, God vouchsafeth, in and for His only Son Jesus Christ, to make partakers of the grace of adoption, by which they are taken into the number, and **enjoy the liberties and privileges of the children of God, have His name put upon them, receive the spirit of adoption**, have access to the throne of grace with boldness, are enabled to **cry, Abba, Father**, are pitied, protected, provided for, and chastened by Him as by a Father: **yet never cast off, but sealed to the day of redemption**; and inherit the promises, as heirs of everlasting salvation.
 - ▶ *Westminster Confession of Faith, Chapter 12:1*

Link 6: Sanctification

- ▶ They, who are once effectually called, and regenerated, having a new heart, and a new spirit created in them, are further sanctified, really and personally, through the virtue of Christ's death and resurrection, by His Word and Spirit dwelling in them, ***the dominion of the whole body of sin is destroyed, and the several lusts thereof are more and more weakened and mortified;*** and they more and more quickened and strengthened in all saving graces, to ***the practice of true holiness,*** without which no man shall see the Lord.
 - ▶ *Westminster Confession of Faith, Chapter 13:1*

Link 7: Glorification

- ▶ The souls of the righteous, **being then made perfect in holiness**, are **received into the highest heavens**, where they **behold the face of God**, in light and glory, waiting for the **full redemption of their bodies**. . . .The bodies of the unjust shall, by the power of Christ, be raised to dishonor: the bodies of the just, by His Spirit, unto honor; and be **made conformable to His own glorious body**.
 - ▶ *Westminster Confession of Faith, Chapter 32:1,3*

Our union with Christ is the basis of every element and benefit of our salvation

UNION WITH CHRIST



Unconditional
Election

Effectual Calling

Conversion
(Faith and Repentance)

Justification

Adoption

Sanctification

Glorification

Our union with Christ provides the means by which all of God's promises to us are "yes in Christ" (2 Co 1:20)



As a result

We are....	Scripture
a new creation in Christ	2 Co 5:17, Eph 4:22-24
crucified, buried and raised with Christ	Ro 6:5-11, Col 2:11-12, Gal 2:20
spiritually joined with God in Christ	Jn 14:18-20, Jn 15:4-5, 1 Jn 4:13, 1 Co 6:15, 17
heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ	Ro 8:14-17, Gal 4:6, Eph 1:3-5, Eph 3:6, 1 Jn 3:1
the righteousness of God in Christ	2 Co 5:21, Ro 3:21-26, Ro 8:1, Gal 2:15-17
advocated before God by Christ	1 Ti 2:5, Heb 9:15, Ro 5:17-19, 1 Co 15:45-49
in fellowship with God in Christ	1 Jn 1:2-3, Ro 5:1, 1 Co 1:4-9
beloved by God in Christ	Eph 3:17b-19, Jn 3:16, Ro 5:8, Eph 2:4-5

Our union with Christ is applied by the Holy Spirit

- ▶ If you love me, keep my commands. And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another advocate to help you and be with you forever—the Spirit of truth. The world cannot accept him, because it neither sees him nor knows him. But you know him, for he lives with you and will be in you. I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you. Before long, the world will not see me anymore, but you will see me. Because I live, you also will live. On that day you will realize that I am in my Father, and you are in me, and I am in you. Whoever has my commands and keeps them is the one who loves me. The one who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I too will love them and show myself to them.

▶ *John 14:15-21*

Therefore, we can only enrich the experience of our union with Christ through **active** spiritual engagement



Union with Christ Lesson 2

Lane Cohee
Fall 2023

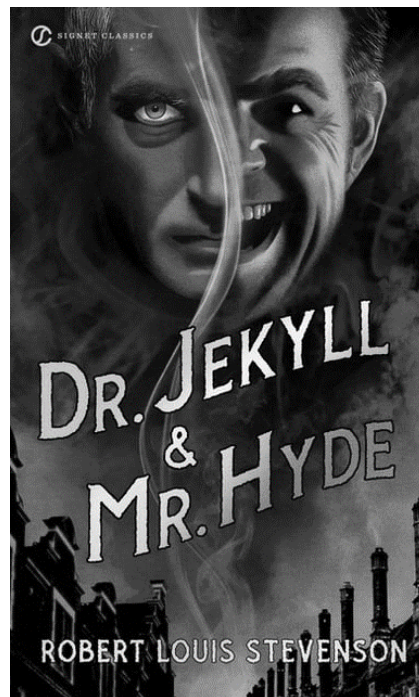
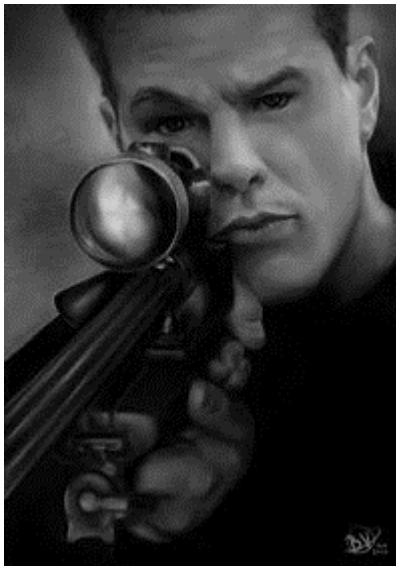
Union with Christ

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Getting Started

- ▶ What is your favorite movie or book that deals with the issue of a hidden or unknown identity and why?



Lesson 1 Review

- ▶ Our union with Christ is the provision by which our eternal, legal, familial, and living communion with God is secured
- ▶ Our union with Christ is the basis of every element and benefit of our salvation
- ▶ The most common biblical reference to our union with Christ is the term “in Christ” (or “in him”)

One of the most significant derivatives of our union with Christ lies in our identity

Identity defined

- ▶ An individual's sense of self defined by (a) a set of physical, psychological, and interpersonal characteristics that is not wholly shared with any other person and (b) a range of affiliations (e.g., ethnicity) and social roles. Identity involves a sense of continuity, or the feeling that one is the same person today that one was yesterday or last year (despite physical or other changes). Such a sense is derived from one's body sensations; one's body image; and the feeling that one's memories, goals, values, expectations, and beliefs belong to the self.
 - ▶ APA Dictionary of Psychology

Whether we realize it or not, our culture greatly influences our sense of identity

Collectivism



Identity is defined in terms of community



Individualism



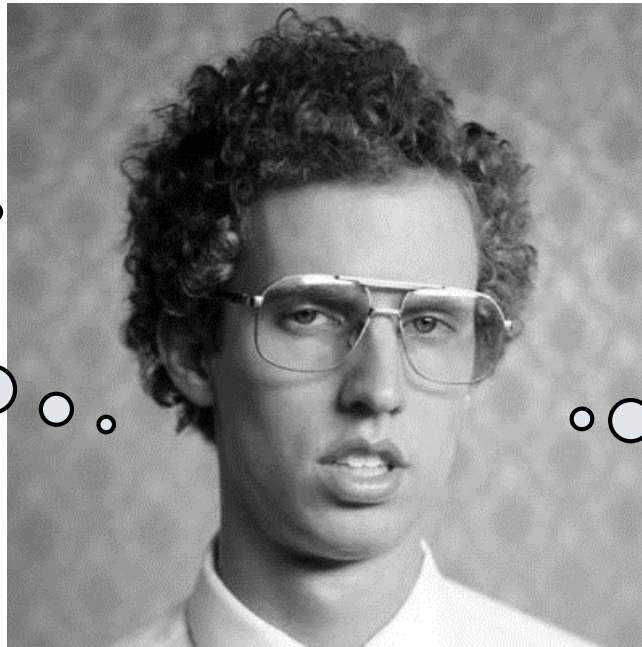
Identity is defined in terms of self

In both cases, identity is based on how we *perform* within our society's cultural norms

We are often equally confused when we become followers of Christ

Who am I now?

Am I a totally depraved sinner?



Am I a saint?

Should I have good self-image or a self-image at all?

A few proof texts of this mystical union

- ▶ **Jn 14:18-20** I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you. Before long, the world will not see me anymore, but you will see me. **Because I live, you also will live.** On that day you will realize that I am in my Father, and **you are in me, and I am in you.**
- ▶ **Jn 14:23** Jesus replied, “Anyone who loves me will obey my teaching. My Father will love them, and we will come to them and **make our home with them.**
- ▶ **I Jn 4:13** This is how we know that **we live in him and he in us:** He has given us of his Spirit.
- ▶ **I Co 6:15, 19** Do you not know that your bodies are **members of Christ himself?** Shall I then take the **members of Christ and unite them with a prostitute?** Never!... Do you not know that your **bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit,** who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own; you were bought at a price.

Therefore...

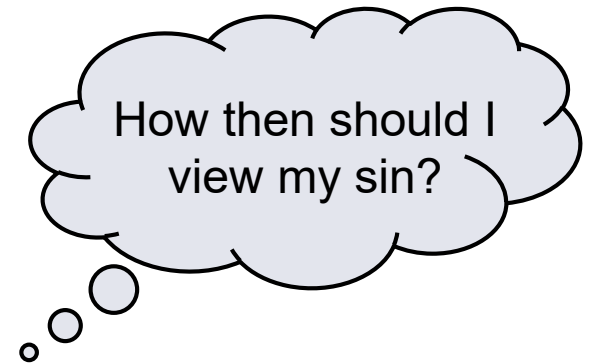
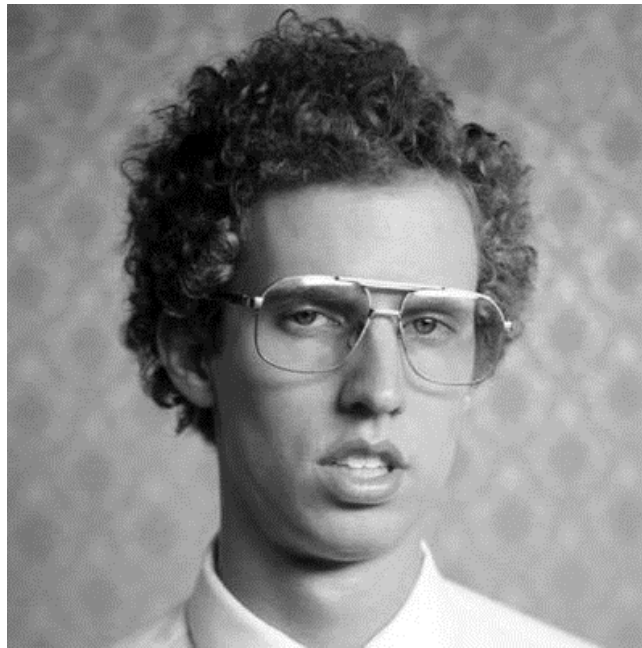
- ▶ To be in Christ means we are so connected to him that everything **he** has done, **we** have done through association. Everything **he** has accomplished, **we** have accomplished. Everything **he** has overcome, **we** have overcome. Everything **he** has put to death, **we** have put to death.
- ▶ And seeing ourselves “in Christ” belies our tendencies toward self-condemnation (shame) and self-congratulation (pride)

SHAME



PRIDE

But an important question remains



Let's recall where we are in the "Golden Chain"

UNION WITH CHRIST



Unconditional Election

Effectual Calling

Conversion
(Faith and Repentance)

Justification

Adoption

Sanctification

Glorification



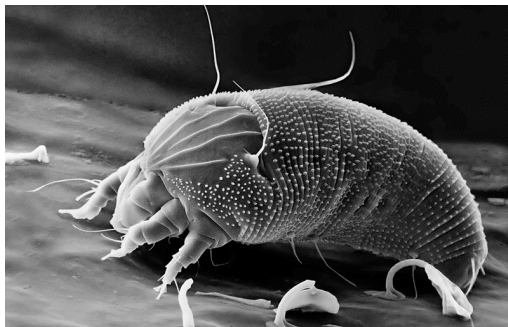
Link 6: Sanctification

- ▶ They, who are once effectually called, and regenerated, having a new heart, and a new spirit created in them, are further sanctified, **really and personally, through the virtue of Christ's death and resurrection**, by His Word and Spirit dwelling in them, **the dominion of the whole body of sin is destroyed**, and the **several lusts thereof are more and more weakened and mortified**; and they more and more quickened and strengthened in all saving graces, to **the practice of true holiness**, without which no man shall see the Lord.
- ▶ *Westminster Confession of Faith, Chapter 13:1*

As such, we should see sin as a present “enemy within”

- ▶ **Ro 6:11-14** In the same way, **count yourselves dead to sin but alive to God in Christ Jesus**. Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body so that you obey its evil desires. **Do not offer any part of yourself to sin as an instrument of wickedness, but rather offer yourselves to God** as those who have been brought from death to life; and offer every part of yourself to him as an instrument of righteousness. **For sin shall no longer be your master**, because you are not under the law, but under grace.

Sin may be viewed as...



- ▶ An alien
- ▶ A cancer
- ▶ A parasite

Which, in Christ, we must put to death
and
In Christ, we will be delivered

Finally, our “identity needs” are met in Christ

Our identity needs	In Christ
We need to feel meaningful	We have meaning because God made us a new creation
We need to feel worthy	We have worth because God paid everything to redeem us
We need to feel safe	We are safe because God is our strong tower
We need to feel powerful	We are powerful because God is the strength of our heart
We need to feel valued	We are valued because God delights and rejoices over us
We need to feel esteemed	We are highly esteemed because God created us for a unique purpose
We need to feel loved	We are loved because God finds us altogether beautiful

Derived from 2 Corinthians 5:17; Romans 8:31–32; Proverbs 18:10; Psalm 73:26; Zephaniah 3:17; Ephesians 2:10; Song of Songs 4:7

The challenge is to live according to our true identity



More to follow on that...





Union with Christ Lesson 3

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Lesson 1 Review

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We are in Christ and Christ is in us

Lesson 1 Review

UNION WITH CHRIST



Unconditional
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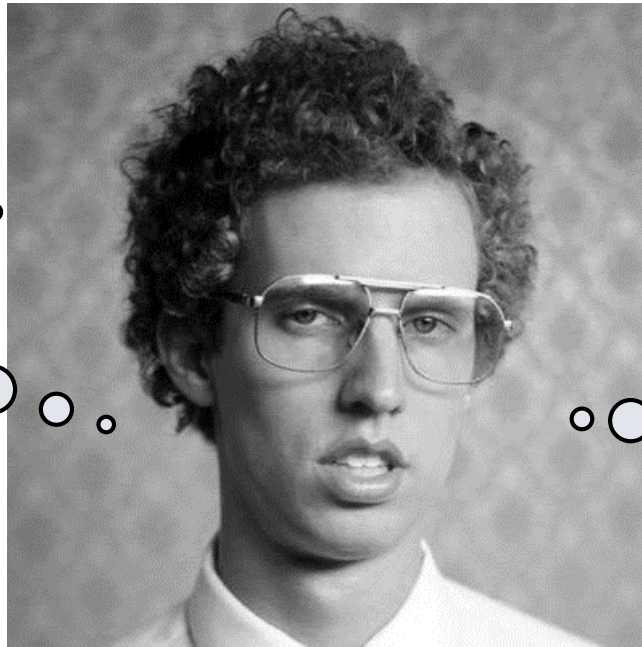
Sanctification

Our union with Christ is the basis of every element and benefit of our salvation

A quick refresh on identity 1 of 3

Who am I now?

Am I a totally
depraved sinner?



Am I a saint?

Should I have
good self-image
or a self-image
at all?

A quick refresh on identity ² of 3

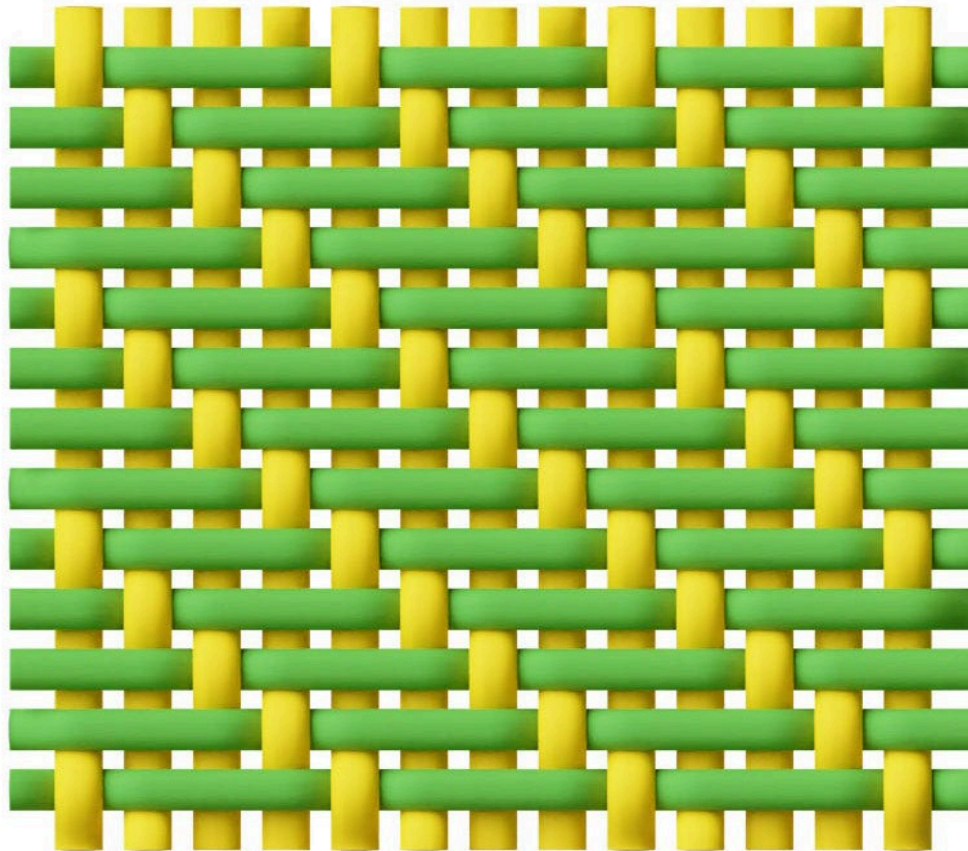
- ▶ Instead of asking the question, “who am I?” it is better to ask the question, “who does God say that I am?”

For followers of Christ, the answer is,
“I am a new creation in Christ”

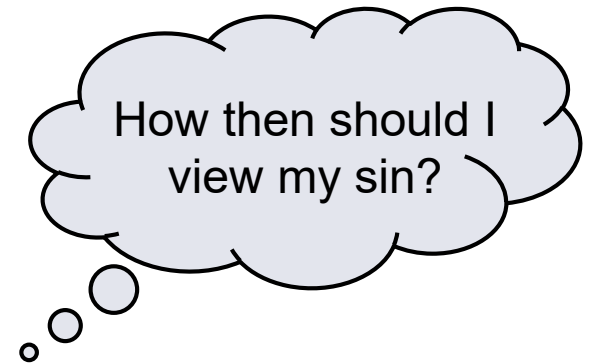
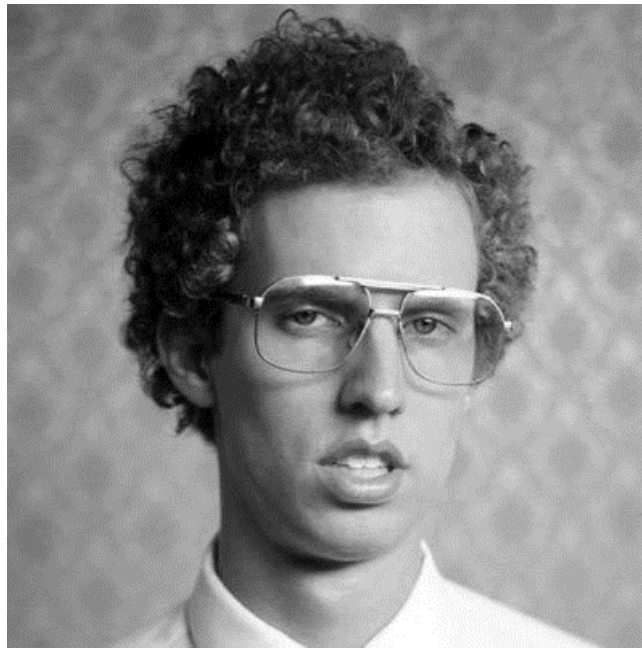
This is an identity that is *received*, not an identity that is *achieved*

A quick refresh on identity ^{3 of 3}

- ▶ The concept is similar to this weave and why Paul can say, “when I (yellow strand) am weak then I (weave) am strong” (2 Co 12:10)



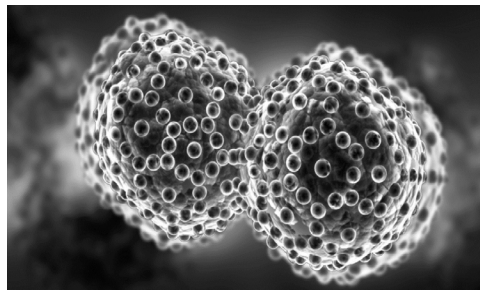
Revisiting this as well...



As such, we should see sin as a present “enemy within”

- ▶ **Ro 6:11-14** In the same way, **count yourselves dead to sin but alive to God in Christ Jesus**. Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body so that you obey its evil desires. **Do not offer any part of yourself to sin as an instrument of wickedness, but rather offer yourselves to God** as those who have been brought from death to life; and offer every part of yourself to him as an instrument of righteousness. **For sin shall no longer be your master**, because you are not under the law, but under grace.

Sin may be viewed as...



→ An alien

→ A cancer

→ A parasite

Which, in Christ, we
must put to death
and
In Christ, we will be
delivered

But being “in Christ” is more than dealing with our sin...it is increasingly living out our identity

Because of our union with Christ... (Col 3:1-3)

Since, then, ***you have been raised with Christ***, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things. For ***you died, and your life is now hidden with Christ*** in God. When ***Christ, who is your life***, appears, then you also will appear with him in glory.

We put off our old self...(Col 3:5-10)

Put to death, therefore, whatever belongs to your earthly nature: sexual immorality, impurity, lust, evil desires and greed, which is idolatry. Because of these, the wrath of God is coming. You used to walk in these ways, in the life you once lived. But now you must also ***rid yourselves*** of all such things as these: anger, rage, malice, slander, and filthy language from your lips. Do not lie to each other, since ***you have taken off your old self*** with its practices and have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge in the image of its Creator.

And we put on our new self...(Col 3:12-14)

Therefore, as God’s chosen people, holy and dearly loved, ***clothe yourselves*** with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity.



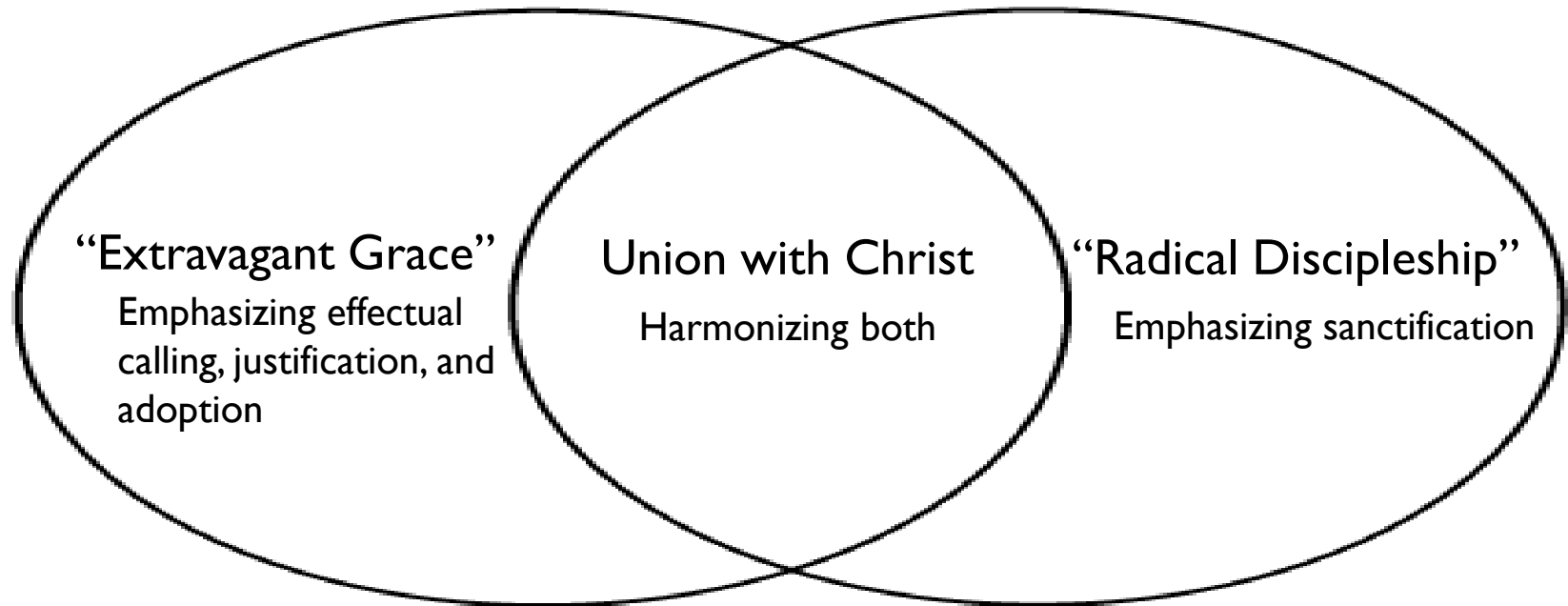
Yet how do we do that when we are often tempted by extremes?

“Just Believe”
(Grace without discipleship)



“Just Obey”
(Demand without grace)

Our union with Christ provides the necessary harmony



Union with Christ displaces us from the center of our own lives. It tells us we can discover who God created us to be only through living in vital union with his Son. It tells us the work of Christ *for us* cannot be separated from the person of Christ *in us*.

- Rankin Wilbourne, Union with Christ

But where are we going with this?

Php 1:10-14 - I want to know Christ—yes, to know the power of his resurrection and participation in his sufferings, ***becoming like him in his death***, and so, somehow, ***attaining to the resurrection from the dead***.

Not that I have already obtained all this, or have already arrived at my goal, but I press on to ***take hold of that for which Christ Jesus took hold of me***. Brothers and sisters, I do not consider myself yet to have taken hold of it. But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and ***straining*** toward what is ahead, I ***press on*** toward the goal to ***win the prize*** for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus.

An anchor, an engine and a hand on your back



...our main obstacle in growing in holiness is that we are not living out of our union with Christ. Where does the strength come from to move out in joy in peace? It begins with the assurance that God is for you—that's your anchor! And the knowledge that God is (working) in you—that's your engine! And the confidence that God is with you and not disappointed in you—that's the hand on your back. These can only come from laying hold of your union with Christ.

- Rankin Wilbourne, Union with Christ



A few practical helps

- ▶ Resist the temptation to believe that we are by ourselves and Christ is somewhere else
- ▶ Practice the questions, “where am I taking you?” “where are you taking me?” and “where are we going?”
- ▶ In the presence of sin, practice the phrase, “that is not who I am in Christ.”
- ▶ When we fall short in sanctification, practice running to our justification (anchor)
- ▶ When we begin to feel confident in ourselves, remember that we are not our own (engine)
- ▶ When we feel uncertain or unworthy in our sanctification, practice running to our adoption (hand on our back)

All of these flow from our union with Christ



Union with Christ Lesson 4

Lane Cohee
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Union with Christ

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But what does this have to do with the church?

First, a quick distinction

The “invisible church”

- ▶ WCF 25:1 The catholic or universal Church, which is **invisible**, consists of the whole number of the elect, that have been, are, or shall be gathered into one, under Christ the Head thereof; and is the spouse, the body, the fulness of Him that fills all in all.
- ▶ The invisible church consists solely of the elect (see Lesson 1)
- ▶ The principle of the invisible church is best explained by Paul when he redefines the covenant community (Eph 2:11-22) and demonstrates that membership in the covenant community does not guarantee election (Ro 9:1-8)

The “visible church”

- ▶ WCF 25:2 The **visible** Church, which is also catholic or universal under the Gospel (not confined to one nation, as before under the law), consists of all those throughout the world that profess the true religion; and of their children: and is the kingdom of the Lord Jesus Christ, the house and family of God, out of which there is no ordinary possibility of salvation.
- ▶ The visible church is the “cultivator” of the invisible church and is given the “ministry, oracles, and ordinances of God” but is subject to “mixture and error.”
- ▶ The visible church is whom Paul refers to when he writes to “the churches at Corinth, Galatia, Ephesus” etc.

So the visible church is like a garden and
the elect are like its flowers



But invariably there will be weeds

When the purity of the visible church is corrupted, we will see disunity but...

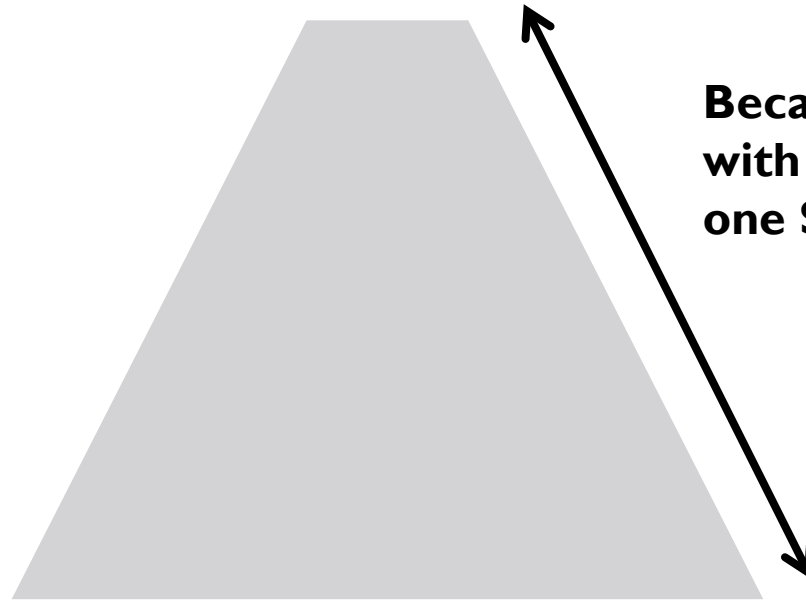
- ▶ We should strive for purity and unity within the body
- ▶ Because it is Christ's prayer

My prayer is not for them alone. I pray also for those who will believe in me through their message, that all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you.

John 17:1

And it is a direct result of our union with Christ

A way of thinking about it...



**Because we have union
with Christ through
one Spirit**



We are unified as one body through the same Spirit

Biblical illustrations of the body

- ▶ Christ is the head of the body, which is the church - Col 1:18, Eph 5:23
- ▶ Therefore all who are in union with Christ are also related to one another in his body
- ▶ This joining together makes us one body in Christ and individually *members one of another* - Ro 12:5; 1 Cor 12:12–14

Biblical illustrations of the spiritual house

- ▶ Another metaphor is a spiritual house where believers, in Christ, are said to be like living stones - 1 Pe 2:4–7, Eph 2:18-22
- ▶ Thus, believers are unified and forever dependent on one another, just like stones of a building



Therefore we are organically connected and dependent on one another ^{1 of 2}

I Co 12:12-26 Just as a body, though one, has many parts, but all its many parts form one body, so it is with Christ. For we were all baptized by one Spirit so as to form one body—whether Jews or Gentiles, slave or free—and we were all given the one Spirit to drink. Even so the body is not made up of one part but of many.

Now if the foot should say, “Because I am not a hand, I do not belong to the body,” it would not for that reason stop being part of the body. And if the ear should say, “Because I am not an eye, I do not belong to the body,” it would not for that reason stop being part of the body. If the whole body were an eye, where would the sense of hearing be? If the whole body were an ear, where would the sense of smell be? But in fact God has placed the parts in the body, every one of them, just as he wanted them to be. If they were all one part, where would the body be? As it is, there are many parts, but one body.

Therefore we are organically connected and dependent on one another ^{2 of 2}

The eye cannot say to the hand, “I don’t need you!” And the head cannot say to the feet, “I don’t need you!” On the contrary, those parts of the body that seem to be weaker are indispensable, and the parts that we think are less honorable we treat with special honor. And the parts that are unpresentable are treated with special modesty, while our presentable parts need no special treatment. But God has put the body together, giving greater honor to the parts that lacked it, so that there should be no division in the body, but that its parts should have equal concern for each other. If one part suffers, every part suffers with it; if one part is honored, every part rejoices with it.

A warning - whether we realize it or not, our culture is working against us in this area

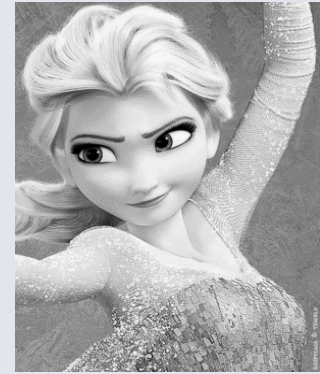
Collectivism



Identity is defined in terms of community



Individualism



Identity is defined in terms of self

Cultural individualism will always encourage us to think of the body as a voluntary “club membership”



Union with Christ Lesson 5

Lane Cohee
Fall 2023

Union with Christ

Course Overview

- ▶ Lesson 1 – Union with Christ – What is it?
- ▶ Lesson 2 – Identity, Purpose, and Direction in Christ, Part I
- ▶ Lesson 3 – Identity, Purpose, and Direction in Christ, Part II
- ▶ Lesson 4 – Union with Christ and the Body of Christ
- ▶ Lesson 5 – Abiding in Christ, Part I
- ▶ Lesson 6 – Abiding in Christ, Part II

Getting Started

- ▶ As one who is in Christ, what does it mean to “bear fruit”?



Review

- ▶ Our union with Christ is the provision by which our eternal, legal, familial, and living communion with God is secured
- ▶ Our union with Christ is the basis of every element and benefit of our salvation
- ▶ The most common biblical reference to our union with Christ is the term “in Christ” (or “in him”)

We are in Christ and Christ is in us

Our union with Christ is the basis of every element and benefit of our salvation

UNION WITH CHRIST



Unconditional
Election

Effectual Calling

Conversion
(Faith and Repentance)

Justification

Adoption

Sanctification

Glorification

Our union with Christ provides the means by which all of God's promises to us are "yes in Christ" (2 Co 1:20)

As a result

We are....	Scripture
a new creation in Christ	2 Co 5:17, Eph 4:22-24
crucified, buried and raised with Christ	Ro 6:5-11, Col 2:11-12, Gal 2:20
spiritually joined with God in Christ	Jn 14:18-20, Jn 15:4-5, 1 Jn 4:13, 1 Co 6:15, 17
heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ	Ro 8:14-17, Gal 4:6, Eph 1:3-5, Eph 3:6, 1 Jn 3:1
the righteousness of God in Christ	2 Co 5:21, Ro 3:21-26, Ro 8:1, Gal 2:15-17
advocated before God by Christ	1 Ti 2:5, Heb 9:15, Ro 5:17-19, 1 Co 15:45-49
in fellowship with God in Christ	1 Jn 1:2-3, Ro 5:1, 1 Co 1:4-9
beloved by God in Christ	Eph 3:17b-19, Jn 3:16, Ro 5:8, Eph 2:4-5

Our union with Christ is applied by the Holy Spirit

- ▶ If you love me, keep my commands. And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another advocate to help you and be with you forever—the Spirit of truth. The world cannot accept him, because it neither sees him nor knows him. But you know him, for **he lives with you and will be in you**. I will not leave you as orphans; **I will come to you**. Before long, the world will not see me anymore, but you will see me. Because I live, you also will live. On that day **you will realize that I am in my Father, and you are in me, and I am in you**. Whoever has my commands and keeps them is the one who loves me. The one who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I too will love them and show myself to them.

▶ *John 14:15-21*

Therefore, we can only enrich the experience of our union with Christ through **active** spiritual engagement

“Abiding” is the practice of that active spiritual engagement

- ▶ **Remain** in me, as I also remain in you. No branch can bear fruit by itself; it must remain in the vine. Neither can you bear fruit unless you **remain** in me. I am the vine; you are the branches. If you **remain** in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing. If you do not **remain** in me, you are like a branch that is thrown away and withers; such branches are picked up, thrown into the fire and burned. If you **remain** in me and my words **remain** in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. This is to my Father’s glory, that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be my disciples.

- ▶ *John 15:4-9*

- ▶ You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you so that you might go and bear fruit—fruit that will last—and so that whatever you ask in my name the Father will give you.

- ▶ *John 15:16*



“Abiding” requires that we trim the sail



And we trim the sail using the “means of grace”

- ▶ The outward and ordinary means whereby Christ communicates to us the benefits of redemption are his ordinances, especially ***the Word, sacraments*** and ***prayer***; all which are made effectual to the elect for salvation.
 - ▶ *Westminster Shorter Catechism Q. 88*

Php 2:12-13: Therefore, my dear friends...continue to ***work out your salvation*** with fear and trembling, for it is ***God who works in you*** to will and to act in order to fulfill his good purpose.

Grace is not opposed to *effort*, but to *earning*

The Word

- ▶ Hearing – regularly; not just on Sundays
- ▶ Reading
 - ▶ For knowledge (wide) e.g., reading plans
 - ▶ For intake and nourishment (deep)
 - ▶ Smaller sections of Scripture
 - ▶ Slower engagement with the text
 - ▶ Active interaction with the text
 - ▶ Oftentimes involves memorization and journaling
 - ▶ Should involve meditation

Some Potential Questions for Deeper Study

- ▶ What is the main message of this passage?
- ▶ What does this passage tell you about God?
- ▶ What does this passage tell you about yourself?
- ▶ What main thing do you want to remember from this passage to help you in the middle of the day?
- ▶ Is there a verse in this passage that stands out to you and that you believe you should memorize? If so, what is it?
- ▶ Is there anything you didn't understand about the passage or that you would like to understand better?

Deeper study involves *putting ourselves in the passage*

Meditation in the Old Testament

Hebrew	Definition	Biblical Examples
<i>hâgâh</i> ⁵⁴ haw-gaw	to murmur (in pleasure or anger); by implication, to ponder: imagine, meditate, mourn, mutter, roar, sore, speak, study, talk, utter	Joshua 1:8 — Keep this Book of the Law always on your lips; meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do everything written in it. Then you will be prosperous and successful. Psalms 1:2 — Whose delight is in the law of the LORD, and who meditates on his law day and night. Psalms 77:12 — I will consider all your works and meditate on all your mighty deeds. Psalms 143:5 — I remember the days of long ago; I meditate on all your works and consider what your hands have done.
<i>šîychâh</i> ⁵⁵ see-khaw	to ponder, i.e. (by implication) converse (with oneself, and, hence, aloud) or (transitively) utter: commune, complain, declare, meditate, muse, pray, speak, talk (with)	Psalms 119:15 — I meditate on your precepts and consider your ways. Psalms 119:23 — Though rulers sit together and slander me, your servant will meditate on your decrees. Psalms 119:27 — Cause me to understand the way of your precepts, that I may meditate on your wonderful deeds. Psalms 119:48 — I reach out for your commands, which I love, that I may meditate on your decrees.

Meditation in the New Testament

Greek	Definition	Biblical Examples
<i>meletaō</i> ⁵⁸ mel-et-ah'-o	to take care of, i.e., (by implication) revolve in the mind: imagine, premeditate	Acts 4:25 — “You spoke by the Holy Spirit through the mouth of your servant, our father David: ‘Why do the nations rage and the peoples plot in vain?’” 1 Timothy 4:15 — Be diligent in these matters; give yourself wholly to them, so that everyone may see your progress.
<i>logizomai</i> ⁵⁹ log-id'-zom-ahee	to take an inventory, i.e., estimate (literally or figuratively): conclude, (ac-)count (of), despise, esteem, impute, lay, number, reason, reckon, suppose, think (on)	Philippians 4:8 — Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things.

Meditation is the machine in which the raw material of knowledge is converted to the best uses. Let me compare it to a wine-press. By reading, and research, and study we gather the grapes; but it is by meditation we press out the juice of those grapes, and obtain the wine.

▶ Charles Spurgeon

A pattern of meditation

- ▶ **Coaching ourselves** through the process of...
 - ▶ **Cleansing** – Ps 51:7: Cleanse me with hyssop, and I will be clean; wash me, and I will be whiter than snow
 - ▶ **Decluttering** – Ps 131:1b-2: I do not concern myself with great matters or things too wonderful for me. But I have calmed and quieted myself, I am like a weaned child with its mother; like a weaned child I am content.
 - ▶ **Communing** – *reflecting* on a word (e.g., joy), a verse, an attribute of God, or our union with Christ and *listening*

Meditation and prayer are twin sisters, and both of them appear to me equally necessary to a Christian life. I think meditation must exist where there is prayer, and prayer would be sure to exist where there is meditation.

- ▶ Charles Spurgeon



Union with Christ Lesson 6

Lane Cohee
Fall 2023

Union with Christ

Course Overview

- ▶ Lesson 1 – Union with Christ – What is it?
- ▶ Lesson 2 – Identity, Purpose, and Direction in Christ, Part I
- ▶ Lesson 3 – Identity, Purpose, and Direction in Christ, Part II
- ▶ Lesson 4 – Union with Christ and the Body of Christ
- ▶ Lesson 5 – Abiding in Christ, Part I
- ▶ Lesson 6 – Abiding in Christ, Part II

Review

- ▶ Our union with Christ is the provision by which our eternal, legal, familial, and living communion with God is secured
- ▶ Our union with Christ is the basis of every element and benefit of our salvation
- ▶ The most common biblical reference to our union with Christ is the term “in Christ” (or “in him”)

A common phrase related to this union is “abiding”

Review - “Abiding” is the practice of that active spiritual engagement

- ▶ **Remain** in me, as I also remain in you. No branch can bear fruit by itself; it must remain in the vine. Neither can you bear fruit unless you **remain** in me. I am the vine; you are the branches. If you **remain** in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing. If you do not **remain** in me, you are like a branch that is thrown away and withers; such branches are picked up, thrown into the fire and burned. If you **remain** in me and my words **remain** in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. This is to my Father’s glory, that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be my disciples.

- ▶ *John 15:4-9*

- ▶ You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you so that you might go and bear fruit—fruit that will last—and so that whatever you ask in my name the Father will give you.

- ▶ *John 15:16*



“Abiding” requires that we trim the sail



Prayer

- ▶ The outward and ordinary means whereby Christ communicates to us the benefits of redemption are his ordinances, especially **the Word, sacraments** and **prayer**; all which are made effectual to the elect for salvation.
 - ▶ *Westminster Shorter Catechism Q. 88*

To be Completed

- ▶ I was unable to complete the final week due to a family emergency but will hopefully do so in the future and will update the content. My plan was to:
 1. Reinforce the linkage between meditation on the Word with prayer (Spurgeon quote from Week 5) and use that as a launching point into a prayer model.
 2. Mention ACTS and the Lord's Prayer as themes to use.
 3. Discuss fasting in tandem with prayer as a means of “subduing the flesh.”
 4. Move into the sacraments—most notably communion.
 5. Use the “Marburg Colloquy” to show the extreme ends and how Calvin “bridged the gap” by ironically using ***Union with Christ*** [Calvin's Doctrine of the Lord's Supper by Keith Mathison \(ligonier.org\)](#) to demonstrate the sacramental union.