

## Sermon Outline

**Sermon Title:** Do you have Union and Communion with God? Part 1 of 2

The Two Distinct Realities of Spiritual Leadership or Healthy Christian Living

a. A Healthy Spiritual Leadership or Christian Living requires a precise understanding of two distinct realities. Confusing them creates an immediate identity crisis.

1. One is our Union which **Our Status**. It is the permanent, unchanging foundation of who we are.

a. Our identity or who we are in Christ is the foundation of our union with Christ. We are His children. 1 John 3:1 says, “*See what great love the Father **has lavished on us**, that we should be called children of God! And that is what we are! The reason the world does not know us is that it did not know him.*” (NIV) “He has lavished his love upon us” is **a finished work**. We have union with Him.

b. This theology of Union is not transactional. It is not given to you because of the good that you done. It is who God is and what he says is true about you.

2. There is a difference between **union and communion**. Secondly, the other distinct characteristic of Healthy Spiritual Leadership or Christian Living is **Communion**. Communion is **Our Function**. The living, variable or changing experience of how we walk daily. As a believer you have been called not just to be **in Union with God** but also to live in **constant Communion** with God. -Amen

b. It is **our response to the union through communion which is critical**. Many of us stop at the truth and the beauty of the union and don't apply what it means.

### **Our Union with Christ is an Unbreakable Position**

Union is the fundamental nature of your being. You are fused or connected to the Vine.

a. Your Union is established by Christ alone through Grace and received by Faith.

b. You are not “more united” to Christ on a good ministry day or “less united” on a bad one. Your Performance doesn't alter your status or Union

c. In you union with Christ there are so many realities and truths. **The Question it Answers** is “Who am I?” You are **justified** (Romans 5:1) you are **adopted** (Ephesian 1:5) **you are sealed** with the Holy Spirit (Ephesians 1:13) you are **holy** (1 Peter 2:9) you **are regenerated** or born again (John 3:3-7) you are free( John 8:36)

d. **Communion with Christ is a Variable Relationship** which means Communion is active and ongoing. But how do we then activate living this life of **communion** from this the place of our security in our identity which is our union then what do we do in response to that, what we do is we must shift now from **standing in our identity** to **responding in Communion**.

### **Idealized Marriage Analogy**

a. When a couple enter into a marriage covenant, a **union** is made. Right? When they stand at the altar, they legally and functionally become one flesh as Genesis 2:24 tell us. And there's security that take place. Matthew 19:6 says “*So they are no longer two, but one flesh. Therefore what God has joined together, let no one separate.*” (NIV) There is security there in the Union. But within the daily life of the husband-and-wife union **should flow** communion. **Communion** is about how do a couple not live just **as roommates**. The harsh reality in so many of our churches is so many of God’s children who are **in union** with Christ but they are not experiencing communion with Christ. They are simply living **as a roommate** instead living in **communion** with God. The same way you can be in union with your spouse and not be living in intimacy, not be living in relationship where you are truly growing and living the way God design for you to live as a couple.

b. So, **the question is how do we actually enter into communion? Just stop for a minute and just think ... is God your roommate?** is God someone you know in your head, or do you know him intimately? or is God just an acquaintance of yours?

### **Stop Trying to Earn your Union**

a. See the problem for so many of us is we can’t move to **Communion** because we are not convinced of **the Union**. So many of us still feel like you got to somehow earn, or impress, or deserve union with God, and so you go back so often to try to wrestle with **Union** instead of coming out to the place of being secure in **Communion** so that you can live out the life God wants you to have with Him.

b. If you are in a marriage and you are constantly at risk of **losing the union**, you can never move into true **communion**. You see, for some of God’s children everything is about a list. For example, “Have I done well enough today? Am I good enough today? Do I have enough metrics? Or do I measured up? **Your success** doesn't have anything to do with **your Union** and **your failures** does take anything from your union. You are secure in Christ. It's your starting point. And it is only when you get there, that you can now figure out how to move into **Communion**.

c. There are so many leaders and church members who have not made **this shift** in their union with Christ into a **daily rhythm** of **Communion** with Christ. This abiding relationship.

d. So, if you are going to move into Communion then you are going to have to figure out and wrestle with what does a daily communion with God look like? What is it that He wants? What is it that He is inviting you too? How do you practice it with yourself and with others.

### **Jesus instituted Communion for His Disciples**

a. 1 Corinthians 11:23-26 says <sup>23</sup> *For I received from the Lord that which I also delivered to you: that the Lord Jesus on the same night in which He was betrayed took bread; <sup>24</sup> and when He had given thanks, He broke it and said, <sup>[a]</sup> “Take, eat; this is My body which is <sup>[b]</sup> broken for you; do this in remembrance of Me.” <sup>25</sup> In the same manner He also took the cup after supper, saying, “This cup is the new covenant in My blood. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me.” <sup>26</sup> For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord’s death till He comes.” (NKJV)*

1. What was Jesus giving us? And Why was He giving it to us?

2. Why was Communion the early church continuous practice? Breaking of Bread and sharing of the cup.

3. Why was remembering communion so important to Jesus?..... It just like in our marriage. God knew that we would need a tangible, repeatable, reminding practice to point us and keep us moving in the right direction. To keep our hearts, our mind, our faith, pointed at these important truths about what Jesus did for you and what He is going to continue to do for you if you put your trust in him and stay in communion with Him.

### **Start Prioritizing Your Communion**

a. Have you ever seen the difference in a branch that's dry and a branch that's green? What can you do with a branch that's green that you can't do with a branch that is dry? BEND IT?

b. What happens if you have a dry branch? It breaks and it produces no fruit. When the heat and storms come in our lives or when the dry spell comes in our lives we BREAK because there's no health. There is no Communion. There is no Abiding. (Do you hear me)

c. So, the true question you have to wrestle with is what type of relationship does God desire with you ? And then you have to ask yourself is this what you desire. And that's a hard one. Theologically, we all know the type of relationship God wants with us. But is that what you want with God?

1. It is a question you wrestle with daily. It just like in a marriage. It's a day reality. Because your marriage can actually have seasons where things are feeling great. They are interesting, things are just working. It doesn't seem to take the effort that it took in the last season. And then one month can go by and you can feel alone.

2. And so, you have to keep always this always in front of you. The question will always be, when you feel dry, when you feel alone, when you feel unseen, when you feel unheard **is that the reality from God's side?** What did Jesus say? Did he say, “do good, and I will do good to you! Be good, and I will be good to you. Do what I say, and I'll remain in you!”  
**Or did he say, “I'll never leave you or forsake you?”**

3. The truth is so many of us are stuck because we are not **secure in our union**. And some of us don't have a Union at all with God. And until we settle that, then we can never move into **living in communion**.

4. And until you can get to union, and then live in a good communion, then you never experience true friendship and relationship to God.....

d. Another important question you have to always keep before you is **What Does Communion for You Look Like with God?**

a. What does your communion with God look like and what does it say about your relationship? What does intimacy look like for you? What is the thing where you feel the closest and most connected with God that you feel you need today? And God right now maybe reminding you of the importance of it.

b. And that's a real question. It is a not theoretical. It maybe something you need to ponder later in a more in-depth way. Just where do you feel communion with God. Where do you feel called back to?

c. What do you do to tangible draw you into Communion with God, that puts you in the right place or that reminds you of the truth of *your Union with God*.

d. What are your practices and what is the goal of your practice? What are your daily routines.

1. Do you read the Bible as a ritual act, a task to accomplish or do you read the Bible for Communion?

2. Do you study the Bible just to teach it to students or do you study the Bible as an act of communion so you can live what you studied before you teach it or preach it?

3. Is your prayer life at church different from your prayer at home?

e. What is the motivation for your practice or your spiritual disciplines like prayer, meditation, fasting, worship, and study. Spiritual disciplines are fuel that leads us to communion, but they are not communion. If no one saw you or if no one knew you. Would you still desire these spiritual disciplines?

f. If you don't invest in your marriage then you and your spouse will be tempted to take each other for granted. The person who you suppose to love the most on this earth more than anyone else. If you and your spouse don't prioritize your marriage then you will become roommates. Roommates who live together and who are on the same page, and there's no fighting. But there is also no intimacy. There's no mission. There's no life in your marriage. You are just existing. And it is the same way with your relationship or Union with God. So many of our churches are filled with Leaders and members sitting in the pew who are just **roommates with God**. Yeah you and God have a long story together so you can tell your story. But it has been a very long time since you felt a deep desire and intimacy.

g. Without intimacy with God, without communion with God, without this living connection with God, where the vine sap is flowing into the branch and branch is flowing into vine, without that connection, there's no fruitfulness.

### **Quiet Your Self and Be still for a moment**

1. For a moment with your hands open. Palms up not down. **This is Physical De-acceleration**

2. Palms up are really important. Because it is a posture of perception, it's a posture of receiving, and it is a posture of opening ourselves up.

3. This is just a very basic moment between you and the Lord for you to be able in this moment just in your own words, just the declare to the Lord **your thankfulness** for **your union** and then open yourself to asking God about how can you respond today to that **union through communion**.

4. And what does the communion look like as you open yourself up before the Lord. Just say whatever you feel lead to say to Him right now. Like this Prayer "Father, Your Sap is flowing. Your love is sufficient. Because I am securely held, I am now ready to respond. How do You want to flow through me today."

5. You are not answering every question. You are right now taking an honest assessment of yourself.

6. What does your communion with God say about your relationship with Him. Is God a vending machine? Is He just there when all else fails? Are there different parts of your life where your communion with Him is different? Do you have a work reality to your Communion with God? Do you have a marriage reality to your Communion with God? Do you have parenting reality to your Communion with God? Do we have a friend reality to your Communion with God?

7. What will your Communion with God in those places say about what you think, what you feel, what you believe about His desire for your life?

8. This is not meant to lead you to despair. It is not meant to lead you to condemnation. It is meant like a marriage conference to lead you to intimacy. It is meant like a counseling session. When you're going with your spouse and saying, "**we just don't talk anymore.** We just don't have that **fire or spark anymore.**"

9. And it is meant for you to sit down and say, "this is the thing I would never have heard said about me like what is said about the Church of Laodicea in Revelation 3:14-22. The Church of Laodicea in Revelation (3:14-22) was guilty of being "**lukewarm**"—neither hot nor cold—leading to spiritual apathy, self-deception, and uselessness in God's kingdom. They relied on material wealth and prosperity rather than spiritual zeal, causing Jesus to rebuke them as wretched, poor, blind, and naked.

Is that you in your desire and pursuit that you have become lukewarm. You have settled for the long-term marriage effect. Where you share space together with God but not intimacy.

Ask Him what area in your life you need to be in Communion with Him.

Maybe you are here today. And you are not married to God. You are not in Union with Him therefore you can't have Communion with Him. But you realize your life is out of balance. There is no lasting peace, joy or hope in your life. Well, Jesus wants to be in relationship with you. He loves you. He died for you so you can live again in Him. If that is you then pray **this prayer**: Jesus today I want to be in Union with you so I can have Communion with you daily. I ask you to forgive me of my sins. I accept you as my Lord and Savior. Come live inside of me and fill me with your Holy Spirit-Amen