

## TIME OF REFLECTION

“For all of us have a basic, intuitive feeling that once we were whole and well; at ease, at home in the world, totally united with the grounds of our being; and that then we lost this primal, happy, innocent state, and fell into our present sickness and suffering. We had something of infinite beauty and preciousness – and we lost it; we spend our lives searching for what we have lost; and one day, perhaps, we will suddenly find it.”

~Oliver Sacks, famed neurologist in his book *Awakenings*

“Union with Christ is in Scripture the most general way of characterizing Jesus’ work of salvation. Jesus saves us by uniting us to himself. ... So the Christian life is a life in Christ: he in us and we in him.”

~John Frame, an American Christian philosopher and theologian

“All saints, that are united to Jesus Christ their Head by His Spirit and by faith, have fellowship with Him in His grace, sufferings, death, resurrection, and glory: and, being united to one another in love, they have communion in each other’s gifts and graces, and are obliged to the performance of such duties, public and private, as do conduce to their mutual good...”

~Westminster Confession of Faith (1646)

“Christ and the Christian are married, faith being the soul’s consent to the spiritual marriage covenant, which as it is proposed in the gospel.... [A]nd so he, being joined to the Lord, is one spirit with Him.”

~Thomas Boston (1676-1732), Scottish theologian and philosopher

“Let him kiss me with the kiss of his mouth; let his gracious presence and streams of beautiful teaching become in me the spring of water springing up to eternal life.... His living and active word is to me a kiss indeed, not the union of lips, which meanwhile belies the union of souls, but the full infusion of joys, revealing of secrets, a marvelous and somehow inseparable fusion of the heavenly light and the illuminated mind. Clinging to God, it is one spirit with him....”

~Bernard of Clairvaux (1090-1153), an abbot, mystic, and Benedictine reformer

“It is therefore indeed correct to say that baptism is a washing away of sins, but the expression is too mild and weak to bring out the full significance of baptism, which is rather a symbol of death and resurrection. For this reason, I would have those who are to be baptized completely immersed in the water, as the word says and as the mystery indicates. Not because I deem this necessary, but because it would be well to give to a thing so perfect and complete a sign.... The sinner does not so much need to be washed as he needs to die, in order to be wholly renewed and made another creature, and to be conformed to the death and resurrection of Christ, with whom he dies and rises again through baptism.”

~Martin Luther (1483-1546), German reformer in *The Babylonian Captivity of the Church*

**SERMON** – “Belonging to Jesus: Union with Christ” – *Pastor Don Willeman*

**SERMON PASSAGE** – *Romans 6:1-14 (NASB95)*

*Romans 5*

<sup>12</sup> Therefore, just as through one man sin entered into the world, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men, because all sinned—...

<sup>18</sup> So then as through one transgression there resulted condemnation to all men, even so through one act of righteousness there resulted justification of life to all men. <sup>19</sup> For as through the one man's disobedience the many were made sinners, even so through the obedience of the One the many will be made righteous. <sup>20</sup> The Law came in so that the transgression would increase; but where sin increased, grace abounded all the more, <sup>21</sup> so that, as sin reigned in death, even so grace would reign through righteousness to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

*Romans 6*

<sup>1</sup> What shall we say then? Are we to continue in sin so that grace may increase? <sup>2</sup> May it never be! How shall we who died to sin still live in it? <sup>3</sup> Or do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus have been baptized into His death? <sup>4</sup> Therefore we have been buried with Him through baptism into death, so that as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life. <sup>5</sup> For if we have become united with Him in the likeness of His death, certainly we shall also be in the likeness of His resurrection, <sup>6</sup> knowing this, that our old self was crucified with Him, in order that our body of sin might be done away with, so that we would no longer be slaves to sin; <sup>7</sup> for he who has died is freed from sin.

<sup>8</sup> Now if we have died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him, <sup>9</sup> knowing that

Christ, having been raised from the dead, is never to die again; death no longer is master over Him.

<sup>10</sup> For the death that He died, He died to sin once for all; but the life that He lives, He lives to God.

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

<sup>12</sup> Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body so that you obey its lusts, <sup>13</sup> and do not go on presenting the members of your body to sin as instruments of unrighteousness; but present yourselves to God as those alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness to God. <sup>14</sup> For sin shall not be master over you, for you are not under law but under grace.

*John 15*

<sup>5</sup> I am the vine, you are the branches; he who abides in Me and I in him, he bears much fruit, for apart from Me you can do nothing.

*1 Corinthians 6*

<sup>15</sup> Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ? Shall I then take away the members of Christ and make them members of a prostitute? May it never be! <sup>16</sup> Or do you not know that the one who joins himself to a prostitute is one body with her? For He says, “The two shall become one flesh.” <sup>17</sup> But the one who joins himself to the Lord is one spirit with Him. <sup>18</sup> Flee immorality. Every other sin that a man commits is outside the body, but the immoral man sins against his own body. <sup>19</sup> 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? <sup>20</sup> For you have been bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body.