

find your seats, we're going to get started. On lesson four, we are at the halfway mark, ladies and gentlemen. Halfway mark. There are three lessons left. We've done three. And today we're going to be talking, well, remember last time we talked about the indicatives of union with Christ.

What does union with Christ mean? Well, today we're going to be talking through the imperatives of the union that flow from those indicatives. That is, what are the commands? What ought we to do because of who we are? Before we get started on that, let's begin with a word of prayer. Our Father and our God, as we come before you this morning, and as we hear from your word, as we hear about the state that we are in and what you require of us because we're in that state, Lord, we pray that you would remove distractions from our minds and help us to not be mere hearers of the word, who delude themselves, but doers. For the sake of your son, Jesus Christ, amen.

All right, so like we said, we've been talking through some of the indicatives of the union, and on that big picture, we talked about the two Adams. We have the old Adam, how we used to be by nature, by virtue of being born human, we were in union with Adam.

And therefore, we received all the curses, all the conditions that were due his sin. and how in Christ we have been transferred out of union with Adam into union with Christ. We've also been given a basic definition for union with Christ. We did that at the very beginning, which is defining our relation to God in relation to our relationship to Christ. Defining our position before God in relation to our relationship with Christ. Now, like I said, so far we've been looking a lot at the indicatives of the union, how we have been put into Christ and what that means.

We've received all of his blessings. How just as when we were in union with Adam, we couldn't do anything to escape that union, we had his guilt, we could not escape, and we acted like it. Just as we could not escape that union when we were put into union with Christ, we cannot escape that union either. We have his perfect righteousness, we have his name stamped on him just as surely as we had Adam's name stamped on us before, and thus we are righteous before God. Now, by virtue of that, because that is true, there is the obvious question.

If that's true, if we can't sin our way out of union with Christ, well, in the words of Romans 6.1, What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin that grace may increase? In other words, if God is glorified by saving sinners, and if we have been put into union with Christ in such a way where we cannot sin our way out of that union, why not keep sinning? Why not engage in sin so that God can be further glorified? After all, if I'm a bigger sinner, then it's a bigger deal that God saves me. What's the issue with that sort of logic?

That's really the question we're going to be answering this morning, and we're going to be using Romans chapter 6 as sort of our guiding text to look at this question. So if you all have your Bibles, I'd encourage you to turn to Romans chapter 6. Romans chapter 6, beginning at verse 1. We're first going to read verses 1 through 4.

What shall we say then? Are we to continue in sin that grace may abound? By no means! How can we who died to sin still live in it? Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death? We have been buried therefore with Him by baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life. So here, the way that Paul begins to answer this question of why we shouldn't, why this is the answer to the question, continue in sin that grace may increase, is by

no means, God forbid, may it never be. He begins by looking at baptism. Baptism. And the point that he makes about baptism, the point that Sinclair points out, is that baptism, While there are many things we can say about it, many things that baptism is, it is no less than this.

It is a naming ceremony. A naming ceremony. In ages past, It was easier to get a sense for this. Because in the medieval period, you had what was called your Christian name. That's what all of us, that's what actually our first names are. We call them first names now. Back in the day, they were called our Christian names. My Christian name is Hunter. Vicki's Christian name is Vicki. These are Christian names.

And it might not be her full Christian name. I think it's a shortening of it. So there we go. Well, all right. All that to say, I suppose that's a nickname then, but yeah, Christian name. My full Christian name is Hunter. My sister's full Christian name is Alexandra, though we call her Lexi. So, there we go. I'm aware of the concept. But yeah, Christian name.

And the reason it was called your Christian name was because it was the name given to you at your christening. That is, at your baptism. When you were baptized, you were given that first name, the name that you would be called throughout your life. And while we don't necessarily do that today, this idea of baptism being a naming ceremony is a very biblical idea.

But we aren't given names like Hunter or Alexandra at our baptism. We're given a different name. We're given God's name, God's triune name. Think about what Jesus says in Matthew 28. He says, Go ye therefore into all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. You are baptized into the name of the triune God. There's a very real sense in which baptism is this naming ceremony. The triune God's name is placed upon you. And because you receive this triune name, The idea behind that is that you are being made part of God's family.

You have his name and thus receive his reputation, his status, his familial relation. You receive a perfect name, a good name. One of the things I often think about is how important a good name is. How many of y'all received opportunities or introductions or even friendships because of who your parents were? Because of your last name? Because someone could say, oh, I knew his dad. I knew his grandfather. I knew his brother. He's a good guy. I can trust him.

A good name is incredibly valuable. A good name is also something you can sort of earn for yourself. By interacting with people, by talking with people, by showing that you're an honest person, you can build up that good name. And that can open a lot of doors for you. Well, in addition, a good name can also be soiled, can't it? Let's go back to the illustration here of you having a good name, where everyone knows that your father was a righteous man, an honest man. And then you go out and you take advantage of that honest name and engage in less than honest business dealings. And then that gets out. What happens to that good name? Well, it gets soiled, right? You dishonor that good name.

Friends, that is exactly what happens when we sin against God. When we sin against our brother, when we sin against God, we take that baptismal name, that triune God's name, and we drag it through the mud. We take the

name of Christ and we drag it through the mud. That is really the first reason that Paul is giving here for why we ought not to continue in sin that grace may increase. In baptism, we have received this new name. We have received the name of Christ and we are Christians, little Christs. And thus, if we were to continue in sin, if we were to continue to engage in sin, have our lives characterized by sin, expecting grace to increase somehow by that, we would dishonor the name of God that's been placed upon us. That is one of the motivations for why we pursue righteousness, for why we fight against sin. The first reason is because we have received this new name. But this new name goes beyond simply a reputation. It's much deeper than that.

Think back to a passage we looked at earlier, a passage that Sinclair cites earlier in the book, where he's talking to the Corinthians, particularly about sexual immorality. And he says that every other sin that you commit is one that's committed outside the body, but if you sin in this way, you sin against your own body. This says something very radical. He says when you sin, when you commit the sin of sexual immorality, you don't do it alone.

Because you are in union with Christ, because you carry his name, because by his spirit he indwells you, in a very real sense, you take Christ with you into the brothel. You take Christ with you into your sin. Think about that. Not only do you sully Christ's name, but you drag him into that sin with you.

You say, come with me, Christ. Come with me, Jesus. Come with me, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, into the brothel. Continue in sin that grace may increase. May it never be. Why? We've received a new name. But not only have we received a new name, we have received a new nature. Look with me at verses 5 and 6 of Romans chapter 6.

For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we shall certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his. We know 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 enslaved to sin.

For one who has died has been freed from sin. So this is a very interesting passage. It's a difficult one for us to really get at here, but I want us to focus particularly on that last line. He who has died is freed from sin. How our old self has been crucified with Christ. This is something that we began to look at earlier.

If baptism is a naming ceremony, because Paul is continuing to talk about baptism here. In baptism, our old self has been crucified with Christ. Baptism is not just a naming ceremony, it's also a drowning ceremony. A drowning ceremony. In our baptism, not only have we received this new name, and again, we need to be careful here. We're not saying that baptism for every single person was the moment in which they were saved, or that baptism, just by doing the work, automatically saves people. That's not what we're saying. Baptism is a sign and a seal that points towards God's work of salvation. And in that work of baptism, in that moment that you enter God's kingdom, you are identified with Christ, there's a very real sense in which is also a drowning ceremony.

It is the defining moment in your life you can look back to and say, in that moment, my old self was drowned, was crucified, was killed in my baptism. My old self, in the words of Paul here, was crucified with Christ. Now, what is this old self? Anyone have an idea who this old self is? What's Paul talking about here? Exactly right. It is us in Adam. Remember, Adam, in Adam, is the old age. This age, the old man, all those kind of references are all talking

about the old Adam. And this old Adam, that self that was in union with Adam, that self that was identified with Adam, that self that had received all of Adam's curses and all of his conditions, that old self is no more.

That old self has been crucified with Christ. Jesus, as he died on that cross, took upon himself our sin. And so that by taking on that sin in a very real sense, by taking on your sin in a very real sense, you died on that cross. That old self, that old Adam, is dead and gone. Now in relation to that, and because this is true, not only is that true positionally, not only is that true legally, your sin has been punished, it's also true in regards to your nature. That old Adam that wanted to run after sin, that wanted nothing more than to gratify those desires, that pursued sin, that old self that was continuing in that progressive profanation, that progressive sinfulness, That is also dead. It's not just the old Adam's state, it's all of the old Adam. His condition as well has been crucified, it is dead in God.

And what that means for you is that you are no longer under sin's power. Sin's power, if you are in Christ, has been broken in your heart. Now that doesn't mean that you don't still have sin living within you. It doesn't mean that that new man does not still struggle against the sinful tendencies still present within you. But those sinful tendencies have no power over you. You can overcome them. You can fight against them. You are not sin's slave. You are God's slave.

Now there are two missteps here that we need to point out in particular in regards to this, in regards to this truth, this truth of baptism being this drowning ceremony, us receiving this new nature. The first one, the first one is what we call personal dualism. Put that right here. Oh, I forgot this, personal dualism. And what personal dualism essentially says is that the Christian is not one person, he's two people.

He is 50% old Adam and 50% in Christ. He's 50% in old Adam, 50% in Christ, when it comes to resisting sin, and you know, sometimes the old Adam wins, sometimes the in Christ wins, and there's this equal dualism inside the Christian where they fight against each other, and you know, it's really anyone's guess as to who's gonna win on a particular Tuesday. You know? It depends on whether you had pizza, did you have sausage on it, I mean, who knows, who knows? Maybe that's what the whole unclean meat thing was about. But yeah, 50%, 50%. This is wrong. That is not the model that is true.

What is true of us in Christ, Paul doesn't say your old self is being crucified. He doesn't say your old self will be crucified. He said your old self has been crucified with Christ. That is, it is dead and gone. So that you are 100% in Christ. You are not two people, you are one person, one renewed person. That's the first misstep.

And we know this from what Paul says, what James says. James talking to believers when they're in temptation. Maybe this is Paul, maybe I'm getting my letters mixed up. But he says, no temptation is overcome to you, and that which is common to man, And God will always provide you a means of escape. That's what Paul is, I think it is Paul, what Paul is saying there is that temptation, sin, that old Adam, that old sinful, those old sinful tendencies do not rule over you. You always have a way of escaping them.

So that's the first major misstep, this idea of personal dualism. The second misstep that often happens, is sinless perfectionism. Sinless perfectionism. So if personal dualism says that you're kind of like 50% sinful, 50% in Christ, and there's this equal struggle within you, and it's not really sure who's gonna win on a particular day, sinless

perfectionism takes this idea that you are 100% in Christ, that sin's power has been broken over you, and says, well, if that's true, if I'm completely in Christ, if the old Adam is completely crucified, then that means that in this life, if I struggle hard enough, if I work hard enough, then I'm going to have no sin present in me at all. That it is achievable in this life to so sanctify myself, to so work out my salvation, that I'll be able to get rid of any sinful tendencies in my heart and be able to live a perfect life for Jesus on earth. Some versions of it even say that that is true of every single Christian, that if you're a Christian, you don't sin.

I know, it's sort of crazy. I've met people who say this. And you know what happens every single time I meet someone like that? I start asking them to define sin. What do you mean not sin? What do you mean by sin? And they take the Ten Commandments and they start doing what the Pharisees did. They minimize them. They say, well, you know, that's not really hateful and that's not really an idol. They start whittling away at it to the point where the law becomes very keepable, even for someone with sinful tendencies. And so we don't want to do that. We know that this is totally against scripture.

John says in 1 John 1.9, if anyone says they have no sin, they deceive themselves and the truth is not in them. Anyone says I don't care how sanctified you are. I don't care how much victory you've had over sin There's still gonna be some sin present in you Now that sin does not rule over you But he is still but that sin is still present within you. I Again, you are not two people. There's not a sinful hunter in me and a righteous hunter in me that are in battle.

It's the righteous hunter, the one who's righteous in Christ, regenerated by Christ's power, by the Holy Spirit, struggling against the sinful tendencies that yet remain within him. That is the true model of the Christian. You have received a new nature, a nature that has been resurrected with Christ, a nature that has his power, a nature that can struggle against sin. It'll be difficult, but it is something that characterizes the Christian life. There's something I've found helpful in discussing these sorts of issues is talk about the Christian life in terms of three tenses. Three tenses.

You have been saved. from sin's penalty. That is completely 100% done. It is in the past. The penalty is 100% paid for. Christ's righteousness is 100% in your account. You are as righteous right now in God's eyes as you will ever be in heaven. That's good news.

You are also being saved from sins. from sin's power. Sin's power has been broken over you, but you continue to struggle against the sinful tendencies yet within you. There's a progression to this. And one day, you will be saved from sin's presence. You have been saved from sin's penalty, you are being saved from sin's power, and you will be saved from sin's presence. And right now we're living right here. Again, not a personal dualism, not two people within you struggling, one righteous person in Christ who struggles against sin.

So we have a new name, a new nature, now we reach the therefore. Therefore, in light of these things, remember, imperatives in the Christian life, commands to do something, commands to struggle against sin, always flow from indicatives. Because you have this new name, because you have this new nature, therefore, struggle against sin. Therefore, be what you are. You are as righteous as Christ himself in God's eyes. You have a new nature. You have a new name. Thus, act like it. Act like it.

In the words of Paul and Philippians, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God who has at work within you, both to will and to work for his good pleasure. Now, as you're doing this, You have to be aware that you are not going to be unopposed. The Christian life is a struggle, and Satan is not going to let you do this struggle, fight against sin, without trying to trip you up.

And in light of this new name, new nature, he's going to try to get you to doubt these two things. Because these two things are your strength. These two things are what motivate your sanctification. These two things are what drive you to put away sin. Thus, he's going to try to get you to doubt these.

When you sin, when you mess up, when you do break God's law, when you love sin in that moment more than you loved God, Satan's going to come to you and he's going to say, Do you really have any right to claim the name of Christ? To claim the name of God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit on your life?

No way. No way. You are nothing but a sinner. You're nothing but a rebel. He's gonna try and get you to doubt that you have received this new name. But Christian, remember, remember that even when you mess up, even when you sin, you don't lose that good name. You sully it, yes, but you don't lose it. Your child, when he disobeys you, doesn't cease to be your child. You can't lose that new name, new nature. Again, when you're struggling against sin, on your bad days, Satan's going to come, he's going to say, He's going to try to convince you.

You don't have any kind of new nature. You don't really love God. You don't have this new nature to struggle against me. Look at your desires. It's all sinful. It's all bad. It's all bad. It's all towards the lusts of the flesh and the lusts of the eyes.

You're powerless. You're my slave. In those moments, you need to remind Satan. You need to rebuke Satan and say, no, I am not your slave. Your power is broken. There's only one king in my heart and his name is Jesus. And though sometimes I might act like I'm your slave, to my shame, I am not your slave. I am Christ's slave. I do as he bids, not as you bid.

Remember your new name. Remember your new nature. That's how you can do the therefore. Any questions on this? How are we doing on time? Oh wow, doing well. Look at that. We're always stressing when you say baptism, to improve your own baptism. Yes. This is how you do that.

People always say, what do you mean improve your baptism? It's to remind yourself you got a new name, a new nature, and to go out and live like that. That's how you improve your baptism. So every time you attend a baptism, Absolutely. That's exactly right, Jamie. It's important that the baptism is not just a means of grace for the person being baptized. It's a means of grace for everyone watching.

Because in that moment, when you look at that baptism, you can remember your own baptism. Remember what is true of you because of that baptism. You've received this new name. You've received this new nature, just as that

child has. And thus, you can strive against sin. Thus, you can improve on your baptism, in the words of the catechism. That's an excellent point. Thank you. Any other questions or comments? All right. Well, let's close with a word of prayer.

Our Father and our God, thank you for all that you've given us. That you save us just as we are, but you love us too much to leave us just as we are. That we have been justified in Christ because we've received his righteousness, we're in union with him. But you've also given us this new name, this new nature. We repent of the times that we have not acted as those who have a new nature, and when we have sullied your name, we ask your forgiveness.

Improve in us, Lord, by your Holy Spirit, that new nature. Continue to strengthen him, that he can continue to fight against the remains of sin left within us. Help us, Lord, to believe that sin's power truly is broken over us, that we can truly fight. Destroy the schemes of Satan, who would seek to deceive us. I pray all this in Jesus' name. Amen.