

**Theology 2**  
**Objective Aspects of Salvation**  
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**10/18/23**

*There are three essential elements among the objective aspects of salvation: **union with Christ, justification, and adoption**. The objective elements have to do with our status or standing in relationship to God.*

**Union with Christ**

- Union with Christ is an inclusive term for the whole of salvation. Union with Christ speaks to **the oneness** between Christ and the believer.
- Key passages that highlight our union with Christ – 2 Cor. 5:17 & Eph. 1:3-4
- The believer is “in Christ,” but Christ is also in the believer – Col. 1:27 & Gal. 2:20
- Our union with Christ is **judicial, spiritual, and vital** (p. 317).
- Probably the greatest picture the Bible uses of our union with Christ is that of **a husband and wife** (see Eph. 5:25ff).
- Implications of our Union with Christ – see pp. 317-318

**Justification**

- Justification is God’s action **pronouncing sinners righteous** in His sight.
- But how can this be, seeing as how all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God?
- Someone else’s righteousness must be **imputed** (not imparted) to us. The righteousness we need belongs to Jesus Christ, who was at all points tempted yet without sin (Heb. 4:15).
- How do we obtain His righteousness? **Through faith alone** in Jesus (Rom. 4:3).
- Imputed righteousness vs. infused holiness
  - **Catholics** have long taught that the righteousness of Christ is obtained through **an infusion of holiness** that comes from God and enables to live worthy of salvation. Essentially, justification is a matter of God-enabled good works.
  - **Protestants** have long stood against that position. In fact, it was this very issue that drove the Reformation. Rather than seeing justification as an infusion of holiness, we understand it as **an imputation of righteousness** that is neither earned or deserved (Eph. 2:8-9).
  - Because we have entered into union with Christ, **His righteousness now belongs to us** so that we stand before God totally justified.

**Adoption**

- Adoption means that we have been transferred from a status of alienation and hostility to one of **acceptance and favor**.
- Key verses: John 1:12, Rom. 8:15, Gal. 4:4-5, 1 John 3:1 (Benefits of adoption – p. 322)
- Through faith in Jesus Christ, **we are now God’s children and He is our FATHER!**