

## Union with Christ

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### Review

Becoming a Christian is bigger than we ever anticipated because, at conversion, we were believing not only on Christ but into Christ, into union and communion with Him. And now, every spiritual blessing is ours in Christ (Eph 1:3)

### Part 12: Sharing in His Death and Resurrection

Our union with Christ has a double-dimension

- An inner spiritual reality. We put off sin (mortification) and grow in Christlike graces (vivification). (Eph 4:20-24; Col 3:9-10)
- An external physical reality, sharing in the outworking of our union with Christ in both His death and resurrection.

There are examples of this second dimension in both the Old and New Testaments

- Jospeh (OT) shared experientially in the dying and rising of Jesus
- Stephen (NT) shared in Christ's death, but also in the fruit of the resurrection in the life of Saul/Paul.

This is a pattern for us. We should see all of life through lenses crafted to the prescription of Union with Christ.

- Taking on His likeness creates a rhythm of death and resurrection (Phil 3:8-11)
  - The Lord uses the hardships we experience to make us useful for His Kingdom
  - But as we share in His suffering, we also share in His fruitfulness

Dr. Ferguson emphasized this pattern by reading through 2nd Corinthians in reverse order: 2 Cor 13:4; 4:10-12; and 1:3-6

- A powerful portrayal of how comprehensive this union is – not just privately and inwardly and spiritually, but also outwardly and experientially
- As we share in both His death and resurrection God is shaping us more and more into the image of Christ, which is the center point of our union with Him.

## **Reflex Check**

As a follower of Jesus, how do I respond to various opportunities and challenges? And what do those responses reveal about my understanding of my union with Christ?

### **1. After a blowup at home, my first step is...**

- A. Set strict rules and double devotions to get back on track.
- B. Keep my distance until I feel worthy to approach again.
- C. Go to God immediately for mercy and help, then apologize.
- D. It wasn't serious; just move on and forget about it.

### **2. Why practice Scripture and prayer?**

- A. So God will bless and protect my week more reliably.
- B. To enjoy communion that reshapes desires and choices over time.
- C. They're optional; I'm fine without regular practices.
- D. To manage stress and feel more in control of life.

### **3. I hit a hard season. My first interpretation is...**

- A. Not punishment; God can grow me through this. Seek wise help.
- B. Probably payback; I must do better so it stops happening.
- C. It proves spiritual things don't matter; withdraw and protect myself.
- D. A sign I've lost favor; keep my head down for a while.

### **4. Someone wrongs me deeply. My instinct is...**

- A. Forgive quickly so God will reward me for obedience.
- B. Wait for real change; they must earn another chance first.
- C. Say it's fine and drop boundaries; that's what forgiveness means.
- D. Move toward wise forgiveness because I live from received mercy.

### **5. Thinking about ministry “results,” I conclude...**

- A. Good results prove I'm accepted; poor ones mean I'm not.
- B. To avoid failing, I should serve less and stay safe.
- C. My call is faithfulness; outcomes belong to the Lord.
- D. Success shows I'm ahead of others; that's encouraging.

### **6. Baptism and the Lord's Supper are mainly...**

- A. They work automatically if performed; grace is transmitted by doing.
- B. Visible promises that strengthen trust; not currency to buy favor.
- C. Just memorials; meaningful but spiritually empty symbols.
- D. Extra credits; frequent participation raises my standing.

### **7. Battling a recurring sin, I will...**

- A. Add stricter rules and punish myself when I fail again.
- B. Stop trying—grace covers it, so stressing is pointless.
- C. Make a bold vow to gain strength and impress God.
- D. Rely on a new identity, seek help, take concrete steps.

**8. After a strong week spiritually, I tend to...**

- A. Give thanks and keep walking dependently, not trusting momentum.
- B. Get nervous and sabotage progress to stay humble.
- C. Expect a smoother week now; I've earned it.
- D. I'm clearly doing better than most; nice to see.

**9. Why give generously?**

- A. So God will prosper me; generosity brings returns.
- B. To quiet guilt about spending and reset my habits.
- C. As grateful participation in God's work with open hands.
- D. Giving isn't needed; that sounds legalistic to me.

**10. When I must confront someone's sin, I...**

- A. Confront strongly so God notices my zeal for truth.
- B. Speak truth in love, aiming for the person's restoration.
- C. Avoid the issue; conflict threatens relationships and reputation.
- D. Vent; they need to feel how wrong they were.