

# The Whole Body of Christ

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1

In Christ alone my hope is found,  
 He is my light, my strength, my song  
 This Cornerstone, this solid ground,  
 Firm through the fiercest drought and storm  
 What heights of love, what depths of peace,  
 When fears are stilled, when strivings cease  
 My Comforter, my All in All,  
 Here in the love of Christ I stand

2

In Christ alone, who took on flesh,  
Fullness of God in helpless Babe  
This gift of love and righteousness,  
Scorned by the ones He came to save  
'Til on that cross as Jesus died,  
The wrath of God was satisfied  
For every sin on Him was laid;  
Here in the death of Christ I live.

3

There in the ground His body lay,  
Light of the world by darkness slain  
Then bursting forth in glorious day,  
Up from the grave He rose again  
And as He stands in victory,  
Sin's curse has lost its grip on me  
For I am His and He is mine—  
Bought with the precious blood of Christ

4

No guilt in life, no fear in death,  
This is the power of Christ in me  
From life's first cry to final breath,  
Jesus commands my destiny  
No power of hell, no scheme of man  
Could ever pluck me from His hand  
'Til He returns or calls me home,  
Here in the power of Christ I'll stand

5

## Recap

- Jesus is brought into the great *Shema*
- The Holy Spirit is the bond of Love proceeding from the Father to the Son and reciprocated by the Son to the Father (Augustine on 1 John 4)

6

## How are we bound to Christ?

- “<sup>16</sup>For by him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things were created through him and for him. <sup>17</sup>And he is before all things, and in him all things hold together.” (Col 1:16–17)
- **1** Long ago, at many times and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets, <sup>2</sup>but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed the heir of all things, through whom also he created the world. <sup>3</sup>He is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature, and he upholds the universe by the word of his power. (Heb 1:1–3)

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## The effects of sin

- Sin is the imposition of a new sustainer
- **Athanasius**
  - The trajectory of creation is reversed in sin
- **Augustine**
  - Greater vs. Diminished existence
- Salvation must reestablish Christ as the Source of Life

9

**15** “I am the true vine, and my Father is the vinedresser. **2** Every branch in me that does not bear fruit he takes away, and every branch that does bear fruit he prunes, that it may bear more fruit. **3** Already you are clean because of the word that I have spoken to you. **4** Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit by itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in me. **5** I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing. **6** If anyone does not abide in me he is thrown away like a branch and withers; and the branches are gathered, thrown into the fire, and burned. **7** If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. **8** By this my Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit and so prove to be my disciples. **9** As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Abide in my love. **10** If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love, just as I have kept my Father’s commandments and abide in his love. **11** These things I have spoken to you, that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be full. (Jn 15:1–11)

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<sup>26</sup>I made known to them your name, and I will continue to make it known, that the love with which you have loved me may be in them, and I in them.” (Jn 17:26)

16



## The Soul united to Christ

“The soul now loves God, not through itself, but through himself; which is a wondrous brightness, since it loves through the Holy Spirit, even as the Father and the Son love one another” (St. John of the Cross)

What Christ has by nature, becomes ours by participation.

### Images of the Fathers

- Iron in the fire
- Ointment and perfume

17

## Our life is “in Christ”

- <sup>20</sup> I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me. (Ga 2:20)
- <sup>3</sup> For you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. <sup>4</sup> When Christ who is your life appears, then you also will appear with him in glory. (Col 3:3–4)

18

## Christ's fate becomes our fate

- Ephesians
  - blessed us *in Christ* with every spiritual blessing (1:3)
  - he chose us *in him* (v. 4)
  - he has blessed us *in the Beloved* (v. 6)
  - *In him* we have redemption (v. 7)
  - to unite all things *in him* (v. 10)
  - *In him* we have obtained an inheritance (v. 11)
  - *In him* you also...were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit (v. 13)
  - the working of his great might <sup>20</sup> that he worked *in Christ* (vv. 1:19–20)
  - made us alive together with Christ...and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places *in Christ Jesus* (2:5-6)
  - created *in Christ Jesus* for good works (v. 10)

19

## One flesh with Christ

<sup>28</sup> In the same way husbands should love their wives *as their own bodies*. He who loves his wife *loves himself*. <sup>29</sup> For no one ever hated *his own flesh*, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as Christ does the church, <sup>30</sup> because *we are members of his body*. <sup>31</sup> “Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and hold fast to his wife, and *the two shall become one flesh*.” <sup>32</sup> This mystery is profound, and *I am saying that it refers to Christ and the church*. (Eph 5:28–32)

20

## One with Christ

- The Road to Damascus
  - Acts 9:4-5
- Matthew 25:40, 45
  - What you do to the least of these, you do to Jesus

21

## One with Christ

- The Road to Damascus
  - Acts 9:4-5
- Matthew 25:40, 45
  - What you do to the least of these, you do to Jesus
- 'This is the highest honor of the Church, that, until He is united to us, the Son of God reckons himself in some measure imperfect.'  
(John Calvin)

22