

“We see that our whole salvation and all its parts are comprehended in Christ [Acts 4:12]. We should therefore take care not to derive the least portion of it from anywhere else.

If we seek salvation, we are taught by the very name of Jesus that it is “of him” [1 Cor. 1:30].

If we seek any other gifts of the Spirit, they will be found in his anointing.

If we seek strength, it lies in his dominion;

if purity, in his conception;

if gentleness, it appears in his birth.

For by his birth he was made like us in all respects

that he might learn to feel our pain.

If we seek redemption, it lies in his passion;

if acquittal, in his condemnation;

if remission of the curse, in his cross [Gal. 3:13];

if satisfaction, in his sacrifice;

if purification, in his blood;

if reconciliation, in his descent into hell;

if mortification of the flesh, in his tomb;

if newness of life, in his resurrection;

if immortality, in the same;

if inheritance of the heavenly kingdom, in his entrance into heaven;

if protection, if security, if abundant supply of all blessings, in his Kingdom;

if untroubled expectation of judgment, in the power given to him to judge.

In short, since rich store of every kind of good abounds in him, let us drink our fill from this fountain, and from no other.”

Our union with Christ

Discuss

Read Ephesians 1:1-14. What *blessings* can you spot listed here?

1. Approaching our union with Christ

(a) “In Christ”, “with Christ” - e.g. Ephesians 1:3-4,7, 2:4-5

(b) Scripture illustrations: union with Christ is *like*...

- Stones and corner stone
Ephesians 2:19-22 (also 1 Peter 2:4-5)
- A vine and its branches
John 15:5, "I am the vine; you are the branches. If a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing..."
- Human body: it's head and members
Ephesians 4:15-16
- Adam and the human race
Romans 5:12-21, 1 Cor. 15:19-49
- The union between the Father and the Son
John 14:20, "In that day you will know that I am in my Father, and you in me, and I in you"
- Husband and wife
John 3:29, Revelation 21:2, Ephesians 5:31-32

2. The nature of our union

(a) spiritual = of the Holy Spirit

1 Corinthians 6:17,19, “But he who is joined to the Lord becomes one spirit with him... Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, whom you have from God?”

(b) faith-union

Eph. 3:17, “...so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith.”

(c) mystical

Ephesians 5:32, Colossians 1:26-27

(d) real

3. The extent of our union

(a) In eternity past: our election in Christ

Ephesians 1:3-4, 11

(b) At the Cross: our death & resurrection with Christ

Romans 6:1-10

- Christ is both representative AND substitute

(c) In our present experience: salvation is actually applied to us in Christ – Ephesians 2:3, Romans 16:7

Righteousness – Philippians 3:8-9

New life – Ephesians 2:4-6,10, Colossians 3:3-4

We die and we will rise

1 Thess. 4:14,16, “For since we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so, through Jesus, God will bring with him those who have fallen asleep... And the dead in Christ will rise first.”

1 Corinthians 15:22, “For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive.”

4. Applying the doctrine of our union with Christ

→ Sanctification

→ Faith

→ Christ... our whole salvation

Resources

- Union with Christ, by Sinclair Ferguson
- Redemption Accomplished and Applied, by John Murray
- On the Westminster Confession of Faith: 10 minute mini-talks by Ian Hamilton and Chad Van Dixhoorn. Cambridge Presbyterian Church website (see Resources / Westminster Confession).