

### 1. What does it mean to be a Christian?

- a. Ephesians 2:1-7 is a picture of an individual who has encountered, or been encountered by God.
- b. How does the Scripture describe such an encounter? How was it for Paul?
- c. Thus, what does it mean to be a Christian?
  - i. It is not something one tries out
  - ii. It is not merely “following Jesus” – WWJD?
- d. It is to be completely born again – once were dead and now you are made alive

### 2. How does this new life happen?

- a. “In Christ”
  - i. What does this mean?
- b. “Union with Christ”
  - i. Source of our union with Christ is God’s sovereign election (1:4)
  - ii. Means of our union with Christ is repentant faith (1:13)
  - iii. Result of our union with Christ is all the blessings of salvation (1:3-14)
- c. What difference does it make?
  - i. It means that your life is not dependent upon your works of righteousness, your failures of sin, or your wavering feelings
  - ii. You are alive because you are united to Christ Jesus
  - iii. This doctrine takes our eyes off of ourselves and puts them on the only one who can rescue us and make us truly live

### 3. What is the significance of this union with Christ?

- a. The verbs in Ephesians 2:4-7 are past tense!
  - i. “made us alive”
  - ii. “raised us up”
  - iii. “seated us”
  - iv. All of these are “with Him” (sun- verbs)
- b. It is such a significant and central doctrine that Paul mentions it often in his letters
  - i. Col 2:13-14
  - ii. Romans 5 and 6
  - iii. 1 Corinthians 12
  - iv. 2 Corinthians 5, pt. v21
- c. Galatians 2:20

- i. “I have been crucified with Christ. I, I no longer live, but the life that I now live I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.”
  - d. Being united to Christ Jesus means that you have had an identity shift
    - i. It doesn’t remove your problems
    - ii. In fact, it means that there is a battle going on inside of you which is more difficult than before
    - iii. “I no longer live, and the life which I now live...”

#### 4. What caused this identity shift?

- a. “I have been crucified with Christ!”
  - i. Being united to Christ means that when He died, I died.
- b. “you are raised up with Him”
  - i. Being united to Christ means that when He was raised, I was raised up with Him.
- c. This union with Him is rooted in His great love and great works on your behalf
  - i. “who loved me and gave himself for me.”

#### 5. Christianity, at its root, is a federal relationship with Jesus

- a. It’s OK to speak of a personal relationship with Jesus, but that is not the foundation of what it means to be a Christian
  - i. That personal relationship is a result of the federal relationship with Jesus
- b. What is a federal relationship?
  - i. It is a legal representative relationship, a covenanted partner
  - ii. When He died, you died – When He was raised, you were raised
  - iii. Analogies
    - 1. Union negotiators
    - 2. Marriage
    - 3. Power of Attorney
- c. 2 Corinthians 5:21
  - i. Did God *actually make* Jesus to be sin on that cross?
    - 1. Did He become proud, selfish, full of corruption and lust?
    - 2. What evidence of His heart do we see on the cross?
    - 3. What kind of faithful obedience do we see?
      - a. Jesus depended upon a God who forsook Him!
      - b. Nobody has ever had to do that! And He remained faithful!
  - ii. Jesus did not actually become sin, but He forensically became sin
    - 1. Your sins came to Him. Your punishment for sin came upon Him
    - 2. Why?

- a. “so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him”
  - i. Does that mean that we actually become God’s righteousness?
  - ii. No! It is federal – a legal righteousness applied to us because our federal head is righteous
- b. Col 1:22 – “he has now reconciled you in his body of flesh by his death, in order to present you holy, blameless, and beyond accusation before him.”
  - i. You’re not actually righteous
  - ii. Yet, united to Christ, God accounts His faithful obedience and sinless perfection as yours
  - iii. Thus, you are truly righteous, even though you are not actually righteous
- d. Whatever is true of him is true of you because you are in a federal relationship with Him
  - i. This is the radical truth of Christianity!
  - ii. Martin Luther’s advice on dealing with Satan’s accusations against you
  - iii. When Satan accuses us, or our guilt is exposed to us, or our own hearts condemn us:  
WHAT SHALL WE DO?
    - 1. Proclaim the gospel of our union with Christ!
    - 2. I have already been crucified for that sin when Jesus died!

## 6. This union with Christ is rooted in the sovereign love of God

- a. Every other religious or philosophical or political leader seeks to show people the way to freedom, peace, salvation, etc.
- b. But Jesus came to BE the WAY!
  - i. “He has become to us wisdom from God, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption!” (1 Corinthians 1:30)
  - ii. He IS your righteousness! He IS your sanctification! He IS your redemption!
- c. Why has He done it?
  - i. “But God, being wealthy with mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us...made us alive together with Him...” (Eph 2:4)
  - ii. “because he loved me and gave himself for me” (Gal 2:20)
  - iii. “in love He predestined us to be conformed to the image of His Son” (Eph 1:4-5)
- d. There is no other cause of our union with Christ than the sovereign electing love of God
  - i. No righteousness of our compelled Him and no sin of mine kept Him from it
  - ii. So Jesus tells His chosen disciples:
    - 1. “Fear not, little flock, for it is your Father’s good pleasure to give to you the Kingdom.” (Luke 12:32)