

1. **Introduction:** How can Christ, who is one Person with two natures, both a divine nature (totally spirit) and a human nature (physical plus spirit), be united to a human person with one human nature that is physical/spirit?
 - Considering this question, keep in mind the distinction between “a nature” (from which come attributes) and person (nature plus an “I”). The “I” controls and uses the nature.
 - God is one infinite, eternal divine nature that is shared and used by 3 divine persons (Father, Son, Holy Spirit). A human is one finite, human nature controlled and used by the person’s “I.”
 - The incarnate Son is one person with two natures (divine and human) both controlled by His divine “I.” His divine nature is infinite & eternal; human nature finite & eternal.
2. **Union Between Finite and Infinite:** Jesus’ divine nature is infinite and pure spirit. How can a finite human whose nature is both physical and spirit become one with Christ?
 - A direct union between Christ’s divine nature and a person’s human nature would mean connecting two infinitely different entities. How could that be?
 - A direct connection doesn’t happen, not even between Christ’s divine and human nature.
 - The two natures of Jesus, the God-Man, do not mix or interfere. His human nature enables a union with the person of Christ without encountering the incompatible nature issue.
 - Jesus’ human nature, like ours, is finite, a combination of physical and spiritual elements. His human nature includes a body of flesh like ours.
 - Our finite human “system” cannot be directly connected to Christ’s infinite “divine system.” In engineering to achieve design goals it is often necessary to interconnect systems of different natures, for example mechanical to electronic.
 - In the engineering problem, interconnection between systems of different natures is made possible by a properly designed “interface.”
 - Though not the only reason for His human nature, His human nature provides an “interface” for Union with Him.
3. **Description of How “Union with Christ” May Work:** “In historical time” the divine Son took to Himself a human nature, conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary. His human nature enables an interface for union with other human natures.
 - A “human-nature”-to-“human-nature” interface provides a way for a human to connect to the person of Jesus. Christ’s human nature is fully indwelt by the Holy Spirit (Scripture says without measure).
 - Christ’s divine and human natures do not mix, do not interchange or blend attributes, but both natures are controlled by the Son’s personal divine “I.”
 - Christ’s divine nature exists in perpetual, mutual indwelling union with the Father and the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit also indwells each believer.

- The Holy Spirit is the common factor between the incarnate Christ and redeemed people that enables “union.” He is both the bond between Christ’s two natures and the bond between our human nature and Christ’s human nature.
 - Believers and Christ are bound together by the bond of the Holy Spirit connecting their human nature to Christ’s human nature (like to like) and through His “I” to the control of His divine nature. That bond is called “Union with Christ.”
 - The Holy Spirit is the living bond for spiritual union between a believer and Christ and through that connection they receive the benefits of His work on their behalf.
 - Chosen before the foundation of the world (Ephesians 1:3-6) is a mystery beyond our understanding. God anticipated the need of salvation which was always to be “in Christ.”
 - Those to be saved were never contemplated by the Father apart from their Union with Christ. Redemption is and has been and will be “in Christ” forever.
4. **Scriptural Evidence for “Union with Christ”:** There are many verses about union of Christ with “His people” who were given to Him by the Father in eternity.
- Speaking of individual believers, Jesus says in Jn. 14:20, *“In that day you will know that I am in my Father, and you in me, and I in you.”* Paul says in 1 Cor. 6:17, *“But he who is joined to the Lord becomes one spirit with him.”*
 - Paul speaks corporately of the church as Christ’s “mystical” body in Eph. 5:29-32, *“For no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as Christ does the church,³⁰ because we are members of his body.³¹ “Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh.”³² This mystery is profound, and I am saying that it refers to Christ and the church.”*
5. **Christ’s High Priestly Prayer:** The vital importance of Union with Christ is clearly seen from the place it occupies in Christ’s High Priestly prayer in John 17.
- The center or focal point of Christ’s petition to the Father appears to be verse 17:22, *“The glory that you have given me I have given to them, that they may be one even as we are one.”*
 - In earlier verses, Jesus expressed His supreme desire for the redeemed.
 - John 17:20-21, *“I do not ask for these only, but also for those who will believe in me through their word,²¹ that they may all be one, just as you, Father, are in me, and I in you, that they also may be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me.”*
 - The oneness for which He prays is a oneness of the Father and the Son dwelling in believers and believers in them.
 - That oneness is the highest status a redeemed but un-glorified human can have.
 - Jesus ends His prayer by reinforcing His intent for believers through His union with them. John 17:26, *“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.”*
6. **Quote on the Importance of Union with Christ:** *“Union with Christ ... is a way of speaking about the way in which believers share in Christ in eternity (by election), in past*

history (by redemption), in the present (by effectual calling, justification, and sanctification), and in the future (by glorification).” (Michael Horton: The Christian Faith, Zondervan, 2011, p. 587).

7. **Salvation Manifested in Individuals During Their Mortal Life:** When the salvation planned by God in eternity is, by God’s grace, made manifest “in time” in a person’s life, they are created spiritually anew (born again).
 - Who they are and what they have done contributes nothing to realizing their new spiritual reality. Their “new reality” is entirely by God’s grace.
8. **Ephesians 2:8-10:** *“For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, ⁹ not a result of works, so that no one may boast. ¹⁰ For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.”*
 - Not only was “salvation in Christ” planned by God in eternity, but when salvation is made manifest to a person in mortal life, it is made manifest in “Union with Christ.” Through our union with Him, the risen Christ constantly influences those “in Him.”
 - A believers’ Union with Christ will never end. It is a union that extends into heaven. For that reason, “those who believe” are to purposely prepare for eternal life with Him.
 - Preparation for eternity includes obeying God, conforming to Scripture, loving God and neighbors, guiding children in the things of God, and laying up treasures in heaven.
9. **Laying up Treasures in Heaven:** The importance of this task was underlined when Jesus said, *“For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also”* (Matthew 6-21).
 - Much about eternal life is mysterious and unknown, but enough is known to point our preparations in the right direction.
10. **What in Mortal Life Affects Eternal Life?** I believe eternal life with God will have structure and purpose and be filled with activity.
 - Everything in mortal life will affect eternal life, but some things are more important.
 - The first and vital thing is our positive response when the Father draws us to Jesus, and the second is, continuous serious attention to being obedient in all things.
 - Things in mortal life that will affect heavenly life include our relationship with God, family, and other people. Being obedient to God. The kind of knowledge and wisdom we develop and store in our mind. The attitude we have toward God, people, and things.
 - In the here and now of mortal life, we have opportunities to acquire godly wisdom and knowledge, godly attitudes, and godly relationships, and by so doing will lay up treasures in heaven and experience pleasure in our mortal life.
 - Worldly power, wealth, status, quantities of goods, outward appearance etc. will not usually be treasures in heaven but can be if used wisely according to Biblical principles.
11. **In Paul’s Letters, he says, because we are “in Christ”**
 - We have redemption (Rom. 3:24); we are to consider ourselves “dead to sin and alive to God” (Rom. 6:11); we receive the gift of “eternal life” (Rom. 6:23; cf. 2 Tim. 1:1).

- We are no longer under condemnation (Rom. 8:1, 2; Gal. 2:4); nothing “will be able to separate us from the love of God” (Rom. 8:39); we are “sanctified; called to be saints; given grace”(1 Cor. 1:2, 4; 15:22).
- We are “one body . . . members one of another” (Rom. 12:5; 1 Cor. 12:12); Christ lives in us (Gal. 2:20) and the Spirit is “poured out on us richly” (Titus 3:6); we are established, anointed, and sealed by the Holy Spirit as a guarantee (2 Cor. 1:21); we are led in “triumphal procession” (2 Cor. 2:14).
- God reconciled us to Himself and no longer counts our sins against us (2 Cor. 5:18-19); we are justified by faith and not by works of the law (Gal. 2:16; 5:6); we become recipients of God’s promised blessings to Abraham by “faith” (Gal. 3:14); we are adopted “as sons of God, through faith” (Gal. 3:26; Eph. 1:5).
- We are given “every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places” (Eph. 1:3); we are “raised up with him and seated . . . with him in the heavenly places” (Eph. 2:6).
- We are created “for good works, which God prepared beforehand” (Eph. 2:10); we have been “brought near [to God]” (Eph. 2:13); we are partakers in God’s eternal purposes and promises (Eph. 3:11,16).
- We have the mind of Christ (Phil. 2:5; 1 Cor. 2:16); we “[receive] the righteousness from God that depends on faith” (Phil. 3:9); we have peace with God (Phil. 4:7); our needs are supplied (Phil. 4:19).
- God’s grace overflows toward us (1 Tim. 1:14; 2 Tim. 2:1); we have salvation (2 Tim. 2:10) and are called to “his eternal glory...” (1 Peter 5:10). We are “[equipped] with everything good that [we] may do his will” (Heb. 13:21).
- We have been crucified with Christ (Gal. 2:20); we have died with Christ (Rom. 6:8); we are raised with Christ (Col. 3:1); we are made alive with Christ (Eph. 2:5); we are made heirs with Christ (Rom. 8:17); we will rise from the dead (1 Thess. 4:14); when we die, we remain *in Christ* (1 Thess. 4:16) and will be with Christ (Phil. 1:23).
- Paul says, “Christ is in believers” (Gal. 2:20; Eph. 3:17; Col. 1:27; Rm. 8:10).
- Paul also says, “believers are in Christ” (Gal. 3:28; 1 Cor. 15:22; 1 Jn. 3:24; Eph. 2:10).
- “In Christ” and “in believers” are combined in some passages (Jn. 6:56; Jn. 15:4).