

1. **Introduction:** *"To be in Christ, is the source of the Christian's life. To be like Christ, is the sum of the Christian's excellence. To be with Christ, is the fullness of the Christian's joy."* Charles Hodge.
 - *"[Christ] unites himself to us by the Spirit alone."* John Calvin
 - Union with Christ" spiritually connects every believer to Christ and, through that union, believers receive all the benefits of His work on their behalf.
2. **Ultimate Purpose of Union with Christ:** A believer's union with Christ brings many good things, but its ultimate purpose is to sanctify a people to dwell with God.
3. **Revelation 21:3:** *And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, 'Behold, the dwelling place of God is with man. He will dwell with them, and they will be his people, and God himself will be with them as their God.'*
 - To live in God's presence a person must be holy (an ontological requirement). Thus, they must be transformed from their unholy state of being to a state of being that is holy as God is holy. They must be a spiritual moral likeness of Christ. That is the goal of salvation.
 - Salvation is a gift from God entirely a product of His grace. It cannot be earned by human effort. God's grace is freely offered and is the basis for all other aspects of salvation.
4. **Salvation:** In God's grace, individuals, who are spiritually dead, are transformed into "new creatures," spiritually alive and "like Christ." It is a multi-step process involving the legal and ontological components of regeneration, justification, sanctification, and glorification.
 - **"Regeneration"** refers to being "born again" through the Holy Spirit which is an ontological change fundamentally transforming a person's being (nature) so that they are reconnected to God. The Holy Spirit indwells the "born again" enabling belief and the discerning and understanding of spiritual truths.
 - **"Justification"** is a legal or forensic declaration in which God declares believers righteous, not based on their own works, but by imputing to them the righteousness of Christ. His righteousness was earned through His perfect life under the Law and His sacrificial death on the cross paying the penalty due believer's sins.
 - **"Sanctification"** is an ongoing ontological process, beginning at the time of justification, in which a believer's moral being is progressively transformed into a moral likeness of Christ. This process is not completed until "glorification."
 - **"Glorification"** is the instantaneous completion of progressive sanctification in which the believer's spiritual being is made holy as God is holy. Glorification occurs at mortal death or when Jesus comes again.

- At the right time, the believer's glorified spiritual being will be united to a glorified resurrection body.
 - The process of salvation was planned by the Father and made possible by the vicarious life and death of the God-Man, Jesus Christ. The Holy Spirit applies the benefits to believers.
 - Vicarious means "for the benefit of others." In this case it means, the vicarious life and death of Jesus was for the benefit of believers.
 - Jesus' salvation work secured Salvation for believers. Salvation unites those who believe to Christ in His death, resurrection, and exaltation in heaven (Romans 6:3-11).
5. **Ephesians 2:4-7**: ***"But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, ⁵ even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ - by grace you have been saved - ⁶ and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, ⁷ so that in the coming ages he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus."***
- The salvation benefits planned by the Father and earned by Jesus vicarious perfect life and death under the Law are applied to believers by the Holy Spirit through effectual calling.
 - God's grace lifts believers out of the pit of sin, unites them to Christ in life and death, and hides their eternal life with Christ "in God."
6. **New Life "In Christ"**: A believer's new "life in Christ" begins during their mortal life when the Holy Spirit effectually calls them to new birth "in Christ."
- A believer's new Christian life of faith is made manifest as it develops "in Christ."
7. **1 Corinthians 6:17**: ***"But he who is joined to the Lord becomes one spirit with him."***
8. **Romans 6:4**: ***"We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life."***
9. **Continuing Life "In Christ"**: In giving believers new spiritual life (regeneration), the Holy Spirit works faith in them, thereby uniting them with Christ. The new life "in Christ" is lived spiritually "at one" with Him.
- Union with Christ and the indwelling of the Holy Spirit never end. Being united with Christ, all believers draw spiritual life from Him (Jn. 5:26: ***"For as the Father has life in himself, so he has granted the Son also to have life in himself."***)
 - Because the Holy Spirit is our bond to Christ, it is impossible to be separated from Christ or lose salvation. Nothing can separate us from the love of Christ (Rm. 8:38-39).
 - Because humans have integrated, interacting physical and spiritual processes, spiritual blessings believers receive impact both spiritual and physical aspects of human life.
 - Spiritual/physical interaction is seen clearly by thinking about mortal death. When the spiritual soul departs, the physical body dies.

- The union of the divine Son's nature (pure spirit) with a human nature (physical plus spirit) forming the God-Man Jesus is an essential foundation for achieving Christ's salvation work. Both natures, divine and human (including physical parts) are essential.
 - The Person of the divine Son took to Himself a human nature. His human nature was derived from His mother (Jesus was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary). His divine nature was His from eternity.
 - As an incarnate Person, Jesus was both fully God and fully man. There was no mixing, confusion, or combining of His two natures. Each nature retains its own attributes. Risen and in heaven, He is one Person with both complete divine and human natures.
 - Jesus' human nature never existed as a human person. He has no human "I." His human nature from conception was controlled by His divine personal "I."
 - His divine "I" controls both His divine and human natures. We see Jesus switch from His human nature to His divine nature in Mark 4:35-39.
 - While in a boat, Jesus' human nature was exhausted, and He slept on a cushion. A raging storm arose. Awakened by His frightened disciples who were afraid they would all drown, He got up, switched to His divine nature, and said "Quiet! Be Still!" The wind and waves died away, producing complete calm (Mark 4:35-41).
10. **Jesus, Fully God and Fully Man:** The Son's divine essence (and Person) were His from all eternity, eternally begotten by the Father. His human nature and body were acquired "in time," derived from His mother Mary.
- It is a deep mystery how the eternal, omnipotent, infinite second Person of the Trinity could add to Himself a finite, limited human nature and become one person, the God-Man in a human body. But we know it is true.
 - The incarnate Jesus possessed a normal human body and had both a human and a divine nature with both a human and a divine will. Jesus could learn things in His human nature, even though in His divine nature, He knew all things.
 - Since there is no interaction between Jesus divine and human natures, are His divine and human wills independent? To get to an answer, we need to ask how each of His two natures in which "decision-making is imbedded are controlled.
 - Though Christ has two natures, He has only one "I," His "divine I" controls both His divine and human nature. That is true even now in His risen, glorified state in heaven. His divine "I" controls both His divine and His human will.
 - The key to answer the question about the interaction of His two wills is that during the incarnation, Jesus freely subjected the control of His "I," with respect to His human nature, to the Father.

11. **John 5:19**, “*So Jesus said to them, ‘Truly, truly, I say to you, the Son can do nothing of his own accord, but only what he sees the Father doing. For whatever the Father does, that the Son does likewise.’”*
12. **John 12:49-50**, “*For I have not spoken on my own authority, but the Father who sent me has himself given me a commandment - what to say and what to speak.⁵⁰ And I know that his commandment is eternal life. What I say, therefore, I say as the Father has told me.*”
13. **Activities of The God-Man During the Incarnation**: Adding a human nature (complete except without sin) did not diminish nor interfere with His divine nature. Everything done in either of His 2 natures is done by the one person, Jesus Christ.
 - When His divine nature calmed the storm, that was done by the one Person Jesus Christ. When in His human nature, He slept, that too was done by the one Person Jesus Christ.
 - With respect to His human nature, He ascended to heaven and is no longer physically present in the world (Jn. 1:28; 17:11; Acts 1:9-11). With respect to His omnipresent divine nature, Christ is and has always been everywhere present (Mt. 18:20; 28:20).
 - The presence of the risen Christ in heaven is mediated to us on earth by the Holy Spirit.
 - At all times on earth in His incarnate state, Jesus’ divine nature continued to uphold creation and to carry out the Father’s plan. But His human nature (including His human body) developed and grew in the normal way, growing in stature and wisdom.