

unbelief before God, do you not see and hear how empty and hopeless your life is, and that for the true Christian it is so completely different? All by grace alone, through faith alone, dependent on Jesus Christ alone, what a change there can be and God promises that for all who come to Him, pleading His mercy and salvation for Jesus' sake. Oh, that also our text might make anyone listening still unsaved, desire truly to become saved and so to cry out to the Saviour for His mercy, also in your case! Imagine being truly and really the Bride of Christ, and members of His body, yes, flesh of His flesh and bone of His bone!

To draw His people and those still lost in sin to Jesus the Saviour, think yet of the delights of this intimate union with Christ, being His bride formed and gathered from out of His side, and being flesh of His flesh and bone of His bone. The delights of this are that everything that belongs to Christ our Husband, He shares with His bride, His people. We receive His name, a new name from Him, and all His possessions, all His glory, all His love, all His gifts and salvation become ours. All that the Father has given to Him and is to His only begotten Son, Jesus, He will be and is to His people, those who are flesh of His flesh and bone of His bone. Think of the best husband for his bride, well, far more and far better Jesus will be and is for His people!

Indeed, there is even this truth that in a certain sense, as a husband cannot be complete without his wife so Christ as Mediator and Saviour of His people is not complete till all His bride is with Him and all wholly and perfectly devoted to Him. And this Jesus is working for that all His people be gathered in and saved by Him and made wholly conformable unto Him, so that there may be a perfect and eternal unity and fellowship and intimacy to be enjoyed forever and ever, even in the new heavens and the new earth to come.

It is truly most amazing and unsearchably grand and glorious Who God in Christ Jesus will be and is for His people, and the extraordinary unity and infinite oneness He has with His people. This bond of gracious, holy, infinite, and eternal love so intimate and wonderful for us with God Himself in and through Jesus Christ the Lord, is the all-surpassing wonder and blessing of the gospel of Jesus Christ, and told about in all the Bible. Amen.

Hans Overduin, Radio Pastor
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BANNER OF TRUTH RADIO BROADCAST

Radio Ministry of the FREE REFORMED CHURCHES of North America

Thou hast given a banner to them that fear thee that it may be displayed because of the truth. (Psalm 60:4)



BONE OF HIS BONES?

The gospel truth we are given to focus on with this message is absolutely incredibly wonderful. It is something so good to know, so encouraging to realize, and so motivating in praise to God and a life of humble grateful godliness before Him. To be a Christian and belong to Christ is the most splendid privilege and blessing and joy you could ever imagine!

Yes, for just think about what happens when you become and are a Christian, a true believer and follower of Jesus Christ. In the last verses of Ephesians 5, Paul tells us about the extraordinary truth of the rich and mystical union between Christ and His people. Specifically in Ephesians 5, he is writing about the husband and wife relationship, about marriage as God intended it, but in that context Paul writes about the relationship between Christ and His church. Paul tells us that to understand and experience marriage as God meant it, you need to grasp something of the union there is between Christ and His church, between Christ, the heavenly Bridegroom, and His Bride, that is, all His people who trust and obey Him. The Apostle relates in this context, there is such an intimate bond between Christ and His people! Indeed, trusting and obeying Christ as Saviour and Lord, we become members of His body, even, as we are told in verse 30, part "*of His flesh and of His bones!*"

Let us just reflect on this in more detail - being so united to Christ that as members of His body, you are not just loosely attached to Him, somehow, but truly flesh of His flesh and bone of His bone! This is a gospel truth to get hold of and glory in, "this mystical relationship, this extraordinary unity, this oneness that Paul is speaking about!" The theme for this message is "Bone of His bones" and we will consider how this truth speaks of the depths of intimate union with Christ, and how it tells of the details of that intimate union, and how it brings out the delights of that intimate union.

First, consider how the phrase, being "*of His flesh and bones*" tells so much of the depths of the believer's union with Christ. The phrase "*of His flesh and of His bones*" is not found in some Greek manuscripts, and so in some translations this last phrase is not included. But there is enough manuscript support to say that it should be included and the context argues in favour for this phrase being part of the inspired text. And surely its purpose is to reinforce not only, but to expand on the gospel truth that God's

people are belonging to Christ, and members of His body. Paul is emphasizing with this additional phrase, so intimate is the union of the Savior with His people, we are like flesh of His flesh, and bone of His bone. You could hardly speak of a closer relationship than that! Christ is so intimately attached and joined to His people! He so closely takes His people, as many as trust and obey Him, unto and into Himself. Trusting Him to be your Saviour from sin, Jesus doesn't only surely save you from your sins, but from His side now especially, we become so joined to Him that Christians are called not only "His body" in a general sense, with Christ as the Head of the church and His people His body, but His people are so much part of Him that we may called, "*flesh of His flesh and bone of His bones*"!

In the context, Paul says how every person watches out for his body; we nourish and cherish our bodies ourselves and, says Paul, so does Christ for His body, speaking not of Jesus' physical body but His church, His people. The Lord so cares for and takes care of His people, who are "*members of His body, of His flesh and of His bones*." These words tell us of the depth of the intimate union between Christ and His own.

You see how Ephesians 5:30 relates something of the depth of the union with Christ that believers may have. But let us move to our next point and see something of the details of this intimate union. Our text can only properly be understood in the light of the context, which is that Paul is speaking about marriage. He is actually quoting from Genesis 2:23, going back to the marriage of Adam and Eve. When God gave Eve to Adam, taking and forming her from a rib from Adam's side while he slept, then Adam said in Genesis 2:23&24: "*This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man. Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and they shall become one flesh.*"

And Paul now in our text in Ephesians tells of this great mystery of God's love in Christ Jesus. For the once crucified and now ever exalted Saviour, Jesus Christ, truly is the second Adam from out of Whom God has taken His bride, His church. Indeed, you might say, while He slept, that is, while He gave His life over to save His people from their sins, yes, even to the death of the cross, from out of that and from His pierced side out of which flowed water and blood, God saves and gathers His church, and as such they are truly members of His body, of His flesh and His bones. Paul writes about this all in verse 32, "*This is a great mystery, but I speak concerning Christ and His church.*" And, indeed, what a revelation of unfathomable love Paul relates to us in this Scripture passage.

Dr. M. L. Jones says it so beautifully in his commentary. He writes concerning what Paul teaches about true believers: "We are members of [Christ's] body, of His flesh, and of His bones. How? Woman was made at the beginning as the result of an operation which God performed upon man.

How does the Church come into being? As the result of an operation which God performed upon the Second Man, His only begotten, beloved Son on Calvary's hill. A deep sleep fell upon Adam. A deep sleep fell upon the Son of God, He gave up the ghost, He expired, and there in that operation the Church was taken out. As the woman was taken out of Adam, so the Church is taken out of Christ. The woman was taken out of the side of Adam; and it is from the Lord's bleeding, wounded side that the Church comes. That is her origin; and so she is "*flesh of His flesh, and bone of His bones*". This is a great mystery [but so wonderful indeed!]"

God's people, we must understand, do not become divine like Jesus Himself is. That is not what the text teaches, but rather that from out of the Saviour, and His once for all saving work on sinner's behalf, a new humanity is born, a new creation is formed. And so intimately is Jesus attached to His people, as many as confess their sins and acknowledge and trust Him as the only Saviour and Lord, that they each and all may be called flesh of His flesh and bone of His bones. The marriage relationship of husband and wife as God instituted it in the beginning is meant to be a reflection of this greatest and most intimate of bonds - between God and His people in Christ Jesus! Isn't this picture of Christ's relationship to His people beautiful, this detail about the believer's union with Him, or rather Christ's intimate union with His people, as many as truly believe on Him?

Are you one who truly believes in Christ as the Saviour from sin you desperately need and the Saviour from sin you trust and obey? God's true people are described as Christ's faithful bride, who would live for and ever serve their heavenly Bridegroom and not be unfaithful to Him in any way, any day, anywhere, anytime. Is that what is true of you and me? Is this union and communion with Christ, being "members of His body, of His flesh, and of His bones" something you cherish, and a matter of sweet communion to and for you too? Would you say you are as a faithful bride to Christ, not meaning you are without daily shortcomings and countless faults and sins, but that you are sincerely and honestly devoted to Christ, and battling always with all that hinders your devotion and allegiance to Him above all, Satan, and this world, and mostly your own sinful flesh still? How the picture of our text about being so united to Christ, flesh of His flesh and bone of His bone, should serve to encourage you and me in relying upon Christ and staying devoted to Him. Will Christ not take care of His body, all the members thereof with a most intimate and almighty and daily and eternal and all comprehensive care, even for our body and soul and in life and death in every need and struggle, come what may?

To be unsaved still, not confessing and turning from your sins and not calling out for Jesus to be your Saviour and Lord, means to be still dead in sins and trespasses, lost in the first Adam and his fall from God, and headed thus to eternal destruction. You who live in sin still and continue in