

How does the resurrection of Christ benefit those who are in union with Him?

"It may well be that the idea of the believer's participation in the risen life of Christ finds clearer expression here than it does elsewhere in the Pauline Epistles... The resurrection of Christ is presented by Paul as the supreme manifestation of the power of God. Those who have been raised with Christ have been raised through faith in the divine power which brought Christ back from the dead, and henceforth that power energizes them and maintains the new life within them – the new life which is nothing less than Christ's resurrection life imparted to all the members of His body. In Him they already enjoy eternal life – the life of the age to come." (F. F. Bruce)

- I. **Those in union with Christ were raised to new life with Him**, "you were also raised with Him through faith in the powerful working of God, Who raised Him from the dead." The Christian has already experienced a "first resurrection."

The union of Christ with His church can be understood in terms

- "Natural" – He took to Himself a human nature with a human body.
- "Mystical" – as expressed as the Head to the body, as the branch to the tree, as the husband to the wife. The same Holy Spirit that was His in complete fullness is the same Spirit that is shared with and gives life to His blood-bought people.
- "Federal" – as expressed through His legal representative Headship. That which our representative does is counted as done by us ourselves.

- II. **Those in union with Christ by faith have received forgiveness for all their trespasses**, "you who were dead in your trespasses... God made alive together with Him, having forgiven us all our trespasses..."

The slate of our record has been wiped clean. Our self-signed affidavit of indebtedness has been canceled.

Such an image reminds us of the inscription of the "charge" nailed over the head on Jesus at the cross. His "crime" – "The King of the Jews" (Mt. 27:37; Mk. 15:26; Lk. 23:38).

- III. **Those in union with Christ have been set free from the domination of our oppressors**, "He disarmed the rulers and authorities, and put them to open shame, triumphing over them..."

There is now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus. The personal temptations to fear, worry, insecurity, purposelessness, worldly competition, idolatry in all its forms, have been rendered impotent unless we allow ourselves to be deceived. We don't have to pay rent to the old landlord. But this is not a life without suffering (Col. 1:24).

We have been liberated from *bankruptcy* and *bondage*. We have been released from the *guilt* of sin and the *dominion* of sin.

There is only One Person who could have done this for you. You could never have accomplished this for yourself.

"As you have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in Him..."

"This is that glory of Christ whereof one view by faith will scatter all the fears, answer all the objections, and give relief against all the despondencies, of poor, tempted, doubting souls; and an anchor it will be unto all believers, which they may cast within the veil, to hold them firm and steadfast in all trials, storms, and temptations in life and death." (John Owen, The Glory of Christ)