

Theme: We are not left to ourselves to live out the life of obedience and faith. We can truly have the mind of Christ and the power of Christ because by faith we are bound up in *union with Christ* – we in Him and He in us.

Background: How is it possible to have a *spiritual mind*? Through our *Union With Christ!!*

Introduction - *The Bourne Identity* – Robert Ludlum, 1980

- What is my new *identity* in Christ?
- The most prominent “unspoken” doctrine in the Christian life.
- NT uses expressions “in Christ” “in Him” “in the Lord” 200 times or more.
- “In Christ” describes us as believers more than any other NT expression.

## I. Union With Christ

### A. Hard to grasp

#### 1. Spiritual , not physical union

- a. *Identification*: Christ is our *Representative* (Romans 5:12ff)
  - What we “possess” in Adam
  - What we “possess” in Christ
- b. *Transformation*: We are changed from the inside out
- c. *Communion*: Christ *abides* in us, and we in Him

Biblical Analogies:

- A body directed by its Head
- A marriage
- A building – we are the house and Christ dwells in it/occupies. He is “in” it.

NOTE: The *union* is very real!

#### 2. Becoming like Him (1 John 3:2; 2 Peter 1:3,4)

- a. Like God – but *Not* God
  - God is our God and We are His people. (Ezekiel 36)
  - Both remain distinct.

NOTE: Many eastern religions and many forms of mysticism obliterate the distinction between the nature of God and the nature of Humanity.

- b. Union not *fusion* (Kevin DeYoung)
  - Son doesn’t become the Father. Spirit doesn’t become Son.
  - 3 Persons, 1 God Unity is not confused or fused.
  - Jesus has two natures in one person. They are not fused or confused
  - We don’t cease to be who we are. But we are made new!  
(2 Corinthians 5:17)

### B. It’s eternal scope

- 1. Election - *in Christ!* (Ephesians 1:3,4)
  - Before the foundations of the earth
- 2. Redemption - *in Christ.* (Ephesians 1:7; Romans 6:3,4)
  - His people were *in Him* when he made the sacrifice for sin

3. New Creations – *in Christ!* (2 Corinthians 5:17; Ephesians 2:10)
  - Redemption bears its fruit.
4. We live the new life – *In Christ.* (Romans 6:4; 1 Corinthians 1:4-9)
  - We are truly “made rich” *in Him.*
5. We die *in/through Christ!* (1 Thessalonians 4:14,16)
  - The union can’t be broken - not even death
6. We are *raised - in Christ!* (1 Corinthians 15:22; Romans 6:5)

NOTE: Union with Christ is the Beginning, Middle and Eternal End (Glory!) of the life of the believer.

## II. Christ in You!

### A. Mystery revealed (Colossians 1:27; John 15:4; Galatians 2:20)

1. More glorious than anticipated! (Colossians 1:27)
  - To include the gentile nations
2. True Unity (Colossians 1:27; Galatians 2:20)
  - Not things “outside” of Jesus – but Jesus himself!
  - Not just living in the flesh – but living in the spirit
3. Mysterious? (1 Corinthians 2:9)

### B. Mystery remains

- That which is finite cannot fully embrace the infinite

1. God in us? (John 10:30) “I and the Father are one.”
  - a. God the Father - in us (John 14:23; John 17:20-23)
  - b. God the Holy Spirit – in us (John 14:15-17)
2. The mystery of faith!!
  - Faith is the means by which we are made partakers of Christ.
    - a. The place of *faith* in Ephesians 1 & 2
      - From being *in Christ* to the gift of faith
    - b. The place of *faith* in Col. 1
      - From faith to the mystery of the Gospel, “Christ in you, the hope of glory”

### Conclusion:

- To begin to think in these terms is to begin to understand what it means to have the mind of Christ.
- Draw near to God in wonder, awe and endless worship.
- We put to death the deeds of the flesh for “I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.”