

**“You Have Been Filled In Him”**

*Sermon Notes*

➤ **Union with Christ is the premier desert island doctrine - choose this one, and all other gospel treasures come with**

*\*Because of our union with Christ...*

1. We have been born again (vv.11-13b; Romans 6:6-11)

2. We have been forgiven (vv.13c-14; John 13:10; 1 John 1:9)

3. We are the champions (v.15; Romans 8:37; 1 John 4:4)

## Community Group Study Guide

For the Week of December 5th-11th

***Back in 2015, we produced a small booklet for children's discipleship (and all of the childlike who would follow them) called Five Rooms: The Biblical Doctrine of Union with Christ. This week's Community Group Study Guide is based on that resource. This one's for all of us...young, old, new believer, seasoned believer, or unbeliever. May this resource be like waters into which you wade, and through these truths out into the ocean depths of the biblical doctrine of union with Christ.***

### Getting Started

1. We see them nearly everywhere on the pages of our New Testament. Little prepositions attached to the word "Christ". "*In Christ*", "*through Christ*", "*by Christ*", "*with Christ*", etc. Hundreds of times in the New Testament these phrases appear. The doctrine of a believer's union with his Lord is at once possibly the most familiar and yet unemphasised teachings today in all the Scriptures. For example, take a look at Ephesians 1:1-14. How many times can you spot the words "in", "with", "by", or "through" Christ? How many different treasures of salvation do you see that are connected to each of them?

### Digging Deeper

2. Though it's true that the exposition of the doctrine union with Christ can become intricate and elaborate – it does not have to be complicated. This is one of the simplest, most vivid, and most memorable of the Bible's teachings – and the images prove it: *vine and branches* (John 15:1-11); groom and bride (Romans 7:1-4; 2 Corinthians 11:2); *temple cornerstone and living stones* (Ephesians 2:18-22; 1 Peter 2:4-5); *head and body* (Colossians 1:18); even *clothing and body* (Romans 13:14; Ephesians 4:20-24; 6:10-20). These illustrations remind us that a picture truly is worthy of a thousand words. Which image of our union with Christ is most meaningful to you personally? How come?

### Open Your Bible to Ephesians 2:10...

3. Jesus is full of life. When we put our faith in him, he fills us with *his* life. Jesus says we must be born again to receive his new life. The Bible calls this **regeneration**. In union with Christ, we come to life in God's **delivery room**. Consider the following Scriptures, noting especially how in each case our new birth is made possible by union with Christ: Ephesians 2:10; 1 John 5:11; Ephesians 2:4-5; Colossians 2:13; 2 Corinthians 5:17; 2 Timothy 1:1. Have you been born again? What evidence do you see in your life that gives you an indication one way or another? If you need help, take a look at 1 John 5:1; 2:4-6; 1 John 3:14; 4:7-8, 20.
4. Jesus is righteous, that means that while he was tempted as we are, he never ever sinned. Scripture says that unlike Jesus, we all have sinned and our sin deserves punishment. In God's great love for us, he sent Jesus who willingly bore our punishment

in his death on the cross. In Jesus, we become the righteousness of God. The Bible calls this **justification**. In union with Christ, we are declared innocent and credited with the righteousness of Christ in God's **court room**. Consider the following Scriptures, noting especially how in each case our justification is made possible by union with Christ: Philippians 3:9; Romans 3:22, 24; Galatians 2:16, 17; 2 Corinthians 5:21; 1 Corinthians 1:30. Have you been justified by Christ? If so, what difference does this make in your daily walk with God? How about when you sin? What changes in your relationship with him? What doesn't? Explain.

5. Jesus Christ is God's one and only Son. God has been his Father forever. The Bible says that those who trust in Christ are given the right to become children of God, too. This wonderful truth is called **adoption**. In union with Christ, we enter God's **family room**. Consider each of the following Scriptures, noting how in each case our adoption is made possible by our union with Christ: John 1:12; Galatians 3:26; Ephesians 1:4-5; Romans 8:12-17; 9:7-8; 1 Peter 3:6; Galatians 3:23-4:7, Galatians 4:21-31; 1 John 3:1-3; Hebrews 2:12, 14. Have you been adopted by God? How often do you dwell on this privilege? J.I. Packer famously said: "Adoption is the highest privilege that the gospel offers: higher even than justification.. To be right with God the Judge is a great thing, but to be loved and cared for by God the Father is greater." Do you agree? Why or why not?
6. Jesus became human like us so that we might become holy like him. God's grace not only offers us pardon for our sin, but power to live in his very own strength so we can become more like Jesus. Jesus gives the gift of the Holy Spirit to every believer. The Holy Spirit applies to us all that Christ accomplished for us. The Holy Spirit is also our helper because the Christian life is hard work. He will help us become more like Jesus over the course of our lives. The Bible calls this **sanctification**. In union with Christ, we get into shape in God's **weight room**. Consider each of the following Scriptures, noting how in each case our sanctification is made possible by our union with Christ: 1 Corinthians 1:30; Romans 8:13; 2 Timothy 2:1; Ephesians 1:1; 3:19-21; Galatians 2:20; Colossians 1:28-29 Are you being transformed by God's Spirit? What evidences do you see of his empowering grace in your life as you seek to kill what remains of your indwelling sin? Where do you need the most help? What practical next steps do you plan to take?
7. After Jesus rose from the dead, he went to heaven so that he could prepare a place for us to join him there when we die. Amazingly, some believers won't even taste death because the Bible says there will be a generation who is alive at the time of his return. For those believers who do die, death is not a punishment for a Christian. Instead it's the doorway into the best room of all. In this room, there is no suffering or sinning, unlike the troubles we face in this world now. Jesus is making all things new – one day when he returns to this earth we'll even get new bodies to live on a new earth. The Bible calls this **glorification**. In union with Christ, we will spend eternity in God's **ballroom**. Consider each of the following Scriptures, noting how in each case our glorification is made possible by our union with Christ: 1 Corinthians 15:22; Colossians 3:4; Romans 8:11, 17; 1 Corinthians 15:49; Revelation 14:13; 21:4, 22, 27; Revelation 22:20. Are you looking forward to forever with Jesus? Is there any way in which his soon return might 'ruin' your plans? If so, what specific change of mind do you need to seek?
8. Ray Ortlund Sr. (now with the Lord) once wrote of our union with Christ as believers:

“We’re in Him the way a baby’s in a womb – but better. We’re in Him the way a moth is in a chrysalis – but better. We’re in Him the way a deep-sea diver’s in his diving suit – but better. We’re in Him the way birds are in the air, or fish are in the sea – but better... Can you think of other comparisons of how Christians are in Christ? None of them measure up to all the wonderful things it means for a believer to be in Him!”