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Human Nature Restored Through our Union with Christ: Growing in Personal and Familial Holiness

Goal for This Week

To articulate how our human nature is restored through our union with Christ, so we can properly reflect his holiness, from one degree of glory to another (Romans 8:29 & 2 Cor. 3:18).

Review from Past Weeks

Theological Reflection – _____

Because theological reflection should always begin, remain, and end with God, and because God has revealed Himself to us through His Word to transform us to be conformed to the image of His Son (Rom 8:28), theology should not only be intellectual but also *transformational*, which includes our _____ and _____.

Doing Soteriology is to _____ on what God says about _____. It seeks to understand how God saves humanity through the death of Christ on the cross. Again, since theological reflection begins, remains, and ends with God, we must consider God primarily when we think about salvation. We are saved by God, from God, and for God.

Sin is “any _____ or _____ that displeases God and deserves blame.”¹

“Man, as made in the image of God, has implanted within him an innate sense to live as God directs. Every departure from this sense is a coming short of the purpose for which man was made, a missing the mark. This failure to hit the mark is always a sin against God; that is, the sinner always fails to achieve the standard set or to hit the mark established by God.”²

Sin refers to a sinful _____.

Sins refer to sinful _____.

Union with Christ: The Central Truth of Salvation

“Salvation is the work of God that delivers us from _____ and its penalty, _____ us to a right relationship with him, and imparts to us eternal life.”³

What is eternal life?

¹ Cornelius Plantinga, *Not the Way It's Supposed to Be: A Breviary of Sin* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1995), 13.

² Daniel Akin, *A Theology For The Church* (Nashville, TN: B&H Publishing Group, 2014), 343.

³ *Ibid.*, 543.

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1 John 5:11-12 – “And this is the testimony, that God gave us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. (12) Whoever has the Son has life; whoever does not have the Son of God does not have life.”

Ephesians 1:3-14 – “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, ⁴ even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him. In love ⁵ he predestined us for adoption *to himself as sons through Jesus Christ*, according to the purpose of his will, ⁶ to the praise of his glorious grace, with which he has blessed us in the Beloved. ⁷ In him we have redemption *through his blood*, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace, ⁸ which he lavished upon us, in all wisdom and insight ⁹ making known to us the mystery of his will, according to his purpose, which he set forth in Christ ¹⁰ as a plan for the fullness of time, to unite all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth.

¹¹ In him we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to the purpose of him who works all things according to the counsel of his will, ¹² so that we who were the first to hope in Christ might be to the praise of his glory. ¹³ In him you also, when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and believed in him, were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit, ¹⁴ who is the guarantee of our inheritance until we acquire possession of it, to the praise of his glory.”

Every Spiritual Blessing in Christ refers to _____ about _____.

How many times does it say “In Christ” or “In Him”? _____

What is said to happen in Christ and through Christ in this passage? How does this passage suggest that our salvation begins with God, remains with God, and ends with God?

John Murray (1898-1975) – “Union with Christ is really the central truth of the whole doctrine of salvation not only in its application but also in its once-for-all accomplishment in the finished work of Christ. Indeed, the whole process of salvation has its origin in one phrase of union with Christ and salvation has in view the realization of other phases of union with Christ.”⁴

⁴ John Murray, *Redemption Accomplished and Applied* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1995), 161.

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Union with Christ Leads to Personal Holiness

How can we properly reflect Christ's holiness, from one degree of glory to another?

Ephesians 4:17-24 – “Now this I say and testify in the Lord, that you must no longer walk as the Gentiles do, in the futility of their minds. ¹⁸They are darkened in their understanding, alienated from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them, due to their hardness of heart. ¹⁹They have become callous and have given themselves up to sensuality, greedy to practice every kind of impurity. ²⁰But that is not the way you learned Christ!— ²¹assuming that you have heard about him and were taught in him, as the truth is in Jesus, ²²to put off your old self, which belongs to your former manner of life and is corrupt through deceitful desires, ²³and to be renewed in the spirit of your minds, ²⁴and to put on the new self, created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness.”

Galatians 2:20 – “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 you.”

What does it look like to be holy according to Ephesians 4:25-5:21?

Galatians 5:22-24 – “But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness faithfulness, (23) gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law. (24) And those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires.”

Union with Christ Calls you to Familial Holiness

Living a holy life as an individual means you are living out your appropriate role in your family to glorify God by reflecting the Gospel.

What is the role of a Father and Husband?

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What is the role of a Wife and Mother?

What is the role of the Child?

Ephesians 5:22-33 – “Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord. ²³ For the husband is the head of the wife even as Christ is the head of the church, his body, and is himself its Savior. ²⁴ Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit in everything to their husbands.

²⁵ Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her, ²⁶ that he might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, ²⁷ so that he might present the church to himself in splendor, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, that she might be holy and without blemish. ²⁸ In the same way husbands should love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. ²⁹ For no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as Christ does the church, ³⁰ because we are members of his body. ³¹ “Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh.” ³² This mystery is profound, and I am saying that it refers to Christ and the church. ³³ However, let each one of you love his wife as himself, and let the wife see that she respects her husband.

Ephesians 6:1-4 – “Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. (2) ‘Honor your father and mother’ (this is the first commandment with a promise), (3) ‘that it may go well with you and that you may live long in the land.’ Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord.”

How does our union with Christ inform our family practice?

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Preparation for Next Week:

Read Article – <https://www.desiringgod.org/articles/can-the-godless-do-good>
(Attached to this document.)

Further Resources:

Akin, Daniel L. *A Theology For The Church: Revised Edition*. Nashville, TN: B&H Publishing Group, 2014.

Chapman, Gary. *Covenant Marriage: Building Communication and Intimacy*. Nashville, TN: Broadman, 2003.

Danylak, Barry. *A Biblical Theology of Singleness*. Cambridge, UK: Grove, 2007.

Keller, Timothy and Kathy Keller. *The Meaning of Marriage: Facing the Complexities of Commitment with the Wisdom of God*. New York: Penguin Books, 2016.

Köstenberger, Andreas J. and David W. Jones. *God, Marriage, and Family: Rebuilding the Biblical Foundation*. 2nd Ed. Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2010.

Murray, John. *Redemption Accomplished and Applied*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1995.

Plantinga, Cornelius. *Not the Way It's Supposed to Be: A Breviary of Sin*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1995.