



Midweek at Renewal | Union With Christ

Session 2: The Gift of Dissatisfaction

I. Introduction — Verses on our Union with Christ

- A. John 15 — Characterizes our relationship with Jesus so intimately that we are portrayed as branches that have sprouted forth from him, the vine.
- B. Ephesians — Portrays believers as the body connected to Jesus, the head. We are also characterized as the bride who is married to her husband, Jesus.
- C. 1 Peter 2 — We are living stones constructed into a temple in which the presence of God manifests.
- D. 1 Corinthians 1 — tells us we have been grafted into the fellowship of the Trinity.
- E. John 17:3 — We are swept up into the eternal life of God through being joined to Christ.
- F. 2 Peter 1:3 — Says our union with Christ is so profound that he can confidently say that we have been given everything we need for life and godliness.
- G. Ephesians 1:3-5 — Believers are rooted in a history that predates us
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
- H. Romans 6:1-5 — Our lives are anchored in life, death, & resurrection of Jesus.
- I. Philippians 3:8-9 — You were lost, but now you're found in him.
- J. Philippians 3:20 — We are citizens of an eternal realm that will one day renew the earth — *heaven!*

II. Why don't I feel different?

- A. Anecdote 1 — One of my children recently asked to be re-baptized. Before I baptized the child of mine several years ago, I talked with her at length about the gospel and we were certain she had a grasp on it and that she sincerely desired to follow Jesus. But, already, at a young age, her spiritual ideals are being shaken.
- B. Anecdote 2 — My ministry has often felt paradoxical.
1. On the one hand, I am deeply convinced of God's unshakeable love for me through faith in Christ Jesus. Jesus is enough. I don't have to do anything to experience his love. And for this I am deeply thankful.
 2. On the other hand, I swim in a world of Christian ministry in which pastors are often assessed by how large the churches are they lead.
 3. This can lead, as it did with me, to a number of joy-stealing insecurities:
 - a) Constant feelings of guilt and sometimes even failure;
 - b) Never being able to meet everyone's expectations;
 - c) If we lose people, did I lead well enough...reach out to them enough...make myself available to them enough...love them enough...preach well enough?
 - d) Am I enough?
 4. I had to learn (and am learning) that I am enough — that as I work within my God-given boundaries, even when it disappoints some people, that the church which emerges under my care, is what God has blessed me with to steward for his glory.
- C. We have to **learn** how to connect the gospel to our daily lives.
- D. And this reality of having to learn a new way of thinking and assessing our spiritual lives is often misinterpreted as wrong or the opposite of God's will.
- E. So we feel stuck. Forward progress doesn't seem to be "just happening."

1. Every time we cynically repeat lyrics on Easter Sunday about how sin has been defeated, we feel this.
2. Every time we wonder if we really are born again because we continue to fall into the same sinful traps, we feel this.
3. Every time we roll our eyes at all the churches in this city in contrast to the seeming hypocrisy, we feel this.
4. Every church burnout who was raised in church but walks the dog on Sunday mornings feels this.

F. Anecdote — John Newton

1. Composer of the song, “Amazing Grace”
2. A slave trader who came to Christ at sea during a violent storm in 1748
3. Though he stopped drinking and gambling, he continued in the slave trade for several more years.
4. He wrote extensively on his struggles with sin and temptation and his longing for change.
5. But it wasn’t until 40-years later that he spoke out against the slave trade when he said, “I hope it will always be a subject of humiliating reflection to me, that I was, once, an active instrument, in a business at which my heart now shudders.” — John Newton

III. The Answer is found in our Dissatisfaction.

1. Sometimes it takes time for the grace of God to take deep root in our lives.
2. Feel the discomfort! Stop suppressing it!
3. Don’t learn to live with it!
4. RW warns, “...if you consider Jesus’s call to discipleship to be optional, reserved for the...supercommitted, then you won’t be bothered by the gap... sadly, many Christians have lived with this gap for so long that they no longer mind it.” — Rankin Wilbourne

5. Matthew 5:3 — *“Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.”*
6. Matthew 5:6 — *“Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied.”*
7. Let this unsettled feeling lead you into rediscovering your **Union with Christ!**

IV. Union with Christ (pages 34-37) — TRIPP

V. The Greatest, Most Honorable & Glorious of Graces — LINDSAY

- A. How to see union with Christ: Ask for spiritual **insight** (Eph 1:16-18).
- B. A glorious example of union with Christ in Acts: Peter **hears** and **obeys** God (Acts 10).
- C. Christ’s grace has given unique **encouragement** for your honorable journey (John 7:38, Is. 41:18, Deut. 31:6).