



Today's Message

Date: October 22, 2023
Speaker: Pastor Steven Thomas
Title: *Union with Christ*

Text: Colossians 2:8–15 (ESV)

⁸ See to it that no one takes you captive by philosophy and empty deceit, according to human tradition, according to the elemental spirits of the world, and not according to Christ. ⁹ For in him the whole fullness of deity dwells bodily, ¹⁰ and you have been filled in him, who is the head of all rule and authority. ¹¹ In him also you were circumcised with a circumcision made without hands, by putting off the body of the flesh, by the circumcision of Christ, ¹² having been buried with him in baptism, in which you were also raised with him through faith in the powerful working of God, who raised him from the dead. ¹³ And you, who were dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made alive together with him, having forgiven us all our trespasses, ¹⁴ by canceling the record of debt that stood against us with its legal demands. This he set aside, nailing it to the cross. ¹⁵ He disarmed the rulers and authorities and put them to open shame, by triumphing over them in him.

Introduction: At the end of this month, we will mark the 506th anniversary of the Protestant Reformation. The Reformers asked the key question, “how can a man be right with God.” They correctly answered, “God justifies the ungodly through faith alone” (Romans 4:5). But this answer raises other questions. How can God do this and still be just? Paul’s answer is union with Christ. The doctrine of union with Christ lies at the heart of Paul’s theology.

In the sermon text, Paul explains the judicial nature of union with Christ for salvation. We will also explore implications of this doctrine for the believer’s ongoing relationships.

Today's take-home truth: Christ is all you need.

I. Do not be deceived about how one can be right with God. 8

- A. Beware of empty, man-made teachings.
- B. Trust only the apostolic message of Christ.

II. Only those united with Christ have right standing with God. 9-12

- A. God lives fully in Christ. 9
- B. Christ lives fully in those united with him. 10
- C. Therefore, through faith, those united with Christ are right with God.
 - 1. They receive a new nature. 11
 - 2. They share Christ's death and resurrection. 12

III. All those united with Christ possess everything he accomplished. 13-15

- A. His life is ours. 13
- B. His righteousness is ours. 14
- C. His triumph is ours. 15

Implications:

- 1. For our personal relationship with Christ
- 2. For our corporate relationship with each other