

Unity with Christ

(needs tidying-up)

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Study 1

The Bride

THE BRIDE TO ACHIEVE FULL AND ABSOLUTE HARMONY WITH CHRIST.

The goal of the Lord Jesus is to have a bride like unto Himself. True bone of His bone and flesh of His flesh.

It must be understood - by the church - that He has established certain ideals, that must be met by His bride. They are made known to us in the volume of the Word.

Consider what a high design is set forth in the words of the apostle John. "As HE IS, so are we in this world." It is not something which has been put off to a future age. We are to be completely like Him, in this world, the here and now. 1 John 4:17

That is one staggering statement. It sets forth the capability and the desire of the Lord to have a people EXACTLY like Himself. **Anything less will not do.**

The pattern of His will and purpose for the church is plainly stated in His Word.

TO BE LIKE HIM WE MUST THINK - AS HE THINKS.

He has made it possible that we have the mind of Christ. Phil. 2:5

That would enable us to think as He thinks. To know perfectly all

that He knew. To speak the Word without fault or flaw. Perfect in interpretation, perfect in all utterances and most certainly perfect in all revelation. A link and oneness that can only be found in the Godhead.

An accomplishment which requires a price that few are willing to pay, in spite of its extremely great reward. Jesus was obedient, which was step one and is one that all who would be like Christ must take. Furthermore He humbled Himself.

The full blessing of the Lord can only be found in the humble. Then a death must occur. Not a physical death but a death to self and everything worldly. Phil. 2:8

The spiritual agony of His death on the cross is something which we may never fully understand. For Jesus, the very holiness of God, to bear the guilt of the sin of every sinner would have wrought extreme emotions in His being.

The sinless one, became sin, was made to be sin, for us, that in turn we should become the righteousness of the Lord, fully cleansed, fully pardoned and living His life in this world. 2 Cor. 5:21

CEASE FROM SIN, LIVE UNTO THE LORD.

A witness and testimony which must become a fact in the life of everyone who would be in the Bride of Christ. Paul said, "I am crucified with Christ." This was evidenced by the fact that Christ was living in Paul, and he was living by the faith of the son of God. A life of surrender, of consecration to Christ produced the Christ life in him. Gal. 2:20

A visit to the cross, being crucified with Christ, means **death to the carnal man.**

The Bride will know and understand the suffering of His crucifixion. For she will have ceased from sin, having been crucified with Christ. Peter made it understandable that those who have suffered in this manner have been freed from sin and all its entanglements. And will no longer become entangled or engaged in the lusts which are common to men but will, after crucifixion, live a life of deliverance which is most pleasing to the Lord.

After all, if we love someone it is our desire to please them. 1 Peter 4:1-2

Study 2

THAT THEY MAY BE ONE.

These are the words of the Lord Jesus as he prayed for His disciples. In an age, such as we live in today, a time of dissension, protest, riots, rebellion and disturbances of all kinds, it is difficult to imagine or conceive of such a thing happening.

The spirit of the world has even spilled over into the church. Nevertheless, there will be the same unity in the church, the body of Christ, in the earth. If for no other reason, Jesus prayed that it would be so, and it will be. John 17:11

The unity of the body is to be equal to that of the Godhead, perfect, absolute and complete agreement. For we are to be “as He is.”

So, the body will achieve the equality which is found in the words, “as we are.”

That is a compatibility, an accord which is perfect in a harmonious relationship, without any possibility of division of any sort.

THE GLORY, I HAVE GIVEN THEM.

It is that glory which originated with the Father and was subsequently imparted to the Son. Then bestowed on those who followed the Lord Jesus.

That glory, revealed in the person of the Holy Spirit was to lead them to become one, entering into that glorious heavenly atmosphere of unity, producing the life of Christ in a body of

believers. John 17:22

The glory is that which the Lord will impart to each and every seeking member of the body of Christ. Spiritually, we are like babes playing in a mud puddle, when vast waters of swimming are made available to us. Jesus said, “ye shall know.” John 14:20

Spiritual knowledge brings the manifestation of Spiritual life. It enables faith producing the fulfillment of the promises of the Word. If the Word is not active in our lives then we badly need a fresh endowment of the anointing of the Spirit of the Lord. Spiritual alliances, horizontally or vertically, with other members of the body or with the Lord Himself, must be equal to that which exists between the Father and the Son and that is absolute.

“JUST AS YOU ARE IN ME AND I AM YOU.”

An unrestricted communication and accomplishment which could know no conflict, no separation. It is impossible for the mortal mind to comprehend the perfect, complete harmony in word, thought and deed which has always, eternally existed in the Godhead. John 17:21

But amazingly, the Lord Jesus forecast that same process would be found in the body of believers. He prayed that they would “be made perfect in one.” John 17:23

All this begins on a very practical and human level. An obedience to the simplicity and the practice of the teaching of the Word.

Make peace with those who may have a quarrel with you, perhaps even a long standing feud. The key word is, be reconciled, “be at peace.” The person actively seeking reconciliation will benefit to no end by their action. Mt. 5:23-24

We, personally, establish the measurement of our forgiveness by the Lord from our own willingness to forgive those who have wronged us, whether imagined or factual. Mt. 11:25-26

With such actions we are the benefactor, by far. Just practicing the Word creates such joy. Do it now. Be free.

Study 3

THE BODY OF CHRIST. NOW - YE ARE THE BODY OF CHRIST!

A positive, emphatic word, expressing the grand position provided the believer who, truly is in Christ Jesus. There is no need to question the exalted standing in Christ, to which all have been called. It is the calling of the Lord to attain to the highest status which can be found in the Lord Jesus. 1 Cor. 12:27

Every member of the body, regardless of its position must be of equal spirituality. It is impossible for the body of Christ to be weak, emaciated and puny.

Remember, what Christ is, we are to be. We are to possess His nature, His being, His might and power and be able to live the same life which He lived here on earth. He and His body are one, identical, equal one with the other in all spiritual matters.

The Word of the Lord establishes a goal for the whole, for every member of the body of Christ. The ultimate is that the entire body of Christ be unified and bonded together as one unit.

That is not a “quick fix.”

There is a process of spiritual growth, which even now is taking place in those who desire to grow and become mature in Christ. It involves ministry and motive.

Speaking the truth in the spirit of love, that we might “grow up,” and reach full maturity in Christ. When the church reaches full growth, she will completely like Christ. Eph. 4:14

TOGETHERNESS WITH CHRIST.

The flora, the plant life which surrounds us has its beginnings with a seed, a bulb or a root. So, with spiritual life. THE WORD OF THE LORD, is planted within the human heart and becomes a thriving, vital, growing plant. 1 Pet. 1:23

Without the seed, which is the WORD, there would be no spiritual life produced. Spiritual life is found in the seed, the Word.

The course of growth involves a number of actions necessary to cultivate the plant. For instance, the believer must be “PLANTED IN THE LIKENESS OF HIS DEATH,” thus assuring that the plant has the necessary life force to grow properly.

That planting, is accomplished by the waters of baptism, and gives the promise of being in the likeness of His resurrection. Rom. 6:5

Water baptism is not a mere symbol of our acceptance of Christ as Savior and our faith in Him. In baptism we are to touch the death, burial and resurrection of the Lord Jesus. There is no other way given by the scriptures for this step of spiritual growth to be accomplished.

Water baptism is a cross and a grave, where the old, carnal nature, sinful self must be crucified and buried. It is a place of cleansing from the past sinful life and an introduction to the new life which is only found in Christ Jesus. Rom. 6:6

Baptism is basic Christianity. It is not a light, frivolous action. The Christian who would live in victory must know the power and

effect that baptism has on our spiritual life. They need to appropriate that life fully unto themselves. Only by death can we live in Christ. The seed which is planted must first die in order to produce life. We are to be planted together with HIM. Plants need water.

Study 4

QUICKENED TOGETHER WITH CHRIST.

From death to life. Because of sin we were dead in trespasses and sins. However He has forgiven us and cleansed us from all our trespasses and sins.

That is full, absolute, complete, everlasting forgiveness.

Never again will we stand to give an account of the sin that has been confessed. Those who have sought forgiveness are “cleansed from all sin,” 1 John 1:7

There is another spiritual action which is granted to the “forgiven sinner,” which is of limitless benefit to them. Paul said, that Christ has “quicken us together with Him.” Eph. 2:5

WHAT IS THE LIMIT OF THAT QUICKENING?

If we have touched and experienced His death, then we have the right to conjointly be quickened with Him. The same resurrection power which was upon Him should rest on His redeemed.

Being “together” with Christ simply means that what He felt and received, we too should receive.

It all hinges on the proper foundation being laid. For if, truly we have been “planted together” in the likeness of His death, that is water baptism. **“WE SHALL BE ALSO IN THE LIKENESS**

OF HIS RESURRECTION.” Rom. 6:5

For He “HATH” raised us up “TOGETHER WITH HIM.” When we become spiritual enough to receive it, there is a life that is lived, in the here and now, which is His resurrection life lived in us. Church, do not be short changed.

There is a spiritual life which makes the present spiritual life of most of us look like death. When in company, joined with Him, we become what He is! When He was raised from the dead, He also wrought a work which is to be fulfilled in His church. Eph. 2:6

Being in one accord with Him, He causes us to “sit together, in heavenly places in Christ Jesus.”

Not something for the future but for now.

We can sit in a heavenly atmosphere surrounded by the glory and power of the Holy Spirit. Another “HATH,” or accomplished spiritual fact is that He is now, “blessing us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ Jesus.” Eph. 1:3

Note that the blessings and heavenly places are in Christ Jesus.

IN CHRIST.

If we are “in Christ,” then Christ is in us. Simple isn't it. But the benefits and blessings are enormous. It is here that we find spiritual and mental rest.

Where there is no condemnation, there is peace of mind and soul. That blessed place is found by those who are “in Christ,” who also are living “in Christ.”

There is a path, a way which is walked separate from the works of the flesh, literally dead to them, and alive unto Christ.

Where we live, move and are motivated by the Spirit of the Lord.
Rom. 8:1

This way is governed by law. Not the old law of sin and death,
which can only produce disunion and death.

The new law, the law of the Spirit, brings liberty from sin and
death. Both of these, sin and death, are the mortal enemies of all
who are born into this world.

Now, “in Christ” the law of the Spirit of life has set us free from
sin and death. Rom. 8:2

We need not sin every day in word, thought or deed. If we live by
the Spirit of life, the law of the Spirit, we are liberated from the
clutches of the law of sin and death.

Sin and death are inseparable. The soul that lives in sin, lives in
death. Eze. 18:20

Study 5

DEAD OR ALIVE WE ARE WITH CHRIST.

Too often our focus is on our being with Him after life or when we are dead. That of course, is precious, for we know that we shall be in His presence, eternally.

But what about the now? Paul is delivering a thought which is much more involving than that. For He places the same mighty presence of the Lord as being with us, “whether we WAKE or sleep.” 1 Thess. 5:10

Our acquaintance and fellowship with Him NOW should be just as great as that which is after death. That kind of a companionship is far more needful for us now than after death.

It is in facing the difficulties and problems of our life that we need His presence and guidance.

HOW GREAT, HOW INTENSE IS HIS LIFE IN US?

A powerful, yet simple statement. “If Christ be in you, the body is dead.”

Not physically dead but dead unto the beggarly elements of the sin of this world.

A spiritual condition where the appeals of the fleshly man are of no avail. There is nothing responding to the temptations of sin. If

there is one sin which has been overcome and no longer has any appeal whatsoever, that then, can be true of all the works of the flesh.

It is highly possible to be completely delivered from, and dead to all sin. This is the perfect will of the Lord for His church. We have been given the gift of God, which “is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.” Rom. 6:23

We are not to be looking forward to something to come, we are to accept that which is already here and has been given unto us. “God HATH given to us eternal life, and THIS life is in His Son.” 1 John 5:11

Present tense, that life is ours and this life that we now live, is life in His Son. How destitute the church is, when so much has been promised and is available to us.

Here is an “either, or”. If we have the Son we have life. If we do not possess the Son we do not have life. There is no in between place whatsoever. 1 John 5:12

I AM CRUCIFIED.

Well known words spoken by the Apostle Paul concerning the life that he had found in the Lord Jesus.

I am with Christ, not only in His life and all the benefits and good things. But I know the agony of the cross, I have died to the world, the flesh and to sin.

Not a physical death, but one which means separation from the human nature that was born in sin, and sharpened in iniquity. He plainly stated that “Christ liveth in me.”

It is inharmonious with the teachings of the Word of the Lord for Christ to occupy a vessel or a place which is unclean. Gal. 2:20

Surely the call of the Lord is to be heard in these words. “be ye holy.” As your Lord is holy, show by example the same nature. Be what He is. He is pure, morally blameless, consecrated. 1 Peter 1:15

Be holy in conduct. Be pure in thought and deed. Let the words of our mouths be satisfying unto the Lord. Be holy for the one who has saved us and called us is very holiness personified. He is the essence of all that is right and just and desires that we become what He is. 1 Peter 1:16

There is nothing but gain for those who follow His pattern of life.

Study 6

A PEOPLE FULLY COMPLEMENTING HIM.

The only source of eternal life is the Lord Jesus. The life that is found in Him is a very real and integral part of our life, if we are in Christ.

Jesus taught a doctrine which was always easy for His hearers to accept. For instance, the “hard saying.” John 6:60

What was it that Jesus said that was so difficult and even caused some of His followers to leave Him?

It was His teaching on what we commonly call the “communion.” He introduced His subject by saying, “verily, verily”, or “truly, truly” or “amen, amen” or “so be it”. That strongly verifies the veracity of His words.

The fact that the word verily, or truly is **repeated** adds to the strength and truthfulness of His teaching. Life, eternal life, His life being manifest and existing in us is dependent on the truth which He is presenting.

A BABY BORN, EXCEPT IT EAT WILL DIE.

We may be Spirit born, but that new being must eat.

No exclusion, all who refuse to eat, and acknowledge what they are eating will die. WOW, what powerful language. Except, unless,

without or lacking. This makes it an imperative that His teaching, and a proper understanding of what He is saying be fully followed.

This is critical to the maintenance of a healthy spiritual life. The sustenance, the growth, the continuance of Spiritual life is in the body and the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ. John 6:53

If He did not mean exactly what He said, He made no attempt whatsoever to correct the manner in which His teaching was comprehended. Nor did He attempt to reconcile with those who left Him because of His teaching.

Eating and drinking the body and the blood of the Lord Jesus is LIFE and without it there is absolutely no life.

Partaking of this life giving force assures the participant of ETERNAL LIFE.

It also carry's with it an assurance of resurrection in the last days, at the coming of the Lord Jesus a second time.

MY FLESH AND MY BLOOD.

Very explicitly Jesus emphasized that it was His FLESH and His BLOOD which must be eaten. Once again it is a tremendous benefit to the person who is obedient to His WORD.

This is the theme of our study, unified, at oneness with Christ Jesus.

This act of worship assures the Holy presence of the Savior and Lord of our lives.

Jesus promised that HE would dwell with us and that we would dwell with Him.

He was not projecting this blessed fellowship sometime out into the future but was speaking of an experience that may be, and should be right now. John 6:54-55

His life is lived out in us when He lives within.

If He is not enjoying a full and permanent residency within the heart and life of the Christian, He is not there at all.

Let's quit deceiving ourselves. Either He dwells continuously and consistently or He does not dwell at all.

He is not moving in and out and constantly changing His place of abode. We are privileged to enjoy the glory of His presence as one who has promised He would never leave nor forsake us.