

This midweek study will explore the doctrine of our union with Christ. Use the following main points, Scriptures, teaching/discussion ideas, and questions to help students gain a better understanding of the essential doctrine for this session.

Essential Doctrine: Union with Christ

Believers' union with Christ is at the heart of salvation. The Bible describes salvation as entering into a covenant relationship with God and describes the church (which is made up of believers) as the bride of Christ (2 Cor. 11:2; Eph. 5:23-32). Christians believe Christ dwells in our hearts through faith (Christ in us) and that we dwell in Him (Eph. 3:17; Col. 1:27; 3:1-4). This union is permanent; it will last for all eternity.

1 Our union with Christ is the centerpiece of both our status and our identity in the eyes of God (2 Cor. 5:21; Gal. 3:16,29).

- ▶ Who are some people or groups you are associated with?
- ▶ Which of these associations do you like? Which do you not like? Why?
- ▶ If you could be associated with anyone in the world, with whom would you want to be associated?
- ▶ How do you think God feels when He looks at you? Is He happy? Delighted? Disappointed? Why?
- ▶ How do you think God feels when He looks upon Jesus? Is He happy? Delighted? Disappointed? Why?

Read 2 Corinthians 5:21.

- ▶ According to this famous verse, what does God see when He looks at a Christian? How does that mean God feels when he looks at you, a Christian?
- ▶ When God looks at you, He sees you dressed in Christ's righteousness. How does that make you feel?

Read Galatians 3:16.

- ▶ Who is the true descendant of Abraham?

Read Galatians 3:29.

- ▶ How does this text expand our understanding of who the true descendant of Abraham is? So how do we become descendants of Abraham?
- ▶ How is being united with Christ better than any other association we could think of?

2 The Holy Spirit applies the work of Christ to unite us to Christ (Rom. 8:5-10).

- ▶ In terms of our union with Christ, what do you think the Spirit's role in our union with Christ is?

Read Romans 8:5-10.

- ▶ What's the difference between a mind set on the flesh (non-believers) and a mind set on the Spirit (Christians)?
- ▶ What's so bad about the mind set on the flesh (vv. 6-8)?
- ▶ In contrast, what would be good about the mind set on the Spirit?

- ▶ How do we know we are in the Spirit (v. 9)? What two names did Paul give to the Spirit here?
- ▶ What is the opening phrase? What does this phrase connect with in verse 9?
- ▶ How is Christ in us? By what person of the Trinity?
- ▶ In our union with Christ, what is the Spirit's work?
- ▶ Reread verses 5-8. What is a telltale sign that the Spirit is in us, bringing us in union with Christ?

3 Our union with Christ guarantees God's favor and promises to us (2 Cor. 1:20).

- ▶ If we were on our own before God, how should we expect to be treated?
- ▶ What are some of the sweetest promises in the Bible for you?
- ▶ How do we know these promises apply to us? How do we know they will still apply to us in a thousand millennia?

Read 2 Corinthians 1:20.

- ▶ How does this verse show us the glory of our union with Christ?
- ▶ How should such a sweeping promise affect our emotions?
- ▶ How should such a sweeping promise motivate us to greater holiness? Should such security make us lax in our spiritual walk or inspire us to greater holiness and joy? (Hint: think of the mind set on the Spirit back in Rom. 8:5-10.)

WRAP IT UP

- ▶ How would you use our union with Christ to comfort or exhort the following people?
 - ▶ A professional athlete
 - ▶ A tired single mom
 - ▶ A lonely middle schooler
 - ▶ A drug addict
 - ▶ Anyone else you can think of? Maybe someone in your life?