

John 14:15-24; I Cor. 6:12-20; In Christ I. He in Us II. We in Him III. We partaking of Him
Congregation of our Lord Jesus Christ, what does it mean to be “in Christ.” Most of the time, we view the relationship with Christ as something outside of us. Like justification- a change of status that has its benefits- but not something that really changes my day to day life. Well- today we are going to focus on the link between Christ and His people- and how that union is presented as a dynamic relationship. To be in something can have great advantage. Think of those living during the days of Noah- to be in the Boat meant the difference between life and death. Well- to be in Christ means that there is living bond that links the church to its master and Lord. One of the arch-types of the Bible is this- Union with Christ. The Bible begins and ends with a wedding. Today we see this theme: Jesus Christ unites us to Himself by the Holy Spirit. This sermon is going to be a little different as we are going to consider various passages and aspects of this blessed relationship.

I. He in Us

We start by considering how being in Christ means that He is in us. When Jesus was instructing His disciples in John 14, He was speaking in the context of their grief and misunderstanding. To them, if Jesus departed they would be forsaken, neglected and left alone. In order to counteract this false conclusion, Jesus teaches that He will return to them by way of the Holy Spirit. The Spirit- or the other comforter, will come to them and dwell within them. They will be indwelt- God making His home with them as v. 23 says. This word- Mone- means a dwelling place or residence. The shocking truth is that Jesus says- I am going to make my home in you! God is at home within the church- dwelling and residing within us by way of the Holy Spirit. Now we know that Jesus was going to heaven to make a home for us- a Mone- same word is used. God making a dwelling place in glory and He will take us up there one day- so that we might be together again. But the church does not need to wait until them- rather God makes a home within us now! We are one with God by the Holy Spirit- making us temples of the Living God- God tabernacles with us by way of Jesus’ incarnation- but He tabernacles within us by

way of the Holy spirit- making us the residence of God! Wow- that is quite a privilege! We are now the residence of God on earth- like the OT temple! This abide of God within us is a gift- a great blessing that we receive as a church. It is a purchased and promised reality given- and thus it cannot be lost. Once God dwells within you- making You a temple- His presence will not leave you as it did the OT temple in Ezekiel 10 when the glory of God departed. Think of it- God does not just dwell near us- nor does He just remain in the Holy of Holies in heaven- He dwell in us! What power and strength we have to face trials and temptations- because of He who is within us!

II. We in Him

Added to this blessed truth, we also confess that we are in Him! From John 15:4 we read- Abide in me, and I in you. We abide in Christ as HE abides in us. To abide here is the word- Meno- meaning to remain, endure, to last and not depart. In this context Jesus is teaching that He is the true vine. He is the life-giving root- while those who are in Him are the branches. Now branches cannot live without the vine- nor will they last if they are separated from Him. We need to abide in Him- as this is a command given to the church. Remain- abide in Me! We are grafted into Him- placed into His life- plunged into His core- and our life comes to us through Him. Last week I cut some branches off a bush in my backyard. Do those branches have any hope for life- will they produce leaves in a few weeks children? No- so it is with us- only those who are in Christ and remain within Him will have life. We are one with Him- there is a unity that we enjoy- as His life is shared with us. We catch another picture of this in I Cor. 6:17- we are one with Him in Spirit- one body and one flesh. This is the marriage picture- the unity and oneness that happens after the covenant bond of matrimony. The two become one flesh- so those who are married to Christ are one with Him- joined to Him in the Spirit. WE know Him- and He knows us. Our life is hidden in Him. We are one flock under our One Shepherd- gathered into one sheep pen as we pass through Him our One gate. By faith we are united- joined together so that in the eyes of the Father we are now- actually one! This one-ness has a direct impact on how we live and how we view others. As

Eph. 4 teaches, we are one with Christ. One faith, one Lord and one body! Being one means that we view other saints as brothers and sisters- treating them as part of our divine family- knowing that we are one in Him- individual parts of His collective body! There is no room for pride here- we also eagerly welcome newcomers as equal and embraced before God and one with Him. If Jesus accepts them and He is within them- who are we to reject them? Being one in Him also means that His works our works- our sin His debt which was paid. Union means we are in Him. He represents us- cares for us- and we now have a new identity and new name. He being in us means we have great strength- we being in Him means we have great comfort! We are not our own- we are purchased and we belong! Or as I Cor. 12 says- we are the body of Christ. As God's special possession, as I Peter 2 says- we are now a chosen nation and royal priesthood! But as I said before, abiding in Him is both a blessing and a command. It is not a static thing, but something to be embraced and pursued. Abiding in Him means that we remain in His love- communing with Him in prayer- and obeying His word. There is a transformation that takes place within us- as we are changed to look and act more like Christ because we are in fact within Him and He is us! So put your roots down deep into Christ's soil- draw your life and growth from Him! Dwell in His presence and hold fast to His life- because He is in you!

III. We partaking of Him

So there remains one more aspect to this union- those who are in Christ and who have Christ in them- will continue to partake of Him and His blessings. As the image of the LS celebrated in I Cor. 11- we are to eat of His flesh and drink of His blood. Being in Christ means that we have a calling to pursue Him- and partake of Him! We feed upon Him as we draw life from His sacrifice! We are nourished as we meditate upon and celebrate His accomplished work. We are to grow up into the reality- to mature in Him and look more like Him. As the branches draw from the life of the vine- so the blood of Christ must be the sap that flows through our veins. We are clothed with Christ- Gal. 3 says- as we are baptized into Him we are covered with His works. I Peter 1:4 says that we actually partake of His deity! Through

these promises you become partakers of his Divine Nature! His nature becomes ours! Once we were children of the first Adam- sharing his nature of fallen flesh and blood. Now we are partakers of the second Adam's nature- sharing His resurrected and glorified body! There is a future hope- a glorious destination that we have to look forward to! Listen to I John 3:2- when we see Him we will be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is! When Jesus comes back, our nature will be fully transformed to faithfully reflect the one who right now lives within us! We will partake of the full blessings and privileges of glorified life! Whatever Christ now enjoys- whatever blessings He has earned- we will partake of as well! Glorification is where the church- where we are headed! Partakers of Christ- then fully like Him!

To conclude, the union that we have with Christ is real and lasting. He in us and we in Him! As He took on our nature, we now partake of His nature and will one day be partakers of His glory! We are in a dynamic relationship with Christ- one that is pictured as a marriage between a husband and wife. A union like a vine to its branches. As Col. 3 says- our life is hidden with Christ in God. We are hidden in Him- and He is our life in us! This union depends on and is experienced by the work of the Holy Spirit. As the Spirit unites us to Son, the Son brings us to the Father. The church is made one- and we will live with Him forever! Praise God for this blessed union- and remain in Him- abide in Him as you abide with one another in love!