

I. The Meaning of Union

The legal aspect of union- the objective basis for union

- 2 Corinthians 8:9 "For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ: Though he was rich, for your sake he became poor, so that by his poverty you might become rich."

The mystical aspect of union

- Ephesians 5:31–32 "For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two will become one flesh. This mystery is profound, but I am talking about Christ and the church."
- John 14:20 "On that day you will know that I am in my Father, you are in me, and I am in you."
- Martin Luther: Faith not only justifies; it "unites the soul with Christ as a bride is united with her bridegroom"
- Martin Luther, *The Freedom of a Christian*, 1520: "Who can even begin to appreciate what this royal marriage means? Who can comprehend the riches of this glorious grace? Christ, the rich and divine bridegroom, marries this poor, wicked whore, redeems her from all of her evil, and adorns her with all of his goodness. It now is impossible for her sins to destroy her, for they are laid on Christ and swallowed up by him. She has her righteousness in Christ, her husband, which she now can boast is her very own. She can set this righteousness over against all of her sins and, in the face of death and hell, say with confidence: "If I have sinned, nevertheless, the one in whom I trust, my Christ, has not sinned. Through our marriage all that is his is mine and all that is mine is his."

The organic aspect of union

- John 15:4–5 "Remain in me, and I in you. Just as a branch is unable to produce fruit by itself unless it remains on the vine, neither can you unless you remain in me. I am the vine; you are the branches. The one who remains in me and I in him produces much fruit, because you can do nothing without me."

- John 16:14 "He will glorify me, because he will take from what is mine and declare it to you."

John Calvin:

- "But since Christ has been so imparted to you with all his benefits that all his things are made yours, that you are made a member of him, indeed one with him, his righteousness overwhelms your sins; his salvation wipes out your condemnation; with his worthiness he intercedes that your unworthiness may not come before God's sight. Surely this is so: We ought not to separate Christ from ourselves or ourselves from him. Rather we ought to hold fast bravely with both hands to that fellowship by which he has bound himself to us. So the apostle teaches us: 'Now your body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit of Christ which dwells in you is life because of righteousness'" - Institutes 3.2.24

II. Misunderstandings of Union

Reducing union to the legal

Making the mystical the basis of the union

Making the organic aspect the basis of the union