

## Seek What is Necessary Through Union with Christ The Gospel Mystery of Sanctification – Direction 3

*Direction 3:* The way to get holy Endowments and Qualities necessary to frame and enable us for the immediate practice of the Law, is to receive them out of the Fullness of Christ, by fellowship with Him; and that we may have this Fellowship, we must be in Christ and have Christ Himself in us, by a mystical Union with Him.

*Thesis:* Seek what is necessary to live God's Law through Fellowship with Christ.

### **I. The way of sanctification is the “mystery of godliness” (1 Tim. 3:16) and it is that, a “mystery,” such that many have received sanctification through it, yet still have not understood it.**

#### ***A. The first mystery is that the power to keep the Law is received out of Christ's fullness.***

1. This is already prepared and brought to existence for us in Christ and is treasured up for us in him.
2. Just as our justification is worked by the righteousness of Christ and imputed to us, so our sanctification are worked out and completed in Christ for us and then passed to us.
3. Many Christians think that though they did not work to produce righteousness in themselves for justification, they must work to develop a new nature and mortify the flesh from their own hearts.  
“They account that, though they be justified by a righteousness wrought out by Christ, yet they must be sanctified by a holiness wrought out by themselves.”
4. This is why many consider holiness and godly living a harsh and difficult thing, when what it is, is impossible.
5. If they knew that this way was simply a receiving of the new nature of Christ they would save themselves much agony.

#### ***B. Another mystery is the manner of fellowship with Christ through which we receive a holy frame of heart from him.***

1. This is more than having a preference for God; it is the believer's being in Christ and Christ in the believer.
2. This is called a “mystical union” because Paul refers to it as such in Eph. 5:32. Paul calls it a “great mystery” indicating that it is above other mysteries. This is one of the three great mysteries of Christianity, the other two being the union of person in the Trinity and the union of human and divine natures in the person of Christ. We are unable to comprehend these mysteries, but believe them because they are revealed in Scripture and because they are foundational for other doctrines.
3. This doctrine is made clear in several places in Scripture:
  - a. John 6:56; 14:20 – The believer is in Christ and Christ in the believer
  - b. 1 Cor. 6:17 – Christ and the believer are joined together so as to become one spirit
  - c. Eph. 5:30-31 – believers are “members of His body, of His flesh and of His bones” and they two, Christ and the church, are one flesh
4. The Scriptures illustrate our union with Christ in various ways (these images are unlike the truth which they are used to illustrate and so seem to obscure truth rather than reveal it):
  - a. John 14:20; 17:21-23 – the union between God the Father and Christ
  - b. John 15:4-5 – the union between vine and branches
  - c. Eph. 1:22-23 – the union between head and body
  - d. John 6:51, 53, 54 – the union between bread and eater
  - e. Our union with Christ is not only resembled but sealed in the Lord's Supper. Our union is such that it is as if we had really eaten his flesh and drank his blood.

#### ***C. Some object to this understanding of the believer's union with Christ.***

### **II. The way of sanctification cannot be perceived through natural reason alone; the Holy Scriptures explain the mystery.**

#### ***A. It is plainly expressed in Scripture.***

1. Some texts show that all things pertaining to our salvation are treasured up for us in Christ, and comprehended in His fullness so that we must have them from that place, or not at all
  - a. Col. 1:19 – “It pleased the Father that all fullness should dwell in Him.”
  - b. Col. 2:11-13 – “And you were circumcised in Him with circumcision not done by hand, in the putting off of the body of the sins of the flesh,...being buried with Him,...made alive together with Him being dead in your sins.”
  - c. Eph. 1:3 – “Who has blessed us with all spiritual blessings in the heavenlies in Christ.” “A holy frame of spirit, with all its necessary qualifications, must needs be comprehended in this, in all spiritual blessings. These are given us in Christ’s person in heavenly places, as prepared and treasured up in Him for us while we are on earth. Therefore we must have our holy endowments out of Him, or not at all.”
  - d. 1 Corinthians 1:30 – “Christ is of God made to us sanctification.”
    - a. John 1:16, 17 – “And we have received of His fullness and grace on top of grace.”
    - e. 1 John 1:3, 5-7 – “Truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ. God is light. If we walk in the light, as He is in the light, we have fellowship one with another.”
2. Other texts of Scripture show plainly that we receive our holiness out of His fullness by fellowship with Him.
  - a. Col. 3:10-11 – “You have put on the new man, which is renewed after the image of Him that created Him; where Christ is all and in all.”
  - b. 1 Cor. 6:17 – “He that is joined to the Lord is one spirit.”
  - c. Gal 2:20 – “I live; yet not I, but Christ lives in me.”
  - d. John 5:11-12 – “This is the record, that God has given us eternal life; and this life is in His Son. He that has the Son has life, and he that does not have the Son does not have life.”
3. “Can we desire that God should more clearly teach us that all the fullness of the new man is in Christ, and all that spiritual nature and life by which we live to God in holiness, and that they are fixed in Him so inseparably, that we cannot have them except we be joined to Him, and have Him abiding in us? Take heed lest, through prejudice and hardness of heart, you are guilty of making God a liar, in not believing this eminent record that God has given us His Son.”

**B. It is illustrated in Scripture.**

We receive from Christ a new holy frame and nature, by which we are enabled for a holy practice, by union and fellowship with Him, in like manner:

1. ...as Christ lived in our nature by the Father (John 6:57);
2. ...as we receive original sin and death propagated to us from the first Adam (Rom. 5:12, 14, 16, 17);
3. ...as the natural body receives sense, motion and nourishment from the head (Col. 2:19);
4. ...as the branch receives its sap, juice and fructifying virtue from the vine (John 15:4-5);
5. ...as the wife brings forth fruit by virtue of her conjugal union with her husband (Rom. 7:4);
6. ...as stones become a holy temple by being built on the foundation, and joined with the chief corner-stone (1 Peter 2:4-6);
7. ...as we receive the nourishing virtue of bread by eating it, and of wine by drinking it (John 6:51, 55, 57), which last resemblance is used to seal to us our communion with Christ in the Lord's Supper.

**C. *“The end of Christ’s incarnation, death and resurrection was to prepare and form a holy nature and frame for us in Himself, to be communicated to us by union and fellowship with Him; and not to enable us to produce in ourselves the first original of such a holy nature by our own endeavors.”***

1. “By His incarnation, there was a man created in a new holy frame, after the holiness of the first Adam's frame had been marred and abolished by the first transgression.”
2. “By His death, He freed Himself from the guilt of our sins imputed to Him, and from all that innocent weakness of His human nature which He had borne for a time for our sakes.”
3. “By His resurrection, He took possession of spiritual life for us, as now fully procured for us, and made to be our right and property by the merit of His death.”

4. "Our sanctification is by the Holy Ghost, by whom we live and walk in holiness (Rom. 15:16; Gal. 5:25)."
5. "The effectual causes of those four principal endowments, which in the foregoing direction were asserted as necessary to furnish us for the immediate practice of holiness, are comprehended in the fullness of Christ, and treasured up for us in Him; and the endowments themselves, together with their causes, are attained richly by union and fellowship with Christ."
6. "His incarnation, death and resurrection were the cause of all the holiness that ever was, or shall be given to man, from the fall of Adam, to the end of the world - and that by the mighty power of His Spirit, by which all saints that ever were, or shall be, are joined together to be members of that one mystical body of which He is the Head."