

Union with Christ

What does it mean to be in Christ?

To belong to Christ is to share in the benefits of his death and resurrection and to live under his lordship. Paul connects this new identity with the Spirit, the church, and practical obedience.

An identity given by Christ

Paul's language of being in Christ describes more than admiration for an inspiring teacher. In Romans 6, believers are connected with Christ's death and risen life. The old domination of sin no longer defines their rightful allegiance. This does not mean that Christians become divine or lose their individuality. It means that Christ's saving work establishes a new relationship with God and a new direction for embodied life.

Biblical references: Romans 6:1-11

Sources: rom-6

Baptism and belonging

Romans 6 places baptism within its explanation of dying and rising with Christ. Galatians 3 connects baptism, faith, and belonging to Abraham's family through Christ. Christian traditions explain baptism's relation to faith and regeneration differently. The passages should neither be stripped of their baptismal language nor made to settle every later sacramental dispute without further argument. Their immediate concern is the believer's allegiance and shared belonging.

Biblical references: Romans 6:3-4 · Galatians 3:26-29

Sources: rom-6, gal-3

A shared life, not private prestige

Union with Christ joins people to one another. First Corinthians 12 uses the body to explain why different gifts and social backgrounds belong together. No member can treat another as unnecessary. Christian identity therefore challenges rivalry and contempt. Learning, leadership, quiet service, and material care have their place within a community whose center is Christ, rather than the most visible or impressive member.

Biblical references: 1 Corinthians 12:12-27

Sources: 1co-12

Practice the identity you have received

Paul tells believers to offer themselves to God and resist sin's rule. His commands assume real choices and continuing struggle; union with Christ is not a claim to instant moral perfection. Begin by reading Romans 6 slowly, noting what Christ has done before each instruction about conduct. Then identify one concrete relationship or habit in which gratitude, repentance, and service can express that new belonging.

Biblical references: Romans 6:12-23 · Romans 8:9-17

Sources: rom-6, rom-8

Sources

- [rom-6] Romans 6, World English Bible Classic (public domain). Chapter linked for contextual reading; this guide contains original explanation, not Scripture quotations. <https://ebible.org/eng-web/ROM06.htm>
- [gal-3] Galatians 3, World English Bible Classic (public domain). Chapter linked for contextual reading; this guide contains original explanation, not Scripture quotations. <https://ebible.org/eng-web/GAL03.htm>
- [1co-12] 1 Corinthians 12, World English Bible Classic (public domain). Chapter linked for contextual reading; this guide contains original explanation, not Scripture quotations. <https://ebible.org/eng-web/1CO12.htm>
- [rom-8] Romans 8, World English Bible Classic (public domain). Chapter linked for contextual reading; this guide contains original explanation, not Scripture quotations. <https://ebible.org/eng-web/ROM08.htm>

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