

### *I. Fellowship with Christ, the Son of God*

To get us started I want us to meditate on 1 Corinthians 1:9

““*God is faithful, by whom you were called into the fellowship of his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.*”

- **Thesis:** “The fellowship which the saints have with the Son of God, Jesus Christ our Lord, is fellowship with him as *Mediator*. Into this office of Mediator Christ submitted himself for our sakes, ‘being born of a woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, that we might receive adoption of sons’ (Gal. 4:4-5)<sup>1</sup>

Scripture shows that Christians have such a fellowship with Jesus Christ (1 Cor. 1:9).<sup>2</sup> This is that fellowship to which all saints are called, and in which, *by the faithfulness of God*, they shall be kept. We are called by God the Father, who loves us, to this fellowship with his Son our Lord.” (pg. 38) [Emphasis mine]

**Big Point:** “*The souls of the saints are the garden of Christ, that good ground which is blessed of God (Heb. 6:7). Christ rejoices in the souls of his saints (Prov. 8:31). He ‘rejoices over them’ (Zeph. 3:17).~pg. 38 Aka—the basis of our fellowship with Christ, the Son of God, is Christ own joy and redemptive work.*

#### **Two Questions:**

- **Question 1:** *Have you ever used Song of Solomon for your daily devotion? Why or why not?*
- **Question 2:** *When you woke up this morning, was Christ disappointed in you or was he delighted in you? How do you know?*

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<sup>1</sup> “But when the fullness of time came, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the law, **so that** He might redeem those who were under the Law, **that we might** receive adoption as sons. **Because** you **are** sons, God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into our hearts, crying ‘Abba! Father!’” (Gal. 4:4-6)

***Logic On Fire: The reason why God delighted in you this morning and the basis of our fellowship with Jesus: [1] Incarnation (one with us) [2] Redemption (Died for us) [3] Adoption (***

*God sent forth His Son*

*born of woman (like you biologically)*

*born under the law (like you in obligation)*

***So that (reason 1):***

*He might redeem those who were under the Law*

***That we might (reason 2):***

*receive adoptions as sons*

***Because you are sons, (Your unchangeable identity)***

*God has sent for the Spirit of His Son into our hearts, crying, 'Abba! Father!'*

**Example: Holocaust Historian offers to serve 10-year sentence of Nigerian boy. A 13 year old Nigerian boy, Omar Faros, was sentenced by a Sharia court to ten years in prison after reportedly using blasphemous language about Allah in an argument with a friend. Piotr Cywinski offered to serve, along with 120 other adult volunteers from all over the world. This is would mean each volunteer would serve one month.**

- Because this is true notice what Owen's says: "*Jesus says, 'Behold I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and dine with him, and he with me' (Rev. 3:20). If this is not fellowship, then I do not know what fellowship is. **Christ will dine with believers. Christ refreshes himself with his own graces in his people, by his Spirit which he has given them. The Lord Christ greatly delights in the sweet fruits of the Spirit in his saints.***"
- Let me introduce you to another Puritan, Thomas Goodwin (England, 1600-1680). A contemporary of John Owen (England, 1616-1683).<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Published *Communion with God* in 1657

- Goodwin wrote that Christ’s “own joy, comfort, happiness, and glory are *increased and enlarged* by....”<sup>4</sup>
- **Question: Now how would you finish that sentence?**
- Owen answers that question this way: “*The souls of the saints are the garden of Jesus Christ....Christ rejoices in the souls of his saints...The souls of Christ’s people are a garden for fruit, pleasant fruit* (Song 4:12-14)
- **Question: What is Owen getting at?**
- Goodwin answers, “*Christ’s ‘own joy, comfort, happiness, and glory are increased and enlarged by his showing grace and mercy in pardoning, relieving, and comforting his members here on earth.’*”<sup>5</sup>

### Discussion

- **Question: What are some of the obstacles you face in believing Christ delights in you or in you delighting in Christ?**

### *II. How we commune with Christ (function not duty)*

**Thesis:** “*Scripture shows us that we hold communion with the Lord Jesus in grace by a marriage relationship. Christ is married to us and we to him. This Spiritual relation is accompanied with mutual love, and so in this fellowship with Christ we experience and enjoy all the excellent things which are in him.*” (pg. 54)

**Foundation:** “*In Isaiah we read, ‘ Your Maker is your husband, the Lord of hosts is his name; and your Redeemer is the Holy One of Israel; he is called the God of the whole earth’ (Isa. 54:5). This is given as the reason why the church will not be ashamed nor confounded in the midst of her trials and troubles. She is married to her Maker, and her Redeemer is her husband and so we see the mutual glory of Christ and his church*

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<sup>4</sup> Thomas Goodwin, *The Heart of Christ* (1651)

<sup>5</sup> Goodwin, *The Heart of Christ*, 107. Similarly Richard Sibbes said, “We cannot please Christ better than in showing ourselves welcome, by cheerful taking part of his rich provision. It is an honor to his bounty to fall to.” Richard Sibbes, *Bowels Opened, Or, A Discovery of the Near and Dear Love, Union, and Communion Between Christ and the Church*,

walking together...As with couples on their wedding day, so it is with Christ and his saints. He is a husband to them.” (pg. 54).

- **Question: Do you tread cautiously here and think it a bit presumptuous to draw on this truth when you find yourself in sin?**

### ***III. Knowing Ourselves***

**Thesis:** *“If we wish to have fellowship with the Son of God, then it is part of our wisdom to know ourselves. The Holy Spirit was sent to convince the world of ‘sin, of righteousness and of judgment’ (John 16:8). To know ourselves in respect of sin, righteousness and judgment is true and sound wisdom.” (pg. 90)*

- **Knowing ourselves in respect to sin:** *“There is an awareness and knowledge of sin left naturally in the consciences of men (Rom. 2:14,15). So man knows ‘the judgement of God, that they who do such things are worthy of death’ (Rom. 1:32)...The very first idea men have of God in this world is that he is a rewarder of good and evil.*

*A further knowledge of sin came by the law. ‘By the law is the knowledge of sin’ (Rom. 3:20). And ‘the law was added because of transgressions’ (Gal. 3:19).*

*The law in all its purity, holiness and perfection reveals the pollution of sin.” (pg. 90)*

**Big Point:** *“Yet man still does not have a true and thorough conviction of sin, and will not have it until Christ sends his Spirit to convince him of sin (John 16:8). So only by Christ is to be found the true knowledge of sin, firstly by his being made sin for us, and secondly by his work of saving us from our sins.” (pg. 90)*

- **Question: After receiving the Spirit (remember Galatians 4:4-6??) Don’t you still struggle with sin? What are some ways that can help us see the sinfulness of sin?**

- **Owen gives 3 ways:**

(1) **Consider what Christ suffered.** *“It pleased God to bruise him, to put him to grief, to make his soul an offering for sin and to pour out his life even to death<sup>6</sup>....He that was the power and wisdom of God stooped under the burden of sin until the whole of nature was amazed and hid itself in darkness. All this shows God’s hatred and*

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<sup>6</sup> Isa. 53:4-10

*loathing of sin. Sin brought the Son of God from the heights of heaven to the depths of hell” (pg. 91)*

- **Question: How does/can this help us fellowship with Jesus?**

***Example: Thumb and hammer***

**(2) Consider man’s weakness and utter inability to save himself from sins.** *“This is the second thing to learn from the cross. Man is utterly unable to make any atonement with God for sin<sup>7</sup> ...Man is utterly unable to obey God and to live in agreement with God. This is one truth that man finds the greatest difficulty in learning. He rises in pride and anger at this truth, denying it with all his being. From where, then, can man learn this truth? Nature does not teach it. The law does not teach it. This truth lies hidden in the Lord Jesus.<sup>8</sup>*

**(3) Consider the utter inability of man to root out and to destroy the power of sin in his life.** *“Sin is Neve more alive than when it is unable to serve its lusts. But it is only in Christ that the root and power of sin can be destroyed.<sup>9</sup> **Christ was crucified for us, therefore sin was crucified in us.** Christ died for us so the body of sin was destroyed so that we would no longer serve sin*

- **Question: How does/can these points help us fellowship with Jesus? Let’s consider John 3:16 for a moment.**

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<sup>7</sup> Micah 6:6,7; Psa. 49:7,8; Heb. 9:9; 10:6-8; 10:11; Acts 13:39

<sup>8</sup> Romans. 8:2-4

<sup>9</sup> Romans 6:3-6

#### ***IV. Communion with Christ in Holiness***

**Premise:** *“Now we must ask: How do we hold communion with Christ in holiness as well as in righteousness? If we would have fellowship with Christ in holiness, we must realise that there are several works of Christ necessary to bring us to holiness.” (pg. 147)*

**1. *The first work of Christ necessary to bring us to holiness is his intercession.***

*“Christ intercedes with the Father, on the strength of his mediatorial work, that he would give the Holy Spirit to his people.<sup>10</sup> ...This, faith considers, takes hold of and meditates on (pg. 147, 148)*

**Question:** *In your daily life have you ever reversed the order? If so, does this effect your fellowship with Christ?*

**2. *The second work of Christ necessary to bring us holiness is the receiving of the Spirit from the Father and sending him into the hearts of his saints, there to dwell in his place, and to do all things for them and in them which he himself has to do in them.*** *“Faith does not only look for the initial coming of the Spirit to dwell in us, but also for the continual workings of the Spirit both in his works of grace and in his loving gifts.*

**3. *The third work of Christ necessary to bring us to holiness is that by his Spirit he imparts a new, gracious, spiritual life, or principle, created and bestowed on the soul by which the soul is changed in all its faculties and desires.*** *“The soul is filled and enabled to obey, and to receive every divine truth presented to it according to the mind of God...Faith embraces Christ for righteousness and salvation as he is held out to us in the promises of the gospel. When faith rests in God and in Christ with delight, desire and satisfaction, it is called love. This new life was purchased for by Christ and is actually communicated to us by Christ.”<sup>11</sup> (pg. 148)*

**Point of Application:** *“Believers exercise their faith by thinking much about this. Here faith gets new life and new strength when a sense of vileness has overwhelmed it. Here is*

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<sup>10</sup> Ezek. 11:19; 36:27; Jer. 32:39-40; Heb. 7:22; 9:15

<sup>11</sup> Philippians 1:29; Eph. 1:3; John 1:16; 17:17; WCF shorter catechism Q&A “What is Effectual Calling. **Effectual calling** is the work of God’s Spirit, whereby convincing us of our sin and misery, enlightening our minds in the knowledge of Christ, and renewing our wills, he doth persuade and enable us to embrace Jesus Christ, freely offered to us in the gospel; Shorter Catechism Q&A 35 “What is Sanctification? **Sanctification** is the work of God’s free grace, whereby we are renewed in the whole man after the image of God and are enabled more and more to die unto sin, and live unto righteousness.”

*a fountain opened. Draw near and see its beauty, purity and effectiveness. One moment's communion with Christ by faith in this matter of cleansing is more effective to the purging of the soul and to growing in grace than the utmost efforts made by self."*

- **Question: Is Owen contradicting himself? How is "exercising their faith by thinking much about this" not "efforts made by self"?**