

# Reframing Spiritual Formation



Two enemies that hijack the centrality of the Gospel in Spiritual Formation:

1. Individualism



Two enemies that hijack the centrality of the Gospel in Spiritual Formation:

1. Individualism

2. Performanceism



1. In spiritual formation, we never go beyond the gospel, but always deeper into the gospel

2. Spiritual formation is primarily driven by covenant community practices

3. Spiritual formation always culminates in outward facing, missional relationships



Never beyond, always deeper into the Gospel



"Christ in you, the hope of glory" - Colossians 1:27



Union with Christ - Ephesians 1:3-14



Ephesians 1:3-13

v. 4-5 - In love he predestined us for adoption to himself as sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will...



Ephesians 1:3-14

v.7-8 - In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace, which he lavished upon us  
v.9-10 - ... making known to us the mystery of his will, according to his purpose, which he set forth in Christ as a plan for the fullness of time, to unite all things in him...



Ephesians 1:3-14

v.11-12 - In him we have obtained an inheritance... so that we who were the first to hope in Christ might be to the praise of his glory.

v.13 - In him you also, when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and believed in him, were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit



"Union with Christ is that intimate, vital, and spiritual union between Christ and His people, in virtue of which He is the source of their life and strength, of their blessedness and salvation."

- Louis Berkhof



Union with Christ in Scripture:

**John 15:5** - Jesus is the vine and we are the branches

**1 Corinthians 6:15-19** - Jesus is the head and we are His body, the Church

**1 Peter 2:4-5** - Jesus is the Chief Living Stone and we are the living stones built upon Him as His temple

**Eph. 5:25-31** - Jesus is the groom of His bride, the Church



Westminster Larger Catechism #69:

A: "The communion in grace which the members of the church have with Christ, is their partaking of the virtue of his mediation, in their justification, adoption, sanctification and whatever else, in this life, manifests their union with him.



"My hope lives not because I am not a sinner, but because I am a sinner for whom Christ died; my trust is not that I am holy, but that being unholy, he is my righteousness. My faith rests not upon what I am, or shall be, or feel, or know, but in what Christ is, in what he has done, and in what he is now doing for me."

Charles H. Spurgeon



Covenant community practices first and foremost



"Christ in you, the hope of glory" - Colossians 1:27



Acts 2:42

And they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers.



LEADER: What are the outward and ordinary means whereby Christ communicates to us the benefits of redemption?

ALL: The outward and ordinary means whereby Christ communicates to us the benefits of redemption are his ordinances, especially the word, sacraments, and prayer; all of which are made effectual to the elect for salvation.



Acts 2:42

WSC #88

Apostles' teaching

Word



Acts 2:42

WSC #88

Apostles' teaching

Word

Breaking of bread

Sacraments



Acts 2:42

WSC #88

Apostles' teaching

Word

Breaking of bread

Sacraments

Prayer

Prayer



Outward facing, missional living



Acts 1:8

"But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth."





Satellite View of the Land of Israel  
NASA photograph; Use permission granted for educational purposes

