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WITH CHRIST

The Union of the Christian with Christ as Expressed
by St. Paul with Special Reference to the
Preposition $\epsilon\upsilon\iota$

A Thesis Presented to the Faculty
of Concordia Seminary, St. Louis,
Department of Exegetical Theology
in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of
Master of Sacred Theology

by

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June 1956

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

One of St. Paul's most difficult and yet one of his most fascinating teachings is the doctrine of the Christian's union with Christ. In this thesis we are studying this teaching from the point of view of the little

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word $\epsilon\acute{\upsilon}\nu$ by examining any of a number of Paul's carefully chosen words. There is, for example, the striking Pauline identification of the Church with the Body of Christ. $\epsilon\acute{\upsilon}\nu$ and $\sigma\omega\mu\alpha$, $\sigma\omega\mu\alpha$ and $\epsilon\acute{\upsilon}\nu$ are some of the pregnant terms related to this concept. Then there is the sacramental $\epsilon\acute{\upsilon}\nu$ of our Lord in the Sacrament of Holy Communion and the question of how we are united with Christ in this holy gift of His grace. We also often find in Paul the related idea of adoption into the sonship of God and the repeatedly used phrase, 'Christ in you.' The

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

One of St. Paul's most difficult and yet one of his most fascinating teachings is the doctrine of the Christian believer's union with Christ. In this thesis we are studying this teaching from the point of view of the little preposition *σύν*. This tiny word carries a surprising impact in Paul's thinking. It is used many times in a variety of different forms to express the profound truth of the Christian's sharing of the body and participation in the activity of Christ. It often conveys the essence of the Pauline doctrine of the union with Christ.

The concept of union with Christ could be approached from many different points of view. We could fruitfully unfold it by examining any of a number of Paul's carefully chosen terms. There is, for example, the striking Pauline identification of the Church with the Body of Christ.

Σῶμα τοῦ Χριστοῦ, *κοινωνία*, and *ἐν Χριστῷ* are some of the pregnant terms related to this concept. Then there is the sacramental *σῶμα* of our Lord in the Sacrament of Holy Communion and the question of how we are united with Christ in this holy gift of His grace. We also often find in Paul the related idea of adoption into the sonship of God and the repeatedly used phrase, "Christ in you." The

Greek terms for these thoughts are *ἰσοθεσία* and *Χριστός ἐν ὑμῖν*. In addition there are in the Holy Scriptures a number of bold metaphors used to describe the intimate connections between our Lord and His Church. Two of these are the pictures of Christ as the Bride of the Church in Ephesians five and our Lord's own illustration of the vine and the branches in the fifteenth chapter of St. John's Gospel. The Old Testament too has related ideas. Probably the most dominant one is found in Isaiah's poems of the Suffering Servant. The Suffering Servant is a strange and fluid Old Testament figure. Sometimes it is clear that the Messiah is meant, but at other times the Servant apparently is Israel herself or the faithful Remnant. Thus there is a close connection and sometimes almost an identification between the Suffering Servant and Israel. There are many other starting points that we could find to examine the doctrine of the union with Christ, but in this thesis we are limiting ourselves to St. Paul's statements using the preposition *σύν*.


"*σύν* words" are used by St. Paul not only to express the vertical union of the Christian with Christ, but they also describe the horizontal union and fellowship that Christians have among themselves. However, we are limiting this thesis to those *σύν* words which are used for the vertical union with Christ. Therefore we do not include words like *συγχαίρω*, *συμπολίτης*, *σύνφυγος*, *σύνδουδος*,


... of passages. We could illustrate our method with a

συνεργός, and many other such words. These words simply describe the horizontal relationships among Christians. However, there are a number of *σύν* words used by Paul to picture what we call a "vertical-horizontal" fellowship, which includes both the fellowship among Christians and the union with Christ as the Head of the Church. These are included. They are examined especially in chapter four, "Living with Christ in the Church through the Means of Grace."

The basic plan of the thesis is the following. After noting a few philological points concerning *σύν* in chapter two, we in chapter three make a study of the chronological phases of Christ's redemptive activity which believers share. The sequence of this chapter follows the second article of the Nicene Creed. It is remarkable how we find Pauline expressions for a union with Christ in almost every phase of His redemptive work. Chapter four discusses the vertical-horizontal union mentioned above. Chapters five and six discuss special problems that come up in connection with this study, chapter five the problem of time and chapter six the question whether or not we can call the union with Christ "mysticism." Finally there follows a brief concluding chapter.

As we move from chapter to chapter and section to section we regularly go back again and again through the same round of passages. We could illustrate our method with a

forward-moving but spiraling line thus: .

Each circle represents the same basic passages, but each spiral takes in a new circle of passages and thoughts, always, of course, keeping in mind what has already been covered. This method has its weaknesses. For example, in chapter three we operate with our normal and accepted human categories of time as we follow a chronological sequence through all the phases of Christ's redemptive activity, but then in chapter five we say that with Christ all earthly categories of time are overthrown! The ideal method would be to see the whole picture in one brilliant panorama. We would like to telescope all the closely interrelated circles of the above spiral into a unified whole. This we could illustrate thus: ). Here each circle also represents the same round of passages, but the new ideas are superimposed upon each other in a development growing from the center outward. We can ponder the concept of the union with Christ in this way, but unfortunately we cannot write it out thus. As long as we use human words and language, the spiraling and consecutive method is the best that we can find in spite of its weaknesses.

We hope that the reader of this thesis will share something of the experience of the writer as he proceeds step by step. First, in chapter three we confront an amazing group of affirmatives with regard to our intimate union with Christ in all the steps of His soteriological work. Then, as we

follow the light of Scripture these facts lead us to depths and heights too profound and exalted for our puny minds to follow, but not too deep nor too high for our needy souls to find rich comfort "with our Lord Jesus Christ."

The purpose of the thesis is not to grind any particular axe. Our concern is not polemical, and we do not wish to attack any theologian, ancient or modern, who might have come to some different conclusions than we. Anything like polemics is incidental and not designed. A few of the major monographs that have been written on related subjects are cited, but our major source is primary, the Greek text of Paul's letters.

The Revised Standard Version of the Bible is used unless otherwise noted. Italicization is for emphasis. The context of the passages is always carefully considered. To make each chapter of the thesis more readable we as much as possible repeat each passage in full whenever it is under discussion.

Our goal is to face squarely the passages where St. Paul uses *σύν* to describe the union of the Christian with Christ and to ask, "What do these passages mean?" Our hope is that in the final analysis Paul's own words will speak for themselves and drive home to us what he means when he says, "I am with Christ."

CHAPTER II

THE USE OF THE PREPOSITION $\sigma\acute{\upsilon}\nu$ TO EXPRESS THE UNION OF THE CHRISTIAN WITH CHRIST

The basic meaning of the preposition $\sigma\acute{\upsilon}\nu$ is "together with." There is no dispute concerning this fundamental definition, and no matter how we find this preposition used in this study the basic meaning must always be kept in mind. $\Sigma\acute{\upsilon}\nu$ always takes the dative, and the dative has always carried the idea of "rest at" in comparison to "motion from" for the genitive and "motion towards" for the accusative.¹

The etymology of $\sigma\acute{\upsilon}\nu$ provides a point relevant to this thesis. Since the time of Hesiod $\sigma\acute{\upsilon}\nu$ has had a close etymological connection with $\kappa\omicron\iota\nu\acute{o}\varsigma$.² The $\sigma\acute{\upsilon}\nu$ $\chi\rho\iota\sigma\tau\acute{\omicron}\varsigma$ concept of St. Paul is paralleled by his complex of ideas using $\kappa\omicron\iota\nu\nu\acute{\iota}\alpha$. Thus we see that even etymologically being "with Christ" ($\sigma\acute{\upsilon}\nu$ $\chi\rho\iota\sigma\tau\acute{\omicron}\varsigma$ $\epsilon\acute{\iota}\nu\alpha\iota$) and being in the fellowship of Christ ($\epsilon\acute{\nu}$ $\kappa\omicron\iota\nu\nu\acute{\iota}\alpha$ $\tau\omicron\upsilon$ $\chi\rho\iota\sigma\tau\acute{\omicron}\varsigma$ $\epsilon\acute{\iota}\nu\alpha\iota$) are related.

The most obvious use of $\sigma\acute{\upsilon}\nu$ is the simple historical

¹H. P. V. Nunn, A Short Syntax of New Testament Greek (Fifth edition, reprinted; Cambridge: The University Press, 1949), pp. 28-30.

²Gerhard Kittel, editor, Theologisches Wörterbuch zum Neuen Testament (Stuttgart: Verlag von W. Kohlhammer, 1938), III, 790.

use describing togetherness in place and time. The preposition is used in the Synoptics and Acts almost exclusively in this sense. Examples are, "Now Peter and those who were with him were heavy with sleep" (Luke 9:32) and "This man also was with him" (Luke 22:56).³ This use of $\sigma\upsilon\nu$ is, of course, also found in Paul's epistles.⁴

But Paul's unique use of $\sigma\upsilon\nu$ that we are studying in this thesis is something much deeper than the simple historical meaning. It conveys an idea of togetherness with Christ that goes far beyond place, space, and time. It is a uniquely Pauline concept. Wilhelm Hahn notes,

Die Aussage vom Mitsterben usw. ist einzigartig. . . . Diese ist eine einzigartige eschatologische Möglichkeit für den Christen, die ihm nicht verfügbar ist, sondern als Gottes Tat ihm zuteil wird. In allen anderen Fällen hat Paulus den gewöhnlichen Gebrauch von $\sigma\upsilon\nu$.⁵

Whether Paul's concept of "with Christ" is always or even largely eschatological, as Hahn suggests, is a separate question which we will take up later.⁶ Our point now is that the Apostle Paul has a very distinctive use of the preposi-

³For more examples see also Mark 2:26; Luke 5:9, 8:38; Acts 4:13, and many others.

⁴For example see 2 Cor. 9:4.

⁵Wilhelm Traugott Hahn, Das Mitsterben und Mitaufstehen mit Christus bei Paulus (Gütersloh: Verlag C. Bertelsmann, 1937), p. 103.

⁶Infra, pp. 101 ff.

tion $\sigma\upsilon\nu$.⁷

There are three forms in which Paul uses $\sigma\upsilon\nu$ to express the union with Christ. The first is a series of compound verbs that use the preposition $\sigma\upsilon\nu$ as prefixes. The second is in a group of compound adjectives that use $\sigma\upsilon\nu$ as prefixes. The third form is the simple prepositional phrase. Tables one, two, and three give all of the relevant words using $\sigma\upsilon\nu$ in these three forms with their proper references to Paul's epistles. These terms and these passages are the substance of our study.

One author points out that the "lexica are able to cite non-Pauline uses for all but five" of the $\sigma\upsilon\nu$ words that he lists. He continues,

If we cannot claim great originality for Saint Paul in the matter of word coinage, we certainly can in the matter of the use of the words. Without exception, I think, we can say that he uses these twenty-four words (and many others of course) in a sense peculiarly his own. As we have repeatedly seen, he possesses to a marked degree the ability to take a quite ordinary word, and, understanding it in the most strictly literal sense, cram into it more meaning and a deeper significance than Plato would have thought possible.

It would not be too much to say that the quintessence of Saint Paul's doctrine on the solidarity of the body

⁷We ought to note here the difference between $\sigma\upsilon\nu$ and the preposition $\mu\epsilon\tau\acute{\alpha}$, which can also mean "with." $\sigma\upsilon\nu$ takes the dative; $\mu\epsilon\tau\acute{\alpha}$ can take the accusative or the genitive. With the accusative it generally means "after" and, with the genitive "among" or "with." Although both $\mu\epsilon\tau\acute{\alpha}$ with the genitive and $\sigma\upsilon\nu$ are used for the simple, historical, local, and temporal idea of togetherness, it is only $\sigma\upsilon\nu$ and not $\mu\epsilon\tau\acute{\alpha}$ that carries this big Pauline concept of the union with Christ.

of Christians with Christ is contained in the concepts embodied in the words which we have been considering.⁸

⁸Brendan McGrath, "'Syn' Words in Saint Paul," Catholic Biblical Quarterly, XIV (July, 1952), 225.

<i>συνηγορία</i>	Phil. 3:10
<i>συνδοχή</i>	Rom. 8:17
<i>συνστασις</i>	Rom. 6:5; Gal. 2:20
<i>συνάβη</i>	2 Tim. 3:11
<i>συνδοχή</i>	Rom. 8:13; Gal. 2:12
<i>συνήγορος</i>	Rom. 2:15; Gal. 2:13
<i>συνεργισμός</i>	Rom. 2:16; Gal. 2:13; Col. 3:1
<i>συνεργιστής</i>	Rom. 2:16
<i>συνδοχή</i>	Rom. 8:17
<i>συνήγορος</i>	Rom. 2:13; 2 Tim. 3:11
<i>συνδοχή</i>	2 Tim. 3:11
<i>συνεργιστής</i>	Eph. 2:21; Eph. 4:16
<i>συνδοχή</i>	Rom. 8:16; Gal. 2:19
<i>συνδοχή</i>	Rom. 2:12

TABLE 1

COMPOUND VERBS USING ΣΥΝ

Compound Verbs	Pauline Occurrences
συμμορφίζω	Phil. 3:10
συνπάσχω	Rom. 8:17
συνσταυρόω	Rom. 6:6; Gal. 2:20
συναποθνήσκω	2 Tim. 2:11
συνθάπτω	Rom. 6:4; Col. 2:12
συνζωοποιέω	Eph. 2:5; Col. 2:13
συνεγείρω	Eph. 2:6; Col. 2:12; Col. 3:1
συνκαθίζω	Eph. 2:6
συνδοξάζω	Rom. 8:17
συνζάω	Rom. 6:8; 2 Tim. 2:11
συνβασιλεύω	2 Tim. 2:12
συναρμολογέω	Eph. 2:21; Eph. 4:16
συνβιβάζω	Eph. 4:16; Col. 2:19
συνοικοδομέω	Eph. 2:22

TABLE 2

COMPOUND ADJECTIVES USING ΖΥΝ

Compound Adjectives	Pauline Occurrences
σύμμορφος	Rom. 8:29; Phil. 3:21
σύμφυτος	Rom. 6:5
σύνσωμος	Eph. 3:6
συνμέτοχος	Eph. 3:6
συγκληρονόμος	Rom. 8:17; Eph. 3:6

TABLE 3

PREPOSITIONAL PHRASES USING ΖΥΝ

Prepositional Phrases	Pauline Occurrences
σὺν Χριστῷ	Rom. 6:8; Phil. 1:23; Col. 2:20
σὺν αὐτῷ	Rom. 8:32; 2 Cor. 13:4; Col. 2:13; Col. 3:4; 1 Thess. 4:14; 1 Thess. 5:10
σὺν Ἰησοῦ	2 Cor. 4:14
σὺν τῷ Χριστῷ	Col. 3:3
σὺν κυρίῳ	1 Thess. 4:17

CHAPTER III

GOD UNITES THE CHRISTIAN TO CHRIST IN HIS REDEMPITIVE ACTIVITY

With Christ in All Things

"I believe in . . . one Lord Jesus Christ, . . . Who for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven and was incarnate by the Holy Ghost of the Virgin Mary and was made man." Thus the Creed begins its statement on our Lord's redemptive work. And this article ends, "And He shall come again with glory to judge both the quick and the dead; Whose kingdom shall have no end." God's saving act in Christ began with the mystery of the incarnation and will finally be consummated when our Lord comes again in glory. This chapter proposes to show from numerous Pauline ^{54v} passages how we are united with Christ in His saving deeds. When we through God's grace are made beneficiaries of the redemption, we are "With Christ in All Things."

God is the subject of the title sentence of this chapter. "God unites the Christian to Christ in His redemptive activity." This is essential to an understanding of the whole concept. It is not man that gradually unites himself to Christ or makes himself like Christ through his life or faith, but the creation and preservation of the union with

Christ is an act of God.

As we proceed more deeply into the theology of the union with Christ, we see that at almost every step of Christ's redemptive activity in life, death, and resurrection, the Christian is joined to Christ. Exactly what the union with Christ means is still a question at this point of our study, but the language of Paul taken literally is unmistakable. We Christians suffer, die, are buried, and rise with Christ. We sit with Him in heavenly places; we shall come with Him when He returns in His *παρουσία*; we shall live and reign with Him in glory as heirs of the Kingdom. It seems that Christians are somehow drawn into every phase of Christ's activity as described by the second article of the Nicene Creed. In his well-known and thorough investigation of the New Testament *κοινωνία* concept Thornton shows that

there is an identity of pattern as between the life of Christ and the life of the community. As the writer of 1 John puts it: "As he is, even so are we in this world" (4:17). There is nothing accidental about this identity of pattern. The identity is due to a mysterious identification by which we partake of his life; and this in turn is something of which we may say that it is effected by him or again that God has effected it through him. He became poor that we might become rich. As the Epistle to the Hebrews represents it: "Since then the children are sharers in flesh and blood, he also himself in like manner partook of the same" (2:14) with the result that "we are become partakers of the Christ" (3:14). By his Incarnation he became a partaker in the things which we share in common, in order

that we partaking of his life may share it together.¹

There is one *σύν* passage of Paul that speaks of the Christian's union with Christ in a rather general way and seems to encompass the whole concept with all its varying aspects. It uses the vivid adjective *σὺμμορφος* which means, "having the same form as another." The passage is Rom. 8:29-32.

For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed (*σὺμμορφους*) to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn among many brethren. And those whom he predestined he also called; and those whom he called he also justified; and those whom he justified he also glorified.

What then shall we say to this? If God is for us, who is against us? He who did not spare his own Son but gave him up for us all, will he not also give us all things with him (*σὺν αὐτῷ*)?

The theme of Romans eight is liberation from suffering and death through the suffering and death of Christ. But here Paul goes back to the very beginning of the whole liberation process, predestination. God predestined us to be conformed (*σὺμμορφους*), that is, made of the same form as "the image of his Son." This re-forming of a man into the form of Christ is the first and all-embracing step in the whole "with Christ" process. Christ therefore is "the firstborn among many brethren." The redemptive Christ-event began with Christ's incarnation, and His incarnate form is

¹L. S. Thornton, The Common Life in the Body of Christ (Westminster: Dacre Press, 1946), p. 44.

that to which God foreplanned that we should be likened. We are made Christ's brethren as He takes on our flesh and blood.

Notice the sequence of changes to which Paul in this passage says we are predestined: conformed to His image, called, justified, glorified. These are phases in the union with Christ, and finally in verse thirty-two we are promised that God will "give us all things with him." God will give ($\chi\rho\rho\acute{\iota}\sigma\epsilon\tau\alpha\iota$) us all things ($\tau\grave{\alpha}\ \pi\acute{\alpha}\nu\tau\alpha$) with him ($\sigma\acute{\upsilon}\nu\ \delta\acute{\upsilon}\tau\omega$) even as He did not spare but gave His only Son for all. As we are "conformed to the image of his Son," we receive with Him all things--resurrection, inheritance in glory, life with Him forever. As Christ "had to be made like his brethren in every respect" (Heb. 2:17), so we will be united with Him "in every respect."

This is not merely a casual connection that we have with Christ. $\Sigma\acute{\upsilon}\mu\mu\omicron\rho\phi\omicron\varsigma$ has a profound meaning. One writer thinks it is so pregnant with meaning that it is "impossible of translation."² Sanday and Headlam remind us that it "denotes inward and thorough and not merely superficial likeness."³ The same word, $\sigma\acute{\upsilon}\mu\mu\omicron\rho\phi\omicron\varsigma$, is used of the thorough re-creation of our body into the form of Christ's

²Gerald Ellard, Christian Life and Worship (Milwaukee: The Bruce Publishing Company, 1953), p. 32.

³William Sanday and Arthur C. Headlam, "A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans," The International Critical Commentary (Fifth edition; Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1952), p. 218.

body after the *παρουσία*. Paul tells the Philippians that the Lord Jesus Christ "will change our lowly body to be like (*σύμμορφον*) his glorious body, by the power which enables him even to subject all things to himself" (Phil. 3:21).

There are a number of parallel passages for this concept which, although they don't contain the preposition *σύν*, do use the same root word from which *σύμμορφος* comes. In the third chapter of the second epistle to the Corinthians Paul speaks of the veil of unbelief which hardened the minds of many when they read the old covenant, but when a man "turns to the Lord" in the new covenant "the veil is removed," and then "we all, with unveiled face, beholding the glory of the Lord, are being changed (*μεταμορφούμεθα*) into his likeness from one degree of glory to another" (2 Cor. 3:18). The verb *μεταμορφούμεθα* is passive. It is God's action which brings about this change into the likeness of Christ in all its degrees of glory. Another passage is in Galatians. With intimate language Paul admonishes the Galatians, "My little children, with whom I am again in travail until Christ be formed (*μορφωθῆ*) in you!" (Gal. 4:19) Again the verb is passive. Christ should actually be formed in the Galatians. Note the verbal connection between *μεταμορφούμεθα*, *μορφωθῆ*, and the adjective *σύμμορφος*. The root in all three words is the same. A change in form is involved.

With Christ in His Suffering

"I believe in . . . one Lord Jesus Christ,
 He suffered . . ." We believe and confess that our Lord suffered in His holy passion. St. Paul the Apostle confessed this also, but he added the remarkable statement that we suffer with Christ! He says, "we are children of God, and if children, then heirs, heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ (συγκληρονόμοι δὲ Χριστοῦ), provided we suffer with him (σὺμπάσχομεν) in order that we may also be glorified with him (σὺνδοξασθῶμεν)" (Rom. 8:16-17).⁴

As mentioned before, the theme of Romans eight is liberation from suffering and death through the suffering and death of Christ. There is a strong suffering-glory antithesis in this chapter. "I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory that is to be revealed to us. For the creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the sons of God . . ."

⁴In this one little passage we see three aspects of our union with Christ: our mutual heirship, suffering together, and being glorified together. This will happen again and again as we look at the various passages. It shows that we are not able to avoid the problem of time sequence in this study.

We must ask what happens to normally accepted time categories when St. Paul tells us that we are joined to Christ in events that took place some two thousand years ago and in the next breath says that we will be glorified with Christ. However, we reserve these problems for a full and separate discussion in chapter five.

(Rom. 8:18-19). "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us" (Rom. 8:35-37). But such liberation to glory comes about "provided we suffer with him." The victory comes through the redemptive work of Jesus Christ alone, but as He suffers, we suffer with Him. Thus we are made participants of the Christ-event.

The idea of suffering with Christ is expressed by St. Paul in a number of other ways besides words. At the beginning of his second letter to the Corinthians, in which Paul defends his apostleship against critics, he says, "For as we share abundantly in Christ's sufferings (*περισσεύει τὰ παθήματα τοῦ Χριστοῦ*), so through Christ we share abundantly in comfort too" (2 Cor. 1:15). Paul tells the Philippians, "I have suffered the loss of all things" in order "that I may know him and the power of his resurrection, and may share his sufferings (*κοινωνίαν παθμάτων*), becoming like him in his death (*συμμορφούμενος τῷ θανάτῳ αὐτοῦ*), that if possible I may attain the resur-

reaction from the dead" (Phil. 3:10-11).⁵ Paul mentions his sufferings to the Colossians also. To them he says, "Now I rejoice in my sufferings for your sake, and in my flesh I complete what is lacking in Christ's afflictions (ἀναπληρῶ τὰ ὑστερήματα τῶν θλίψεων τοῦ Χριστοῦ ἐν τῇ σαρκί μου) for the sake of his body, that is, the church . . ." (Col. 1:24). This is a bold statement, but it is even bolder when he tells the Galatians, "Henceforth let no man trouble me; for I bear on my body the marks of Jesus (τὰ στίγματα τοῦ Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ)" (Gal. 6:17).

Thornton makes these comments in discussing Col. 1:24:

Once he [Paul] had taught that his "affliction" was due to an overflow of the Messiah's sufferings [2 Cor. 1:5-7]. Now however he boldly declares that his afflictions are "the afflictions of the Messiah." They are messianic afflictions which declare an identity of life between the Messiah and his apostle. That is what gives him joy. His own flesh is stamped with the Messianic pattern of suffering [Gal. 6:17]. He is resolved therefore to drink this privileged cup of suffering to the full. There must be no defect in the fulfillment of his apostolic vocation to suffer with the Head on behalf of the Body.⁶

⁵Albert Schweitzer, The Mysticism of Paul the Apostle (New York: Henry Holt and Company, c.1931), p. 147, thinks that Paul means the same thing when he speaks of suffering with Christ and dying with Christ. He says that suffering is "a form of manifestation of the dying with Christ." This passage, Phil. 3:10-11, with its participial phrase, συμμορφούμενος τῷ θανάτῳ αὐτοῦ, seems to support this point of view. However, before we decide whether or not Schweitzer is right, it is only fair to look at all the aspects of the issue. This passage will come up for discussion several more times in this chapter.

⁶Thornton, op. cit., p. 35.

This concept is not limited to St. Paul's letters. One of the themes of St. Peter's first epistle is an exhortation to the readers to bear up under sufferings in the approaching persecution. Peter writes, "But rejoice in so far as you share Christ's sufferings (*κοινωνεῖτε τοῖς τοῦ Χριστοῦ παθήμασιν*), that you may also rejoice and be glad when his glory is revealed" (1 Peter 4:13). The writer to the Hebrews at one place says, "Wherefore Jesus also, that he might sanctify the people with his own blood, suffered without the gate. Let us go forth therefore unto him without the camp, bearing his reproach (*τὸν ὀνειδισμὸν αὐτοῦ φέροντες*)" (Heb. 13:12-13).⁷ Thornton comments on this passage, "Our part then (in this life) is still at the foot of the Cross, where the reproach of Jesus must be shared. . . ."⁸

So the Christian suffers with Christ. However we may understand it, this much St. Paul and the other writers of the New Testament evidently meant to say.

With Christ in His Death

"I believe in . . . one Lord Jesus Christ . . . crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate."

⁷King James Version. The R.S.V. translates *τὸν ὀνειδισμὸν αὐτοῦ φέροντες* less literally, "bearing abuse for him." Goodspeed has, "sharing the contempt that he endured."

⁸Thornton, *op. cit.*, p. 387.

Perhaps the best passage that conveys the thought of our union in Christ's crucifixion is Rom. 6:5-11:

For if we have been united with him in a death like his (σύνφυτοι γερόναμεν τῷ θανάτῳ τοῦ θανάτου αὐτοῦ), we shall certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his. We know that our old self was crucified with him (συνεσταυρώθη) so that the sinful body might be destroyed, and we might no longer be enslaved to sin. For he who has died is freed from sin. But if we have died with Christ (ἀπεθνήκαμεν σὺν Χριστῷ), we believe that we shall also live with him (συνήσομεν). For we know that Christ being raised from the dead will never die again; death no longer has dominion over him. The death he died he died to sin, once for all, but the life he lives he lives to God. So you also must consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus.

The purpose of this intimate participation in Christ's death is that we "no longer be enslaved to sin," but that having "died with Christ" we be "freed from sin" and thus consider ourselves "dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus." Romans six begins with an exhortation not to use grace as a cloak for sin, not to continue in sin because we know that grace is available. Rather as we appropriate God's grace by participating in Christ's redemptive activity, we become "dead to sin." A parallel is a passage to the Galatians, where Paul writes, "those who belong to Christ Jesus (οἱ δὲ τοῦ Χριστοῦ Ἰησοῦ) have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires" (Gal. 5:24).

In Romans death is closely connected to sin. We see this in a passage like Rom. 8:10, "But if Christ is in you, although your bodies are dead because of sin, your spirits are alive because of righteousness." The opposite of being

crucified with Christ is to crucify Him by unbelief and sin. The writer to the Hebrews says just this, "if they then commit apostasy . . . they crucify the Son of God on their own account and hold him up to contempt" (Heb. 6:6). As sin and death are so closely related, the most profound meaning of the crucifixion is that by it the Son of God "became sin" for us. Thornton discusses this with these thought-provoking sentences:

"It behooved him" therefore "in all things to be made like unto his brethren" (2:17) [Hebrews], yet "without sin" (4:15). Upon this tremendous excepting clause depends the whole relationship of the redeemed to the Redeemer. Nevertheless even at this point, where the contrast presupposed in the relationship is at its maximum, the law of identification still continues to operate. For the most mysterious text in the Bible states the basis of our reconciliation to God in these terms: "Him who knew no sin he made to be sin on our behalf; that we might become the righteousness of God in him" (2 Cor. 5:21). Somehow God identified his Son with our sinful state, in order that we might be identified with God's righteousness in his Son. In this action Christ became our representative in the sphere which is utterly alien to him (the sphere of sin) in order that we might enter the sphere which is our true home (the righteousness of God in him).⁹

And that this might be accomplished, says St. Paul, we die with Christ. By this death with Him He becomes sin for us, and we "become the righteousness of God in him." Thus through our death with Christ our whole existence is lived with Christ. "For you have died, and your life is hid with Christ ($\sigma\upsilon\nu\ \tau\acute{\omega}\ \chi\rho\iota\sigma\tau\acute{\omega}$) in God" (Col. 3:3).

⁹Ibid., p. 45.

Paul uses the same theme of dying with Christ in different connections. In several instances he uses it of dying to the law. For those who are "with Christ" the law is no longer a controlling factor. For example, in the second chapter of Galatians Paul is almost totally preoccupied with a repudiation of dependence upon works and in setting forth justification by faith. Suddenly he inserts into the center of the discussion this passage:

For I through the law died to the law, that I might live to God. I have been crucified with Christ (Χριστῷ συνεσταύρωμαι); it is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me; and the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me (Gal. 2:19-20).

It is the crucifixion of Christ that killed the power of the law and showed the uselessness of dependence upon works, and in that crucifixion I am "with Christ." Paul warns the Colossians against entanglements in legalistic regulations with the same argument. "Wherefore if ye be dead with Christ from the rudiments of the world (ἀπεθάνετε ὀὐκ Χριστῷ ἀπὸ τῶν στοιχείων), why, as though living in the world, are ye subject to ordinances (touch not; taste not; handle not . . .)" (Col. 2:20-21--King James Version). Another warning against those who depend on the law is in Philippians. There Paul calls the Judaizers "dogs . . . evil-workers, . . . who mutilate the flesh" (Phil. 3:2). Then he continues,

For his sake [Christ's] I have suffered the loss of all things, . . . that I may gain Christ and be found in

him, not having a righteousness of my own, based on law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness from God that depends on faith; that I may know him and the power of his resurrection, and may share his sufferings, becoming like him in his death (συνμορφιζόμενος τῷ θανάτῳ αὐτοῦ), that if possible I may attain the resurrection from the dead (Phil. 3:8-11).

Father Ellard calls *συνμορφιζόμενος* "one of those Pauline words impossible of translation," for it speaks of "becoming one and the same nature [sic] with Christ in his death."¹⁰

Two parallel passages will help us see what Paul is here saying. In Rom. 7:4 the Apostle says, "Likewise, my brethren, you have died to the law through the body of Christ, so that you may belong to another, to him who has been raised from the dead in order that we may bear fruit for God." This dying is dying with Christ, for it is "through the body of Christ." A similar passage is 2 Cor. 5:14-15: "For the love of Christ controls us, because we are convinced that one has died for all; therefore all have died. And he died for all, that those who live might live no longer for themselves but for him who for their sake died and was raised." It is the "love of Christ" and not the law that controls us. Notice especially in this last passage the amazing words, "one has died for all; therefore all have died."

¹⁰Ellard, *op. cit.*, p. 32.

In at least one place Paul speaks of the world being crucified to him. The passage we have in mind is Gal. 6:14: "But far be it from me to glory except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world." This is a parallel to those passages which speak of dying to the law and dying with Christ.

Sometimes Paul connects the dying with Christ rather closely to our sufferings. We noted above that Albert Schweitzer views "suffering with Christ" and "dying with Christ" as merely different ways of saying the same thing.¹¹ For him "dying with Christ" is a way of describing our sufferings with Christ as Christians. In fact, he says that this is the only "intelligible" way of understanding the idea of crucifixion with Christ.¹² However, the three above-mentioned passages that refer to the dying with Christ--Rom. 6:3-11, Gal. 2:19-20, and Phil. 3:10-11--with perhaps the exception of the Philippians passage give no evidence to prove this. But there is one σύν passage, surprisingly not mentioned by Schweitzer at all, that does to a degree seem to support his contention. This is 2 Tim. 2:11-12, where Paul tells Timothy, "The saying is sure: If we have died with him (συνάπεθάνομεν) we shall also live with him (συνήσομεν); if we endure, we shall also reign

¹¹Supra, p. 19, note 5.

¹²Schweitzer, op. cit., p. 147.

with him (συμβασιλεύσομεν); . . ." It is the context that makes us say that suffering with Christ and dying with Christ are closely related here. Paul is telling Timothy, his beloved friend and assistant, in these final instructions to hold fast in the face of suffering. "Take your share of suffering as a good soldier of Christ Jesus" (2:3). "Remember Jesus Christ . . . as preached in my gospel for which I am suffering and wearing fetters, like a criminal" (2:8-9). He then uses this "saying is sure" quotation, which probably is taken from "an early Christian hymn"¹³ or "catechetical data or snatches of prophetic utterance current in the Church,"¹⁴ to comfort Timothy by saying, "If we have died with him, we shall also live with him."

A number of parallel passages that do not use *σύν* are nevertheless pertinent to this discussion of the relationship between suffering with Christ and dying with Christ. When Paul talks about "tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword" in Romans eight, he quotes the Old Testament, "For thy sake we are being killed all the day long; we are regarded as sheep to be slaughtered" (Rom. 8:36). Paul seems to call his "peril" the same as dying in First Corinthians. He says,

¹³Thornton, *op. cit.*, p. 408.

¹⁴E. K. Simpson, *The Pastoral Epistles* (London: The Tyndale Press, 1954), p. 134.

"Why am I in peril every hour? I protest, brethren, by my pride in you which I have in Christ Jesus our Lord, I die every day" (1 Cor. 15:30-31). The same thought is found in Second Corinthians.

We are afflicted in every way, but not crushed; perplexed, but not driven to despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed; always carrying in the body the death of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be manifested in our bodies. For while we live we are always being given up to death for Jesus' sake, so that the life of Jesus may be manifested in our mortal flesh. So death is at work in us, but life in you (2 Cor. 4:8-12).

Here living in affliction, perplexity, and persecution is clearly related to "carrying in the body the death of Jesus" and "being given up to death for Jesus' sake."

We have seen that the union with Christ's death is used in a variety of different ways by St. Paul. Sometimes it is used as the motivation for discarding sin and living to God. Because we have died with Christ, let us consider ourselves "dead to sin and alive to God." Sometimes it is used to show that we are dead to the power of the law and the world. Because we have been crucified with Christ, the law and the world are dead to us. Sometimes it is rather closely connected to the suffering with Christ. In the final analysis, however, all of these different emphases merely apply the teaching of the dying with Christ. None of them actually explain this doctrine. In conclusion, then, we can only say that although we see how Paul applies the union with Christ's death in different ways, we cannot understand what

he means by the teaching itself. Each of us can only repeat what Paul says, "I have been crucified with Christ," and apply it to himself as Paul makes the application.

With Christ in His Burial

"I believe in . . . one Lord Jesus Christ,
He . . . was buried;" There are two passages from St. Paul that tell us that we are buried with Christ. The first is Rom. 6:3-4:

Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were buried therefore with him (συνετάφημεν οὐν αὐτῷ) by baptism into death, so that as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father we too might walk in newness of life.

The second one is Col. 2:12-14:

and you were buried with him (συνταφέντες αὐτῷ) in baptism, in which you were also raised with him (συνηγέρθητε) through faith in the working of God, who raised him from the dead. And you, who were dead in trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made alive together with him (οὐν αὐτῷ), having forgiven us all our trespasses, having canceled the bond which stood against us with its legal demands; this he set aside nailing it to the cross.

Christ's burial was a mark of the completion and finality of His death. There is nothing that affirms the reality of death more certainly than entombment in a grave. "Burial is only death sealed and made certain."¹⁵ So for us the burial with Christ is an extension of the totality of

¹⁵Sanday and Headlam, op. cit., p. 157.

Christ's death to us. This is especially clear in the Romans passage where Paul tells us that we "were buried therefore with him by baptism into death." The verses following Rom. 6:3-4 show us this connection between death and burial. Rom. 6:5-11 was our chief text for the previous section of this chapter, "With Christ in His Death." Therefore the meaning of the death with Christ can be applied to the burial with Christ, which is so closely connected to the death. We said above that the death with Christ in the light of the context of Romans six means that "as we appropriate God's grace by participating in Christ's redemptive activity, we become 'dead to sin.'"¹⁶ This is certainly true as we are buried "with him by baptism into death."

Another aspect of the dying-with-Christ theme of St. Paul which was already mentioned in the previous section, is that dying with Christ is dying to the law as a controlling factor in one's life. For the person who is "crucified with Christ" the law is dead. "It is the crucifixion of Christ that killed the power of the law and showed the uselessness of dependence upon works, and in that crucifixion I am 'with Christ.'"¹⁷ This same emphasis is clearly seen in the context of Col. 2:12-14, the second passage which speaks of burial with Christ. These are some of Paul's thoughts that

¹⁶Supra, p. 21.

¹⁷Supra, p. 23.

precede and follow the burial-with-Christ reference. "Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ" (Col. 2:8--King James Version). But now that "you have come to fulness of life in him" (2:10) and "were buried with him in baptism" (2:12), God has "canceled the bond which stood against us with its legal demands; this he set aside, nailing it to the cross" (2:14). As a result the Apostle can continue with this exhortation, "let no one pass judgment on you in questions of food and drink or with regard to a festival or a new moon or a sabbath" (2:16). When we are buried with Christ the law is dead to us. We are with Christ in His total redemptive work, and this means forgiveness and grace and not being bound to the law and the supposed merit of good works.

This burial with Christ is, of course, inseparably linked with Baptism in both passages. This will be taken up in the next chapter of this thesis. We might only note here in anticipation that it is interesting that our Baptism should come up in connection with His burial. We are not told that we are with Christ in His Baptism in the Jordan performed by John, but we are buried with Christ by Baptism. As already said, the burial of Christ marked the finality of His death and the end of His state of humiliation. We are initiated into the union with Christ by Baptism at the point where His death is actually seen to be final--in the

burial.

With Christ in His Resurrection

"I believe . . . one Lord Jesus Christ, . . . the third day He rose again according to the Scriptures; . . ."

At a number of places in his epistles Paul uses the preposition *σύν* or compound verbs with *σύν* to express the idea that we are resurrected with Christ. As was the case for the dying with Christ, the meaning and purpose of the resurrection with Christ is not the same in all the passages. We will see these varying aspects of the expression as we look at the passages individually.

Two of the passages take us to the heart of the atonement's meaning. They show us the meaning and result of Christ's death for us as we appropriate it through our sharing of the Christ-event, as we are "with Christ." The first of these passages is Eph. 2:4-6:

But God, who is rich in mercy, out of the great love with which he loved us, even when we were dead through our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (*συνεζωοποίησεν τῷ Χριστῷ*) (by grace you have been saved), and raised us up with him (*συνῆγειρεν*), and made us sit with him (*συνεκάθισεν*) in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, . . .

After the introductory first chapter of Ephesians Paul gets to the core of his theology in this second chapter. Notice how he begins the chapter, "And you he made alive, when you were dead through the trespasses and sins in which you once walked," The antithesis is between death and life.

By Christ's redemption we who were dead are made alive with Christ. As He was made alive even so we are made alive in and with Him. It is most interesting to see that the σύν- compounds are introduced by Paul at this crucial point.

The second of the passages that brings us to the heart of the atonement's meaning is Col. 2:9-14. We have already looked at it briefly in connection with our burial with Christ, but we quote it again in full:

For in him the whole fulness of deity dwells bodily, and you have come to fulness of life in him, who is the head of all rule and authority. In him also you were circumcised with a circumcision made without hands, by putting off the body of flesh in the circumcision of Christ; and you were buried with him (συνταφέντες αὐτῷ) in baptism, in which you were also raised with him (συνηγέρθητε) through faith in the working of God, who raised him from the dead. And you, who were dead in trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made alive together with him (συνεζωοποίησεν σὺν αὐτῷ), having forgiven us all our trespasses, having canceled the bond which stood against us with its legal demands; this he set aside, nailing it to the cross.

Paul tells us here that we "have come to fulness of life in him." We, who "were dead in trespasses" are "made alive" by God "together with him." As we have been "buried with him," we are now also "raised with him." This is done as God forgives us "all our trespasses" and cancels "the bond which stood against us." Sin is forgiven, and the dead are made alive. As Christ died and rose again, so we rise from death to life with Christ. A clearer explanation of the atonement would be hard to find.

There are two "resurrection-with-Christ passages" that carry this process a step further. They assume the sharing of Christ's resurrection as expressed in the last two passages, and then they push its meaning to the inevitable ethical expectation. Because we are now raised with Christ, we must live as resurrected and remade "new creatures" in Christ. The first of these two passages is Col. 3:1-4:

If then you have been raised with Christ (συνηγέρθητε τῷ Χριστῷ), seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth. For you have died, and your life is hid with Christ (σὺν τῷ Χριστῷ) in God. When Christ who is our life appears, then you also will appear with him (σὺν αὐτῷ) in glory.

This passage simply carries Paul's discussion to its logical point. We saw in Col. 2:20 that "with Christ" we died to "the rudiments of the world" (King James Version) and in Col. 2:9-14 that we have been "buried with him in baptism," "raised with him through faith in the working of God," and "made alive together with him" as He forgives us "all our trespasses." Now it only seems logical that the Apostle should add that being "raised with Christ" we should "seek the things that are above" and "set" our "minds on things that are above." The rest of the chapter shows how this can be carried out with a long list of Christian virtues. "Put to death therefore what is earthly in you: immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry" (3:5). Put away "anger, wrath, malice, slander,

and foul talk" (3:8). Put on "kindness, lowliness, meekness, and patience, forbearing one another" (3:12-13). "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly" (3:16). "Wives, be subject to your husbands" (3:18). And so Paul continues even into chapter four with practical instructions for children, fathers, slaves, masters, and all others, whatever their station in life might be. This whole section on Christian living is triggered by the passage, "If then you have been raised with Christ (συνηγέρθητε τῷ Χριστῷ), seek the things that are above" (3:1).

The second passage with an ethical thrust is Rom. 6:5-11. We have looked at it in connection with our death with Christ, and we discussed the verses immediately preceding it in our section on the burial with Christ. However, we repeat it here as we look this time at the resurrection with Christ:

For if we have been united with him (σύνθετοί γεγονάμεν) in a death like his, we shall certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his (καὶ τῆς ἀναστάσεως ἐσόμεθα). We know that our old self was crucified with him (συνεσταυρώθη) so that the sinful body might be destroyed, and we might no longer be enslaved to sin. For he who has died is freed from sin. But if we have died with Christ (σὺν Χριστῷ), we believe that we shall also live with him (συνζήσομεν). For we know that Christ being raised from the dead will never die again; death no longer has dominion over him. The death he died he died to sin, once for all, but the life he lives he lives to God. So you also must consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus.

We have already seen that the purpose of Romans six is to avoid any possibility of thinking that we can "continue

in sin" because grace abounds. This theme comes through clearly in this passage. Because we have been crucified and raised with Christ, we can "no longer be enslaved to sin." As the raised Christ "lives to God," so "you also must consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus." This emphasis is carried through all of the chapter. Note the verse immediately following the passage, "Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal bodies, to make you obey their passions" (6:12). Now that you have "been set free from sin" you "have become slaves of righteousness" (6:18). Because you have been crucified and raised with Christ, "yield your members to righteousness for sanctification" (6:19). The indicatives of the participation in Christ's resurrection become imperatives. Because you are "united with him in a resurrection like his," you "must consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus."

A parallel to these ideas is in Phil. 3:10-11. We have twice referred to this passage, once in connection with the suffering with Christ and once in connection with the dying with Christ. This passage also mentions the resurrection although not with a σύν. Paul suffered the "loss of all things" (3:8) in order that he might have a righteousness "through faith in Christ" (3:9) and that he "might know (γινῶσκει) him and the power of his resurrection (τὴν δύναμιν τῆς ἀναστάσεως), and may share his sufferings,

becoming like him (συνμορφιζόμενος) in his death, that if possible I may attain the resurrection from the dead" (3:10-11). The word we want to take special note of here is γινῶναι. Paul wanted to "know" Christ and the "power of his resurrection." Γινῶναι means much more than simply "know" as we usually understand the word. It rather means "recognize, feel, appropriate." It is frequently used in the Septuagint for $\gamma\iota\omega\tau$.¹⁸ $\gamma\iota\omega\tau$ goes far beyond a mere intellectual knowledge. It is sometimes used for the most intimate human union possible, the sex act. And here the Greek equivalent γινῶναι is used to link us with the power of Christ's resurrection. This "knowledge" is more than head knowledge. It is "knowledge" so complete that it almost describes a union of the Christian with Christ in His resurrection. It is a "knowledge" that assures us that we are risen with Christ and are therefore "dead to sin."

In the passages which refer to the resurrection with Christ there are repeated occurrences of strong antitheses. We have seen sharply defined contrasts between death and life, sinning and living for God, enslavement and freedom, keeping one's eyes on earthly things and seeking the things above. The resurrection with Christ is always the impetus for the positive side of these contrasts. At one place in

¹⁸J. B. Lightfoot, Saint Paul's Epistle to the Philippians (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1953), p. 150.

Second Corinthians Paul uses $\sigma\upsilon\nu\ \tau\eta\sigma\omicron\upsilon$ to show the big contrast of his life. He says,

We are afflicted in every way, but not crushed; perplexed, but not driven to despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed; always carrying in the body the death of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be manifested in our bodies (2 Cor. 4:8-10).

But Paul's greatest comfort in all of this is in his "knowing that he who raised the Lord Jesus will raise us also with Jesus ($\sigma\upsilon\nu\ \tau\eta\sigma\omicron\upsilon$) and bring us with you into his presence" (4:14). "So," he says, "we do not lose heart. Though our outer nature is wasting away, our inner nature is being renewed every day" (4:16). The big contrast in this passage is between suffering so severe that it seems to Paul that he is always "carrying" in his body "the death of Jesus" and his hope of resurrection "with Jesus."¹⁹ A parallel to this passage is in the first chapter of the same epistle:

For we do not want you to be ignorant, brethren, of the affliction we experienced in Asia; for we were so utterly, unbearably crushed that we despaired of life itself. Why, we felt that we had received the sentence of death; but that was to make us rely not on ourselves but on God who raises the dead; he delivered us from so deadly a peril, and he will deliver us; on him we have set our hope that he will deliver us again (2 Cor. 1:8-10).

Even though $\sigma\upsilon\nu$ is not used, note the contrast here also

¹⁹We might ask here whether this resurrection with Jesus is simply the eschatological hope pointed toward the day of the $\pi\alpha\rho\upsilon\sigma\iota\alpha$ or whether it in any way is a present reality. This question is discussed completely in chapter five.

between the "sentence of death" and the hope of St. Paul in "God who raises the dead."

We have seen from these passages that our resurrection with Christ has three distinct accents in its application. It brings us to the heart of the meaning of the atonement as it shows us that we who were dead in trespasses and sins have been made alive with Christ; it has a practical meaning for our Christian life as it tells us to set our minds on things that are above now that we are raised with Christ; and it comforts us in our afflictions and troubles because we know that "he who raised the Lord Jesus will raise us also with Jesus." But as was the case with the dying with Christ, these three accents are applications of the resurrection with Christ, not explanations. What the resurrection with Christ actually is we cannot understand. It is so close in meaning to the atonement itself that, like the atonement, we can only believe it but can never understand it.

The Church has not overlooked the application of the resurrection with Christ in her worship. We quote two collects as witnesses of this fact. The first is the collect for Palmarum, the sixth Sunday in Lent:

Almighty and everlasting God, who hast sent Thy Son, our Savior Jesus Christ to take upon Him our flesh and to suffer death upon the cross that all mankind should follow the example of His great humility, mercifully grant that we may both follow the example of His patience and also be made partakers of His resurrection [et resurrectionis ejus consortia];

The second is one of the collects for the Feast of our Lord's Resurrection:

Grant, we beseech Thee, Almighty God, that we who celebrate the solemnities of the Lord's resurrection may by the renewal of Thy Holy Spirit rise again from the death of the soul [a morte animae resurgamus];

With Christ in His Session

"I believe in . . . one Lord Jesus Christ, He ascended into heaven, And sitteth on the right hand of the Father;"

There are no passages that refer to any kind of a union that Christians might have with Christ in His ascension. As a matter of fact, this is the only phase of our Lord's redemptive work as expressed by the Nicene Creed not personalized by Paul with his $\sigma\acute{\upsilon}\nu$ concept. For every other statement of Jesus' life, from incarnation to the return in glory, there are Pauline expressions to describe our union with Christ in the historical Christ-event. However, the Church in its ancient prayers has taken the union with Christ and applied it even to the ascension. This is the Collect for the Feast of our Lord's Ascension:

Grant, we beseech Thee, Almighty God, that like as we do believe Thine only-begotten Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, to have ascended into the heavens, so may we also in heart and mind thither ascend and with Him continually dwell;

This is probably merely a metaphorical use of Christ's ascension as an illustration of our "spiritual" ascension

in faith to Almighty God. It would thus be similar to the obviously non-literal Sursum Corda, "Lift up your hearts." Nevertheless, it is most interesting to see that the Church attached itself to this particular illustration.

There is one passage from Ephesians that refers to our session with Christ in the heavenly places. This is Eph. 2:4-6, briefly referred to earlier under the resurrection:

But God, who is rich in mercy, out of the great love with which he loved us, even when we were dead through our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (συνεζωοποίησεν τῷ Χριστῷ) (by grace you have been saved), and raised us up with him (συνῆγειρεν), and made us sit with him (συνεκάθισεν) in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus,

We have already noted that this passage occurs as Paul is discussing the heart of the meaning of the atonement. "By grace" God not only "made us alive together with Christ" and "raised us up with him," but He also "made us sit with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus."

We anticipate the discussion of chapter five a bit again here by noting in passing that this passage cannot be eschatological because συνεκάθισεν as well as the other σύν verbs are aorist. It also obviously cannot be understood in a crass local and historical sense because we are not sitting in heaven. It is probably a way of describing our re-creation in Christ and our total union with Christ, but like the entire union with Christ it is ultimately a mystery that is beyond our comprehension.

With Christ in His Glory

"I believe in . . . one Lord Jesus Christ, . . . he shall come again with glory" After the statement on Christ's session, the Creed continues with the belief that Christ will come again with glory. It is the firm hope of every Christian and the teaching of St. Paul that we will be made partakers of this glory with Christ. The preposition σύν is used in this connection also.

In Colossians three Paul says, "When Christ who is our life appears, then you also will appear with him (σύν αὐτῷ) in glory" (Col. 3:4). In Romans he asserts that we are "heirs with Christ (συγκληρονόμοι δὲ Χριστοῦ), provided we suffer with him (συνπάσχομεν) in order that we may also be glorified with him (συνδοξάσθωμεν)" (Rom. 8:17). And this glory with Christ is so great that "the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing" with it (8:18).

Peter said something similar when he was comforting the suffering Christians to whom he wrote. The fifth chapter of his first epistle begins, "So I exhort the elders among you, as a fellow elder (σὺν πρεσβύτερος)²⁰ and a witness of the sufferings of Christ as well as a partaker in the

²⁰This is an illustration of a σύν word that describes a simple horizontal relationship among Christians. Words such as this are beyond the scope of this thesis.

glory (δόξης κοινῆς) that is to be revealed" (1 Pet. 5:1). And it may not be going too far afield in this connection to remember the words of our Lord in the High Priestly Prayer, "Father, I desire that they also, whom thou hast given me, may be with me (μετ' ἐμοῦ)²¹ where I am, to behold my glory which thou hast given me in thy love for me before the foundation of the world" (St. John 17:24).

By God's grace Christ's glory is our glory, for we shall be with him in his glory.

With Christ in His Second Coming and Judgment

I believe in . . . one Lord Jesus Christ, He shall come again with glory to judge both the quick and the dead;"

There is even a σὺν passage which refers to our being with Christ on the great day of the Last Judgment. The place is First Thessalonians four. Paul does not want to have the brethren ignorant "concerning those who are asleep" as apparently some were. So he assures them that "since we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so, through Jesus, God will bring with him (σὺν αὐτῷ) those who have fallen asleep" (4:14). This is such a positive thing in Paul's mind that he can immediately continue, "this we declare to you by the word of the Lord" (4:15). As the Lord

²¹Supra, p. 8, note 7.

Himself descends "from heaven with a cry of command, with the archangel's call" (4:16), the dead in Christ will rise first. Then "we who are alive, who are left, shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air; and so we shall always be with the Lord (σὺν κυρίῳ)" (4:17). With this knowledge we should "comfort one another" (4:18).

There may be a veiled reference to being with Christ on Judgment Day in one of Paul's cryptic remarks to the Corinthians. When he admonishes the Corinthian Christians for suing each other in secular courts, he adds, "Do you not know that the saints will judge the world? And if the world is to be judged by you, are you incompetent in trivial cases?" (1 Cor. 6:2) This refers to Christ's sharing of His judging and rulership in the Messianic Kingdom.²² Somehow we, the saints, are to be involved with Christ at the Judgment.²³

Living and Reigning with Christ as Heirs of the Kingdom

"I believe in . . . one Lord Jesus Christ,"

²²See Dan. 7:22 and Matt. 20:21.

²³"The early Church ascribed this dignity esp. to the martyrs: τοῦ κυρίου πρέσβυτοι . . . καὶ μίτοχοι τῆς κρίσεως αὐτοῦ καὶ συνδικάζοντες (Euseb., H. E., vi., 42; see Ed.)." G. G. Findlay, "St. Paul's First Epistle to the Corinthians," The Expositor's Greek Testament (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1951), II, 814.

Whose kingdom shall have no end."

Christians are heirs with Christ of this Kingdom. We are "heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ (συγκληρονόμοι δὲ Χριστοῦ), provided we suffer with him (συνπάσχομεν) in order that we may also be glorified with him (συνδοξασθῶμεν)" (Rom. 8:17). The "sure saying" of 2 Tim. 2:11-12 shows that this inheritance will be fulfilled, for we shall "reign with him." "If we have died with him (συνάπεθανομεν), we shall also live with him (συζήσομεν); if we endure, we shall also reign with him (συνβασιλεύσομεν)."

There are a number of other σύν passages which speak of the future living with Christ. Several of them we have touched upon previously in other connections; others are new to this discussion. We shall simply list them here. Most are familiar passages. In the important Romans six passage we remember that Paul says, "if we have died with Christ (ἀπεθάνομεν σὺν Χριστῷ), we believe that we shall also live with him (συζήσομεν)." In Second Corinthians Paul writes, "For though he was crucified through weakness, yet he liveth by the power of God. For we also are weak in him, but we shall live with him (συζήσομεν σὺν αὐτῷ) by the

power of God toward you (εἰς ὑμᾶς)" (2 Cor. 13:4).²⁴ As Paul discusses his sufferings and imprisonments in his letter to the Philippians, he says, "I am hard pressed between the two. My desire is to depart and be with Christ (σὺν Χριστῷ), for that is far better" (Phil. 1:23). We have already looked at the passage in First Thessalonians describing the παρουσία, and we remember Paul's final assertion there, "so we shall always be with the Lord (σὺν κυρίῳ)" (1 Thess. 4:17). Another σὺν passage follows in close connection in the fifth chapter of First Thessalonians: "For God has not destined us for wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, who died for us so that whether we wake or sleep we might live with him (σὺν αὐτῷ)

²⁴This is the King James Version, which is here more literal than the R.S.V. The question is a textual one concerning the last two words of this passage, "toward you" (εἰς ὑμᾶς). Paul is dealing with certain scandals in the Corinthian Church in this epistle, and the R.S.V. interprets this phrase to mean, "in dealing with you we shall live with him." However, there is some textual doubt as to whether εἰς ὑμᾶς is original. The important Vaticanus, the third hand of the Claromontanus, and the Armenian version do not have the phrase. Westcott-Hort puts it into brackets. It is hard to translate εἰς ὑμᾶς in this passage, and the text would seem purer and closer to other similar passages without the addition. The R.S.V. retains the phrase and interprets it. The K.J.V. retains it but hangs it loosely (and senselessly) at the end of the sentence. We would prefer to drop it completely with the Vaticanus and Goodspeed.

ὑπόσμεν)" (1 Thess. 5:9-10).²⁵

Another passage that points to our future life with Christ is Phil. 3:20-21:

But our commonwealth is in heaven, and from it we await a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, who will change our lowly body to be like his (σύνμορφον) glorious body, by the power which enables him even to subject all things to himself.

The context of this passage is completely eschatological. Paul in Philippians three has spoken of his "loss of all things" (3:8) and how he certainly has not "already obtained" (3:12) or is "already perfect" (3:12), but he continues to "press on toward the goal" (3:14), for he knows that his "commonwealth is in heaven" (3:20) where Christ "will change our lowly body to be like his (σύνμορφον) glorious body."

This chapter began with the pregnant adjective *σύνμορφος* as we saw how God predestined us "to be conformed (*συνμόρφους*) to the image of his Son" (Rom. 8:29), and it ends with the same adjective as we see that in heaven God "will change our lowly body to be like his (*σύνμορφον*) glorious body" (Phil. 3:21). It is well that we begin and end at the same point and even with the same term, for in all

²⁵This passage again raises an interesting and familiar question. Is the living with Christ eschatological or a present reality? All the other passages in this section on living and reigning with Christ as heirs of the Kingdom are future and seem to be eschatological, but this one is different. Paul says, "whether we wake or sleep we might live with him." We will discuss this question in chapter five.

its phases there is really only one Christ-event, and Christians are made sharers of all the phases of this event. We take every word of our Creed seriously, and the union with Christ vividly shows us how the benefits and meaning of Christ's work become in essence our very own.

CHAPTER IV

LIVING WITH CHRIST IN THE CHURCH THROUGH THE MEANS OF GRACE

Living with Christ Now in the Church

In the last chapter we saw how Paul teaches that we are united with Christ in all things--in His sufferings, in His death, in His burial, in His resurrection, in His session, in His glory, in His second coming and judgment, and as heirs with Him in His Kingdom. Now we shall see how we as a body of Christians--Christ's Body--are united with Him in His Church.

We are limiting the scope of this thesis to the vertical union of the Christian with Christ. Therefore we are not including a discussion of *σύν* words such as *συγχαίρω*, *συμποδίτης*, and *σύνδισμος*, which express only a straight horizontal relationship among fellow Christians. However, the vertical and the horizontal cannot really be separated. There is one all-inclusive fellowship enfolding both Christ and the members of His Church in a vast horizontal-vertical union. Thornton says,

If the new life is common to the redeemed, it is so because, and only because, it is common to the redeemed and the Redeemer. All that is "common" to man as man he redeemed from being "unclean" by making it his own in order that his holy life might be common to him and

to us and therefore common to us in him.¹

There is one Church, and Christ is the Head of this Church, His Body. Therefore we find some $\sigma\upsilon\nu$ words that are not limited to the vertical or the horizontal but show us both aspects of union and fellowship. We might visualize these distinctions with some illustrations. As much as possible we are limiting this thesis to the vertical union thus:

($\begin{array}{c} \text{Christ} \\ \updownarrow \\ \text{Christian} \end{array}$). The horizontal fellowship in the Church (Christian \longleftrightarrow Christian) is not our primary concern.

However, we find that some $\sigma\upsilon\nu$ words are used in a vertical-horizontal fellowship thus: ($\begin{array}{c} \text{Christ} \\ \updownarrow \\ \text{Christian} \end{array} \longleftrightarrow \text{Christian}$). And ultimately we find that this ($\begin{array}{c} \updownarrow \\ \longleftrightarrow \end{array}$) is the only valid picture. Only in theory can (\updownarrow) and (\longleftrightarrow) exist unconnected. Actually they are inseparable.

In this first section of this chapter we simply want to look at the passages containing the vertical-horizontal words. Most of them are in Ephesians, the great epistle on the unity of the Church.

In the Church "Christ Jesus himself" is "the chief cornerstone, in whom ($\epsilon\nu \hat{\omega}$) the whole structure ($\pi\acute{\alpha}\sigma\alpha \omicron\iota\kappa\omicron\delta\omicron\mu\eta$) is joined together ($\sigma\upsilon\nu\alpha\rho\mu\omicron\lambda\omicron\gamma\omicron\upsilon\mu\acute{\epsilon}\nu\eta$) and grows into a holy temple in the Lord ($\epsilon\nu \kappa\upsilon\rho\iota\acute{\omega}$); in whom ($\epsilon\nu \hat{\omega}$) you also are built ($\sigma\upsilon\nu\omicron\iota\kappa\omicron\delta\omicron\mu\epsilon\iota\sigma\theta\epsilon$) into it for a

¹L. S. Thornton, The Common Life in the Body of Christ (Westminster: Dacre Press, 1946), p. 280.

dwelling place of God in the Spirit" (Eph. 2:20-22). Paul is here talking about the fellowship that Christians have with each other through God's making "peace" for us "in the blood of Christ" (2:13-16). The σύν words here are συν-αρμολογέω ("fit together") and συνοικοδομέω ("build together"). These words in themselves express a horizontal activity of Christians among themselves, but what makes all of this vertical as well as horizontal is the repeated use of ἐν -- "in whom" (ἐν ᾧ), "in the Lord" (ἐν κυρίῳ), and "in whom" (ἐν ᾧ) again.² This preposition ἐν unites the Church to her Lord. There is therefore one vertical-horizontal fellowship, one organism united to the Lord. The two σύν compounds are basically horizontal in meaning, but the vertical element is certainly implicit if not explicit.

Paul's immediate concern in these chapters of Ephesians is the participation of the Gentiles in the Body of Christ. Only a few verses after the above passage he describes "how the Gentiles are fellow heirs (συγκληρονόμοι), members of the same body (σύσσωμα), and partakers (συμμέτοχα) of the promise in Christ Jesus (ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ) through the gospel" (Eph. 3:6). The ἐν Χριστῷ formula again makes a basically horizontal concept

²For a thorough and definitive investigation of the ἐν Χριστῷ formula see Walter James Bartling, "In Christ Jesus," unpublished master's thesis, Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, 1949.

vertical. Christians are all members of the same Body, the Church, but the Head of this Body is Christ Himself. The Body cannot be separated from its Head. There can be no horizontal fellowship without the vertical union and the connection with Christ.

Another Ephesians passage comes in the fourth chapter. Paul is telling the Ephesians "to grow up in every way into him (εἰς αὐτόν) who is the head, into Christ (ὅς ἐστὶν ἡ κεφαλὴ, Χριστός), from whom (ἐξ οὗ) the whole body (πᾶν τὸ σῶμα), joined (συναρμολογούμενον) and knit together (συνβιβασόμενον) by every joint with which it is supplied, when each part is working properly, makes bodily growth and upbuilds itself in love" (Eph. 4:15-16). Here rather than ἐν the prepositions εἰς and ἐξ are used of Christ with the σύν compounds to show the vertical-horizontal union with Christ, the Head of the one Body.

The letter to the Colossians briefly refers to the same thing. When we are carried away with legalistic opinions, says Paul in that epistle, we are "not holding fast to the Head, from whom (ἐξ οὗ) the whole body, nourished and knit together (συνβιβασόμενον) through its joints and ligaments (συνδέσμων), grows with a growth that is from God" (Col. 2:19).

Certainly these passages bear out on a horizontal plane what Paul says of the vertical union in other statements like, "whether we wake or sleep we . . . live with

him" (1 Thess. 5:10) and, "your life is hid with Christ in God" (Col. 3:3).

The Union With Christ is Initiated by Baptism

One of the conclusions of this thesis will be that the union of the Christian with Christ in the Church is a mystery. This fact is probably already obvious to the reader, and we are anticipating nothing that will be a striking revelation later by saying it now. The sacraments of the Church are also mysteries to us, and it is not surprising that we find the sacraments intimately associated with the Christian's union with Christ in the Church. In fact, the Christian's participation in the Christ-event is initiated by God's miraculous working in Holy Baptism. This coming of God into human lives with His grace in a thing we call the Sacrament of Holy Baptism is the beginning of an entirely new relationship with God in Christ. The hostility to God is removed; harmony with God is created. The baptized person is a "new creature," "born again" of "water and the Spirit." He is now with Christ. "For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ" (Gal. 3:27).

In the section, "With Christ in His Burial," we have already examined the two σύν passages that refer to Baptism. They are Rom. 6:3-4 and Col. 2:12:

Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus (ἐβαπτίσθημεν εἰς Χριστὸν) were baptized into his death? We were buried therefore with

him by baptism (συνετάφημεν . . . διὰ τοῦ βαπτισματος) into death, so that as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father we too might walk in newness of life (Rom. 6:3-4).

and you were buried with him in baptism (συνταφέντες αὐτῷ ἐν τῷ βαπτισματι), in which you were also raised with him through faith in the working of God, who raised him from the dead (Col. 2:12).³

We have already pointed out how interesting it is that our Baptism should come up in connection with His burial.

Burial is the mark of the completion and totality of Christ's death. When His body was placed into a tomb, it was a witness to the world that He had died. As He said He would be, so He was put to death. And we are baptized into his death.

"Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ were baptized into his death?" (εἰς τὸν θάνατον αὐτοῦ ἐβαπτίσθημεν). "We were buried therefore with

³Notice Col. 2:11, the verse immediately preceding this passage: "In him also you were circumcised with a circumcision made without hands, by putting off the body of flesh in the circumcision of Christ." Here Paul says that we are circumcised "with a circumcision made without hands" not "with him" but "in him" (ἐν αὐτῷ). In a sense circumcision is the Old Testament counterpart of Baptism. We are circumcised "in him," and we are "buried with him in baptism." The Church has interpreted the circumcision in Christ to be symbolical of the Holy Spirit's cutting away our sinfulness. Note the Collect for the Feast of the Circumcision of our Lord:

O Lord God, who for our sakes hast made Thy blessed Son, our Savior, subject to the Law and caused Him to endure the circumcision of the flesh, grant us the true circumcision of the Spirit that our hearts may be pure from all sinful desires and lusts;

However, as the ensuing discussion proposes to show, Baptism must be thought of as more than a symbol of our putting off of sin. It is the actual removal of the sin as the removal of a spot from a garment.

him by baptism into death (εἰς τὸν θάνατον)" Then Paul continues, "if we have been united with him in a death like his, we shall certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his" (Rom. 6:3-5). And so at this point where His redemptive death is seen to be final and sure we are by Baptism initiated into union with Him.⁴

In the passages that speak of our burial with Christ by Baptism we run headlong into the temptation to take Holy Baptism simply as a symbol of our new life. This view would be something like this: As Christ not only died but rose again, so we in Baptism see a symbol of our death to sin and rising again to a new life. Even the external ceremonies of the Sacrament attract one to this interpretation. Especially immersion with its dramatic and complete covering by the water and the immediate rising from the water clean and washed would seem to be useful for such a view. Even Thornton uses the symbol idea. He says, "Immersion signifies death and burial in one act . . . so also we were

⁴It is interesting to see that Jesus several times speaks of His sufferings and death as a "baptism." Note these verba Christi: "I have a baptism to be baptized with; and how I am constrained until it is accomplished" (Luke 12:50). When James and John ask for special places in the Kingdom, Jesus tells them, "You do not know what you are asking. Are you able to drink the cup that I drink or to be baptized with the baptism with which I am baptized?" (Mark 10:38). Alfred Plummer says, "His passion is a flood in which He must be plunged. The metaphor is a common one in the O.T." Alfred Plummer, "A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Gospel According to St. Luke," The International Critical Commentary (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1951), p. 334.

raised with him from the tomb to a new life."⁵ Certainly this is a useful illustration, but it is not the fundamental meaning of the burial with Christ by Baptism. Baptism is a real union with Christ. It is the beginning of a new relationship with God. It is a miracle of God. By it a man is made into a total new creation in and with Christ. It is much more than a symbol. Albert Schweitzer says,

Baptism is the beginning of the being-in-Christ and the process of dying and rising again which is associated therewith. He [Paul] makes no use of the symbolism of the ceremony to explain what happens. He does not make it an object of reflection. In Rom. 6:3-6 he nowhere suggests that he thinks of Baptism as a being buried and rising again with Christ just because the baptized plunges beneath the water and rises out of it again. These ingenious interpretations have been read into his words by interpreters; Paul himself follows no such roundabout ways. Baptism is for him a being buried and rising again, because it takes place in the name of Jesus Christ, who was buried and rose again.⁶

The preposition *σύν* is the crux of these assertions.

Walter Bartling emphasizes that in Romans six the *συν-ετάφημεν αὐτῷ* of verse four, *συνεσταυρώθη* of verse six, and *ἀπεθάνομεν σὺν Χριστῷ* of verse eight do not mean that Christ's experience is repeated symbolically in the believer at the time of Baptism. He says, "The *σύν* (*Χριστῷ*) stands stubbornly in the way of this interpretation."⁷

⁵Thornton, op. cit., p. 280.

⁶Albert Schweitzer, The Mysticism of Paul the Apostle (New York: Henry Holt and Company, c.1931), p. 19.

⁷Bartling, op. cit., pp. 58 f.

The symbolical meaning would limit the meaning of Baptism to a picture of ethical change in our lives rather than a redemptive act of God which joins us to Christ. But our initiation into Christianity is primarily redemptive and not ethical. We need only think of the implications of infant Baptism. The ethical is, of course, an outgrowth and necessary result of the redemptive act of God, but Baptism itself is an initiation into the redemptive union with Christ.

Therefore there are not two things involved, the one being the historical events of Christ's death, burial, and resurrection, and the second the symbolical passing through by us of the same events. There is one Christ-event, and we by Baptism are drawn into it. "Die Taufe steht nicht als gesondertes Geschehen neben dem Christusgeschehen, sondern ist eine Funktion desselben und zwar so, dass Christus personhaft in ihr handelt."⁸ "Es gibt also kein sakramentales Taufgeschehen neben dem geschichtlichen Christusgeschehen, sondern beides ist eins."⁹

A most interesting but very difficult parallel to all of this is in First Peter. We quote it in full to get the context.

⁸Wilhelm Traugott Hahn, Das Mitsterben und Mitaufstehen mit Christus bei Paulus (Gütersloh: Verlag C. Bertelsmann, 1937), p. 134.

⁹Ibid., p. 135.

For Christ also died for sins once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh but made alive in the spirit; in which he went and preached to the spirits in prison, who formerly did not obey, when God's patience waited in the days of Noah, during the building of the ark, in which a few, that is, eight persons, were saved through water. Baptism, which corresponds to this,¹⁰ now saves you, not as a removal of dirt from the body but as an appeal to God for a clear conscience, through the resurrection of Jesus Christ, who has gone into heaven and is at the right hand of God, with angels, authorities, and powers subject to him (1 Peter 3:18-22).

This passage is, of course, replete with fearful exegetical difficulties, but our only concern here is the introduction of Baptism into this passage. Here we simply want to note in passing three aspects of the passage which drew our attention to it as a parallel. First, we note that Baptism is introduced at the point in Peter's kerygmatic repetition of the Gospel story between the death and the resurrection.

This passage is the locus on the descent into Hell, which, if we can speak of a time sequence here at all, followed immediately upon the burial. Paul says that we are buried with Christ by Baptism. So both Paul and Peter introduce

¹⁰This version, the Revised Standard, connects ἀντί-
τυπον with βάπτισμα and translates, "Baptism, which cor-
responds to this," This would seem to make of Bap-
tism a symbol. However, ἀντίτυπον can better be connected
to ἕκαστος, and thus this passage could be translated, "And
water now saves you too, who are the antitype of Noah and his
company, namely the water of baptism" Edward Selwyn
makes a strong case for this interpretation. He says, "The
order of the words renders it impossible to take ἀντίτυπον
with βάπτισμα" Edward Gordon Selwyn, The First
Epistle of St. Peter (London: MacMillan and Co. Ltd.,
1952), pp. 203 f.

Baptism at this point in Christ's work. Secondly, we note that in this passage of Peter as well as in both the Pauline $\sigma\upsilon\upsilon$ passages on Baptism the resurrection is intimately connected with and follows immediately upon the mention of Baptism. Thirdly, we note that Peter says that Baptism "saves you." This word "saves" like the persistent $\sigma\upsilon\upsilon$ in Romans and Colossians seems to exclude any possibility of a symbolical interpretation.

It is important to see that God is the only active subject in the redemptive act which begins for us in our recreation through Baptism. The title of the last chapter in which we traced the whole process of union through the various phases of Christ's life was, "God Unites the Christian to Christ in His Redemptive Activity." We emphasized the active role of God as the initiator and performer of this miracle. In Baptism we are passive and God is active. In the two passages at hand we see that passives are used. "Do you not know that all of us . . . have been baptized ($\acute{\epsilon}\beta\alpha\pi\tau\iota\sigma\theta\eta\mu\epsilon\nu$) . . . into his death? We were buried ($\sigma\upsilon\nu\epsilon\tau\acute{\alpha}\phi\eta\mu\epsilon\nu$) therefore with him by baptism . . ." (Rom. 6:3-4), "and you were buried ($\sigma\upsilon\nu\tau\alpha\phi\acute{\epsilon}\nu\tau\epsilon\varsigma$) with him in baptism" (Col. 2:12). The passives simply emphasize the activity of God in the miracle of the Sacrament. And, of course, the passives have no point at all if the symbolical explanation of Baptism is adopted.

By this emphasis on our passivity in Baptism we are

not trying to make of the Sacrament a magical thing working ex opere operato in us. "Dieses Taufgeschehen ist kein magisches."¹¹ There must be activity on the part of the recipient of Holy Baptism which could be called an ethical response to the Sacrament. The Sacrament cannot be taken in the abstract apart from life any more than faith can, for "faith apart from works is dead" (James 2:26). Thus also Paul makes it clear that because we are buried with Christ by Baptism, we must "consider" ourselves "dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus" (Rom. 6:11). But we must not confuse cause and effect. Baptism is the cause; the ethical response is the effect. God through the burial with Christ by Baptism into death, which is the Gospel of redemption, gives us the power to respond in our lives. There is certainly something "supernatural" in Baptism but nothing "magical."

The Union with Christ is Sustained
by the Speaking of the Gospel

We have seen that we are initiated by God into the vertical-horizontal relationship with Christ in the Church ($\leftarrow \uparrow \rightarrow$) through Holy Baptism. Baptism is thus a "means of grace." Another "means of grace," a method that God has chosen to sustain and preserve us in the union with Christ

¹¹Rahn, op. cit., p. 134.

is the speaking of the Gospel to one another. As we talk to one another about our Lord's life, passion, death, and resurrection, by which our sins are forgiven and of which we are made sharers, the union of each Christian with Christ is sustained, preserved, and strengthened. It is fascinating to see how this is worked out in Ephesians, for in each of the vertical-horizontal ($\leftarrow \uparrow \rightarrow$) passages in that epistle using $\sigma\acute{\upsilon}\nu$ words, the Gospel, the word of life which the Apostle preached, is a prominent feature. We will look at each of these passages again with this in mind.

In Ephesians two the Church is spoken of as a community of

fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the chief cornerstone, in whom the whole structure is joined together ($\sigma\upsilon\nu\alpha\rho\mu\omicron\lambda\omicron\gamma\omicron\upsilon\mu\acute{\epsilon}\nu\eta$) and grows into a holy temple in the Lord; in whom you also are built ($\sigma\upsilon\nu\omicron\iota\kappa\omicron\delta\omicron\mu\acute{\epsilon}\iota\sigma\theta\epsilon$) into it for a dwelling place of God in the Spirit (Eph. 2:19-22).

What is the "foundation of the apostles and prophets" but the Gospel, the message of a merciful and living God, prophesied in the Old Testament and revealed and proclaimed by the Apostles in the New Testament? This "foundation" is a "means of grace." It is that which sustains the union with Christ that God has initiated through Baptism. The Holy Spirit is as active in the words of the Gospel as He is in the blessed Sacrament of initiation.

In chapter three of Ephesians Paul speaks of the in-

corporation of the Gentiles into the Church. He makes it clear that this inclusion of non-Jews in the Body of Christ is accomplished and maintained by the "mystery . . . made known . . . by revelation . . . to his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit," "this gospel," the preaching of "the unsearchable riches of Christ." We will quote the entire context to get the thrust of the passage.

For this reason . . . assuming that you have heard of the stewardship of God's grace that was given to me for you, how the mystery was made known to me by revelation, as I have written briefly. When you read this you can perceive my insight into the mystery of Christ, which was not made known to the sons of men in other generations as it has now been revealed to his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit; that is, how the Gentiles are fellow heirs (συγκληρονόμα), members of the same body (σῶμα), and partakers (συμμίτοχα) of the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel.

Of this gospel I was made a minister according to the gift of God's grace which was given me by the working of his power. To me, though I am the very least of all the saints, this grace was given, to preach to the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ, and to make all men see what is the plan of the mystery hidden for ages in God who created all things; . . . (Eph. 3:1-9).

Look at the repeated use of words like "revelation," "apostles," "prophets," and "gospel." This passage clearly shows that the mystery of the Gentiles' union with Christ is created and sustained by the preaching of the Gospel.

Another passage is in the fourth chapter of Ephesians.

And his gifts were that some should be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers, for the equipment of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for building up the body of Christ, until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ; so

that we may no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the cunning of men, by their craftiness in deceitful wiles. Rather, speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ, from whom the whole body, joined ($\sigma\upsilon\nu\alpha\rho\mu\omicron\lambda\omicron\gamma\acute{o}\mu\epsilon\nu\omicron\nu$) and knit together ($\sigma\upsilon\mu\beta\iota\beta\alpha\acute{\gamma}\acute{o}\mu\epsilon\nu\omicron\nu$) by every joint with which it is supplied, when each part is working properly, makes bodily growth and upbuilds itself in love (Eph. 4:11-16).

We are all "apostles," "prophets," "evangelists," "pastors," and "teachers," who are "speaking the truth," that is the Gospel, to one another so that we may "grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ." Thus the "whole body," "joined" ($\sigma\upsilon\nu\alpha\rho\mu\omicron\lambda\omicron\gamma\acute{o}\mu\epsilon\nu\omicron\nu$) and "knit together" ($\sigma\upsilon\mu\beta\iota\beta\alpha\acute{\gamma}\acute{o}\mu\epsilon\nu\omicron\nu$) is in union with Christ. This passage is a magnificent description of the Gospel's power to build up the Body into union with Christ. This is the vertical-horizontal Church ($\left\langle \uparrow \right\rangle$) with Christ at the Head and the members daily growing into a closer union with Him.

In addition to these Ephesians passages a few of the other $\sigma\upsilon\nu$ passages that speak of the straight vertical union with Christ (\updownarrow) have hints of the Gospel as the creating and sustaining power in the union with Christ. However, this aspect is not prominent in any of them. We must remember though that in most cases the very statement of the union with Christ is a statement of the Gospel. For example, when Paul tells us that "our old self was crucified with him ($\sigma\upsilon\nu\epsilon\sigma\tau\alpha\upsilon\rho\acute{\omega}\delta\eta$)" so that the sinful body might be destroyed,

and we might no longer be enslaved to sin" (Rom. 6:6), this is a clear preachment of the Gospel in itself. The union with Christ concerns the very heart of the Gospel message-- Christ's suffering, death, and resurrection. Then too the Gospel as a message to people is of essential importance only when we move from the simple vertical union (\updownarrow) to the vertical-horizontal union in the Church ($\leftarrow\uparrow\rightarrow$). The Church by the Gospel, the story of union with Christ, strengthens itself and reaches out to gain others for it.

We will look at a few of these "hints" of the Gospel as a creating and sustaining power in the "vertical" $\sigma\upsilon\nu$ passages. One of the first passages we looked at in this thesis was Rom. 8:29-30.

For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed ($\sigma\upsilon\mu\mu\acute{o}\rho\phi\omicron\upsilon\varsigma$) to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn among many brethren. And those whom he predestined he also called; and those whom he called he also justified; and those whom he justified he also glorified.

We know that the only way in which God "calls" those whom He "predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son" is by the word of the Gospel. It would be hard to find a clearer statement of this than Luther's explanation to the thirt article of the Creed in the Small Catechism. There he says, "The Holy Ghost has called me by the Gospel . . . even as he calls, gathers, enlightens, and sanctifies the whole Christian Church on earth. . . ." A parallel to this is 1 Cor. 1:9: "God is faithful, by whom you were called

into the fellowship (κοινωνία) of his Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord."

Another σύν passage that shows how the union with Christ is sustained by the speaking of the Gospel is 2 Tim. 2:11-12. The context of the "with Christ" statement is what is important there. Paul is telling Timothy to take his "share of suffering as a good soldier of Christ Jesus (2 Tim. 2:3). And within the context of exhortation to bear up under suffering he says,

Remember Jesus Christ, risen from the dead, descended from David, as preached in my gospel, the gospel for which (ἐν ᾧ) I am suffering and wearing fetters, like a criminal. But the word of God is not fettered. Therefore (διὰ τοῦτο) I endure everything for the sake of the elect, that they also may obtain the salvation which in Christ Jesus goes with eternal glory. The saying is sure: If we have died with him (συναπεθάνομεν), we shall also live with him (συζηήσομεν); if we endure, we shall also reign with him (συνβασιδεύσομεν);

It is the Gospel "for which" (ἐν ᾧ) Paul is suffering, and it is "therefore" (διὰ τοῦτο), that is, because of the power of this Gospel, that he can "endure everything for the sake of the elect" and can even say, "we have died with him" (συναπεθάνομεν). Thus we see that which sustains Paul in his suffering and dying with Christ is the Gospel itself.

Still another passage is 1 Thess. 5:9-11.

For God has not destined us for wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, who died for us so that whether we wake or sleep we might live with him (συν αὐτῷ). Therefore (οὖν) encourage one another and build one another up, just as you are doing.

The point here is the connective οὖν. Because "our Lord

Jesus Christ" came and "died for us" so that "we might live with him" (σὺν αὐτῷ), we can "therefore" (διό), because of this Gospel of Jesus' death, "encourage . . . and build one another up" in the union with Him. The Gospel is the power to sustain the union with Christ.

We might use just two non-Pauline parallels to undergird this section. The first is from the words of our Lord. Jesus told His disciples on the night in which He was betrayed that "when my words abide in you" then "you abide in me" (St. John 15:7). The words of Christ enable us to abide in Christ. The second parallel is from the Apostle St. John. John had years of contact with the living Gospel, Jesus Christ Himself, and toward the end of his life he wrote, "that which we have seen and heard we proclaim also to you, so that you may have fellowship (κοινωνία) with (μετά) us; and our fellowship (κοινωνία) is with (μετά) the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ" (1 John 1:3). John's proclamation came from what he saw and heard. And when he proclaimed the Gospel, it was "so that" (ἵνα) his hearers might have horizontal κοινωνία with one another even as his own κοινωνία was a vertical κοινωνία "with (μετά) the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ."

In all of this we want to remember that the very preaching of a Christian's participation in the suffering, death, and resurrection is preaching that Gospel which sustains and strengthens this same union with Christ.

We end this discussion with a pertinent quotation from Wilhelm Hahn:

Es wird noch deutlich werden, dass damit der Mensch durch das Wort der Predigt dem Kreuz und der Auferstehung Christi so einbezogen wird, dass er realen Anteil an diesem Geschehen hat, und dieses sich an ihm selbst ereignet.¹²

The Union with Christ is Sustained
by the Use of Holy Communion

There are no $\sigma\upsilon\upsilon$ passages directly connected with the Sacrament of Holy Communion. However, this Sacrament, so vital to the life and the preservation of the faith of the Church, is with Holy Baptism and the word of the Gospel one of the Church's "means of grace." And so, although there are no $\sigma\upsilon\upsilon$ passages used by St. Paul to describe this Sacrament, there are some important implications that the Blessed Sacrament of the Lord's Supper has for the union with Christ and that the union with Christ has for the Sacrament. Therefore this section on Holy Communion is not a direct discussion of any of Paul's $\sigma\upsilon\upsilon$ passages, but it is a rounding out of the picture of this chapter by briefly listing and discussing some of these implications.

There is an obvious verbal link between the union with Christ and Holy Communion. In this Sacrament our communion is not only with one another at the altar, but it is also

¹²ibid., pp. 129 f.

with the Lord of the Church, Jesus Christ, who is really present in Holy Communion. The communion is a vertical-horizontal ($\leftarrow \uparrow \rightarrow$) communion. The verbal link between the union with Christ and Holy Communion comes through in the Greek word *κοινωνία*. The passage which brings this out is 1 Cor. 10:16-17.

The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not a participation (*κοινωνία*) in the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not a participation (*κοινωνία*) in the body of Christ? Because there is one loaf, we who are many are one body, for we all partake (*μετέχομεν*) of the same loaf.

The whole *κοινωνία* concept is a direct parallel to the *σὺν Χριστῷ* concept in St. Paul's theology. We are with Christ through *κοινωνία* in the body and blood of our Lord in the Blessed Eucharist. If we really believe what we say we believe about the real presence of Jesus Christ in Holy Communion, this carries profound implications for the *σὺν Χριστῷ* concept. Jesus Christ was sacrificed once and for all on the cross of Calvary, but His body broken for us and His blood shed for us are actually and really present in Holy Communion. Therefore we are vitally, profoundly, and really with Christ as we receive this gift of His grace.

In First Corinthians the Church is called the "body of Christ." This Body is the great vertical-horizontal organism into which we are incorporated. The creation of this Body is a miracle, an act of God. In this thesis we have at a number of places stressed the importance of viewing God

as the only creator and initiator of the union with Christ. As God is the active agent miraculously creating the mystical Body, His Church, through the union with Christ, so also it is a supernatural and mysterious act of God that brings the sacramental body of Christ to us in Holy Communion. One miracle is just as great as the other, and we can understand neither of them. When we ask what the connection is between the sacramental body and the mystical body we can only say that the connection is extremely intimate. There is really only one Body of Christ, the Una Sancta, and as we are united with Christ in this Body, the Sacrament of Christ's body and blood is essential.¹³

Another point we must note is the relationship of this second Sacrament to the first Sacrament, Holy Baptism. We saw from St. Paul that we have been buried with Christ by Baptism into Christ's death. As Baptism is initiation into Christ's sacrifice, so Holy Communion sustains and preserves us in the union with this sacrifice. Thornton reminds us, "Every eucharist is a renewal of our initiation into the sacrifice of Christ, with its pattern of suffering and glory."¹⁴

¹³The relationship of the sacramental body of Christ to the mystical Body, the Church, enters into the discussion of Oscar Cullmann in Early Christian Worship, translated from the German by A. Stewart Todd and James B. Torrance (Chicago: Henry Regnery Company, 1953).

¹⁴Thornton, op. cit., p. 349.

In our discussion of Holy Baptism we made quite a point of the fact that Baptism is not merely some kind of a symbol of our new life. Also in Holy Communion we "partake of the fulness of that glory [that is, the sacrificial death of Jesus Christ] when we eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood."¹⁵ This is not simply a reminder of Christ's sacrificial death. We quote Thornton a little more extensively in this connection.

The Christian passover meal is no mere memorial of redemption as the Jewish passover was. In it we partake of the living Christ, so that our life becomes organic to his; or rather that organic union which has already taken place is continuously renewed and built up. Moreover it is a mystical union of the soul with Christ such as St. Paul described in Galatians 2:20. The union is personal and reciprocal. It is a form of mystical identification to which there are no adequate analogies, but which supplies its own authentication.¹⁶

We might question Thornton's use of a phrase like "mystical union of the soul with Christ," but his main point of the reality of the union with Christ in the Holy Eucharist we must accept.

The word "Eucharist" brings to mind another implication that this second Sacrament has for the union with Christ. This is the extent to which we can and should use the word "sacrifice" in Holy Communion. There is a Scriptural use of the word "sacrifice" that refers to our life of work,

¹⁵Ibid., p. 372.

¹⁶Ibid., p. 423.

praise, worship, and thanksgiving (εὐχαριστία) as a response to Christ's all-sufficient sacrifice on the cross. Of course, as the Lutheran Confessions so clearly state,¹⁷ this is always a "eucharistic" sacrifice and never a propitiatory sacrifice. But if there is sacrifice on our part in Holy Communion, eucharistic though it be, is not this perhaps a key to the understanding of the Pauline idea of being with Christ, especially as it is related to Holy Communion? Ynve Brilioth, who made a monumental study of eucharistic faith and practice, gives us something to think about in this connection. He says,

There [in Hebrews] it is Christ who offers His sacrifice, not we; but Luther's thought goes on to find some place for an offering made by man, for since we are by the Sacrament incorporated into Christ, we there "offer ourselves up with Christ," sharing in His sacrifice [my italics]. Here he is in contact with the highest conception of the Eucharistic sacrifice in the Early Church, the self-oblation of the Church to God in union with the one sacrifice [my italics]. But unfortunately he never worked out this idea fully, for the blossoming of this gracious and spiritual doctrine was cut short by the icy winds of controversy; and the failure of the Lutheran churches to recover the idea, either in liturgy or in doctrine, has led to their permanent impoverishment. For the sacrificial idea lies so near to the heart of Christianity that it can never be neglected with impunity. But any doctrine of a material presentation made by man to God must involve the paganizing of the Church's worship. The only conception of sacrifice which is beyond all criticism is that of the self-devotion of man himself to God; such is the one sacrifice of Christ, and such is the self-oblation of

¹⁷The Apology of the Augsburg Confession, Article XXIV.

the humble communicant through him.¹⁸

There are at least two other implications that Holy Communion has for the *σὺν Χριστῷ* concept. Both are relative to the entire with-Christ theology and will be discussed at length in ensuing chapters. We simply mention them here. The first is the obvious difficulty of time,¹⁹ which hangs over our whole discussion of the union with Christ and which is especially prominent in any discussion of the Lord's Supper. If Christ some two thousand years ago died once and for all time at a historical place and time, and today He is really present in body and blood in the Sacrament of Holy Communion, and we are thus united with Him in His sacrifice of Calvary, we must face the difficulty of the breakdown of normal human time categories. We only set this up as a problem now and suggest no solution here. Wilhelm Hahn shows us what is involved thus:

In ihn sind die Glaubenden und insbesondere die Empfänger des Abendmahls einbezogen, sie alle haben an ihm teil, sind ihm gleichzeitig geworden. Der "mystische" Leib kommt also nur zustande durch Einbeziehung in den geschichtlichen.²⁰

¹⁸Inve Brillioth, Eucharistic Faith and Practice Evangelical and Catholic, translated from the Swedish by A. G. Herbert (London: Society For Promoting Christian Knowledge, 1930), p. 138.

¹⁹Cfr. chapter five.

²⁰Hahn, op. cit., p. 146.

Finally there is the question of "mysticism."²¹ We have run across terms here like "mystical union" and "mystical identification." The problem of mysticism is especially relevant to a discussion of this Blessed Sacrament since Holy Communion attracts "mystics" and plays an important part in their lives and theologies. We only want to note one fact here. That is the interesting fact that *μυστήριον* was translated "sacramentum" at a number of places in the Vulgate, and the use of the word "mysteries" was used for the sacraments by Ambrose and Chrysostom as early as the fourth century.²² It is interesting that this connection between sacrament and mystery was made so early and so consistently in the history of the Church.

When all is said and done, we can still say unequivocally that we are with Christ in a most special way as we receive Christ's body and blood in the Holy Sacrament of the Altar. As in the preaching of the Gospel, but in a more visual and actual way, the union with Christ is sustained and preserved through Holy Communion. The doctrine of the union with Christ and the Sacrament of Holy Communion have strong implications for each other.

²¹Cfr. chapter six.

²² Gerhard Kittel, editor, Theologisches Wörterbuch zum Neuen Testament (Stuttgart: Verlag von W. Kohlhammer, 1938), IV, 833.

Is the Union with Christ the Same
as Faith in Christ?

In this chapter we have been seeing how we live with Christ in the Church through the means of grace. We have seen how the straight vertical union of the Christian with Christ must extend to a vertical-horizontal relationship with Christ as we together are members of His Body, the Church. God initiates us into the union with Christ through Holy Baptism, for we are buried with Him by Baptism into His death. The union with Christ is preserved and sustained through the other means of grace, the word of the Gospel and the Sacrament of Christ's body and blood. Now if the means of grace create and preserve the union with Christ, and we know that the same means of grace create and preserve faith, is not the union with Christ simply another way of describing faith? Can we say that the whole picture of union with Christ as we have traced it above is simply a vivid metaphor for faith in Christ?

There are some who would say, "yes," to this question. In examining the $\acute{\epsilon}\nu \chi\rho\iota\sigma\tau\acute{\omega}$ formula, an expression closely related to the $\sigma\acute{\upsilon}\nu \chi\rho\iota\sigma\tau\acute{\omega}$ concept Walter Bartling states, "I believe it is a profound intuition of the truth which has led many interpreters to discuss the $\acute{\epsilon}\nu \chi\rho\iota\sigma\tau\acute{\omega}$ in the con-

text of Paul's teaching on πίστις .²³ He also says, "The 'being in Christ' describes not only the context of faith, but is itself a beautiful description of faith."²⁴ Although Bartling is specifically referring to the ἐν Χριστῷ formula, the "many interpreters" he mentions are considering σὺν Χριστῷ as well as ἐν Χριστῷ. We assume this from the evidence he gives, especially a quotation from Feine which reads, "Erst in diesen Aussagen (ἐν Χριστῷ — σὺν Χριστῷ) tritt uns die ganze Tiefe des paulinischen Glaubenserlebnisses entgegen."²⁵ Albert Schweitzer also points out that many have tried to make "union with Christ" and "being in Christ" the same as "belief in Christ."²⁶

One's first impulse is that this identification is correct and is the key which solves the whole problem of what the union with Christ is. However, there are some who deny that the union with Christ can be regarded as the same as faith in Christ. Schweitzer himself is one of these. He says that making the union with Christ the same as belief in Christ is accomplished by "verbal ingenuity," and that it is "nowhere indicated by Paul" and "nowhere presupposed by him."²⁷

²³Bartling, op. cit., p. 75.

²⁴Ibid., p. 76.

²⁵Ibid., p. 75.

²⁶Schweitzer, op. cit., pp. 116 f.

²⁷Ibid.

At this point we find ourselves in agreement with Schweitzer.²⁸ We see four compelling reasons why the union with Christ described by St. Paul with his *οὐ* words and as set forth in this thesis cannot simply be identified with faith in Christ.

First, there is the simple fact that *πίστις* is found

²⁸We agree with his conclusion at this point although our reasons are not the same as his. Schweitzer comes to his conclusion on the basis of this reasoning:

The relationship of faith in Christ to union with Christ is for him [Paul] thus: that belief in Christ being present, union with Christ automatically takes place under certain circumstances, that is to say, when the believer causes himself to be baptized. Without baptism there is no being-in-Christ! The peculiarity of the Pauline mysticism is precisely that being-in-Christ is not a subjective experience brought about by a special effort of faith on the part of the believer, but something which happens, in him as in others, at baptism. (p. 117)

We must criticize this reasoning on four counts. (1) Schweitzer categorically places faith before Baptism, and says that the union with Christ only follows faith "under certain circumstances," that is, "when the believer causes himself to be baptized." Although we do not say that the union with Christ and faith are the same thing, as long as we are on this earth before our Lord's *παρουσία* we cannot conceive of them being separated. If we must use a sequence of events at all, we would have to reverse Schweitzer's sequence. In other words, when we are buried with Christ by Baptism, faith follows as the gift of the Holy Ghost. (2) The believer does not "cause himself to be baptized." What about the baptizing of an infant? Baptism is a gift given and "caused" by God. (3) We would object to the use of the word "automatically" in connection with Baptism. It is too close to the word "magically," which we must reject. We must always remember that God is an active agent in Baptism, and it is not "automatic" or "magic." Schweitzer says that the believer "causes himself to be baptized," and then "union with Christ automatically takes place." We would have to say that God causes a person to be baptized and simultaneously unites the person with Christ actively and consciously, not "automatically." (4) Faith is not a "subjective experience" or something which involves a human "special effort." It is a gift of God as is Baptism and the union with Christ.

in connection with the $\sigma\acute{\upsilon}\nu$ words in only a few of the $\sigma\acute{\upsilon}\nu$ passages. Even a roundabout contextual connection we find only occasionally. The few passages where the two concepts are connected by the context we will examine below, but the majority of the $\sigma\acute{\upsilon}\nu$ passages say nothing of faith. As far as the frequency of $\pi\acute{\iota}\sigma\tau\acute{\iota}\varsigma$ in connection with $\acute{\epsilon}\nu \chi\rho\iota\sigma\tau\acute{\omega}$ goes, Bartling admits that his formula also is rarely connected with $\pi\acute{\iota}\sigma\tau\acute{\iota}\varsigma$. But he brushes this aside as unimportant because he starts with the assumption that $\pi\acute{\iota}\sigma\tau\acute{\iota}\varsigma$ and $\acute{\epsilon}\nu \chi\rho\iota\sigma\tau\acute{\omega}$ mean the same thing. He says,

since it is true that $\pi\acute{\iota}\sigma\tau\acute{\iota}\varsigma$ and $\acute{\epsilon}\nu \chi\rho\iota\sigma\tau\acute{\omega}$ are but different ways of expressing the same idea, then it should not surprise us that there are relatively few passages in which the two are immediately connected.²⁹

This is too pat. It may be true for the $\acute{\epsilon}\nu \chi\rho\iota\sigma\tau\acute{\omega}$ formula.³⁰ We do not know. That question is beyond the scope of this thesis. But there is absolutely no warrant for making

²⁹Bartling, op. cit., pp. 77 f.

³⁰Bartling would probably be right if Ernst Lohmeyer is right when he sharply distinguishes $\sigma\acute{\upsilon}\nu \chi\rho\iota\sigma\tau\acute{\omega}$ from $\acute{\epsilon}\nu \chi\rho\iota\sigma\tau\acute{\omega}$. Lohmeyer maintains that $\acute{\epsilon}\nu \chi\rho\iota\sigma\tau\acute{\omega}$ refers only to the Christian's existence in this life while $\sigma\acute{\upsilon}\nu \chi\rho\iota\sigma\tau\acute{\omega}$ refers to an existence which goes far beyond all time and space. For Lohmeyer $\sigma\acute{\upsilon}\nu \chi\rho\iota\sigma\tau\acute{\omega}$ is much more inclusive than $\acute{\epsilon}\nu \chi\rho\iota\sigma\tau\acute{\omega}$ especially since it includes the being-with-Christ in the sacraments and after the $\pi\alpha\rho\omicron\upsilon\sigma\iota\delta$. Ernst Lohmeyer, " $\sigma\acute{\upsilon}\nu \chi\rho\iota\sigma\tau\acute{\omega}$," Festgabe für Adolph Deissmann (Tübingen: Verlag von J. C. B. Mohr, 1927), pp. 220, 230, 257.

Thus if we limit $\acute{\epsilon}\nu \chi\rho\iota\sigma\tau\acute{\omega}$ as Lohmeyer does, we could understand how the formula could be closely associated if not identical with faith, which is something we need and use here in this life before the $\pi\alpha\rho\omicron\upsilon\sigma\iota\delta$.

such an assumption with the $\sigma\upsilon\nu$ $\chi\rho\iota\sigma\tau\acute{\omega}$ concept. If $\pi\acute{\iota}\sigma\tau\iota\varsigma$ and $\sigma\upsilon\nu$ $\chi\rho\iota\sigma\tau\acute{\omega}$ do mean the same thing, and with this we cannot agree, it is definitely not because there are many instances where the terms explain each other or are even found adjacent to each other.

The second reason why the union with Christ as expressed by the $\sigma\upsilon\nu$ passages cannot be identified with faith in Christ is because it contains such diffuse and diverse elements. We have seen, for example, that it includes the experience of suffering with Christ (Rom. 8:16-17). All the evidence points to the conclusion that this means a real, genuine, physical suffering in the body, sufferings which Christians must often bear because of their faith in Christ. Christians are to view this suffering as suffering with Christ. It is hard to see how this suffering could be twisted by "verbal ingenuity" simply to mean "faith in Christ." Then there is the striking inclusion of Holy Baptism in the union with Christ. We are buried with Christ by Baptism into death. This Baptism is an active miracle of God by which we are born again and made into new creatures in Christ. Infants are baptized and also receive the full benefits of the Sacrament. It is true that faith is also a miracle of God, and we are even willing to say that infants can "believe." However, fiducia as we usually understand it does imply an intellectual basis of knowledge and agreement, and because of this intellectual aspect of faith in Christ,

we cannot simply identify faith in Christ with the miraculous union with Christ initiated by Baptism. The two are closely related but are not the same thing. There are other vivid elements in the union with Christ concept as we have examined it that impel us not to simply identify it with faith. For example, we are crucified with Christ (Gal. 2:19), raised with him (Col. 3:10), and made to sit with Him in heavenly places (Eph. 2:6). This whole concept of union with Christ as expressed by Paul's $\sigma\upsilon\nu$ words is too diffuse, too vivid, too real, too sacramental, too eschatological, too closely identified with the redemption of Christ itself to simply be understood as a metaphor for faith in Christ. Perhaps this second reason for coming to this conclusion will be regarded as extremely subjective, and perhaps it is, but the more one immerses himself in the union-with-Christ passages, the more he sees it as an actual reality, and the less he is willing to merely identify it with abstract "faith."

The third compelling reason why the union with Christ cannot be identified with faith in Christ was touched on above with the phrase "too eschatological." The whole question of whether or not the "with Christ" concept is completely or partially eschatological is examined in the next chapter, but here we can say that sometimes it definitely is eschatological. These three passages are some of the clearest examples: We know "that he who raised the Lord Jesus

will raise us also with Jesus (σὺν Ἰησοῦ) and bring us with you into his presence" (2 Cor. 4:14). "But our commonwealth is in heaven, and from it we await a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, who will change our lowly body to be like his (σὺμμορφόν) glorious body, by the power which enables him even to subject all things to himself" (Phil. 3:20-21). "I am hard pressed between the two. My desire is to depart and be with Christ (σὺν Χριστῷ), for that is far better" (Phil. 1:23). Now we know that after our Lord's second coming and when we are with Him in heaven, there will be no need for faith as we now understand it. Faith is for sinners who are bound down to the earth awaiting the consummation of their redemption. For "we know that while we are at home in the body we are away from the Lord, for we walk by faith, not by sight. We are of good courage, and we would rather be away from the body and at home with the Lord (πρὸς τὸν κύριον)" (2 Cor. 5:6-8). Therefore if "faith" is something we need only before our Lord's παρουσία and while we are physically away from Him, while the union with Christ extends beyond the παρουσία, then we cannot simply say that the union with Christ and faith in Christ are the same thing.

The fourth reason why the union with Christ and faith in Christ cannot be identical is a little more involved. Under this reason we will discuss the few σὺν passages in which we do find πίστις connected. This is the argument in

brief: We have tried to show that the union with Christ is the actual participation in the redemptive work of Christ. It is not simply describing the benefit or result of the redemption in a man's life, but it is describing the redemption itself as its meaning becomes part of the person upon whom God acts. We suffer; we are crucified; we are raised; we shall live--with Him. The union with Christ is the redemption itself rather than simply the trust in God which the message of the redemption produces. We cannot say that the union with Christ is the same as faith in Christ any more than we would say that the redemption is the same as faith in Christ. We would say, however, that the union with Christ is the redemption made personal to an individual, and this redemptive union is appropriated and lived by faith. It is not faith that causes the redemptive union with Christ, but it is the message of the redemptive union by which the Holy Spirit produces and sustains our faith. This cause-effect relationship must be clearly understood. Only after we have carefully distinguished the redemption of Christ of which we are made sharers and faith in Christ by which we appropriate the redemption, can we look at the passages that have πίστις in the context with σύν.

The first such passage is Gal. 2:20.

I have been crucified with Christ (Χριστῷ συνεσταύρωμαι); it is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me; and the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith (ἐν πίστει) in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.

It is true that the big point of Galatians two is justification by faith, but Paul nowhere says that faith and the crucifixion with Christ are the same thing. He simply says that the life he lives as one who is crucified with Christ, that is, one who is redeemed by Christ from sin, is a life that is lived by faith. The redemptive union with Christ produces and sustains his faith in Christ.

Another σύν passage that uses πίστις in its context is in Ephesians two.

God, who is rich in mercy, . . . even when we were dead through our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (συνεζωοποίησεν τῷ Χριστῷ) (by grace you have been saved), and raised us up with him (συνήγειρεν), and made us sit with him (συνεκάθισεν) in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, . . . For by grace you have been saved through faith (διὰ πίστεως); . . . (Eph. 2:4-8).

We saw in chapter three that this is one of the passages that takes us to the heart of the atonement's meaning. The redemptive union with Christ, so vividly described here with three σύν words, is more adequately explained with the phrase "by grace" (τῇ γὰρ χάριτι) than with the phrase "through faith" (διὰ πίστεως). Our gracious God is the creator and sustainer of this atoning redemptive union. Faith is then the result of God's grace; it is produced by the "means of grace." It is through faith that a man lives in grace when God has united him to Christ. This passage does not say that the atoning redemption, as described here with three σύν words is the same as faith.

Another σύν passage that describes the core meaning of the atonement is in Colossians. Here too the phrase διὰ τῆς πίστεως occurs:

you were buried with him (συνταφέντες) in baptism, in which you were also raised with him (συνηγέρθητε) through faith (διὰ τῆς πίστεως) in the working of God, who raised him from the dead. And you, who were dead in trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made alive together with him (συνεζωοποίησεν σὺν αὐτῷ), having forgiven us all our trespasses . . . (Col. 2:12-13).

The same things that have been said of the previous passages apply here. Faith and the redemptive union are not the same thing. The instrumental διὰ shows that faith is the way in which the union with Christ is shown and carried out in a man's life.

A passage that gives us a little more difficulty is Phil. 3:9-10. In this chapter of Philippians Paul is telling his readers not to depend on works but on faith in Christ for righteousness. He speaks of

not having a righteousness of my own, based on law, but that which is through faith (διὰ πίστεως) in Christ, the righteousness from God that depends on faith (ἐπιτῆ πίστει); that I may know him and the power of his resurrection, and may share his sufferings, becoming like him in his death (συμμορφούμενος) . . .

One might quickly assume here that "faith" and the present participial phrase, "becoming like him in his death," are the same thing, but we must remember that redemption through the suffering and death of Christ and faith in Christ are not identical. When we share the sufferings and death of Christ, this redemption works itself out in the life of a man through

faith. Note the force of the prepositions $\delta\iota\acute{\alpha}$ and $\epsilon\pi\acute{\iota}$ with genitive and dative respectively. In this passage also there is no real reason for identifying with each other the redemptive union with Christ and faith in Christ.

These are the only $\sigma\acute{\upsilon}\nu$ passages in which faith and the union with Christ are found in any kind of connection. All the other $\sigma\acute{\upsilon}\nu$ passages--Rom. 6:3-11; Rom. 8:16-17; Rom. 8:29-30; Rom. 3:32; 2 Cor. 13:4; Eph. 2:20-22; 2 Cor. 4:14; Eph. 3:6; Eph. 4:12,15-16; Phil. 1:23; Phil. 3:20-21; Col. 2:20; Col. 3:1-4; 1 Thess. 4:14,17; 1 Thess. 5:9-10; and 2 Tim. 2:11-12--do not even use $\pi\acute{\iota}\sigma\tau\iota\varsigma$ in a roundabout contextual connection.

On the basis of the above evidence we must conclude that the union with Christ is not simply a metaphor for faith in Christ. The four reasons for this conclusion in summary are: (1) We do not find $\pi\acute{\iota}\sigma\tau\iota\varsigma$ in close connection with the $\sigma\acute{\upsilon}\nu$ concept. It is found even in the context in only a limited number of the passages. (2) The union with Christ concept is too diverse and vivid to be a metaphor for faith. (3) The union with Christ is sometimes totally eschatological. "Faith," on the other hand, in its usual sense, will not be necessary after the $\pi\alpha\rho\upsilon\sigma\iota\acute{\alpha}$ while we will continue to be "with Christ." (4) The union with Christ is being drawn into the redemptive activity of Christ. The message of this single redemption in which we participate produces faith, and thus faith and the redemptive

union cannot be made identical.

This conclusion has been reached only after living with the concept of union with Christ through a lengthy study of the passages involved. We must admit that our first assumption was that the union with Christ and faith are the same thing. At first this section of this chapter was entitled, "Christians Live with Christ by Faith," but this had to be changed to a question, "Is the Union with Christ the Same as Faith in Christ?" Our answer is, "no."

Of course, with all of this we do not mean to exclude faith from the union with Christ or completely separate the two ideas. We merely say that the two are not identical. Obviously there is a close involvement between them. Faith is the agent which makes the redemptive union with Christ meaningful in people's lives. We can say that "we have boldness and confidence of access through our faith in him" (Eph. 3:12). We can go along with Luther who uses faith as the link between Christ and us in the redemptive union when he says,

the third incomparable benefit of faith is this, that it unites the soul with Christ as a bride is united with her bridegroom. And by this mystery, as the Apostle teaches, Christ and the soul become one flesh. . . . it follows that all they have they have in common, the good as well as the evil, . . . Christ is full of grace, life and salvation; the soul is full of sins, death and condemnation. Now let faith come between them, and it shall come to pass that sins, death

and hell are Christ's, and grace, life and salvation are the soul's.³¹

³¹Martin Luther, "Treatise on Christian Liberty," Works of Martin Luther (Philadelphia: Muhlenberg Press, c.1943), II, 320.

One of the major problems in studying Paul's concept of union with Christ as expressed by the preposition *en* is the question of time. How can we understand Paul's apparent disregard of time? Does St. Paul say that we suffer, die, are buried, and are raised again with Christ when these events happened to Christ some two thousand years ago? How can Paul sometimes use the past tense *scripsi* and say, "we have been raised with Christ," and other times the future tense, "we shall be raised with Christ," for the same phrase of union with Christ? Does the union with Christ refer to an eschatological living with Christ after the *resurrection*, or is it a present reality, or does it chiefly concern itself with a past event in a Christian's life such as baptism? These are some of the questions we are attempting to answer in this chapter.

Thus far we have looked at the passages in which Paul presents his theology of the union with Christ. We have seen that Paul teaches this doctrine vividly and clearly. We have seen that it has many different aspects. However, we have not yet faced squarely the problem of time in this

CHAPTER V

THE PROBLEM OF TIME IN THE UNION WITH CHRIST

The Problem of Time in the Union with Christ

One of the major problems in studying Paul's concept of union with Christ as expressed by the preposition $\sigma\upsilon\check{\nu}$ is the question of how we can understand Paul's apparent disregard of time. How can St. Paul say that we suffer, die, are buried, and are raised again with Christ when these events happened to Christ some two thousand years ago? How can Paul sometimes use the past tense aorist and say, "we have been raised with Christ," and other times the future tense, "we shall be raised with Christ," for the same phase of union with Christ? Does the union with Christ refer to an eschatological living with Christ after the $\pi\alpha\rho\omicron\upsilon\sigma\iota\kappa\alpha$, is it a present reality, or does it chiefly concern itself with a past moment in a Christian's life such as Baptism? These are some of the questions we are attempting to answer in this chapter.

Thus far we have looked at the passages in which Paul presents his theology of the union with Christ. We have seen that Paul teaches this doctrine vividly and clearly. We have seen that it has many different aspects. However, we have not yet faced squarely the problem of time in this

doctrine. Questions concerning time have been dogging our progress as we have examined the passages involved, and we have been conscious that this problem is present and is quite real, but beyond a few brief references to the problem we have not yet tried to solve it.

Wilhelm Traugott Hahn uses as a frontispiece for his book, Das Mitsterben und Mitaufgerstehen mit Christus bei Paulus, this quotation from Kierkegaard's Der Begriff der Angst:

Der Begriff, um den sich im Christentum alles dreht, das, was alles neu macht, ist die Fülle der Zeit; sie ist aber der Augenblick als das Ewige, und doch ist dieses Ewige zugleich das Zukünftige und das Vergangene. Wenn man nicht darauf achtet, kann man nicht einen Begriff von ketzerischen und verräterischen Zusätzen, welche ihn sprengen, freihalten.

By beginning with this quotation Hahn shows that one of his major concerns in his book is the problem of time, and it is. This quotation from Kierkegaard also shows us that in a discussion of the problem of time we are apt to get into philosophical questions as we explore and try to solve this issue. However, in this discussion we attempt to remain as closely as possible to the evidence and the conclusions provided by a study of the passages themselves.

In non-Christian religions and pagan philosophies time is often regarded as cyclic rather than linear. In other words, the pagan view of time is that all things that can happen have happened, and human beings are constantly traversing the same round of events and experiences. In opposi-

tion to this, however, the Christian concept of time is distinctly linear. Time is a reality for Christians. The Holy Scriptures do not make light of it. We know that we are moving from event to event, from day to day and year to year, from birth to death. St. Augustine set much of the theological basis for the Christian linear concept of time. His discussions of the two great dispensations in history--before and after Christ, the coming of Christ at a point in history, and the doctrines of creation, eternity, and time, set the tone for much of the later Christian thinking. However, can we say that for the individual Christian time is always completely linear? When we see a pregnant concept like the union with Christ, we wonder whether time in Christian theology cannot sometimes be "cyclic" and repetitive in character. What are we to do with a passage that speaks of the "Lamb slain from the foundation of the world"?¹ These questions must be asked as we study Paul's doctrine of the Christian's union with Christ.

We must, of course, always safeguard the historicity of the cross of Jesus Christ when we ask these questions. Thornton, for example, is careful to do so. He says,

¹Rev. 13:8. King James Version. Although the thought of this translation is interesting, the R.S.V. is probably correct when it translates this verse, "every one whose name has not been written before the foundation of the world in the book of life of the Lamb that was slain." A comparison with Rev. 17:8 shows that ἀπὸ καταβολῆς κόσμου most likely goes with γέγραπται . . . ἐν τῷ βιβλίῳ τῆς ζωῆς.

It would not . . . be sufficient to say simply that the historical event of our Lord's crucifixion was a dramatic representation in the outward order of that which takes place in us in a mystical and spiritual sense. For the death of Christ upon the Cross was, in the first place, a real enactment in history of God's victory over the powers of darkness.²

This fact of God's acting uniquely and decisively in history is something that Augustine saw clearly.

In the Christian assertion that God has acted in a decisive and unique way in Jesus Christ at a given point in history, Augustine sees Christianity declaring a truth which Platonic philosophy can never understand.³

We approach the problem of time in the union with Christ with this fact firm and unshaken: God acted through Jesus Christ at a given place, Calvary, in time, the reign of Pontius Pilate, to redeem mankind by the blood of the cross. But now when we participate in the redemptive acts of Christ are we somehow brought back in time to the first century? Or is the first century brought up in time to us? Hahn puts the question this way:

Wie kann Paulus die reale, persönliche Beteiligung des konkreten Menschen, der aus seinem geschichtlichen Ort nicht zu lösen ist, an einem Geschehen der Vergangenheit annehmen, das ebenfalls seinen festen geschichtlichen Platz hat?⁴

²L. S. Thornton, The Common Life in the Body of Christ (Westminster: Dacre Press, 1946), p. 146.

³Roy W. Battenhouse, A Companion to the Study of St. Augustine (New York: Oxford University Press, 1955), p. 9.

⁴Wilhelm Traugott Hahn, Das Mitsterben und Mitauferstehen mit Christus bei Paulus (Gütersloh: Verlag C. Bertelsmann, 1937), p. 88.

We will approach the problem in the following way. First, we want to see how St. Paul actually uses his tenses in the $\sigma\upsilon\nu$ passages. This is basic textual evidence. Secondly, we want to learn as far as it is possible, whether the union with Christ concept is eschatological, non-eschatological, or partially eschatological. Finally we will have a brief section giving our conclusions.

The Use of the Tenses in the $\Sigma\upsilon\nu$ Passages

Paul's use of the Greek tenses with his $\sigma\upsilon\nu$ words presents us with a rather complex and difficult picture. However, we must attempt to see the picture clearly in order to understand the union with Christ. To get the full picture we have to examine not only the tenses of the verbs prefixed with $\sigma\upsilon\nu$, but we also have to study the tenses of the verbs used in connection with the compound adjectives and prepositional phrases using $\sigma\upsilon\nu$. With his $\sigma\upsilon\nu$ words Paul usually uses the present, future, and aorist tenses. See tables four, five, and six for a list of the forms and tenses involved.

As we analyze the use of these different tenses we get a varied and broad picture of the union with Christ. In chapter three of this thesis we examined the phases of Christ's redemptive work in the sequence of the Nicene Creed. Here we shall go through these same phases of our Lord's life, but this time the examination will be from the point

of view of the tenses used and the time element involved in our union with Christ in these events.

The first phase is suffering with Christ. The only direct mention of our union with Christ in His sufferings using a σύν word is in the present tense. Paul says that we will be "fellow heirs with Christ, provided we suffer with him (συνπάσχομεν) . . ." (Rom. 8:17). All the parallels to this idea that we looked at are in the present tense also: "For as we share abundantly in Christ's sufferings . . ." (2 Cor. 1:5); "I . . . share his sufferings . . ." (Phil. 3:10); "I complete what is lacking in Christ's afflictions . . ." (Gal. 6:17); and "you share Christ's sufferings . . ." (1 Peter 4:13). Evidently then this phase of the union with Christ refers to our actual physical sufferings with Christ.

Dying with Christ is usually expressed in the aorist tense. Thus it becomes a specific event in the past life of the Christian. The only two occurrences of συνσταυρόω involve past time. These occurrences are, "our old self was crucified with him (συνεσταυρώθη) . . ." (Rom. 6:6) and, "I have been crucified with Christ (συνεσταύρωμαι) . . ." (Gal. 2:20). Συναποθνήσκω and ἀποθνήσκω σὺν Χριστῷ are in all cases used in the aorist: "If we have died with him (συναπεθάνομεν) . . ." (2 Tim. 2:11); "if we have died with Christ (ἀπεθάνομεν σὺν Χριστῷ) . . ." (Rom. 6:8); and "If with Christ you died (ἀπεθάνετε σὺν

TABLE 4

TENSES OF PAUL'S ΣΥΝ VERBS

Pauline Occurrence	Form Used	Tense
Phil. 3:10	συμμορφιζόμενος	present
Rom. 8:17	συμπάσχομεν	"
Rom. 6:6	συνεσταυρώθη	aorist
Gal. 2:20	συνεσταύρωμαι	perfect
2 Tim. 2:11	συναπεθάνομεν	aorist
Rom. 6:4	συνετάφημεν	"
Col. 2:2	συνταφέντες	"
Eph. 2:5	συνεξωποίησεν	"
Col. 2:13	συνεξωποίησεν	"
Eph. 2:6	συνήγειρεν	"
Col. 2:12	συνηγέρθητε	"
Col. 3:1	συνηγέρθητε	"
Eph. 2:6	συνεκάθισεν	"
Rom. 8:17	συνδοξασθώμεν	" (subj.)
Rom. 6:8	συνήσομεν	future
2 Tim. 2:11	συνήσομεν	"
2 Tim. 2:11	συνβασιλεύσομεν	"
Eph. 2:21	συναρμολογούμενη	present
Eph. 4:16	συναρμολογούμενον	"
Eph. 4:16	συμβιβάζόμενον	"
Col. 2:19	συμβιβάζόμενον	"
Eph. 2:22	συνοικοδομεῖσθε	"

TABLE 5

TENSES OF VERBS USED IN CONNECTION WITH PAUL'S ΣΥΝ ADJECTIVES

Pauline Occurrence	Adjective	Verb Used in Connection	
Rom. 8:29	συμμόρφους	aorist	προώρισεν
Phil. 3:21	σύμμορφον	future	μετασχηματίσει
Rom. 6:5	σύμφυτοι	perfect	γεγόναμεν
Eph. 3:6	σύσσωμα	present	εἶναι
Eph. 3:6	συνμέτοχα	present	εἶναι
Eph. 3:6	συγκληρονόμα	present	εἶναι
Rom. 8:17	συγκληρονόμοι	present	ἔσμεν

TABLE 6

TENSES OF VERBS USED IN CONNECTION WITH PAUL'S ΣΥΝ PREPOSITIONAL PHRASES

Pauline Occurrence	Prep. Phrase	Verb Used in Connection	
Rom. 6:8	σὺν χριστῷ	aorist	ἀπεθάνομεν
Phil. 1:23	σὺν χριστῷ	present	εἶναι
Col. 2:20	σὺν χριστῷ	aorist	ἀπεθάνετε
Rom. 8:32	σὺν αὐτῷ	future	χαρίσεται
2 Cor. 13:4	σὺν αὐτῷ	future	γήσομεν
Col. 2:13	σὺν αὐτῷ	aorist	συνεψωποίησεν
Col. 3:4	σὺν αὐτῷ	future	φανερωθήσεσθε
1 Thess. 4:14	σὺν αὐτῷ	future	ἔξει
1 Thess. 5:10	σὺν αὐτῷ	aorist (subj.)	γήσωμεν
2 Cor. 4:14	σὺν Ἰησοῦ	future	ἐγερεῖ
Col. 3:3	σὺν τῷ χριστῷ	perfect	κέκρυπται
1 Thess. 4:17	σὺν κυρίῳ	future	ἔσομεθα

Χριστῷ) . . ." (Col. 2:20).

The dying with Christ is often associated with the past point of Baptism in a Christian's life because of the regular use of the aorists and the close link between dying with Christ and the related burial with Christ by Baptism into death. However, there is one passage where the dying

with Christ is spoken of in the present tense. This is

Phil. 3:10, "that I may know him and the power of his resurrection, and may share his sufferings, becoming like him in his death (συμμορφιζόμενος τῷ θανάτῳ αὐτοῦ). . . ."

We noted earlier that this passage is one of those speaking of the union with Christ's death that may be using the idea simply as another way of describing the suffering with Christ.⁵ This possibly could explain the use of the present tense in this one passage. Some of the parallels to dying with Christ also use the present tense, but these too are in the context of suffering. Examples are: "we are being killed all the day long . . ." (Rom. 8:36), "I die every day" (1 Cor. 15:31), and "carrying in the body the death of Jesus . . . while we live we are always being given up to death for Jesus' sake . . ." (2 Cor. 4:10-11). The one exception from the aorist tense, Phil. 3:10, and these parallels, which are also in the present tense, we will either have to understand as another way of describing the suffering

⁵Supra, chapter three, p. 19, note 5; also p. 25.

with Christ, or we will have to find another explanation for the use of these present tenses. Another alternative would be not to understand the dying with Christ in connection with Baptism at all but to look at it as a more general term for the whole union with Christ. Thus it could logically use the aorist or the present tenses.

The burial with Christ is definitely associated with Baptism by Paul himself. Reference to our participation in Christ's burial is made twice--both times with the aorist. "Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were buried (συνετάφημεν) therefore with him by baptism into death . . ." (Rom. 6:3-4). And in Col. 2:12 we read, "you were buried (συντάφεντες) with him in baptism . . ." We have several times noted how in meaning death and burial are closely related. Burial is death sealed and made certain. We also see that in Romans six the burial by Baptism is "into his death." Therefore it is not hard to see how a man's dying and burial with Christ, described usually with the aorist tense, are closely associated if not simultaneous and identical with his Baptism.

The resurrection with Christ occurs in the aorist and future tenses. These are the occurrences with the aorist: "God . . . even when we were dead through our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (συνεζωοποίησεν τῷ Χριστῷ) . . . and raised us up with him (συνήγειρεν)

. . . " (Eph. 2:5-6), "you were also raised with him (συνηρέσθητε) And you, who were dead in trespasses . . . God made alive together with him (συνεζωοποίησεν) . . . " (Col. 2:12-13), and "If then you have been raised with Christ (συνηρέσθητε), seek the things that are above . . . " (Col. 3:1).

The following are the occurrences of the resurrection with Christ in the future tense: "For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we shall certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his (σύνμυθοι . . . τῆς ἀναστάσεως ἐσόμεθα) . . . " (Rom. 6:5) and "he who raised the Lord Jesus will raise us also with Jesus (σὺν Ἰησοῦ ἐγερεῖ) . . . " (2 Cor. 4:14).

At first this use of both the aorist and the future tenses to describe the resurrection with Christ seems to present us with an irreconcilable contradiction. However, when we see the different emphases that Paul is making in the different passages, the difficulty is easily resolved. In Romans and Second Corinthians Paul with future tenses is probably referring to eschatology, the future resurrection, although in Rom. 6:5 the future tense may simply be logical as it connects the resurrection with Christ logically to the death with Christ. But in Colossians and Ephesians Paul uses the same resurrection-with-Christ terminology with aorists to describe the new resurrected life that the person who has died with Christ is already living here and

now.⁶ There is, in a sense, an "eschatological existence" which baptized and believing Christians have on this earth. It is the new life with Christ. The temporal line between the new life that the heirs of the Kingdom have on earth and the consummated possession of the inheritance in Heaven is not always as sharply drawn as we might suppose. However, we cannot deny that there is a tension between the aorist and the future tenses in spite of this explanation. It seems that within the framework of Paul's teaching of resurrection with Christ the straight linear concept of time breaks down. Paul does not merely list a consecutive chain of events. There is an approach to time that goes deeper than that.

There is only one reference to the session with Christ, and the aorist tense is used. "God . . . made us sit with him (συνεκάθισεν) in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus . . ." (Eph. 2:6). This passage also causes a clash with our usual concept of time. This cryptic little remark of Paul cannot be understood in a crass local and physical sense, because, of course, we are not sitting in "heavenly places" with him, but we are sitting in a particular place in St. Louis, Missouri, a definite point on the earth. Nor can it be understood to refer to the future heavenly existence, because it plainly uses a past tense aorist, "God

⁶Thornton, op. cit., p. 60.

. . . made us sit with him" The passage must be understood as a mysterious way of describing the whole mysterious union with Christ.

The two references to being with Christ in His glory are undoubtedly eschatological. Both have a future force. The first is Rom. 8:16-17, in which Paul says that we are fellow heirs with Christ, "provided we suffer with him in order that we may also be glorified with him (συνδοξασθῶμεν)." The verb is aorist subjunctive, but as such it carries a future force. The second passage is Col. 3:4. Here Paul uses a future verb with a prepositional phrase as he assures the Colossians that when "Christ who is our life appears, then you also will appear with him (σὺν αὐτῷ φανερωθήσεσθε) in glory."

The references to being with Christ in His second coming and judgment and then living and reigning with Him as heirs of the Kingdom are almost all in the future tense and are completely eschatological in their thrust. On the Day of Judgment God "will bring" (ἀΐξει) with Jesus (σὺν αὐτῷ) "those who have fallen asleep . . . and so we shall always be with the Lord (σὺν κυρίῳ ἔσόμεθα)" (1 Thess. 4:14,17). "If we have died with him we shall also live with him (συζήσομεν); if we endure, we shall also reign with him (συμβασιλεύσομεν); . . ." (2 Tim. 2:11-12). "He who did not spare his own Son but gave him up for us all, will he not also give (χαρίσεται) us all things with him

(σὺν αὐτῷ)?" (Rom. 8:32) Paul tells the Corinthians that "we shall live with him (ζήσομεν σὺν αὐτῷ) by the power of God" (2 Cor. 13:4), the Romans, "we believe that we shall also live with him (σὺζήσομεν αὐτῷ) . . ." (Rom. 6:8), and the Philippians, "My desire is to depart and be with Christ (σὺν Χριστῷ εἶναι) . . ." (Phil. 1:23).

Finally, there is a series of present tense verbs which refer to the vertical-horizontal union of Christians in the Church. We saw in the section of chapter four called, "Living with Christ Now in the Church," that we cannot separate the vertical from the horizontal union. Christ Jesus Himself is "the chief cornerstone in whom the whole structure is joined together (συναρμολογουμένη) . . . in whom you also are built into it (συνοικοδομεῖσθε) for a dwelling place of God in the Spirit" (Eph. 2:20-22). With Christ as its Head the whole body is "joined (συναρμολογούμενον) and knit together (συνβιβασόμενον) by every joint . . ." (Eph. 4:15). The Gentiles are (εἶναι) fellow heirs (συγκληρονόμα), members of the same body (σύσσωμα), and partakers (συμμέτοχα) of the promise in Christ Jesus . . ." (Eph. 3:6).

This study of the present, future, and aorist tenses as Paul uses them in his "with Christ" concept has helped us to sharpen our understanding of the many things Paul includes under this concept. We here summarize the findings of this section. Our sufferings with Christ are spoken of in the

present tense. Apparently they refer to our actual physical sufferings in which we are in some way joined to Christ's sufferings. The death with Christ is usually spoken of in the aorist, but at least once it is in the present tense. When it is aorist, it seems to be connected with the burial and point back to Holy Baptism through which a Christian is initiated into full union and participation in the redemptive death of Christ. When it is used in the present, it may be another way of describing the suffering with Christ. The resurrection with Christ sometimes is described with the aorist tense and sometimes with the future tense. Therefore it does not only point back in time to the specific point of initiation into union with Christ, but it includes the whole new life with Christ, begun and experienced here on earth by the Christian and consummated in the $\epsilon\sigma\chi\alpha\tau\omicron\nu$ in a full resurrection with Christ. The session with Christ in heavenly places occurs once in the aorist tense and apparently is also a broad and all-inclusive term. Our glory with Christ, our being with Him in His second coming and at the Judgment, and our living and reigning with Him are all consistently expressed with future tenses and must refer to the eschatology of the future life with Christ. Finally a series of present tense $\sigma\acute{\upsilon}\nu$ verbs is used to describe the present existence of Christians living in a vertical-horizontal relationship with Christ and among themselves in Christ's Body, the Church, through the means of grace.

Is the Union with Christ Eschatological?

The question arises whether the union-with-Christ teaching of St. Paul as he expresses it with his *σύν* words is eschatological or non-eschatological. There are many interpreters who regard the concept as completely eschatological in its source, orientation, and ultimate meaning. Schweitzer, for example, illustrates his contention that "Pauline Mysticism" is an eschatological concept thus:

As the spider's net is an admirably simple construction so long as it remains stretched between the threads which hold it in position, but becomes a hopeless tangle as soon as it is loosed from them; so the Pauline Mysticism is an admirably simple thing, so long as it is set in the framework of eschatology, but becomes a hopeless tangle as it is cut loose from this.⁷

This, of course, holds true for all of Christian theology. Try to cut it free from eschatology, and it becomes a hopeless tangle. However, our question is whether the union with Christ is specifically limited to eschatology. That is, is it to be understood simply as a picture of the future life with Christ?

Ernst Lohmeyer is an interpreter who gravitates toward the strict eschatological understanding of the "with Christ" formula. His first thesis in his essay, "*σύν Χριστῷ*," is, "das 'mit Christus' bezieht sich auf eine Vereinigung mit

⁷Albert Schweitzer, The Mysticism of Paul the Apostle (New York: Henry Holt and Company, c.1931), p. 140.

Christus jenseits von Raum und Zeit."⁸ This is his explanation:

Dieser noch der irdischen Zeit angehörige Bezirk ist durch eine Christusgemeinschaft erfüllt, die wohl durch "in Christus" oder "durch Christus" oder "zu Christus" wiederzugeben ist; es ist die Sphäre des Glaubens und der Tat. Niemand aber wirkt "mit Christus," niemand dient und liebt, arbeitet und hilft "mit ihm." Was "mit Christus" allein möglich ist, das ist, "mit ihm sterben und begraben werden," "mit ihm erweckt und offenbart werden," vor allem aber "mit ihm leben und immerdar sein." Es ist die Sphäre des Hoffens und Erleidens. So umspannt der Sinn der Formel "mit Christus" das Leben des Gläubigen "in Christus" und fügt dieses seiner Ordnung ein. . . .⁹

Here we see, as we noted earlier,¹⁰ that Lohmeyer distinguishes between the ἐν Χριστῷ formula and σὺν Χριστῷ. For him ἐν Χριστῷ refers to this life but σὺν Χριστῷ to a transcendent eschatological existence. Therefore he can say of the σὺν Χριστῷ formula:

So erschlieszt sich in der prägnanten Formel eine eigentümliche Metaphysik zweier Welten. Sie stehen in einem entscheidenden Gegensatz: Hier Zeit, dort Ewigkeit, hier irdische, dort himmlische Leiblichkeit, hier "fern von Christus," obwohl "in Christus," dort "mit Christus," weil "fern vom Leibe."¹¹

Apparently this is the same position that Deissmann takes.

He briefly refers to the σὺν Χριστῷ formula in his monu-

⁸Hahn, op. cit., p. 90.

⁹Ernst Lohmeyer, "σὺν Χριστῷ," Festgabe für Adolph Deissmann (Tübingen: Verlag von J. C. B. Mohr, 1927), pp. 220 f.

¹⁰Supra, chapter four, p. 76, note 30.

¹¹Lohmeyer, op. cit., p. 223.

mental study of the ἐν Χριστῷ thus, "Mann kann sagen, dass das σὺν Χριστῷ εἶναι das Ziel des ἐν Χριστῷ εἶναι ist."¹²

Now, of course, there are passages that refer to the future eschatological existence with Christ. Our study of the tenses in the above section of this chapter brought this out clearly. We saw that there are a good many futures together with the presents and aorists. The eschatological thrust of passages like, "we shall also reign with him" (2 Tim. 2:12), He "will change our lowly body to be like his (σὺμμορφον) glorious body" (Phil. 3:21), "God will bring with him those who have fallen asleep. . . . and so we shall always be with the Lord" (1 Thess. 4:14,17), "My desire is to depart and be with Christ" (Phil. 1:23) and other future tense passages, is obvious and undeniable.

However, most of the future tenses and most of these eschatological passages occur with the prepositional phrases σὺν Χριστῷ, σὺν αὐτῷ, σὺν Ἰησοῦ, and σὺν κυρίῳ. There are relatively few future tenses with the compound verbs and adjectives using σὺν. See tables on pages 92 and 93. And it is noteworthy that Lohmeyer bases his study of the σὺν Χριστῷ formula only on the twelve occurrences in prepositional phrases.¹³ He does not examine the whole

¹²Adolph Deissmann, Die Neutestamentliche Formel "in Christo Jesu" (Marburg: N. G. Elwert'sche Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1892), p. 126.

¹³Lohmeyer, op. cit., pp. 218 f.

picture including the compound verbs and adjectives as we are doing. We can therefore understand why his explanation of the concept is almost exclusively eschatological. Wilhelm Hahn faults him for limiting the scope of his study this way.

Es ist fraglich, ob dieses Schema mit den Gedanken des Paulus vereinbar ist und nicht zu einer Missdeutung führen musz. So wenig bestritten werden dann, dasz sich das "mit Christus" in Phil. 1,23 und 1. Thess. 4,17 auf eine Vereinigung mit Christus jenseits des Todes bezieht und auch sonst die Formel im Blick auf die eschatologische Totenaufstehung begegnet, so ist doch problematisch, ob Lohmeyer recht tut, von diesen zwei Stellen ausgehend, die ganze Formel zu deuten. Seine Begründung scheint nicht tragfähig, dasz das "mit Christus sein" im Gegensatz zu der Fülle der Deutungsmöglichkeiten der Verbindung des "mit" mit den Verben des Sterbens und Auferstehens eindeutig sei.¹⁴

We go along with Hahn's criticism of Lohmeyer because when we see the whole picture including the compound verbs and adjectives we see that the concept is not exclusively eschatological or exclusively beyond space and time. "Nicht auf eine transzendente, zeitlose unpersönliche Welt, sondern auf das konkrete Christusgeschehen bezieht sich die Formel."¹⁵ The with-Christ concept is based on the historical Christ-event, and it sometimes is applied to realities in our Christian lives that are very much spacial, temporal, and non-eschatological. Here is where the presents and aorists will have to be considered as well as the futures.

¹⁴Hahn, op. cit., pp. 90 f.

¹⁵Ibid., p. 91.

The suffering with Christ, for example, is certainly non-eschatological. As children of God we are "fellow heirs with Christ (συγκληρονόμοι δὲ χριστοῦ), provided we suffer with him" (Rom. 8:16-17). This heirship and suffering are present realities. The occurrences of the perfect tense indicate a present condition because of a past event. "For you have died, and your life is hid with Christ (κέκρυπται σὺν τῷ χριστῷ) in God" (Col. 3:3). This is now.

Then, of course, there is the whole picture of living with Christ now as members of the Church. The vertical-horizontal relationships in the Church are expressed with a number of σὺν words that depict a present reality. With Jesus Christ as its head the whole structure "is joined together" (συναρμολογουμένη). You "are built into it" (συνοικοδομεῖσθε). It is "knit together" (συνβιβασόμενον), and the Gentiles "are fellow heirs" (συγκληρονόμα), "members of the same body" (σύνσωμα), and "partakers" (συμμέτοχα).

Then we have all of the aorists, and they cannot be made to refer to an eschatological existence beyond space and time. These aorists point to specific events in our lives, lives which are being lived in space and time. We have died with Christ; we were buried with Him by Baptism; we have been raised and made to sit in the heavenly places with Him.

The solution to the problem of whether the union with Christ is or is not eschatological comes when we admit that it includes both eschatological and non-eschatological elements. On the other hand, we would be willing to grant that the concept is "eschatological" if we understand the term "eschatology" very broadly. Eschatology, in this sense, begins now. In fact, it begins for each person when he is baptized. Our eschatological existence began at our Baptism, continues now, and will be consummated at the *Προουσία*. It is not in this sense "jenseits von Raum und Zeit" because as flesh and blood we are living in "Raum und Zeit." Ultimately, however, it will be "jenseits von Raum und Zeit."

The old world . . . exists side by side with the new. And even the believer, insofar as he is still *σὰρξ* (Gal. 2:20), has one foot in the old world. It is the old story, at once glorious and dreary, of the "even now" and the "not yet," of the "arrived" and the "still afar off."¹⁶

A passage that nicely shows us this double character of our "eschatological" living with Christ is 1 Thess. 5:9-10:

"For God has not destined us for wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, who died for us so that whether we wake or sleep we might live with him

(*ζήσωμεν*). " If *ζήσωμεν*, the Alexandrinus variant for

¹⁶Walter James Bartling, "In Christ Jesus," unpublished master's thesis, Concordia Seminary, 1949, p. 74.

the aorist subjunctive is read as Blass prefers,¹⁷ the passage would definitely be future. However, if we retain the aorist subjunctive, and the textual evidence would warrant this, the passage refers to our existence with Christ now as well as our living with Christ after our death. "Whether we wake or sleep," there is one all-enveloping life with Christ. George Milligan says of this passage,

The question whether this "life" is to be confined to the new life which belongs to believers here, or to the perfected life that awaits them hereafter, can hardly be said to arise. It is sufficient for the Apostle that through union with . . . their Lord believers have an actual part in His experience, and that consequently for them too "death" has been transformed into "life."¹⁸

For "to live," he continues, is "the most universal and pregnant description of salvation." Therefore we "live with Christ," "eschatologically," if you will, when we share His one universal act of salvation and redemption.

This "eschatological" existence is carried out for Christians living on earth and in time most uniquely and miraculously in the blessed sacraments of the Church. Here eschatology is made present, and our life with Christ on earth is made eschatological. We can go along with Lohmeyer when he says, "Sakrament und Eschatologie, beide gegründet auf die 'Heilstatsachen' von Tod, Auferstehung und Leben

¹⁷George Milligan, St. Paul's Epistles to the Thesalonians (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmann Publishing Co., 1953), p. 70.

¹⁸Ibid.

Christi, bestimmen also das 'mit Christus sein.'¹⁹

Earlier we looked at the sacraments as the Church's "means of grace" for creating and sustaining the union with Christ.²⁰ Now we only want to offer a few quotations to show how the sacraments are an "eschatological" link between our life with Christ now and the future life with Him.

Hahn links Baptism with the *προουσία* thus:

Es gibt also kein sakramentales Taufgeschehen neben dem geschichtlichen Christusgeschehen, sondern beides ist eins. Damit ist der Mensch Teilhaber am neuen Aeon und ist deshalb auch der künftigen Aufnahme in die Parusie gewisz.²¹

Even Lohmeyer concedes that the *σὺν Χριστῷ* becomes earthly in the miracle of the sacraments.

So empfangen Taufe und Abendmahl ihren eigentümlichen Sinn dadurch, dass in diesen Akten der Herr gegenwärtig ist und deshalb, paulinisch gesprochen, die Gläubigen "Mit Christus" sind. Er ist gegenwärtig freilich nicht in der göttlichen Herrlichkeit seiner Gestalt, sondern gleichsam durch die ewigen Tatsachen seines geschichtlichen Lebens, Tod, Begräbnis, und Auferstehung, oder die ebenso zeitlose Gültigkeit seiner menschlichen Erscheinung, Leib und Blut Christi. Dieses "Mit Christus" ist also vermittelt; es gründet sich auf Geschichte und wird von dem Gläubigen erlebt in der Geschichte, es fordert darum die Unmittelbarkeit des "Mit-Christus-sein," jenseits von Zeit und Raum. Es ist also vermitteltes auf den Augenblick der sakramentalen Feier beschränkt, mag dieser Augenblick auch mit seiner sakramentalen Macht das ganze Dasein des Gläubigen durchdringen; so fordert es die Zeitlosigkeit des "Mit-Christus-sein," in dem der einmalige oder wiederholbare

¹⁹Lohmeyer, *op. cit.*, p. 221.

²⁰*Supra*, chapter four, pp. 52 ff.

²¹Hahn, *op. cit.*, p. 135.

Augenblick zu ewiger Dauer sich vollendet. . . .²²

Thornton says,

Our eucharistic communion with God and man lies between the two Comings of "the Man from heaven." So, like our Lord in his mortal body, we are "straightened" [συνεχομαι -- Luke 12:50] until our passion is accomplished. The foretaste of the messianic banquet induces a longing for the final reality of unclouded vision.²³

Finally we look at one more statement by Lohmeyer.

So gehören sakramentale Erfahrung und eschatologische Hoffnung zusammen und bedingen sich gegenseitig. Der Sinn jener ist dadurch bestimmt, dass die Gegenwärtigkeit des Herrn im Sakrament in der Mitte steht zwischen dem geschichtlichen Kommen des Herrn in der Vergangenheit und dem offenbaren Kommen des Herrn in eschatologischer Zukunft; auf jenes ist sie gegründet, auf dieses ist sie gerichtet. Mit jenem teilt sie den Charakter der Vermittlung in Zeit und Augenblick, mit diesem die Gewisheit und Gültigkeit des $\sigma\upsilon\nu$ $\chi\rho\iota\sigma\tau\acute{\omega}\varsigma$ ²⁴

To the question, "Is the Union with Christ Eschatological?" we answer, "Yes, if we properly understand eschatology." Only some of the $\sigma\upsilon\nu$ passages refer specifically with future tense to the afterlife with Christ. Some of the passages refer to real events in the lives of Christians-- such as being baptized with water and suffering with Christ. However, our union with Christ will be fulfilled at the $\pi\rho\omicron\upsilon\sigma\iota\delta\acute{\alpha}$, and therefore our union with Christ now and our existence with Christ in the future together comprise the

²²Lohmeyer, op. cit., p. 252.

²³Thornton, op. cit., p. 345.

²⁴Lohmeyer, op. cit., p. 253.

one great redemptive and "eschatological" event into which we are placed.

With Christ Time Disappears

When we set forth the problem of time at the beginning of this chapter, we did so by suggesting several questions that we would try to answer. They are: Can we say that when we participate in the redemptive acts of Christ we are somehow brought back to the time of Pontius Pilate? Or is the time of our Lord somehow brought up to us in this year, 1956? Our answer is that we can say, "yes," to neither of the questions. We are neither brought back to the time of Pontius Pilate nor is that age somehow brought up to us. Both questions are worded wrong. It is not a matter of going back to the first century, or the first century coming up in time to us, but there is rather one supreme Christ-event which breaks through all time categories and into which we are drawn. Here, we feel, is where the straight linear concept of time breaks down. While carefully maintaining the historicity of Christ's life, death, and resurrection, we must somehow allow for a concept of time which embraces God's whole redemptive history in each Christian life. For we are crucified with Christ. We are with Him in all things. Thornton helps us here by pointing out that

History is not a mere process, a mere stream of events. It has neither the repetitive character which predominates in events of the order of nature, nor the merely

fortuitous character which we relegate to the fantasy or to the fairy-story. History is an organic whole which embodies the purpose of God. . . . For Christian faith the meaning of the whole cannot be fully understood until the future goal is reached. But meanwhile we possess a key to the character of that final de-nouement in the things which God has done once for all through the dying and rising of his Son. The messianic events have this "once-for-all" character, because in them the purpose of God was not merely exemplified but actually and finally effected. . . .²⁵

To illustrate this we turn once again to our passages with their fascinating use of the Greek tenses. We will use only two passages to get our point across. The classic "with Christ" passage is Rom. 6:3-11. We remember that Paul tells us there that we were buried with Him by Baptism (aorist), we have been united with Him in a death like His (perfect), we shall be united with Him in a resurrection like His (future), and we shall also live with Him (future). Then the whole point of the passage is wrapped up in this verse, "The death he died he died to sin, once for all ($\epsilon\delta\acute{\alpha}\pi\alpha\varsigma$), but the life he lives (present) he lives to God. So you also must consider yourselves (present) dead to sin and alive to God (present) in Christ Jesus." The one redemptive act of God which spans all tenses, time, and history, is a present reality with us now, and we are expected to live it and show it as a force in our lives now. The time sequence disappears in the present reality. It is not that we are brought back to 29 A.D. or that 29 A.D. is

²⁵Thornton, op. cit., p. 64.

brought up to us, but we participate in Christ's redemption now.

Col. 3:1-4 shows a similar pattern. You have died (aorist), you have been raised with Christ (aorist), you will appear with Him in glory (future), but now "your life is hid with Christ (κέκρυπται σὺν τῷ Χριστῷ) in God." We are right now united into the single time-transcending "Christusgeschehen."

Time is closely related to space. When we say, "I have been crucified with Christ," and understand it in as crassly a literal sense as possible, we see that there has to be spanned not only some two thousand years of time to the reign of Pontius Pilate but also the space of some thousands of miles from wherever we are to a hill on the outskirts of Jerusalem. We meet the problem of spacial categories at other places in our theology. For example, we readily accept as an article of faith the actual though supernatural presence of Jesus Christ in the Holy Eucharist.²⁶ This is certainly an acceptance of the breakdown of ordinary spacial categories. If we thus are able to accept and believe this

²⁶ "God's right hand is everywhere; at which Christ is placed in deed and truth according to His human nature. . . . God has and knows of various modes of being in any place and not only the one . . . which philosophers call localis. . . ." Formula of Concord, Epitome, VII, "Of the Lord's Supper." Triglot Concordia: The Symbolical Books of the Evangelical Lutheran Church (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1921), p. 811.

breakdown of human spacial categories by God, we should be able also to accept a breakdown by God of human temporal categories.

Although we see the oneness and the time-transcendence of the "once-for-all" Christ-event and although we see our sharing of this event, we still have not resolved the clash between its historicity and its reality today in our lives. Nor can we. This remains a mystery. This is our paradox: The redemptive acts took place at one definite place and time in history. They are unique, final, and unrepeatable. They are the fulfillment in time of the Scriptures and God's whole predestined plan of redemptive activity. Yet these acts are an ever-present reality. Paul most clearly teaches that we share all phases of Christ's redemption. Walter Bartling faces this problem and after a thoughtful discussion can only conclude, "All that we can say is that this teaching of Paul implies a complete overthrow of the usual time relationships. And we must leave it at that."²⁷ Hahn comes to the same point:

Deshalb wird dieses vergangene Geschehen nie Vergangenheit, sondern ist Ewigkeit, ohne seine Geschichtlichkeit aufzugeben. So ist jede Zeit dieser Ewigkeit gleich nah und fern, so fern diese sich jede Zeit vergegenwärtigen kann. Die Zeitkategorie ist im Christusgeschehen aufgehoben.²⁸

²⁷Bartling, op. cit., pp. 63 f.

²⁸Hahn, op. cit., p. 175.

We must remember that we are bound by the finitudes of time and space. We cannot fathom the temporal relationships of our participation in the Christ-event, but God is above and beyond and over all time categories. He predestined our union with Christ before there was any time. "For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed (*συμμορφους*) to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the first-born among many brethren" (Rom. 8:29). The Christ-event reached back in time from Calvary to the people of the Old Testament dispensation as well as it reaches forward to us. Paul tells how even the "fathers" were united to Christ by drinking of the supernatural Rock, even Christ.

I want you to know, brethren, that our fathers were all under the cloud, and all passed through the sea, and all were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea, and all ate the same supernatural food and all drank the same supernatural drink. For they drank from the supernatural Rock which followed them, and the Rock was Christ (1 Cor. 10:1-4).

Our Lord Himself, speaking as a man in the flesh to the unbelieving Pharisees, showed that He is not limited to our time categories. He said, "Truly, truly, I say to you, before Abraham was, I am" (John 8:58). Can He not unite Himself to us today in His redemptive work as He could cross the time boundaries then? The saying was as hard for the Pharisees as it is for us, for "they took up stones to throw at him . . ." (John 8:59).

We can only say in conclusion what has been said. "Die Zeitkategorie ist im Christusgeschehen aufgehoben." "This

teaching of Paul implies a complete overthrow of the usual time relationships." There is one historical place and time where Christ took the sins of the world upon Himself on the cross, and in this event we participate. We are united with Christ in all phases of His redemptive activity. With Christ time disappears.

To make a statement in a thesis that normal time sequences and categories disappear with Christ may at first seem to be useless and irrelevant theorizing, but it can be an extremely practical and useful insight. A contemporary writer of some popular worship materials for parochial use employs it to explain the Church Year to parishioners. He says,

It is important to note that the Church Year does not begin with Creation and end at the Resurrection of the body. The Church Year engages us rather in a participation "now" of all that Jesus is, said, and did. And this participation is not only calling a past deed to remembrance; it is that. But it is chiefly a living in the deed of Jesus that has the same significance and power now as it had in time past.²⁹

"The same significance and power now as it had in time past"--how true this is when each of us says, "I am crucified with Christ."

²⁹"The Church Year," meditation on back cover of liturgical bulletin (Medford, Oregon: Morse's Liturgical Bulletin Service, the first Sunday after the Epiphany, January 8, 1956).

CHAPTER VI

THE CHRISTIAN'S UNION WITH CHRIST AS "MYSTICISM"

The Union with Christ is not "Mysticism"

The final question of this thesis is whether or not the $\sigma\upsilon\nu$ $\chi\rho\iota\sigma\tau\acute{\omega}\varsigma$ concept can properly be called "mysticism." The fact is that the term "mysticism" is often used of this teaching. Theologians and authors of every stripe call Paul a "mystic" and speak of his theology as "mysticism." Albert Schweitzer wrote a whole book called The Mysticism of St. Paul the Apostle in which he discusses the dying and rising again with Christ. In discussing 2 Cor. 13:4 Alfred Plummer says, "We see here how intensely real to St. Paul was his union with Christ. In this he is ever a mystic."¹ Sanday and Headlam put the title, "The Mystical Union of the Christian with Christ," before the classic $\sigma\upsilon\nu$ passage, Rom. 6:1-14, and they have a lengthy excursus entitled, "The Doctrine of Mystical Union With Christ."² A. T. Robertson in discussing the preposition $\sigma\upsilon\nu$ says, "As applied to

¹Alfred Plummer, "A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Second Epistle of St. Paul to the Corinthians," The International Critical Commentary (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1951), p. 375.

²William Sanday and Arthur C. Headlam, "A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans," The International Critical Commentary (Fifth edition; Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1952), pp. 153 ff.

Christ, $\sigma\upsilon\nu$, like $\epsilon\nu$, may express the intimate mystic union. . . .³

If "mysticism" is understood, as it so often has been, as a kind of esoteric contemplation by which the soul of man is eventually completely absorbed into some kind of a vague force or being called God, then we cannot say that Paul's doctrine is "mysticism." For a working definition of this kind of mysticism Bartling quotes Mehlis:

Mystik ist eine Form des religiösen Bewusstseins, in welcher die Ueberwindung der Trennung zwischen der irrationalen Gottheit und der reinen Seele schon in diesem Leben bis zur vollkommenen Wesenvereinigung ersehnt und gefordert wird.⁴

Paul's theology is not in harmony with this kind of mysticism.

There are many points of difference between Paul and this sort of thing. Bartling lists some of the chief differences.

(1) Being in and with Christ does not have its source in man's "religious consciousness" (religiöse Bewusstseins).

It is objectively rooted in a cross and an open grave. (2)

God is not an irrational something (irrationale Gottheit),

the "Pure Being," "The All," or any other such thing. He is

intensely personal and rational, for He planned our salva-

tion. (3) The I-Thou relationship is never destroyed as it

³A. T. Robertson, A Grammar of the Greek New Testament in the Light of Historical Research (Nashville: Broadman Press, c.1934), p. 628.

⁴Walter James Bartling, "In Christ Jesus," unpublished master's thesis, Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, 1949, p. 81. Quoted from G. Mehlis, Die Mystik in Der Fuelle ihrer Erscheinungsformen in allen Zeiten und Kulturen, 1926, p. 22.

seems to be in this "Wesenvereinigung."

Therefore we could not describe Paul's teaching of the union with Christ as, "Frömmigkeit, die den Weg zur Gottheit durch innere Erfahrung ohne rationale Vermittlung direkt gefunden hat."⁵ Nor could we say with Deissmann that the dying with Christ is to be understood as "mystische Leidenskontemplation."⁶

There are some writers who claim that Paul took his doctrine of the union with Christ directly from Gnosticism and the Hellenistic mystery cults.⁷ It is true that some of these pagan religions spoke of sharing a fall and return of the "Primal Man." But for the Gnostics this "Primal Man" was an abstract idea in which every person by nature participates. It was similar to Plato's "Idea." Thus man held in himself the reflection or seeds of the divine. All later mysticism of the radical variety followed this same course of thought. However, this is never Paul's thought. It is never Christian thought. The union with Christ is rather a free

⁵Wilhelm Traugott Hahn, Das Mitsterben und Mitaufstehen mit Christus bei Paulus (Gütersloh: Verlag C. Bertelsmann, 1937), p. 70. Quoted from Adolf Deissmann, Paulus.

⁶Hahn, op. cit., p. 73.

⁷One is Reitzenstein in Die Hellenistischen Mysterienreligionen, 1927. Discussed by Hahn, op. cit., p. 4. Another is Dom Jaques Dupont. See Johannes Schneider, review of "SYN CHRISTO--L'Union avec le Christ suivant Saint Paul" by Dom Jaques Dupont, Theologische Literaturzeitung, February, 1954, pp. 99-102.

gift of God, a grace given by the Creator. It is created and sustained by God through His unique gifts to the Church, the means of grace.

Perhaps the strongest argument against understanding Paul's doctrine of union with Christ as perverted "mysticism" or as a copy of the Hellenistic mystery cults is the "once-for-all" character of Christ's death. Our faith is firmly rooted in known fact. Hahn says of the ἐφάναξ in Romans six,

Durch dieses ἐφάναξ ist die klare Scheidung zwischen dem Geschehen, das die paulinischen Aussagen vom Mitsterben usw. bezeugen, und dem Geschehen der Mysterienkulte vollzogen. Letztere beziehen sich auf ein zeitloses, sich je wiederholendes Geschehen, das den Charakter des Mythischen trägt. Paulus aber liegt alles an der Singularität und dem Perfektum, also den Momenten, die durch das "ein für allemal" für Tod und Auferstehung Jesu in gleicher Weise gesichert sind. . . . Dabei liegt wiederum wie in Rom. 6,10 der Ton auf der Einmaligkeit und Abgeschlossenheit dieses Geschehens, da gerade darin die Spitze des gebrauchten Bildes von der Ehe liegt.⁸

In conclusion, what Bartling says of the ἐν Χριστῷ formula we can just as well say for the σὺν Χριστῷ concept:

it is a gross misunderstanding to say that the ἐν Χριστῷ expresses a mystical, esoteric, highly subjective experience. "Being in Christ" is simply the expression of a fact--universal, objective Christian fact. We shall perhaps never know in this life everything that this fact implies. As all Christian facts, it is a fact of faith, for faith.⁹

⁸Hahn, op. cit., p. 67.

⁹Bartling, op. cit., p. 56.

Yet the Union with Christ is "Mysticism"

And yet, if we properly define and understand the term, we can correctly speak of Paul's doctrine of the union with Christ as "mysticism." Many reputable and orthodox theologians use the term "mysticism" to describe Paul's theology, and we cannot throw the word out simply because we prefer another term or because it has often been perverted. The fact of the matter is that the word is used, and we too can use it if we understand it in the proper setting of Paul's *oúv* theology. Then too, "it is apparent to even a superficial reader that there are definite points of contact between Paul's teaching and the mystical beliefs of the ages."¹⁰

Paul was, as Plummer says, by nature "ever a mystic." Ultimately, whether or not you call some of Paul's theology "mysticism" or not is a "matter of semantics."¹¹ "The question whether or not Paul's theology is rightly described as mystical is perhaps largely a matter of definition."¹²

H. A. Kennedy says,

It is wholly justifiable to speak of the Mysticism of Paul. . . . To many natures everything that savours

¹⁰Ibid., p. 81.

¹¹Ibid., p. 83.

¹²C. H. Dodd, New Testament Studies (Oxford: Manchester University Press, 1953), p. 69.

of mystical experience is not only alien but offensive. They regard it as a purely pathological condition, the result of auto-suggestion. Or they view it as an un-ethical dissociation of personality from the salutary claims of normal life, with the aim of absorption in an impersonal Absolute.¹³

It is true that some "mysticism" has "gone off the deep end," as it were, and is just this, but Kennedy goes on,

Mysticism, in effect, is a term which covers a manifold area of experience. It is extremely difficult, for example, in the history of Christianity, to distinguish it from those conditions of overpowering faith, involving profound emotion, which belong to the soul that has "counted all things as loss" for Christ.¹⁴

We could take a modern example of this "overpowering faith, involving profound emotion," from the life of Blaise Pascal, the intense seventeenth century French Jansenist. These are brief excerpts from Pascal's prayers for the proper use of sickness:

But to finish the preparation for thy abode, grant, O my Savior, that if my body has this in common with thine--that it suffers for my offences, my soul may also have this in common with thine--that it may be plunged in sorrow for the same offences; and that thus I may suffer with thee, and like thee, both in my body and in my soul, for the sins that I have committed.¹⁵

unite my will to thine, and my sorrows to those which thou hast suffered. Grant that mine may become thine. Unite me to thee; fill me with thyself and with thy Holy Spirit. Enter into my heart and soul, to bear in them my sufferings, and to continue to endure in me

¹³H. A. Kennedy, "St. Paul and the Mystery-Religions," The Expositor, series eight V (1913), p. 118.

¹⁴Ibid.

¹⁵Francis Mauriac, The Living Thoughts of Pascal (New York: Longmans, Green, and Co., c.1940), p. 35.

what remains to thee to suffer of thy passion, that thou mayest complete in my members even the perfect consummation of thy body, so that being full of thee, it may no longer be that I live and suffer, but that it may be thou that livest and sufferest in me, O my Savior. And that thus having some small part in thy sufferings, thou wilt fill me entirely with the glory that they have acquired for thee, in which thou wilt live with the Father and the Holy Spirit through ages upon ages. So be it.¹⁶

We could probably find other examples of such Christocentric and Pauline "mysticism" in men like St. Augustine and Martin Luther. Like St. Paul they had intense religious experiences, and like St. Paul they knew the historical fact of the crucified Lord as the center of their faith.

Although the I-Thou relationship is always maintained by Paul, he can say, "I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me" (Gal. 2:20). This is a healthy type of "Christ-mysticism," for as the "I" retreats to let "Christ" take its place, the identification is founded upon the once-for-all event of Calvary. "Here is a type of mysticism which stands by itself. It has little in common with the notion of absorption in the Deity which links together mystical aspirations in every age and every clime."¹⁷

We must therefore admit that Paul's doctrine is "mysticism," rightly understood. We solve nothing by throwing

¹⁶ Ibid., p. 39.

¹⁷ Kennedy, op. cit., p. 121.

the term "mysticism" away although, as Bartling reminds us, we always want to maintain strenuously the distinction between so-called "Christ-mysticism" and "classical mysticism."¹⁸ The Christian religion is by its very nature "mystical." To his saints "God chose to make known how great among the Gentiles are the riches of the glory of this mystery ($\mu\upsilon\sigma\tau\acute{\eta}\rho\iota\omicron\nu$), which is Christ in you, the hope of glory" (Col. 1:27). The holy sacraments are essentially mystical, and to try to take the mystical element away from these "mysteries" of the Church would be to cut the heart out of their meaning. The solution is not to throw away the term "mysticism," but it is to properly understand it as the miracle of being $\sigma\upsilon\nu$ $\chi\rho\iota\sigma\tau\acute{\omega}$.

¹⁸Bartling, op. cit., p. 83.

CHAPTER VII

CONCLUSIONS

In this thesis we have seen that the preposition *σύν* with its basic meaning, "together with," is used by St. Paul as a key to some of the most profound theology in the Holy Scriptures. This little preposition is frequently used in prepositional phrases, compound adjectives, and compound verbs to describe an intimate union that the Christian has "with Christ." Paul clearly teaches that believers in Christ are drawn into almost every phase of Christ's redemptive activity as defined by the Nicene Creed. We are with Christ in His sufferings, His death, His resurrection, His session, His glory, His Second Coming and Judgment, and in the future we shall live and reign with Him as members of His Kingdom.

The union with Christ is a present reality, for we live with Christ in His Body, the Church. The participation in the Christ-event is initiated by God in Holy Baptism and is sustained by the word of the Gospel and the Holy Sacraments.

The difficulty of explaining accepted human time categories in the framework of Paul's *σύν* teaching presents a big problem in this thesis. Paul takes very seriously the historicity of the Christ events, and yet ultimately we cannot explain the breakdown of our time categories. The

Apostle freely mixes aorist, present, and future tenses, and from a study of these tenses we must conclude that sometimes the union with Christ refers to an eschatological existence and sometimes to a non-eschatological existence here on earth. However, properly understood, even our present existence in the Church here in time can be called "eschatological." Thus ultimately *σὺν Χριστῷ* is eschatologically orientated.

The union with Christ is not a "mysticism" which is a vague contemplation by which one's soul is absorbed into God, but it is a healthy "mysticism" based on the historical fact of Christ's redemption.

What is the union with Christ? Is it the boldest of all possible metaphors, or is it something more real than a metaphor? We must conclude that it is not merely a metaphor but that it is a reality, difficult though this may be for us to accept and impossible though it may be to understand. "In a word, even if it is a mystical and mysterious thing, it cannot be merely a metaphorical thing, if we have read intelligently the emphatic assertions of the Apostle."¹

We have shown that the union with Christ cannot be identified with faith in Christ or merely made a metaphor for faith. Faith is the apprehension and carrying out of

¹William James McGarry, "The Mystical Union in Christ," Paul and the Crucified (New York: The America Press, c.1939), p. 192.

the union with Christ, but it is not the same as the union with Christ. There is no textual warrant for making them identical, and faith, as we understand and define it, is something which no longer will be needed after the $\pi\alpha\rho\sigma\upsilon\delta\acute{\iota}\alpha$ while the union with Christ will continue.

Nor is the union with Christ identical with or a metaphor for the ethical rejuvenation of a Christian. It is true that an ethical response is expected and must follow as a matter of course when a person is united with Christ. After Paul reminds the Romans how they have died with Christ, how they have been buried with Him by Baptism, and how they shall be raised with Him he says, "So you also must consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus" (Rom. 6:11). He also triggers a lengthy ethical admonition to the Colossians with the statement, "If you then have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above" (Col. 3:1). However, in these as in other passages, the union with Christ is the impulse, the motivation, the source of the ethical life. The union with Christ and the new life of virtuous living are not the same thing.

Whenever we try to explain the union with Christ we get pale copies of Paul's concept. We cannot explain it without making it less potent. We can only define it. Ernest Burton, for example, tries to explain it by saying that it contains these three elements in varying degrees of emphasis:

- (1) "the participation of the believer in the benefits of

Christ's experience," (2) "a spiritual fellowship with him in respect to these experiences," and (3) "the passing of the believer through a similar or analogous experience."² However, each of these three elements and all of them put together do not say what Paul says. This explanation is still a basically metaphorical explanation, and it refuses to face the actual fact of full participation in Christ's redemptive acts. The union with Christ is more than receiving the benefits of Christ's experience, having a "spiritual" (which often implies unreal) fellowship with Him, and the passing through of similar or analogous experiences.

Also all psychological explanations of the union with Christ, which say that by becoming very sympathetic to Christ's sufferings you identify yourself with them, and even those explanations which speak of Christ as a "representative" of the new humanity in Christ to this writer do not seem to take into account the full implications of Paul's statements.

Perhaps the closest that we can come to an actual understanding of the union with Christ is in the sacraments and in the knowledge of our eschatological future with our Lord.

²Ernest De Witt Burton, "A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Galatians," The International Critical Commentary (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1952), p. 135.

The relationship of the sacraments and eschatology to the union with Christ is not metaphorical. Although the sacraments and eschatology do not circumscribe the entire union with Christ, nevertheless Paul's $\sigma\upsilon\nu$ language does not merely symbolize these actual aspects of the Christian existence just as the sacraments and eschatological existence are not mere symbols. We are actually united with Christ in Holy Baptism, Holy Communion, and the life beyond the $\pi\rho\omicron\varsigma\text{-}\omicron\upsilon\sigma\iota\acute{\alpha}$. This union is intensely real, even as the entire union with Christ is real and actual.

The best way to explain the union with Christ is not to explain it at all. We can define it, describe it, repeat it, and apply it as Paul has given it to us, but we cannot explain it. It is an all-inclusive concept for the entire Christian existence. It begins when a new life is born by God's work through the means of grace. It continues through all of eternity. It is a mystery.

In closing we would like to make just one more point. We feel that Paul's theology of the union with Christ, "mysticism," if you will, is an extremely practical doctrine for a Christian to study and contemplate. This study has not been for this writer the irrelevant theorizing of a scholar, far off in the clouds, separated from all reality. It has been a Spiritual (capital "S") experience. By quoting collects and other current materials here and there we have tried to show that the participation in the redemption of

Christ is a thing that a Christian actually lives. The Church has duly recognized this practical teaching in her Liturgy, and it is tremendously comforting for the weak and struggling Christian to know that he is with Christ. As these words are being written, it is early in Holy Week. Holy Week is a wonderful time in which to ponder how we suffer, die, and rise with Christ. Pius Parsch points out that Lenten meditation can on the one hand be simply sentimental, seeking to elicit tears, analyzing the virtues displayed by our Lord in His Passion, and attempting to imitate them. But on the other hand, the true meditation of a Christian in Lent is that "each person feels himself a member of the Body of Christ, and sees in earthly misfortunes, for instance, a participation in his Savior's sufferings."³ This, says Parsch, is a "marvelous outlook." Then each of us can say, "My whole life as a Christian is bound up with Christ; my suffering and my joy are Christ's."⁴

³Pius Parsch, The Church's Year of Grace (Collegeville, Minn.: The Liturgical Press, c.1953), II, 262 ff.

⁴Ibid., p. 264.

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