

# PRESCRIPT FOR LIFE (PART 2)

## — CHRISTUS VICTOR WEEK 3 —

*Colossians 1:1-2 (NIV)*

<sup>1</sup> Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus  
by the will of God,  
and Timothy our brother,

<sup>2</sup> To God’s holy people in Colossae,  
the faithful brothers and sisters in Christ:

Grace and peace to you from God our Father.

### I. OUR FOUNDATION

<sup>1</sup> Paul,  
an apostle of Christ Jesus  
by the will of God,  
and Timothy our brother,

### II. OUR \_\_\_\_\_

<sup>2</sup> To God’s holy people in Colossae,  
the faithful brothers and sisters in Christ:

- (1) ...and Timothy our brother,
- (2) ...from God our Father.

### III. OUR \_\_\_\_\_

(<sup>2</sup>) Grace and peace to you from God our Father.

### IV. OUR \_\_\_\_\_

(<sup>2</sup>) ...the faithful brothers and sisters in Christ:

## THE BOTTOM LINE

\_\_\_\_\_ the Three “\_\_\_\_\_” You \_\_\_\_\_:  
\_\_\_\_\_, God’s \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_, and \_\_\_\_\_

...by \_\_\_\_\_ primarily as a \_\_\_\_\_, not \_\_\_\_\_.  
...by sharing \_\_\_\_\_ with your “real” \_\_\_\_\_, the \_\_\_\_\_.  
...by \_\_\_\_\_ you have been \_\_\_\_\_.

### The Ethos of the “Household of Faith”

David DeSilva, *Honor, Patronage, Kinship & Purity*, 213

The Christians are explicitly instructed to treat one another as family: “Do not speak to harshly to an older man, but speak to him as a father, to younger men as brothers, to older women as mothers, to younger women as sisters—with absolute purity” (1 Tim 5:1-2). Fostering an ethos of kinship within the Christian group was widespread technique of the group, grounded in the conviction that believers have become kin by the blood of Christ, being adopted into the one household of God as the many sons and daughters.

Of all the possible family relationships from which to choose, however, it is the sibling relationship that emerges as prominent. *Philadelphia* (“the love of brothers and sisters”) becomes the central topic for shaping relationships with one another in the church. Believers are often specifically exhorted to embody this particular species of love toward one another (Rom 12:9-10; 1 Thess 4:9-10; Heb 13:1; 1 Pet 1:22; 3:8; 2 Pet 1:7), and their fellowship is called a “brotherhood” by one author (*adelphotes*, 1 Pet 2:17; 5:9). Use of the terms *brother*, *sister* and *brethren* for the community of disciples from the very beginning (see Mt 18:15:28:10; Lk 22:32; Jn 20:17-18; 21:23; Acts 1:15; 9:30; 10:23; 15:1, 3, 22, 32-33, 36, 40; 12:17; 28:15; by far the most common way of referring to fellow Christians) facilitates the adoption of a sibling ethic for the Christian church. The New Testament authors consistently come back to this kinship ethic to evaluate what behavior are compatible and what behaviors are incompatible with living together as the household of God.

(The author goes on to discuss: *mutual love; sharing of resources; unity; cooperation and mutual honoring, not competition for precedence; and reconciliation in the family.*)

### Summary of Paul’s Concept of “Union with Christ”

Constantine Campbell, *Paul and Union with Christ*, 420

Union with Christ is defined as *union, participation, identification, incorporation*—terms that together do justice to the widespread variety and nuance of Paul’s language, theology, and ethical thought about our relatedness to Christ. *Union* conveys faith union with Christ, mutual indwelling, trinitarian, and nuptial notions. *Participation* refers to the partaking in the events of Christ’s narrative. *Identification* encapsulates believers’ location in the realm of Christ and their allegiance to his lordship. *Incorporation* gathers up the corporate dimensions of membership in Christ’s body. These terms provide sufficient breadth through which the various characteristics of union with Christ are to be understood—the notions of locality, identification, participation, incorporation, instrumentality, Trinity, union, eschatology, and spiritual reality are all ably represented.

The conceptual antecedents for Paul’s thought are to be found in Jewish theology, the Old Testament, and the words of Jesus, beginning with his encounter with Christ on the Damascus Road. The revelation that Saul, the persecutor of Christians, was in fact persecuting the risen Christ himself forever transformed Paul’s life and understanding of the universe.