

EXPERIENCING, ENJOYING, AND EXPRESSING CHRIST (2)

KEY STATEMENTS

Through incarnation God's only begotten Son
put on humanity and became a God-man;
then in resurrection Christ was born to be the firstborn Son,
and at the same time His believers were born
to be the many sons of God.

The Triune God has been processed
through incarnation, crucifixion, resurrection, and ascension
to become the law of the Spirit of life
installed in our spirit as a "scientific" law, an automatic principle;
this is one of the biggest discoveries,
even recoveries, in God's economy.

As the children of God, we are God-men,
born of God, possessing the life and nature of God,
and belonging to the species of God;
now as children of God, we should walk in love and light,
with love as the inner substance of God
and with light as the expressed element of God.

Christ is the constituents of God's armor,
and prayer is the unique and practical way
to apply Christ as the armor of God.

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Training Outlines

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EXPERIENCING, ENJOYING, AND EXPRESSING CHRIST (2)

TRAINING OUTLINES

Message One

The Seed of David Becoming the Son of God

Scripture Reading: Acts 13:23, 33; Rom. 1:3-4; 8:29

- I. In Acts 13 Paul said that from David's seed "God, according to promise, brought to Israel a Savior, Jesus" (v. 23), and that "God has fully fulfilled this promise...in raising up Jesus, as it is also written in the second Psalm, 'You are My Son; this day have I begotten You'" (v. 33):**
- A. In verses 32 and 33 we see that Christ as the Firstborn of God was promised to the fathers, and God fulfilled this promise by raising up Jesus.
 - B. Resurrection was a birth to the man Jesus:
 - 1. He was begotten by God in His resurrection to be the firstborn Son of God among many brothers—Rom. 8:29.
 - 2. He was the only begotten Son of God from eternity—John 1:18; 3:16.
 - 3. After His incarnation, through resurrection He was begotten by God in His humanity to be God's firstborn Son—Heb. 1:6.
 - C. Paul was able to see the Lord's resurrection in Psalm 2:7: "You are My Son; / Today I have begotten You":
 - 1. Paul applied the word *today* to the day of the Lord's resurrection.
 - 2. This means that Christ's resurrection was His birth as the firstborn Son of God.
 - 3. Jesus, the Son of Man, was born to be the Son of God through being raised up from the dead; therefore, God's raising up Jesus from the dead was His begetting of Him to be His firstborn Son—Acts 13:33.
 - D. Through incarnation God's only begotten Son put on humanity and became the God-man (John 1:14, 18; Luke 1:35); then in resurrection this God-man was born of God to be His Firstborn (Acts 13:33; Heb. 1:6; Rom. 8:29):
 - 1. Before incarnation God's only begotten Son did not have the human nature; He had only the divine nature.
 - 2. In resurrection God's firstborn Son has the human nature as well as the divine nature.
 - E. Through His resurrection Christ was born to be the firstborn Son, and at the same time all His believers were born to be the many sons of God—1 Pet. 1:3; Heb. 2:10:
 - 1. Among these many sons, only the Firstborn is God's only begotten Son—John 1:18; 1 John 4:9.
 - 2. This only begotten Son of God, in His resurrected humanity, is also the firstborn Son of God—Rom. 8:29.
 - 3. The Firstborn has both divinity and humanity, and we, His believers as God's many sons, also possess both the human nature and the divine nature—2 Pet. 1:4.
- II. We need to know Christ in His resurrection designated as the Son of God in power with His human nature—Rom. 1:3-4:**
- A. Before His incarnation and resurrection, Christ was the Son of God, the only begotten Son—John 1:18; 3:16.

- B. Although Christ already was the Son of God before the incarnation, He still needed to be designated the Son of God out of resurrection because by incarnation He had put on the human nature, which had nothing to do with divinity—1:1, 14; Rom. 8:3:
 - 1. After the Son of God became incarnate, His divine nature was concealed by the flesh.
 - 2. Christ was already the Son of God in His divinity, but the part of Him that was Jesus with the human nature, born of Mary, was not the Son of God—Luke 1:31-32, 35.
 - 3. By His resurrection Christ sanctified and uplifted His human nature, His humanity, and He was designated out of resurrection as the Son of God with this human nature; in this sense He was begotten the Son of God in His resurrection—Rom. 1:3-4; Acts 13:33; Heb. 1:5.
 - 4. This designation of the Son of God was “in power,” the power of Christ’s resurrection, the reality of which is the Spirit—Rom. 1:4; Phil. 3:10; Eph. 1:19-20.
- C. Through designation in resurrection the Christ who was already the Son of God before His incarnation became the Son of God in a new way—Rom. 1:4:
 - 1. Before His incarnation He was the Son of God only with divinity; through His resurrection He was designated the Son of God with both divinity and humanity—v. 4.
 - 2. If Christ had not put on human nature, there would have been no need for Him to be designated the Son of God, for in His divinity He was already the Son of God, even from eternity—John 1:18; 17:5.
 - 3. Having put on humanity through incarnation, He was designated the Son of God with humanity in resurrection—1:14; Rom. 8:3; 1:3-4; Heb. 2:14:
 - a. As the designated Son of God, Christ has two natures, divinity and humanity; the humanity that He now has is not a natural humanity but a humanity uplifted in resurrection—Rom. 1:4.
 - b. Even Christ’s human nature has been designated the Son of God, for He has been designated the Son of God with both divinity and humanity.
- D. The designation of Christ as the Son of God with humanity was “according to the Spirit of holiness”—v. 4:
 - 1. The Spirit of holiness is the life essence within the Lord Jesus; when He lived on earth in the flesh, He had this essence within Him—Matt. 1:18, 20; Luke 1:35.
 - 2. When the Lord Jesus was resurrected from among the dead, He was designated the Son of God in power by resurrection according to the Spirit of holiness that was in Him—Rom. 1:4.
 - 3. Now He is the Son of God in a way that is more wonderful than before, for now He has both the divine nature and the resurrected, transformed, uplifted, glorified, and designated human nature—6:4; Luke 24:26; John 17:5; Acts 3:13.
- E. We need to connect Romans 1:3-4 and 8:29:
 - 1. Through His incarnation, crucifixion, and resurrection, Christ, the Son of God, became the firstbornSon, and the many sons, who are the brothers of Christ, are being conformed to His image—Heb. 2:10-11; Rom. 8:29.
 - 2. In Romans 1:3-4 Christ, the Son of God, is the prototype, whereas in 8:29 the many brothers are those who have been “mass-produced” from the prototype and, by being saved in life, will be conformed to the image of the firstborn Son.
 - 3. This brings us to the matter of deification and implies that God’s intention in His economy is to make Himself man so that, in Christ, we, the believers in Christ and children of God, may become God in life, in nature, and in constitution (but not in the Godhead); such an implication is exceedingly great, and eventually, the Bible consummates with this matter—Rom. 8:29; 1:3-4; John 1:1-13; 1 John 3:1; Rev. 21:2,

10-11.

Message Two
**Christ as the Emancipator
and as the One Who Makes Us More Than Conquerors**

Scripture Reading: Rom. 8:2, 31-39

I. We can experience, enjoy, and express Christ as our Emancipator by the law of the Spirit of life—Rom. 8:2:

- A. The enjoyment of the law of the Spirit of life in Romans 8 ushers us into the reality of the Body of Christ in Romans 12; this law operates within us as we live in the Body and for the Body—8:2, 28-29; 12:1-2, 11; Phil. 1:19.
- B. Every life has a law and even is a law; God's life is the highest life, and the law of this life is the highest law—cf. John 1:4-5; 12:24; 14:6a; 10:10b; 1 Cor. 15:45b.
- C. The Triune God has been processed through incarnation, crucifixion, resurrection, and ascension to become the law of the Spirit of life installed in our spirit as a “scientific” law, an automatic principle; this is one of the biggest discoveries, even recoveries, in God's economy—Rom. 8:2-3, 11, 34, 16.
- D. The law of the Spirit of life is the spontaneous power of the divine life; it is the natural characteristic and the innate, automatic function of the divine life—v. 2; Phil. 2:13; Ezek. 36:26-27; Prov. 30:18-19; Isa. 40:28-31; Heb. 12:2a; Phil. 4:13; Col. 1:28-29.
- E. While we remain in the touch with the Lord, staying in contact with the Lord, the law of the Spirit of life works automatically, spontaneously, and effortlessly:
 - 1. We need to cease from our own struggling and striving—Gal. 2:20a; Rom. 7:15-20:
 - a. If we have not seen that sin is a law and that our will can never overcome this law, we are trapped in Romans 7; we will never arrive at Romans 8.
 - b. Paul willed again and again, but the result was only repeated failure; the best that a man can do is to make resolutions—7:18.
 - c. When sin is dormant within us, it is merely sin, but when it is aroused in us by our willing to do the good, it becomes “the evil”—“I find then the law, with me who wills to do the good, because the evil is present with me”—v. 21.
 - d. Instead of willing, we should set our mind on the spirit and walk according to the spirit—8:6, 4; Phil. 2:13.
 - 2. We need to cooperate with the indwelling, installed, automatic, and inner operating God by prayer and by having a spirit of dependence, thus maintaining our fellowship with the Lord of life and the Lord of work—1 Thes. 5:17; Eph. 6:17-18.
 - 3. We need to care for the sense of life in our spirit to remain in the fellowship of life, the flowing of the divine life, for the operation of the law of the Spirit of life—Rom. 8:6, 16; 1 John 1:2-3, 6-7.
- F. The whole key to our living and serving in the Body of Christ is the law of the Spirit of life, which operates within us:
 - 1. The law of the Spirit of life makes us God in life, nature, and expression but not in the Godhead, shaping us into the image of the firstborn Son of God so that we may become His corporate expression—Rom. 8:2, 29.
 - 2. The law of the Spirit of life constitutes us the members of the Body of Christ with all kinds of functions—Eph. 4:11-12, 16.
- G. We can cooperate with the inner operating Triune God as the law of the Spirit of life by “switching on” this law in the following ways:
 - 1. We need to walk according to the spirit—live in the spirit—Rom. 8:4, cf. Psalms 23:3:

- a. The secret of experiencing Christ is to be in the One who empowers us to do all things, and the secret of being in Him is to be in our spirit—Phil. 4:12-13, 23.
- b. The practicality of living in Christ is for us to live in our spirit; in the book of Romans the apostle Paul stresses that whatever we are (2:29; 8:5-6, 9), whatever we have (vv. 10, 16), and whatever we do toward God (1:9; 7:6; 8:4, 13; 12:11) must be in our spirit:
 - 1) In order to live in our spirit, we need to take time to behold the Lord, praying to fellowship with Jesus, to bask in His countenance, to be saturated with His beauty, and to radiate His excellence—2 Cor. 3:16, 18; Psa. 27:4; cf. Matt. 6:6; 14:23; Exo. 33:11a; 34:4, footnote 2.
 - 2) In order to live in our spirit, we need to pray without ceasing—1 Thes. 5:17; cf. John 20:22; Lam. 3:55-56; Rom. 10:12-13.
 - 3) In order to live in our spirit, we need to remain in the fellowship of the divine life to walk in the divine light—1 John 1:2-3, 6-7.
2. We can mind the things of the Spirit—setting our mind on the spirit—Rom. 8:5-6:
 - a. We need to take heed to our spirit, paying attention to the sense of our spirit, in order to not grieve the Spirit and not quench the Spirit—Mal. 2:15-16; Eph. 4:30; 1 Thes. 5:19.
 - b. We can set our mind on the spirit by setting our mind on God's words, which are spirit and life—John 6:63; Isa. 55:8-11.
 - c. To set our mind on the spirit, to mind the things of the Spirit, is also to be one with the Lord to care for the church with all the saints in the inward parts of Christ Jesus—Phil. 2:21; 1:8.
3. We can put to death by the Spirit the practices of our body—Rom. 8:13; Zech. 4:6; Gal. 5:16:
 - a. We must allow the Spirit to inhabit and reside in our inward being—Rom. 8:9, 11.
 - b. We need to remain in the church life, where the God of peace crushes Satan under our feet—16:20; 12:1-2, 11.
4. We can be led by the Spirit as the sons of God—8:14:
 - a. To be led by the Spirit is to take care of the inner anointing, the moving and working of the indwelling compound Spirit—1 John 2:20, 27.
 - b. To be led by the Spirit is to care for the rest in our spirit, being led as a captive in Christ's triumphal procession—2 Cor. 2:12-14; 7:5-6.
5. We can cry to the Father in the spirit of sonship—Rom. 8:15; Gal. 4:6:
 - a. When we cry "Abba, Father!" (Rom. 8:15), "the Spirit Himself witnesses with our spirit that we are children of God" (v. 16).
 - b. To cry "Abba, Father!" expresses the sweetness of our intimate relationship with our God—cf. Matt. 18:3.
6. We can groan in the interceding Spirit for our full sonship, which is the redemption of our body—Rom. 8:23, 26-27:
 - a. In our groaning the Spirit groans also, interceding for us.
 - b. The interceding Spirit prays for us so that we may be conformed to the image of Christ as the firstborn Son of God—vv. 28-29.

II. We can experience, enjoy, and express Christ as the One who makes us more than conquerors—v. 37:

- A. We can love God and be constrained, restricted, motivated, compelled, impelled, and propelled by the love of Christ to more than conquer in all things—vv. 31-39:

1. By loving God, we participate in all the riches contained in God—1 Cor. 2:9-10; cf. 2 Tim. 3:2-4.
 2. We need to be constrained by the love of Christ to love God and the saints with Christ as our love—2 Cor. 5:14.
- B. “If God is for us, who can be against us?”—Rom. 8:31; Jer. 31:31-34; Heb. 8:8-10:
1. “I will make an eternal covenant with them that I will not turn away from them, to do them good; and I will put My fear into their hearts, so that they will not turn away from Me. And I will rejoice over them to do them good, and I will plant them in this land in faithfulness with all My heart and with all My soul”—Jer. 32:40-41.
 2. This eternal covenant is the new covenant; it is by this covenant that God will not turn away from us and will plant us in Christ, our good land, and Christ in all His aspects will be bought by us, that is, gained by us through our paying the price to forget the things that are behind and pursue Christ—vv. 40-44; Phil. 3:8-14.
- C. God freely gives us all things with Christ; every thing, every person, and every situation are ours, the ones who love Him, for our perfecting—Rom. 8:28, 32; 1 Cor. 3:21-22.
- D. Christ, having died for us and having been raised, is interceding for us at the right hand of God—Rom. 8:34:
1. In verse 34 Christ is at the right hand of God, yet in verse 10 Christ is now in us, in our spirit—2 Tim. 4:22; cf. John 1:51; Gen. 28:11-22.
 2. In Romans 8:34 it is Christ who intercedes for us, yet in verse 26 it is the Spirit who intercedes for us:
 - a. These are not two Intercessors but one, the Lord Spirit—2 Cor. 3:18.
 - b. He is interceding for us at two ends: at one end it is the Spirit in us, probably initiating the intercession for us; at the other end it is the Lord Christ at the right hand of God, probably completing the intercession for us, which must be mainly that we will be conformed to His image and brought into His glory.
- E. No suffering, including tribulation, anguish, persecution, famine, nakedness, peril, and sword, shall separate us from the love of Christ—Rom. 8:35.
- F. In all the sufferings we more than conquer through Christ who loved us—v. 37:
1. Because of God’s unchanging love for us and the fact that Christ has accomplished everything on our behalf, neither tribulation nor persecution can suppress or defeat us; rather, in all these things we more than conquer through Him who loved us.
 2. The love of God is the source of His eternal salvation; this love, from which nothing can separate us, is in Christ and has been poured out in our hearts through the Holy Spirit—vv. 38-39; 5:5; Jer. 31:3.
 3. In God’s salvation the love of God has become the love of Christ, which does many marvelous things for us through the grace of Christ until God’s complete salvation is accomplished in us—Rom. 8:35; Hosea 11:4.
 4. These marvelous things provoke God’s enemy to attack us with all kinds of calamities, but because of our response to the love of God in Christ, these attacks have become benefits to us; hence, we more than conquer in all our afflictions and calamities—Rom. 8:35-37, 28.

Message Three

God's Power and God's Wisdom

Scripture Reading: 1 Cor. 1:2, 23-24, 30; Rom. 6:6, 19, 22; Eph. 1:9, 11; 3:11

I. Before mentioning Christ as the power of God and the wisdom of God in 1 Corinthians 1:24 Paul, in verse 23, declares, “We preach Christ crucified, to Jews a stumbling block, and to Gentiles foolishness”:

- A. This indicates that the Christ who is the power of God and the wisdom of God for the carrying out of God's economy is the crucified Christ, a Christ who did not do anything to save Himself—v. 24.
- B. In man's eyes, if a person is crucified, he is deemed powerless, because a powerful person would not allow himself to be crucified; nevertheless, the Christ who is the power of God was crucified.
- C. Furthermore, from the human perspective, a wise person would find ways to avoid crucifixion, yet the Christ who is the wisdom of God was crucified—Gal. 2:20.
- D. The crucified Christ is the power of God—1 Cor. 1:24:
 - 1. In the cross of Christ we see God's power.
 - 2. It takes the power of God to defeat Satan, the world, sin, fallen man, the flesh, the natural life, the old creation, and the ordinances.
 - 3. The death of Christ—His crucifixion—has become the power of God—v. 24.
- E. The crucified Christ is the wisdom of God—2:7:
 - 1. In order to accomplish anything, we need Christ as both power and wisdom—1:24.
 - 2. Wisdom is for planning and purposing, whereas power is for carrying out and accomplishing what is planned and purposed.
 - 3. When we experience the crucified Christ, He becomes to us not only the power of God but also the wisdom of God—Rom. 6:6; Gal. 2:20.
 - 4. The crucified Christ as God's wisdom is related to God's deep and profound plan according to His good pleasure and also according to God's way to fulfill His will—Eph. 1:9, 11; 3:11:
 - a. Since we have the crucified Christ as God's wisdom, there is no need for us to seek a way to carry out God's will.
 - b. Simply by experiencing the crucified Christ, we spontaneously have a way to do God's will.
 - c. We become very wise in doing the will of God—Col. 1:9; 4:12.
 - d. As long as we experience the crucified Christ, Christ will become to us God's wisdom to fulfill His plan; we will have the wisdom of God to do His will—1:9.
- F. When we experience the crucified Christ, we are terminated—Gal. 2:20:
 - 1. All that we are, all that we have, and all that we can do—all is completely terminated.
 - 2. When we call on the name of the Lord Jesus, as we are experiencing and enjoying Him, His crucifixion will terminate us.
 - 3. Christ crucified is not only the power but also the way for us to be delivered from the flesh, the natural life, and the old creation.

II. As those who are called by God, we need to know and experience Christ's power and wisdom—1 Cor. 1:24:

- A. First Corinthians 1:2 mentions “the called saints”:
 - 1. The believers in Christ are called saints, not called to be saints; this is a positional matter, a sanctification in position with a view to sanctification indisposition.

2. To call upon the name of the Lord implies to believe into Him—Rom. 10:14.
 3. All the believers in the Lord should be callers—Acts 9:14, 21; 22:16.
 4. We have been called to call, called by God to call upon the name of the Lord.
 5. To those called by God, Christ is the power of God and the wisdom of God.
- B. *Those who are called* (1 Cor. 1:24) refers to the believers who were chosen by God in eternity (Eph. 1:4) and who believed in Christ in time (Acts 13:48).
- C. To those who believe in Christ and call upon His name, He is the power of God and the wisdom of God.
- D. Christ crucified is the power of God for saving us and the wisdom of God for fulfilling His plan:
1. Power is the ability, and wisdom is the way.
 2. Christ is first our power, and then He is our wisdom, that is, our way.
 3. Christ is the power of God to carry out God's economy, and He is also the wisdom of God, the way of God, to carry out God's economy.
- E. Christ as the power of God strengthens us with a dynamic power, supplying and sustaining us in what we are and what we do:
1. In all our circumstances and conditions, Christ as the power of God enables us to suffer, to bear burdens, and to stand firm.
 2. He also sustains us to the point of being unshakable; for this reason, Paul declares, "I am able to do all things in Him who empowers me"—Phil. 4:13.
 3. Christ as the power of God is daily supplying and sustaining us through His divine dispensing.
- F. Christ as the wisdom of God flows unceasingly from God to us to be our present and practical wisdom in our experience—1 Cor. 1:24.

III. "Of Him you are in Christ Jesus, who became wisdom to us from God: both righteousness and sanctification and redemption"—v. 30:

- A. In this verse Paul does not say that Christ became our wisdom; instead, he says that Christ became wisdom "to us from God":
1. The expression *to us from God* indicates something present, practical, experiential, and ongoing in the way of transmission.
 2. For Christ to become wisdom to us from God indicates that there is the transmission of Christ as wisdom from God to us for our daily experience.
 3. We need Christ continually as wisdom to us from God.
- B. Christ became wisdom to us from God as three vital things in God's salvation:
1. He is our righteousness (for our past), by which we have been justified by God, that we might be reborn in our spirit to receive the divine life—Rom. 5:18.
 2. He is our sanctification (for our present), by which we are being sanctified in our soul, that is, transformed in our mind, emotion, and will, with His divine life—6:19, 22.
 3. He is our redemption (for our future), that is, the redemption of our body (8:23), by which we will be transfigured in our body with His divine life to have His glorious likeness (Phil. 3:21).
 4. It is of God that we participate in such a complete and perfect salvation, which makes our entire being—spirit, soul, and body—organically one with Christ and makes Christ everything to us.
 5. This is altogether of God, not of ourselves, that we may boast and glory in Him, not in ourselves—Eph. 3:20-21.

Message Four

Our Spiritual Food, Our Spiritual Rock, and the Contents of the Lord's Table

Scripture Reading: 1 Cor. 10:3-4, 16-17, 21; 11:23-26

I. The deep truth in Exodus 16 is that God wants to change our diet to a diet of Christ as our spiritual food, the real manna sent by God the Father for God's chosen people to live by Christ—1 Cor. 10:3; John 6:31-35, 48-51, 57-58:

- A. Whatever we eat of Christ to be our reconstituting element and our supply to make us God's dwelling place in this universe will be an eternal memorial—Exo. 16:16, 32.
- B. Just as the manna in the golden pot was the focal point of God's dwelling place, so Christ as the manna eaten by us is the focal point of God's building today—Heb. 9:3-4; Eph. 4:16; Col. 2:19.
- C. The unique food that we take for our sustenance, strength, and satisfaction must be Christ, and the one unique ministry in the New Testament conveys Christ as the unique food for God's people—Num. 11:5-6; cf. Acts 1:17, 25; 2 Cor. 4:1; 1 Tim. 1:12; 2 Cor. 3:6.
- D. The characteristics of Christ as our unique food, our daily manna, become our characteristics for His magnification through our metabolic transformation as we continually enjoy Him—John 6:57; Phil. 1:20-21; cf. Gal. 6:17:
 - 1. Manna is a mystery—Exo. 16:15; Col. 2:2; Isa. 9:6; Eph. 3:4; John 3:8.
 - 2. Manna is a long-term miracle—Exo. 16:4; cf. Matt. 6:34.
 - 3. Manna is from heaven—Exo. 16:4; John 6:41.
 - 4. Manna comes with the dew—Exo. 16:13-14; Num. 11:9; Psalms 133:3; Lamentations 3:22-23; Hebrews 4:16; Psalm 110:3.
 - 5. Manna comes in the morning—Exo. 16:21; cf. Song of Solomon 1:6b; 7:12; John 5:39-40; Romans 6:4; 7:6.
 - 6. Manna is small—Exo. 16:14; Luke 2:12; John 6:35; cf. Judges 9:9, 11, 13; Matthew 13:31-32.
 - 7. Manna is fine—Exo. 16:14; John 6:12.
 - 8. Manna is round—Exo. 16:14; John 8:58.
 - 9. Manna is white—Exo. 16:31; Psalm 12:6; 119:140; 2 Cor. 11:3b.
 - 10. Manna is like frost—Exo. 16:14; Proverbs 17:27.
 - 11. Manna is like coriander seed—Exo. 16:31; Num. 11:7; Luke 8:11.
 - 12. Manna is solid—Num. 11:8; 2 Cor. 1:4; Eph. 6:18.
 - 13. Manna's appearance is like that of bdellium—Num. 11:7; Revelation 4:6, 8; Ezekiel 1:18.
 - 14. Manna's taste is like that of fresh oil—Num. 11:8; Psalm 92:10.
 - 15. Manna's taste is like that of wafers made with honey—Exo. 16:31; Psalm 119:103.
 - 16. Manna is good for making cakes—Num. 11:8; 1 Tim. 4:6.

II. Christ has been crucified to become a spiritual rock that follows His people; this following rock is the resurrected Christ as the life-giving Spirit, who is always with the church to supply His believers with the water of life—1 Cor. 10:4; Exo. 17:6; Num. 20:8; John 19:34:

- A. Trouble among God's people can be caused by the shortage of water, which typifies the Spirit of life; whenever God's people are short of the Spirit of life, they will have problems; when God's people have an abundance of the Spirit, their problems among themselves and with God are solved—Num. 20:2-13; John 7:37-39; Romans 8:2.

- B. Since Christ has been crucified and the Spirit has been given, there is no need for Christ to be crucified again; that is, there is no need to strike the rock again so that the living water may flow; in God's economy Christ should be crucified only once—Heb. 7:27; 9:26-28a.
- C. To receive the living water from the crucified Christ, we need only to “take the rod” and “speak to the rock”—Num. 20:8:
 - 1. To take the rod is to identify with Christ in His death and apply the death of Christ to ourselves and our situation.
 - 2. To speak to the rock is to speak a direct word to Christ as the smitten rock, asking Him to give us the Spirit of life based on the fact that the Spirit has already been given—cf. John 4:10; Luke 11:13.
 - 3. If we apply the death of Christ to ourselves and ask Christ in faith to give us the Spirit, we will receive the living Spirit as the bountiful supply of life.
- D. Instead of speaking to the rock, Moses was angry with the people, condemned them as rebels, and struck the rock with his rod twice—Num. 20:9-11:
 - 1. Moses condemned the people as rebels, but Moses was the one who rebelled against God's word—v. 24; 27:14.
 - 2. Moses did not believe in Jehovah to sanctify Him in the sight of the children of Israel—20:12:
 - a. To sanctify God is to make Him holy, that is, to separate Him from all the false gods; to fail to sanctify God is to make Him common.
 - b. In being angry with the people when God was not angry, Moses did not represent God rightly in His holy nature, and in striking the rock twice, he did not keep God's word in His economy; thus, Moses offended both God's holy nature and His divine economy.
 - c. Because of this, even though he was intimate with God and maybe considered a companion of God (Exo. 33:11), Moses lost the right to enter the good land.
 - 3. In all that we say and do concerning God's people, our attitude must be according to God's holy nature, and our actions must be according to His divine economy; this is to sanctify Him; otherwise, in our words and deeds we will rebel against Him and offend Him.

III. Christ as the contents of the Lord's table is the reality of the New Testament economy of God—1 Cor. 10:16-17, 21; 11:23-26:

- A. The emphasis of the Lord's table is the fellowship of His blood and body, the participation in the Lord, the enjoyment of the Lord in mutuality, in fellowship—10:16-17, 21:
 - 1. The Lord has given Himself to us so that we may partake of Him as our feast and enjoy Him by eating and drinking Him; in order to become our feast, the reality of the produce of the good land, Christ had to be processed—cf. Deut. 8:7-10:
 - a. If Christ had not been incarnated, He could not have blood and a body; through incarnation Christ put on a human body with blood and flesh—Heb. 2:14.
 - b. If Christ had not been crucified, His blood could not be separated from His body; through crucifixion His blood was separated from His body—John 6:53-55.
 - c. If Christ had not been resurrected, He could not be on the table as our food; in resurrection He is served to us on the table as a feast for our nourishment and enjoyment; the One who presents His body and His blood to us is the resurrected Christ as the all-inclusive life-giving Spirit—1 Cor. 15:45b; 2 Cor. 3:17.
 - 2. The Lord Jesus “took bread and blessed it, and He broke it and gave it to the disciples and said, Take, eat; this is My body”—Matt. 26:26:

- a. The bread denotes life, the life of God, the eternal life; the bread signifies the Lord's physical body, which He gave for us on the cross in order to impart life into us—John 6:35, 57, 63; Luke 22:19.
- b. The bread also signifies the Lord's mystical Body, the means for Christ to carry out His heavenly ministry for the accomplishment of the divine administration—Eph. 1:22-23; 4:16; Rev. 5:6.
- c. By participating in the Lord's divine life, eating and enjoying Him as the bread of life, we become His mystical Body, His enlargement—1 Cor. 10:17; 12:27.
3. The Lord Jesus took a cup and gave thanks, and He gave it to them, saying, "Drink of it, all of you, for this is My blood of the covenant, which is being poured out for many for forgiveness of sins"—Matt. 26:27-28:
 - a. The cup denotes blessing, which is God Himself as our portion—Psa. 16:5.
 - b. The Lord's salvation has become our portion, the cup of salvation that runs over, the content of which is God as our all-inclusive blessing—116:13; 23:5.
 - c. The blood of Christ as the blood of the new covenant ushers us into the new covenant, in which God gives us a new heart, a new spirit, His Spirit, the inner law of life, and the ability of life to know God, possess God, be possessed by God, and receive the blessing of the forgiveness and forgetting of all our iniquities—Ezek. 36:26-27; Luke 22:20; Heb. 8:10-12; Psa. 103:1-3, 12.
 - d. The blood of the covenant ushers us into the presence of God in the Holy of Holies, where we behold His beauty, into the infusion and transfusion of God, and into the eternal enjoyment of God; enjoying God in this way is what produces a man of God—27:4; Exo. 24:8; cf. Lev. 16:11-16.
 - e. Ultimately, the blood of the covenant, the eternal covenant, leads God's people into the full enjoyment of God as the tree of life and the water of life both now and for eternity—Heb. 13:20; Rev. 7:14, 17; 22:1-2, 14, 17.
- B. "As often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you declare the Lord's death until He comes"—1 Cor. 11:26; cf. Rom. 5:10:
 1. To *declare the Lord's death* is to proclaim and display the Lord's death; to declare His life-releasing death is to declare His first coming for His judicial redemption to produce the church—John 12:24; 19:34.
 2. *Until* implies that the church bridges the gap between His first coming and second coming by the eating and drinking of Christ in the process of His organic salvation.
 3. *He comes* is His second coming to establish the kingdom of God on earth, as the Lord said in Matthew 26:29: "I shall by no means drink of this product of the vine from now on until that day when I drink it new with you in the kingdom of My Father."
 4. Thus, to declare the Lord's death until He comes is to declare the existence of the church for the bringing in of the kingdom; our eating of the Lord's supper must result in the remembrance of the Lord in His two comings.

Message Five

Christ as the Image of God and the Treasure

Scripture Reading: 2 Cor. 4:4, 7; Col. 1:15; Heb. 1:3; John 1:18

I. Second Corinthians 4:4-7 shows us that we may experience and enjoy Christ as the image of God and the treasure:

- A. The image of God refers to Christ as our outward expression, whereas the treasure refers to Christ as our inward content.
- B. We should bear Christ as the image of God without, and we should have Christ as the treasure within.
- C. We need to enter into the rich and full enjoyment of Christ.
- D. According to Hebrews 1:3, Christ is the effulgence of God's glory; that is, He is the expression of the image of God.
- E. Christ as the image of God is the declaration, the expression, of God; He declares God and expresses God—John 1:18.
- F. Colossians 1:15 speaks of Christ as "the image of the invisible God"; the image here is not a physical form but an expression of God's being in all His attributes and virtues.
- G. Our mind needs to be renewed to such an extent that we have a clear view of Christ as the image of God—Rom. 12:2.

II. In 2 Corinthians 4:4 Paul speaks of "the illumination of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God":

- A. In this verse Paul also informs us that the god of this age, the ruler of this world (John 12:31; 14:30; 16:11; Eph. 2:2), has blinded the thoughts of the unbelievers:
 - 1. The god of this age is Satan, the ruler of the present age, who dominates today's world and hunts for people's worship by blinding their mind and thoughts—2 Cor. 4:4.
 - 2. All people today, whether primitive or highly cultured, have been blinded by the god of this age.
 - 3. We need to pray, "Lord, I trust in You to defeat the god of this age; apart from You, I do not worship anyone or anything."
 - 4. If we pray in this way, the divine light will shine, and we will receive revelation.
 - 5. If we drop our concepts and turn our heart to the Lord (3:16), the veils will be taken away, and the god of this age will have no ground in our being.
- B. The gospel of Christ is the gospel of His glory that illuminates and shines forth.
- C. God is invisible, but Christ, the Son of God's love, who is the effulgence of the glory of God and the impress of His substance (Heb. 1:3), is His image, expressing what He is.
- D. The image of God in Colossians 1:15 refers to the expression of God and the fullness of God, that is, Christ Himself.
- E. The expression *the image of the invisible God* implies that although God Himself is invisible, His image is visible—v. 15.
- F. The invisible God has a visible image, and this image is Christ:
 - 1. John 1:18 says, "No one has ever seen God; the only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, He has declared Him."
 - 2. Although God is invisible, He is expressed by a living person, that is, Jesus Christ, the Son of God—3:16.

III. "We have this treasure in earthen vessels"—2 Cor. 4:7a:

- A. Christ as the life-giving Spirit in us is the One who shines and works; this is the treasure we

- have in us.
- B. God's shining in our hearts (vv. 4, 6) brings into us a treasure, the Christ of glory, who is the embodiment of God to be our life and our everything.
 - C. Because of the shining in our hearts, we have a treasure that is wonderful, precious, and marvelous.
 - D. This treasure, the indwelling Christ, in us, the earthen vessels, is the divine source of the supply for the Christian life—v. 7.
 - E. The expression *this treasure* in 2 Corinthians 4:7 refers to verse 6, where Paul speaks of the face of Jesus Christ:
 - 1. The shining of God in our hearts is to illuminate us that we may know the glory of God in Christ's face.
 - 2. The glory of God manifested in the face of Jesus Christ is the God of glory expressed through Jesus Christ; to know Him is to know the God of glory—v. 6.
 - 3. Literally, the Greek word for *face* in 2 Corinthians 4:6 is the same word translated "person" in 2:10, which refers to the part around the eyes, the look as the index of the inward thoughts and feelings, which shows forth and manifests the whole person.
 - 4. This indicates that unless we have the index of Christ's face, He cannot be a treasure to us in reality:
 - a. We will not sense that we have a treasure within us until we see the face of Jesus Christ.
 - b. On the one hand, we can all declare that we are the earthen vessels and that Christ is the treasure within us.
 - c. On the other hand, we need to see that it is only when we are living in the presence of Christ, looking at the index of His being, that we will sense that He is a treasure to us— v. 10.
 - F. The first step of God's procedure in fulfilling His purpose was to create man as an earthen vessel to contain Himself as life — Gen. 2:7:
 - 1. God chose us so that we may be vessels of honor filled with the Triune God—Rom. 9:21, 23; 2 Cor. 13:14.
 - 2. The New Testament shows us that God wants believers as vessels loving Him and keeping themselves open to Him— Rom. 9:21, 23; 2 Cor. 3:16.
 - 3. If in the depths of our being we are not open to the Lord, He cannot dispense Himself into us and make His home in our heart—1 Cor. 2:10.
 - 4. An open vessel is doing nothing but keeping itself open to be filled by the divine dispensing of the Divine Trinity—2 Cor. 13:14.
 - 5. When the Lord fills us, He does everything for us—Eph. 3:19.
 - G. We are weak because we are earthen vessels; however, a treasure within us, the vessel, enables us to keep ourselves open to the Lord, giving Him every opportunity to do everything He wants to do; this is the proper and genuine Christian life—v. 17; Gal. 2:20.

IV. "That the excellency of the power may be of God and not out of us"—2 Cor. 4:7b:

- A. The fact that we are earthen vessels proves that the excellency of the power is of God and not out of us:
 - 1. In ourselves we are nothing more than earthen vessels; we are sinful, fallen, and low.
 - 2. As such, we do not have the power to manifest the truth and shine forth the glory of the gospel—v. 4.
- B. Although we are worthless earthen vessels, God has shined the precious treasure into us:
 - 1. Now this treasure becomes the source of the power energizing us and enabling us to

shine forth God's glory and manifest the truth—v. 7a.

2. This treasure has the power, and this power is excellent.
- C. Outwardly, we are earthen vessels, but inwardly, we have a priceless treasure—Christ as the embodiment of the processed and consummated Triune God to be the all-inclusive life-giving Spirit— 1 Cor. 15:45b.
- D. Within us, we have Christ as a wonderful treasure; outwardly, we bear Christ as the image of God, the expression of the Triune God—2 Cor. 4:4.
- E. When we believed in the Lord Jesus, we received more than simply a Redeemer; we received the most excellent One in the universe.
- F. We need to experience and enjoy Christ as the treasure within and the image without.

Message Six

The Grace of God and the All-inclusive Spirit

Scripture Reading: 1 Cor. 15:10; 2 Cor. 1:12, 15, 21-22; 3:3, 6, 8, 17-18; 12:9; 13:14

I. In 2 Corinthians Christ as the grace of God is the good land for us to enter into, experience, enjoy, partake of, and possess—John 1:17; 1 Cor. 15:10; cf. Gal. 2:20; 1 Cor. 5:7; 10:3-4; 2 Cor. 13:14:

- A. In 2 Corinthians 13:14 the grace of the Lord is mentioned first because this book is on the grace of Christ—1:12; 4:15; 6:1; 8:1, 9; 9:8, 14; 12:9:
 - 1. The Holy Spirit as the circulation, the transmission, of the grace of Christ with the love of the Father is the supply in our Christian life and church life:
 - a. The entire church life depends upon 2 Corinthians 13:14.
 - b. The current of the Divine Trinity within us as revealed in 2 Corinthians 13:14 is our spiritual pulse.
 - 2. The blessing in 2 Corinthians 13:14 is the same as that in Numbers 6:22-27; this is the eternal blessing of the Triune God, which is the Triune God dispensing Himself in His Divine Trinity into us for our enjoyment:
 - a. “Jehovah bless you and keep you” is the love of God the Father as the fountain of life and light—v. 24; Psa. 36:9.
 - b. “Jehovah make His face shine upon you and be gracious to you” is the grace of Christ as the fatness of God’s house — Num. 6:25; Psa. 36:8.
 - c. “Jehovah lift up His countenance upon you and give you peace” is the fellowship of the Holy Spirit as the river of God’s pleasures—Num. 6:26; Psa. 36:8.
- B. The grace of God in His economy is rich, multiplying, and abounding—Eph. 2:7; 1 Pet. 1:2b; 2 Pet. 1:2; Eph. 1:7b-8:
 - 1. God has graced us in the Beloved—v. 6.
 - 2. We have obtained access by faith into this grace in which we stand—Rom. 5:2a.
 - 3. When Christ in us is daily received, experienced, and enjoyed by us, that is grace being added to us, grace upon grace—John 1:16.
- C. The new covenant ministers’ living is the living of grace, the experience of grace—Heb. 12:28; 1 Cor. 15:10; 2 Cor. 1:12, 15:
 - 1. The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the Spirit of grace, is with our spirit, which has been regenerated to be the dwelling place and vessel of the Triune God—Heb. 10:29b; Gal. 6:18; Phil. 4:23; Philem. 25; 2 Tim. 4:22; cf. 1:6-7.
 - 2. Whenever we turn to our spirit, we enter through the gate of heaven and touch the throne of grace in heaven through Christ as the heavenly ladder—Heb. 4:16; Gen. 28:12-17; John 1:51; Eph. 2:22.
 - 3. Grace is with all those who love our Lord Jesus Christ in incorruptibility—6:24.
 - 4. Humility saves us from all kinds of destruction and invites God’s grace—1 Pet. 5:5-6; James 4:6.
 - 5. We need to enjoy the word of His grace—Acts 20:32; Jer. 15:16.
 - 6. We need to experience the Spirit of grace and of supplications to bring us into the enjoyment of the Triune God—Zech. 12:10a.
 - 7. The new covenant ministers enjoy Christ as their all-sufficient grace through sufferings:
 - a. The ministry of the new covenant is produced by revelation plus suffering—2

- Cor. 12:7; 1:3-4, 8-10.
- b. Christ as grace becomes power tabernacling over the new covenant ministers, overshadowing them in their weakness to become their dwelling place to sustain, support, maintain, protect, and keep them—12:9b.
 8. We need the grace of God in Christ applied to us as the strength and power for our move and our protection—Ezek. 1:6b, 9a; Exo. 19:4; Isa. 40:31; 2 Cor. 4:7; 1:12; 12:9; 1 Cor. 15:10; Psalms 17:8; 57:1; 63:7; 91:4.
 9. We reign in life by receiving the abundance of grace—Rom. 5:17.
 10. We need to be good stewards of the varied grace of God—1 Pet. 4:10; Eph. 3:2.
 11. Our word should convey grace to the hearers—Luke 4:22; Eph. 4:29; Isa. 50:4.
 12. We need to enjoy the grace of life in the church life to keep ourselves in the genuine oneness—Psalms 133.
 13. In the church life, when we have grace upon us, the church will be built up, and the grace that we receive will be visible—Acts 4:33; 11:23.
 14. The product of the grace in God's economy is the Body of Christ as the poem of God, expressing God's infinite wisdom and divine design—Eph. 2:10, 7; 2 Cor. 5:17.
 15. The grace of the Lord Jesus dispensed to His believers throughout the new testament age consummates in the New Jerusalem, in which the processed and consummated Triune God will be the grace enjoyed by all the believers for eternity—Rev. 22:21; cf. 21:23; 22:1-2.

II. In order to be constituted as the ministers of the new covenant for the building up of the Body of Christ, we need to experience all the aspects of Christ as the all-inclusive Spirit in 2 Corinthians:

- A. The anointing Spirit is the indwelling, compound Spirit moving and working within us to impart all of God's divine ingredients and constituents into us—1:21; Phil. 1:19; Exo. 30:23-25; Rom. 10:12-13:
 1. The reaching of the anointing accomplishes the central purpose of God's salvation to anoint the compounded God into us so that we may be united, mingled, and incorporated with Him—1 Cor. 15:45b; 1 John 2:20, 27.
 2. The teaching of the anointing is the inward feeling generated by the moving of the Spirit within us, enabling us to know God's mind and to live in Him, teaching us the things concerning the Triune God and His activities—v. 27; Acts 16:6-7.
- B. The sealing Spirit forms the divine elements into an impression to express God's image—2 Cor. 1:22; Eph. 1:13:
 1. The sealing Spirit saturates the believers continuously unto the redemption of their body—4:30.
 2. The sealing Spirit transforms the believers into a treasure to God as His inheritance—1:11.
 3. The more we are sealed, the more we bear the image of God to be constituted into the masterpiece of God—2 Cor. 3:18b; Eph. 2:10.
- C. The pledging Spirit gives us a foretaste as a sample and guarantee of the full taste of God—2 Cor. 1:22; 5:5:
 1. The Spirit's pledging guarantees that God is our inheritance — Eph. 1:14.
 2. Christ as the pledging Spirit is in us for our taste, for our enjoyment of Him as our divine inheritance, our allotted portion, through the exercise of our spirit—Psalms 34:8; 1 Pet. 2:3; Col. 1:12.
- D. The inscribing Spirit writes Christ into us to make us the living letters of Christ—2 Cor. 3:3; cf. Psalms 45:1:

1. Christ is being inscribed into us with the spiritual ink, the Spirit of the living God; if we are under the Spirit's inscribing, we have the deep sensation of being living within.
 2. The Spirit is the ink, and the content of the ink is Christ with His person, work, and attainments; the compound Spirit as the compound ink adds the substance of Christ into us and saturates us with the essence of Christ.
- E. The life-giving Spirit, the vivifying Spirit, imparts the divine life into our being to make us men of life with the ministry of life—2 Cor. 3:6, 17; John 7:38:
1. When we study and read the Bible prayerfully with the exercise of our spirit, we are vivified—2 Cor. 3:6; John 6:63.
 2. To be one who can give life to others, we must abide in the divine life and must walk, live, and have our being in the divine life—1 John 5:16a.
- F. The ministering Spirit imparts all that Christ is into us and makes all that Christ is and has real to us—2 Cor. 3:8; John 16:13-15:
1. We can receive the supply of the ministering Spirit by exercising our spirit to pray and call on the Lord—Gal. 3:5a; Col. 4:2; Rom. 10:12-13.
 2. The ministering Spirit ministers Christ into us and ministers Christ to others through us—2 Cor. 3:6; cf. Phil. 1:25.
- G. The freeing Spirit frees us from the bondage of the letter of the law; the Spirit of the Lord is the Lord Himself, with whom is freedom—2 Cor. 3:17; 4:5; Gal. 2:4; 5:1:
1. This freeing includes full satisfaction, with a rich, supporting supply and the full enjoyment of Christ—John 4:14b.
 2. This freeing includes the enjoyment of true rest, without being under the heavy burden to keep the law—Matt. 11:28-30.
- H. The transforming Spirit dispenses the divine life, nature, essence, element—even the Divine Being—into us so that we may be metabolically changed in our inner being—2 Cor. 3:18:
1. When we turn our heart to the Lord to behold and reflect the glory of the Lord with an unveiled face, He infuses us with the elements of what He is and what He has done.
 2. Thus, we are being transformed metabolically from one degree of glory to another degree of glory to have His life shape by His life power with His life essence.
- I. The transmitting Spirit transmits all that Christ is with all the riches of God into us for our participation—13:14:
1. God is love, and this love is being transmitted as grace into us by the Spirit, who is the Transmitter.
 2. The Spirit is the fellowship, the communication, the circulation, the transmission of the grace of Christ with the love of the Father, transmitting the divine riches into our being for our enjoyment.

Message Seven

The One Who Is Formed in the Believers

Scripture Reading: Gal. 1:15-16; 2:20; 3:29; 4:5, 19; Eph. 3:17a; 2 Cor. 3:18; Rom. 8:29; 12:2a

I. The New Testament reveals that Christ is deeply related to our inner being and desires to have a subjective relationship with us—Gal. 1:15-16; 2:20:

- A. God revealed His Son to Paul and to us—1:15-16:
 - 1. The word *reveal* in Galatians 1:16 is crucial and of utmost importance.
 - 2. To reveal is to make known (divulge) or to show plainly (display) something that has been kept secret.
 - 3. In the New Testament *revealed* is used in a profound manner related to our spirit—Rom. 1:17; 8:18; 1 Cor. 2:10; 1 Pet. 1:5; 5:1.
 - 4. God's revealing of His Son to us is in us; it is not outward but inward, not by an outward vision but an inward seeing.
 - 5. God's heart's desire is to reveal His Son in us so that we may know Him, receive Him as our life (John 17:3; 3:16), and become sons of God (1:12; Gal. 4:5-6).
- B. In Galatians 2:20 we see the most basic truth of God's economy—no longer I but Christ living in me:
 - 1. When Christ was crucified according to God's economy, we were included in Him; this is an accomplished fact—Rom. 6:6; Gal. 2:20; 6:14.
 - 2. We have died to the law and live to God through the organic union with Christ—John 15:4-5; 1 Cor. 6:17; Rom. 12:4-5; 1 Thes. 1:1.
 - 3. The "I" in Galatians 2:20 refers not only to Paul but to each one of us, and Paul's testimony is also our testimony:
 - a. "I am crucified with Christ"—v. 20a.
 - b. "It is no longer I who live, but it is Christ who lives in me"—v. 20b.
 - c. "The life which I now live in the flesh I live in faith, the faith of the Son of God"—v. 20c.
 - d. "The Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me"—v. 20d.
 - e. "What from Thee can separate me? / Thou wilt love me to the end! / Oh! Thy love is so prevailing, / E'en Thyself with me to blend! / We two one will be forever; / I am Thine and Thou art mine! / This will be my testimony: / In Thy love we'll ever twine!"—*Hymns*, #152, stanza 4.

II. Christ was crucified (Gal. 3:1) to redeem us out of the curse of the law (v. 13) and rescue us out of the evil religious course of the world (1:4), and He was resurrected from the dead so that He might live in us (2:20) and be formed in us at our maturity (4:19).

III. In Galatians 4:19 Christ is presented as the One who is formed in the believers:

- A. Christ, a living person, is the focus of Paul's gospel—1:16; Rom. 1:1, 3-4.
- B. Paul's preaching was to bring forth Christ, the Son of the living God, in the believers—Gal. 1:15-16; 2:20; 4:19.
- C. Christ is now living in us, and He will be formed in us—v. 19.
- D. Paul was travailing so that Christ might be formed in the believers for their full sonship—vv. 5, 19.

IV. According to Paul's usage in the New Testament, the word *form* refers to the outward expression of the inner being (Phil. 2:6); what we are is expressed in our form, that is, the outward expression of our inner being.

V. To have Christ formed in us is to have Christ fully grown in us—Gal. 4:19; Eph. 4:13-16:

- A. First, Christ was born into us at the time we repented and believed into Him, then He lives in us in our Christian life (Gal. 2:20), and finally, He will be formed in us at our maturity.
- B. To have Christ formed in us is to allow Him to permeate our whole being and saturate our inward parts—4:19; Eph. 3:17a; Col. 3:4, 10-11:
 - 1. When Christ occupies our inner being in this way, He is formed in us—Psa. 51:6.
 - 2. We need to allow Christ to saturate every part of our inner being; He must occupy us and saturate our mind, emotion, and will—Phil. 2:5; Eph. 3:17a.
 - 3. To have Christ possess our entire being is to have Him formed in us—Gal. 4:19.
- C. For Christ to make His home in our hearts, He needs to be able to settle down within us, and this requires that we allow Christ to make His home in all the parts of our inner being; this is to have Christ formed in us—Eph. 3:17a.
- D. To have Christ formed in us is to allow the all-inclusive Spirit to occupy every part of our inner being—Gal. 4:19; 3:2-3, 14:
 - 1. Christ should not only spread into our mind, emotion, and will; He should actually become our mind, emotion, and will—Phil. 2:5; 1 Cor. 2:16.
 - 2. Everything other than Christ must diminish, and Christ must become everything to us in our experience; this is to have Christ formed in us.
- E. To have Christ formed in us is to have Christ mingled with our whole being—6:17:
 - 1. In every part of our being, Christ should be mingled with us—Eph. 4:23.
 - 2. Christ must permeate us and saturate us until He is completely blended with us; then He will be formed in us—3:17a; Gal. 4:19.
- F. Paul's word about Christ being formed in the believers implies that we are being constituted with Christ—Col. 1:27; 3:4, 10-11:
 - 1. Christ is living in us, He is being formed in us, and He is becoming our constitution; Christ is now living in us so that we may be constituted with Him organically—Gal. 2:20; Col. 3:4, 10-11.
 - 2. Eventually, our whole being will be constituted with the element of Christ, for He will constitute every part of our soul so that we may have His form, His image, in every part of our being—2 Cor. 3:18; Rom. 8:29.
- G. The word *formed* in Galatians 4:19 corresponds to the word *image* in 2 Corinthians 3:18:
 - 1. Christ with His element is working within us organically so that we may have His form and express His image—Rom. 8:29.
 - 2. Christ's being formed in us depends on our being transformed into His image—2 Cor. 3:18.
 - 3. Our being transformed into His image and His being formed in us cause us to be conformed to His image; our being conformed to His image is the issue of His being formed in us—Gal. 4:19; Rom. 8:29.
- H. To have Christ formed in us is to have the three parts of our soul—our mind, emotion, and will—renewed—12:2a; Eph. 4:23:
 - 1. In order for our mind, emotion, and will to be renewed, Christ must saturate our mind, emotion, and will and replace the self and the world in our soul with Himself—Rom. 12:2a.
 - 2. If we are renewed in this way, every part of our inner being will bear the image of

Christ—2 Cor. 3:18; Rom. 8:29.

VI. Christ needs to be formed in us so that we may be sons of full age and heirs to inherit God's promised blessing and so that we may mature in the divinesonship—Gal. 3:14, 26, 29; 4:5-6:

- A. Galatians 3:26 says, "You are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus"; the expression *sons of God* refers to sons of full age.
- B. Under the old testament, God's chosen people were considered infants; now under the new testament, they are considered sons of full age, who will inherit the promised blessing—the all-inclusive Spirit of Christ.
- C. Christ must mature in us in order for us to be heirs for the full enjoyment of the Triune God as our inheritance; the Holy Spirit is the pledge of our inheritance—Eph. 1:13b-14; 1 Pet. 1:4.
- D. We need to pray that the Lord will bring us into the experience and enjoyment of Christ, who has been born into us, is now living in us, and will be formed in us at our maturity in order that we may be sons of full age and heirs of God's promised blessing and that we may mature in the divinesonship—Gal. 3:29; 4:6, 19.

Message Eight
**The Way to Receive, Experience,
and Enjoy the All-inclusive Christ
as the All-inclusive Life-giving Spirit—
the Aggregate of the All-embracing Blessing
of the Full Gospel of God**

Scripture Reading: Gal. 1:15a, 16a; 2:20; 4:19; 3:14

- I. Galatians reveals that God's plan according to His good pleasure is to work Christ Himself into us; the most evil thing, according to Galatians, is to distract people from Christ—Eph. 1:5; Gal. 1:4-17; 2:20; 4:19; *Hymns*, #538.**
- II. Galatians presents the Christ who is the threefold seed in humanity for God's dispensing of Himself into the believers of Christ for the fulfillment of His economy—3:16; Gen. 3:15; Gal. 4:4; Luke 8:5a, 11; John 12:24:**
- A. Christ as the seed of the woman refers to the incarnated Christ, the complete God becoming a perfect man through the dispensing of Himself into humanity in order to destroy Satan and to save the believers in Christ from sin and death—Gen. 3:15; Isa. 7:14; Matt. 1:16, 20-21, 23; Gal. 4:4; John 1:1, 14; Heb. 2:14; 1 Cor. 15:53-57.
 - B. Christ as the seed of Abraham is for the blessing to all the families of the earth; the unique seed of Abraham as the last Adam became the life-giving Spirit, who is the blessing of Abraham (the reality of the good land), for the dispensing of Himself into the believers of Christ to make them the corporate seed of Abraham—Gen. 12:2-3, 7; 17:7-8; Gal. 3:14, 16, 29; John 14:17-20; 1 Cor. 15:45b; John 12:24; Isa. 53:10.
 - C. Christ as the seed of David refers to the resurrected Christ, who carries out God's New Testament economy for the dispensing of the processed Triune God into the members of His Body so that they may share His kingship in His resurrection in the eternal kingdom—2 Sam. 7:12-14a; Matt. 22:42-45; Rom. 1:3; Rev. 22:16; Acts 2:30-31; Matt. 16:16-18; Rev. 20:4, 6:
 - 1. The great mountain, the kingdom of God that fills the whole earth in Daniel 2:34-35, is the corporate threefold seed in humanity, which includes all the believers in Christ—cf. Mark 4:26.
 - 2. Through Christ as the threefold seed in humanity, the enemies are gone, the blessing is here, and we are in the kingdom; this is the revelation of the entire Bible.
- III. Galatians reveals the way to receive, experience, and enjoy the all-inclusive Christ as the all-inclusive life-giving Spirit— the aggregate of the all-embracing blessing of the full gospel of God—3:14:**
- A. The way to receive, experience, and enjoy the all-inclusive Christ as the all-inclusive life-giving Spirit is by God's revealing of Christ in us; we live the Christian life according to the Christ whom we have seen—1:16a; Eph. 1:17; Gen. 13:14-18; Eph. 3:8, 19:
 - 1. Nothing is more pleasing to God than the unveiling, the revelation, of the living person of the Son of God in us—Gal. 1:15a, 16a; 2 Cor. 3:14-17; 4:3-6.
 - 2. The more inward, subjective revelation we receive of the Son of God, the more He will live in us; the more He lives in us, the more He will become to us the reality of the all-inclusive land as the blessing of Abraham, the blessing of the all-inclusive

- life-giving Spirit—Gal. 2:20; 3:14.
3. If we drop our concepts, turn our heart to the Lord, pay attention to the spirit, and spend time in the Word in a spirit and atmosphere of prayer, Christ will be revealed in us, live in us, and be formed in us—1:15a, 16a; 2:20; 4:19:
 - a. We must drop our concepts; every concept, whether spiritual or carnal, is a veil; this inward revelation is in our spirit through our enlightened mind—2 Cor. 3:14-15; 4:4; Eph. 1:17-18; Luke 24:45.
 - b. We must turn our heart to the Lord; the more we turn our heart to the Lord, the less ground the god of this age will have in our life and in our being, and we will be under the shining of the heavenly light to receive the inward revelation of this living person—2 Cor. 3:16, 18.
 - c. We must care for and pay attention to our spirit; it is in our spirit that the Spirit is shining, revealing Christ in us and speaking to us concerning Christ—Eph. 1:17; 3:5; cf. Rev. 1:10; 2:7.
 - d. We must pray-read the Word—Eph. 6:17-18.
 4. We need to be full of the revelation of the Son of God and thereby become a new creation with Christ living in us, being formed in us, and being enjoyed by us continually as the all-inclusive Spirit—Gal. 6:14-15.
- B. The way to receive, experience, and enjoy the all-inclusive Christ as the all-inclusive life-giving Spirit is by our receiving of Christ out of the hearing of faith—Gal. 3:2:
1. The faith of the believers is Christ entering into them to be their faith, making their spirit a spirit of faith—Heb. 12:2a; Gal. 2:16; Rom. 3:22; 2 Cor. 4:13.
 2. Faith comes out of the hearing of the word—Rom. 10:17.
 3. Faith is to believe that God is and we are not; faith always annuls us and reveals Christ to us—Heb. 11:6; Gen. 5:24; John 8:58; Gal. 2:20.
 4. The believers are the members of the family, the household, of faith; this faith house is a house that believes in God through His word—6:10.
- C. The way to receive, experience, and enjoy the all-inclusive Christ as the all-inclusive life-giving Spirit is by being born according to the Spirit and by being given the Spirit of God's Son into our hearts—4:29b, 6.
- D. The way to receive, experience, and enjoy the all-inclusive Christ as the all-inclusive life-giving Spirit is by putting on Christ through the baptism that puts us into Christ—3:27.
- E. The way to receive, experience, and enjoy the all-inclusive Christ as the all-inclusive life-giving Spirit is by being identified with Him in His death so that it may be no longer we who live but He who lives in us; and the life which we now live in the flesh we live in the faith of Christ—2:20:
1. To be identified with Christ means to be one spirit with Him and even to be one entity with Him—1 Cor. 15:45b; 6:17; Phil. 1:20-21a.
 2. We are identified with Christ in His death in order that it may be no longer we who live but Christ who lives in us—Rom. 6:3-4; Gal. 2:20.
 3. We live such a life in Christ as our faith; genuine faith is Christ Himself infused into us to become our appreciation of Him as a reaction to His attraction—v. 20b; 2 Cor. 5:14-15; Heb. 12:2a.
- F. The way to receive, experience, and enjoy the all-inclusive Christ as the all-inclusive life-giving Spirit is by living and walking by the Spirit—Gal. 5:16, 25.
- G. The way to receive, experience, and enjoy the all-inclusive Christ as the all-inclusive life-giving Spirit is by having Christ formed in us through travail—4:19.
- H. The way to receive, experience, and enjoy the all-inclusive Christ as the all-inclusive life-giving Spirit is by sowing unto the Spirit with the desire and aim of the Spirit in view,

to accomplish what the Spirit desires—6:7-8.

- I. The way to receive, experience, and enjoy the all-inclusive Christ as the all-inclusive life-giving Spirit is by boasting in the cross of Christ and living a new creation—vv. 14-15.
- J. The way to receive, experience, and enjoy the all-inclusive Christ as the all-inclusive life-giving Spirit is by the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ with our spirit—vv. 17-18.

Message Nine

The Mystery of the Church

Scripture Reading: Rev. 10:7; Rom. 16:25; Eph. 1:5, 9, 11, 22-23; 3:3-11; 1 Cor. 6:17

I. Ephesians 3:3-11 reveals that we may experience and enjoy Christ as the mystery of the church.

II. God's hidden purpose is the mystery, and the unveiling of this mystery is revelation; the Bible speaks of the revelation of the mystery—Rom. 16:25; Eph. 3:3, 5:

- A. The mystery of Christ, the church, was hidden in other generations but has been revealed in the New Testament age—v. 5.
- B. This mystery was hidden in God throughout the ages, but now the New Testament believers, having been enlightened, are able to see it—v. 9.
- C. The mystery of Christ has been revealed to the apostles and prophets in their spirit by revelation—v. 5:
 - 1. The mingled spirit is the means by which the New Testament revelation concerning Christ and the church is unveiled to the apostles and prophets.
 - 2. When our spirit is mingled with the divine Spirit, our spirit becomes the organ to which the mystery of Christ is revealed—1 Cor. 6:17; Eph. 1:17; 3:5.
- D. If we would see the revelation of the hidden mystery, we need to be strengthened into our inner man, our regenerated spirit, and allow Christ to make His home in our heart—vv. 14-17a.
- E. In Romans 16:25 and 26 Paul speaks of the revelation of the mystery: “The proclamation of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery, which has been kept in silence in the times of the ages but has now been manifested.”

III. The seventh trumpet, as the conclusion of the eternal economy of the processed Triune God, closes the present age of mystery; hence, Revelation 10:7 says, “The mystery of God is finished”:

- A. “To seal up vision and prophet” (Dan. 9:24c) is to close the age of mystery, that is, to finish the mystery of God (Rev. 10:7; 1 Tim. 3:9).
- B. In the dispensations from Adam to Moses and from Moses to Christ, everything was unveiled, manifested, and there was no mystery.
- C. It will be the same in the dispensation of the millennial kingdom and in the new heaven and new earth—everything will be unveiled, and then there will be no more mystery.
- D. Christ Himself (Col. 2:2), the church (Eph. 3:4-6), the kingdom of the heavens (Matt. 13:11), the gospel (Eph. 6:19), the indwelling of Christ (Col. 1:26-27), and the coming resurrection and transfiguration of the saints as the end of this dispensation of mystery (1 Cor. 15:51-52) are all mysteries that were hidden in times of the ages (Rom. 16:25; Eph. 3:5; Col. 1:26).
- E. All these mysteries will be completed, finished, and will be over at the trumpeting of the seventh trumpet.
- F. At the trumpeting of the seventh trumpet, not only God's judgment of wrath upon the earth but also the mystery of God are finished.
- G. In the dispensation from the incarnation of Christ to the millennial kingdom—the church age, the age of grace—everything is a mystery:
 - 1. The incarnation of Christ, as the beginning of the age of mystery, is a mystery—1

- Tim. 3:16.
- 2. Christ is the mystery of God—Col. 2:2.
- 3. The church is the mystery of Christ—Eph. 3:4-6:
 - a. Christ is a mystery, and the church, as the Body of Christ to express Him, is the mystery of Christ.
 - b. Christ and the church as one spirit are the great mystery— 5:32; 1 Cor. 6:17.
 - c. During the church age, the age of mystery, Christ is building up the church to be His bride—Matt. 16:18; Eph. 4:16; Rev. 19:7-9.
- 4. The kingdom of the heavens, the indwelling of Christ, and the resurrection and transfiguration of the saints are all mysteries—Matt. 13:11; Col. 1:26-27; 1 Cor. 15:51-53.

IV. The mystery of the church is the ultimate mystery in the universe:

- A. The church is the hidden mystery in God's eternal economy— Eph. 3:9-11:
 - 1. The mystery of the universe is God, the mystery of God is Christ, and the mystery of Christ is the church—Gen. 1:1; Rev. 4:11; Col. 2:2; Eph. 3:4.
 - 2. According to Ephesians 3:4, the church has a particular title—*the mystery of Christ*.
 - 3. In the ages before the New Testament, the mystery of the church was hidden from men; it has been revealed to the apostles and the believers only in the New Testament age—v. 5; Col. 1:26.
 - 4. The mystery of the church was hidden from eternity past throughout the Old Testament times, but in the New Testament age it has been manifested to all the believers in Christ.
 - 5. In the New Jerusalem God obtains an eternal and full expression in the man whom He created; this is the ultimate mystery in the universe—the mystery of the church—Eph. 5:32.
 - 6. Our spirit needs to be strong and full of wisdom and revelation so that we may know the mystery of the church—1:17.
 - 7. The mystery of Christ and the mystery of the church are great and deep.
- B. The great mystery—Christ and the church—is the meaning of the universe and of human life—Rev. 4:11; Eph. 5:32:
 - 1. God's intention in His creation of all things, including man, was that man would be mingled with God to produce the church—Zech. 12:1; Eph. 3:9.
 - 2. The desire of God's heart is to have the mystery of Christ—the Body of Christ as the increase and expression of Christ—1:5, 9, 11, 22-23.
 - 3. The Body life is the ultimate satisfaction of our spiritual experience—5:30.
 - 4. The economy of the mystery hidden in God throughout the ages is the mystery of the church as the Body of Christ—3:9-10.
 - 5. The mystery of Christ and the mystery of the church should be our daily life; without this mystery, our life would be merely the life of a human being, not the life of a Christian—v. 4; 1 Tim. 3:15-16.

Message Ten
**The Creator of the One New Man
as the Masterpiece of God**

Scripture Reading: Gen. 1:26; Eph. 2:14-16; 4:22-24

I. God's intention in His creation of man was to have a corporate man to express Him and to represent Him—Gen. 1:26; Eph. 2:15:

- A. God created man in His own image for His expression and gave man His dominion so that man would represent Him to deal with His enemy—Gen. 1:26.
- B. The church as the new man in the new creation bears God's image for God's expression and fights against God's enemy for God's kingdom—Col. 3:10-11; Eph. 2:15; 4:24; 6:10-11.
- C. What was divided and scattered in the old man is recovered in the new man—Gen. 11:5-9; Acts 2:5-12; Col. 3:10-11.

II. The new man as the poem, the masterpiece, of God was created through Christ's death and in His resurrection—Eph. 2:10, 15-16:

- A. We need to pay careful attention to two phrases in verse 15: *in His flesh* and *in Himself*:
 - 1. "In His flesh" Christ terminated all the negative things in the universe: Satan, the devil, the enemy of God (Heb. 2:14); sin (Rom. 8:3; John 1:29); the flesh of fallen man (Gal. 5:24); the world, the cosmos, the evil system of Satan (John 12:31); the old creation represented by the old man (Rom. 6:6); and the separating ordinances of the law (Eph. 2:15).
 - 2. "In Himself" as the sphere, element, and essence, Christ created the Jews and the Gentiles into one new man:
 - a. Christ is not only the Creator of the one new man, the church, but also the sphere in which and the element and essence with which the new man was created.
 - b. Christ is the very element and essence of the one new man, making God's divine nature one entity with humanity—cf. Col. 3:10-11.
- B. In the creating of the new man, first our natural man was crucified by Christ, and then through the crossing out of the old man, Christ imparted the divine element into us, causing us to become the masterpiece of God's work, an absolutely new item in the universe, a new invention of God—Rom. 6:6; 2 Cor. 5:17:
 - 1. The Greek word for *masterpiece* is *poiema*, meaning "something that has been written or composed as a poem."
 - 2. Not only a poetic writing may be considered a poem, but also any work of art that expresses the maker's wisdom and design.
 - 3. We, the church, the masterpiece of God's work, are a poem expressing God's infinite wisdom and divine design; the church is God's wise exhibition of all that Christ is—Eph. 3:10-11.
 - 4. Christ became wisdom to us from God as three vital things in God's salvation—1 Cor. 1:30:
 - a. He is our righteousness (for our past), by which we have been justified by God, that we might be reborn in our spirit to receive the divine life—Rom. 5:18; 8:10.
 - b. He is our sanctification (for our present), by which we are being sanctified in our soul (transformed in our mind, emotion, and will) with His divine life—6:19, 22.

- c. He is our redemption (for our future), that is, the redemption of our body, by which we will be transfigured in our body with His divine life to have His glorious likeness—8:23; Phil. 3:21.
- 5. It is of God that we participate in such a complete and perfect salvation, which makes our entire being—spirit, soul, and body—organically one with Christ to make Him everything to us and to make us the wise exhibition of all that Christ is.

III. On the cross Christ created the new man in Himself by abolishing in His flesh the law of the commandments in ordinances, the middle wall of partition—Eph. 2:14b-15a:

- A. The law spoken of in verse 15 is not the law of the moral commandments but the law of the ritual commandments, such as the ordinances of circumcision, keeping the Sabbath, and eating certain foods.
- B. Ordinances are the forms or ways of living and worship, which create enmity and division:
 - 1. On the cross Christ abolished all the regulations regarding living and worship, regulations that have divided the nations—v. 15; Col. 2:14.
 - 2. From the time of Babel, mankind has been divided by ordinances concerning the ways of living and worship; in God's economy in the church life, we must overcome Babel—Gen. 11:1-9:
 - a. Christ should be our only source; we should not allow anything of our background, culture, or nationality to be our source—cf. Col. 3:10-11.
 - b. The worldly people regard cultural differences as a source of prestige, but in Christ we have put off this prestige; now our only prestige is Christ and the genuine oneness.
 - c. If we are willing to let go of our cultural pride, it will be possible for the Lord to have the proper church life—Eph. 4:22-24.

IV. For and in the one new man, we need to allow the peace of Christ to arbitrate in our hearts—2:14a, 15b; Col. 3:12-15; 2:14-18; Rom. 5:1; Matt. 18:21-35:

- A. The Greek term for *arbitrate* can also be rendered “umpire, preside, or be enthroned as a ruler and decider of everything”; the arbitrating peace of Christ in our hearts dissolves our complaint against anyone—Col. 3:13-15.
- B. Often we are conscious of three parties within us: a positive party, a negative party, and a neutral party; hence, there is the need for inward arbitration to settle the dispute within us:
 - 1. Whenever we sense that different parties within our being are arguing or quarreling, we need to give place to the presiding peace of Christ and allow this peace, which is the oneness of the new man, to rule within us and have the final word.
 - 2. We need to set aside our opinion, our concept, and listen to the word of the indwelling Referee.
- C. If we allow the peace of Christ to arbitrate in our hearts, this peace will settle all the disputes among us; we will have peace with God vertically and with the saints horizontally:
 - 1. Through the arbitration of the peace of Christ, our problems are solved, and the friction between the saints disappears; then the church life is preserved in sweetness, and the new man is maintained in a practical way.
 - 2. The arbitrating of the peace of Christ is Christ working within us to exercise His rule over us, to speak the last word, and to make the final decision—cf. Isa. 9:6-7.
 - 3. If we stay under the ruling of the enthroned peace of Christ, we will not offend others or damage them; rather, by the Lord's grace and with His peace, we will minister life to others.

4. This peace should bind all the believers together and become the uniting bond—Eph. 4:3.

V. In the one new man Christ is all the members and is in all the members—Col. 3:10-11:

- A. The Christ who dwells in us is the constituent of the one new man—1:27; 3:11:
 1. Because Christ is all the members of the new man, there is no possibility, no room, for any natural person (for any race, nationality, culture, or social status) in the new man—vv. 10-11.
 2. No matter what kind of person we may be, as far as the one new man is concerned, we all are nobodies.
 3. In the one new man there is only one person—the all-inclusive Christ—2:17; 3:4, 11.
- B. For the new man we all need to take Christ as our person—Eph. 2:15; 3:17a:
 1. As the Body of Christ, the church needs Christ as its life; as the one new man, the church needs Christ as its person.
 2. Christ is in all of us as one person; therefore, we all have only one person—Gal. 2:20; Eph. 3:17a.
 3. For the practical existence of the one new man, the total person of the old man must be put away, and we must live by our new person—Rom. 6:6; Gal. 2:20; Eph. 4:22-24; 3:17a:
 - a. We need to live a life in the new man by taking Christ as our person, with Him as the One making all the decisions in us.
 - b. Once we see that we are a part of the one new man, we will not be able to decide things merely by ourselves.
 - c. We need to see that we are a corporate Body and a corporate new man and that both our living (person) and our moving (life) are corporate—1 Cor. 12:12; Rom. 12:4-5.
 4. We need to consider *one new man* in Ephesians 2:15 together with *one mouth* in Romans 15:6 and *speak the same thing* in 1 Corinthians 1:10:
 - a. In the past there were too many mouths because there were too many persons.
 - b. *With one accord* and *with one mouth* (Rom. 15:6) mean that even though we are many and all are speaking, we all “speak the same thing” (1 Cor. 1:10).
 - c. Although we are many and come from many places, we all have one mouth, and we all speak the same thing; this is because we all are the one new man having only one person—Eph. 2:15; 4:22-24; 3:17a; Rom. 15:6; 1 Cor. 1:10.

Message Eleven

The Children of God Walking in Love and Light

Scripture Reading: Eph. 1:5, 9; 5:1-14; 1 John 4:8, 16; 1:5

- I. God's good pleasure is to be one with man and to make man the same as He is in life and in nature but not in the Godhead—Eph. 1:5, 9.**
- II. As the children of God, we are God-men, born of God, possessing the life and nature of God, and belonging to the species of God—5:1; 1 John 3:1; John 1:12-13:**
 - A. God is our real, genuine, Father, and we are His real, genuine, children—1 John 3:1; Eph. 5:1.
 - B. The greatest wonder in the universe is that human beings could be begotten of God and that sinners could be made children of God—1 John 3:1, 9; 4:7; 5:1, 4, 18; John 1:12-13.
 - C. Through such an amazing divine birth we have received the divine life, the eternal life, as the divine seed sown into our being—1 John 1:2; 3:9.
 - D. Since we have been born of the divine life and possess the divine life, we, the children of God, are divine persons—5:11-13; 3:1, 10.
 - E. As those who have been born of God, we have not only the divine life but also the divine nature—2 Pet. 1:4.
 - F. Because we are the children of God with the life and nature of God, we can be imitators of God—Eph. 5:1.
 - G. As the Father's children, having the Father's life and nature, we can be perfect as our Father is perfect—Matt. 5:48.
- III. We need to know and experience God as love and light—1 John 4:8, 16; 1:5:**
 - A. Love and light are actually God Himself; they are God's being, His essence—4:8; 1:5.
 - B. First John says that God is light (v. 5) and then that God is love (4:8, 16).
 - C. Love, as the nature of God's essence, is the source of grace, and light, as the nature of God's expression, is the source of truth.
 - D. When the divine love appears to us, it becomes grace, and when the divine light shines upon us, it becomes truth.
- IV. As children of God, we should walk in love and light—Eph. 5:2, 8:**
 - A. As grace and truth are the basic elements in 4:17-32, so love and light are the basic elements of Paul's exhortation in 5:1-33:
 - 1. Grace is the expression of love, and love is the source of grace; truth is the revelation of light, and light is the origin of truth—1 John 4:8; 1:5.
 - 2. Love is the inner substance of God, and light is the expressed element of God; the inner love of God is sensible, and the outer light of God is visible.
 - 3. Our daily walk as children of God should be constituted with both the loving substance of God and the shining element of God; this should be the inner source of our walk.
 - 4. Walking in love and light is deeper and more tender than living according to truth and by grace.
 - B. "Walk in love, even as Christ also loved us and gave Himself up for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling savor"—Eph. 5:2:
 - 1. To walk in love is to walk in intimacy with God—cf. 1 John 3:1:

- a. In the Father's presence, we not only enjoy grace, the expression of love, but we also enjoy love itself.
 - b. In our daily walk we should always care for our Father's feeling, for we live intimately in His tender love.
- 2. The goal of the book of Ephesians is to bring us into love as the inner substance of God that we may enjoy His presence in the sweetness of the divine love and thereby love others as Christ did—5:25:
 - a. In the condition and atmosphere of love, we are saturated with God to be holy and without blemish before Him—1:4.
 - b. The love in which we are rooted for growth and grounded for building is the divine love realized and experienced by us in a practical way—3:17.
 - c. The love of Christ, which is Christ Himself, is immeasurable and knowledge-surpassing, yet we can know it by experiencing it—v. 19.
 - d. In the love of God in Christ, we hold to truth, that is, to Christ with His Body—4:15.
 - e. The Body of Christ builds itself up in love; love is the most excellent way for us to be anything and to do anything for the building up of the Body of Christ—v. 16; 1 Cor. 12:31.
 - f. To love the Lord in incorruptibility means to love Him in the new creation and according to all the incorruptible things revealed in the book of Ephesians—6:24.
- 3. As those who have been regenerated to become God's species, we, the children of God, should be love because God is love; since we become God in life and in nature, we also should become love—1 John 4:8, 16.
- C. "You were once darkness but are now light in the Lord; walk as children of light"—Eph. 5:8:
 - 1. As God is light, so we, the children of God, are children of light—1 John 1:5; Eph. 5:8; John 12:36.
 - 2. We are not only children of light—we are light itself; we are light because we are one with God in the Lord—Matt. 5:14; 1 John 1:5.
 - 3. When we are in the light, we are outside the realm of right and wrong—v. 7.
 - 4. If we walk as children of light, we will bear the fruit described in Ephesians 5:9:
 - a. The fruit of the light must be good in nature, righteous in procedure, and real in expression, that God may be expressed as the reality of our daily walk.
 - b. The fruit of the light in goodness, righteousness, and truth is related to the Triune God:
 - 1) God the Father as goodness is the nature of the fruit of the light; therefore, goodness in verse 9 refers to God the Father—Matt. 19:17.
 - 2) Righteousness refers to God the Son, for Christ came to accomplish God's purpose according to God's righteous procedure—Rom. 5:17-18, 21.
 - 3) Truth, the expression of the fruit of the light, refers to God the Spirit, for He is the Spirit of reality—John 14:17; 16:13.
 - c. The proof that we are walking as children of light is seen in the bearing of such fruit.

Message Twelve

The Giver of Gifts and the Constituents of God's Armor

Scripture Reading: Eph. 4:7-16; 6:10-20

- I. Ephesians 4:7-16 presents to us Christ as the Giver of gifts for the intrinsic building up of the organic Body of Christ; this building up is by the giving, the dispensing, of the divine grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ:**
- A. Every member of the Body of Christ is an indispensable gift to the Body—v. 7; 1 Cor. 12:14-22; Rom. 12:4-5:
 - 1. The gift of Christ is a person constituted with Christ's life and element dispensed into him by the Divine Trinity—cf. 2 Cor. 1:15.
 - 2. Each gifted person has a measure, and the divine grace is given, dispensed, into him according to that measure—Eph. 4:16; cf. Rom. 12:3.
 - B. The intrinsic building up of the organic Body of Christ is by the giving of the gifted persons, such as apostles, prophets, evangelists, and shepherds and teachers, who are constituted by the dispensing of the Divine Trinity, by Christ as the Head in His ascension (including His resurrection), to the Body of Christ—Eph. 4:8-12:
 - 1. Ephesians 4:8 says, "Having ascended to the height, He led captive those taken captive and gave gifts to men":
 - a. *Height* in the quotation from Psalm 68:18 refers to Mount Zion (vv. 15-16), symbolizing the third heaven, where God dwells (1 Kings 8:30).
 - b. Psalm 68 implies that it was in the Ark that God ascended to Mount Zion after the Ark had won the victory (Num. 10:35); this portrays how Christ has won the victory and ascended triumphantly to the heavens.
 - c. Through His universal traffic and in His ascension, Christ led as captives those who had been taken captive by Satan and made them gifts to His Body—Eph. 4:8-11:
 - 1) The redeemed saints had been taken captive by Satan before they were saved by Christ's death and resurrection—cf. Luke 4:18.
 - 2) In His ascension Christ led them captive; that is, He rescued them from Satan's captivity and took them to Himself—Psa. 68:18.
 - 3) In His ascension Christ led them to the heavens as His captives in His train of vanquished foes and made them gifts to His Body.
 - 4) Now Christ is celebrating His triumph over them, His vanquished foes, and is leading them as His captives in a triumphal procession in His move for His ministry to build up His Body—2 Cor. 2:14.
 - 2. The more Christ ascends and descends within us, capturing and vanquishing us, the more He fills us with Himself to constitute us as gifts to His Body—cf. Eph. 4:9-10.
 - C. The intrinsic building up of the organic Body of Christ is by the gifted persons' perfecting of the saints in the divine dispensing so that all the saints may be able to do the work of the New Testament ministry, that is, to build up the Body of Christ—vv. 11-12:
 - 1. The gifted persons perfect the saints by nourishing them according to the tree of life with the life supply for their growth in life—Gen. 2:9; 1 Cor. 3:2, 6.
 - 2. The gifted persons perfect the saints to do what they do for the direct building of the Body of Christ—Matt. 16:18; Eph. 4:11-12; cf. 1 Tim. 1:16; 4:12.
 - 3. The result of this perfecting is that we will all arrive at the oneness of the faith and of the full knowledge of the Son of God, at a full-grown man, and at the measure of the

stature of the fullness of Christ—Eph. 4:13; cf. John 17:23.

4. This perfecting will cause us to be no longer little children tossed by waves and carried about by every wind of teaching in the sleight of men, in craftiness with a view to the satanic system of error—Eph. 4:14.
5. This perfecting will cause every member of the Body of Christ to be a building member in love—growing up into the Head and functioning out from the Head—vv. 15-16.

II. Ephesians 6:10-20 reveals that Christ is the constituents of God's armor:

- A. The whole armor of God is for the entire Body of Christ as the corporate warrior, not for any individual member of the Body; we must fight the spiritual warfare in the Body, not as individuals— vv. 10-13; James 4:7; cf. Rom. 13:12-14; Deut. 32:30.
- B. In Ephesians 2 we sit with Christ in the heavenliesto participate in all His accomplishments (v. 6); in chapters 4 and 5 we walk in His Body on the earth to fulfill God's eternal purpose (4:1, 17; 5:2, 8, 15); then in chapter 6 we stand in His power in the heavenlies to fight against God's enemy (vv. 11, 13-14; cf. 1 John 5:4, 18; John 3:6b).
- C. "Stand therefore, having girded your loins with truth"—Eph. 6:14a:
 1. *Truth* here refers to God in Christ as the reality in our living, that is, God realized and experienced by us in our living; this is actually Christ Himself lived out by us—4:15, 21, 24-25; John 14:6; 8:31-32, 36.
 2. The truth with which we are girded is actually the Christ whom we experience; because Paul's living was conformed to the pattern of Christ, he had the strength to face all opposition and adverse circumstances—Eph. 4:20-21; Phil. 1:19-21a.
- D. "Having put on the breastplate of righteousness"—Eph. 6:14b; 1 Cor. 1:30; Jer. 23:6:
 1. Christ as the breastplate of righteousness covers our conscience, signified by the breast; in fighting against Satan, our accuser, we need a blood-purified conscience, a conscience void of offense—Heb. 9:14; 10:22; Acts 24:16.
 2. "They overcame him because of the blood of the Lamb" (Rev. 12:11); our response to Satan's accusations should be, "I overcome Satan, the accuser, not by my perfection and not even by a conscience void of offense but by the blood of the Lamb; I am defended against his accusations by the breastplate of righteousness."
- E. "Having shod your feet with the firm foundation of the gospel of peace"—Eph. 6:15:
 1. Christ has made peace for us on the cross, both with God and with man, and this peace has become our gospel; the gospel of peace has been established as a firm foundation, as a readiness with which our feet may be shod—2:13-17.
 2. We fight the spiritual warfare by standing in peace; if we lose the peace between us and God or between us and other believers, we lose the standing to fight—Col. 3:15.
- F. "Besides all these, having taken up the shield of faith, with which you will be able to quench all the flaming darts of the evil one"— Eph. 6:16; 2 Cor. 4:13; Heb. 12:2:
 1. The flaming darts are Satan's temptations, proposals, doubts, questions, lies, and attacks; we need to take up the shield of faith to quench these flaming darts.
 2. We need to exercise our spirit of faith with our subdued and resurrected will to believe that the Lord's manifestation is to destroy the works of the devil—1 John 3:8; Matt. 16:22-23; Luke 4:39-41; Matt. 12:28; Luke 10:17, 19.
 3. We need to exercise our spirit of faith to believe that the Lord's death has destroyed Satan—Heb. 2:14; Gen. 2:17; 3:15; Gal. 2:20; Rom. 6:3-6; 1 Cor. 15:54-58.
 4. We need to exercise our spirit of faith to believe that the Lord's resurrection has put Satan to shame—Col. 2:12-15, 20; 3:1; John 14:30; Phil. 3:10; Isa. 61:10; Zech. 3:4-5.
 5. We need to exercise our spirit of faith to believe that the ascension of the Lord is far

- above Satan's power—Eph. 1:19-23; 2:6; 6:11, 13.
6. We must have faith in God, who is real, living, present, and available—Mark 11:22; Rev. 1:18.
 7. We must have faith in God's heart; God's heart toward us is always good; He has no intention to punish us, to injure us, or to cause us to suffer loss—Rom. 8:28-39.
 8. We must have faith in God's faithfulness; God cannot lie but is always faithful to His word—1 Cor. 1:9; 1 John 1:9; Titus 1:2.
 9. We must have faith in God's ability—Eph. 3:20.
 10. We must have faith in God's word; God is bound to fulfill all that He has spoken—cf. 1 Thes. 5:24; Eph. 6:17-18.
 11. We must have faith in God's will—1:5, 9, 11.
 12. We must have faith in God's sovereignty; under His sovereignty even our mistakes work for good—Rom. 9:19-29.
- G. "Receive the helmet of salvation"—Eph. 6:17a:
1. The helmet of salvation is for covering our mind, our mentality, against the negative thoughts shot in by the evil one; such a helmet, such a covering, is God's salvation.
 2. Satan injects threats, worries, anxieties, fears, and other weakening thoughts into our mind; God's salvation is the covering that we take up against all of these, and this salvation is the saving Christ whom we experience in our daily life—John 16:33; Phil. 1:19; Rom. 5:10; 10:12-13.
- H. Receive "the sword of the Spirit, which Spirit is the word of God"—Eph. 6:17b:
1. Among the six items of God's armor, the sword of the Spirit is the only one for attacking the enemy; with the sword we cut the enemy to pieces.
 2. Christ as the Spirit and the word furnishes us with a sword as an offensive weapon to defeat and slay the enemy.
 3. When the logos (the constant word in the Bible) becomes the rhema (the present, instant, living speaking of the Spirit) to us, this rhema is the sword that cuts the enemy to pieces—cf. John 6:63.
- I. "By means of all prayer and petition, praying at every time in spirit and watching unto this in all perseverance and petition concerning all the saints"—Eph. 6:18:
1. Prayer may be considered the seventh item of the armor of God, because it is the means by which we apply the other items.
 2. Prayer is the unique way to apply Christ as the armor of God; it is prayer that makes the armor available to us in a practical way.