

KEY STATEMENTS FOR THE 2019 THANKSGIVING CONFERENCE

**God's will for us concerning the all-inclusive, extensive Christ
is that we would know Christ, experience Christ,
enjoy Christ, be saturated with Christ,
and have Christ become our life and person.**

**We can walk in Christ as our living land
and absorb Christ as our rich soil, in which we have been rooted,
so that we may grow with the elements that we absorb from the soil
and be made full in Christ in our experience.**

**Because all the fullness of the Godhead dwells in Christ
and because we have been put into Him,
we have been made full in Him—filled up with the divine riches—
and all that He is and all that He has belong to us,
and all that He has experienced has become our history.**

**If we allow the peace of Christ to arbitrate in us
and if we are filled with the word of Christ,
we shall have the new man in a practical way;
all the saints in all the churches throughout the Lord's recovery
will be living Christ in the one new man.**

**Outline of the Messages
for the Thanksgiving Conference
November 28—December 1, 2019**

**GENERAL SUBJECT:
KNOWING AND EXPERIENCING
THE ALL-INCLUSIVE, EXTENSIVE CHRIST**

Message One

The Will of God concerning the All-inclusive, Extensive Christ

Scripture Reading: Rev. 4:11; Eph. 1:5, 9, 11; Col. 1:9-10, 27; 2:6-7; 3:4, 10-11; 4:12

- I. God is a God of purpose, having a will of His own pleasure, and He created all things for His will that He might accomplish and fulfill His purpose—Rev. 4:11; Eph. 3:9-11; Col. 1:9:**
- A. God's will is God's wish; God's will is what He wants to do—Eph. 1:9.
 - B. God's good pleasure is of God's will; His good pleasure is embodied in His will—v. 5.
 - C. God's will is His determination for the carrying out of His purpose—v. 11; 1 Cor. 1:1.
 - D. God has made known to us the mystery of His will through His revelation in Christ, that is, through Christ's incarnation, crucifixion, resurrection, and ascension—Eph. 1:9; 3:9.
 - E. God works all things according to the counsel of His will; God's will is His intention, and His counsel is His consideration of the way to accomplish His will—1:11.
- II. Colossians is a book concerning the great, eternal will of God—1:9; 4:12:**
- A. The will of God mentioned in this book is not His will in small matters—it is the eternal will of God, the great will of God.
 - B. Colossians reveals what God's will is according to His desire and intention in the whole universe, in creation, in redemption, in the present age, in the coming age, and in eternity—Eph. 1:5, 9, 11; 3:9-11; Matt. 16:18; Rev. 19:7-9; 11:15; 21:2.
 - C. We need to be filled with the full knowledge of God's will—Col. 1:9:
 - 1. God's will in Colossians 1:9 is His will regarding His eternal purpose, regarding His economy concerning Christ—Eph. 1:5, 9, 11.
 - 2. To have the full knowledge of God's will is to have the revelation of God's plan so that we may know what God plans to do in the universe—Rev. 4:11:
 - a. God's plan is to make Christ everything in the divine economy—Matt. 17:5; Col. 1:15-18; 3:10-11.
 - b. The revelation of God's plan opens the way for us to have more experience of Christ—2:16-17; 3:4, 15-16.
 - 3. To know and experience the all-inclusive, extensive Christ requires "all spiritual wisdom and understanding"—1:9:
 - a. Spiritual wisdom and understanding are of the Spirit of God in our spirit—Eph. 1:17; 1 Cor. 2:11-12; 6:17; 1 John 5:20.
 - b. Wisdom is in our spirit to perceive God's eternal will; spiritual understanding is in our mind, renewed by the Spirit, to understand and interpret what we perceive in our spirit—Eph. 1:17; 4:23.
 - D. Walking worthily of the Lord issues from having the full knowledge of God's will; such a walk is one in which we live Christ—Col. 1:10; Phil. 1:19-21a.
 - E. We need to stand mature and fully assured in all the will of God—Col. 4:12.
- III. The will of God for us is that we know the all-inclusive, extensive Christ, experience Him, and live Him as our life—1:9, 15-18; 3:4:**

- A. The will of God is in Christ, concentrated in Christ, and for Christ; Christ is everything in the will of God—1:9.
- B. For Christ to be the Firstborn of both the original creation and the new creation means that He is both all-inclusive and extensive—vv. 15, 18:
 - 1. The extensive Christ is the Christ who is more vast than the universe and who is everything to us—Eph. 3:18.
 - 2. Christ, the Savior and Lord in whom we believe, is limitless and inexhaustible; since He is without limitation, the revelation concerning Him must also be without limitation—vv. 2-5, 8-9.
- C. The Christ unveiled in Colossians is the all-inclusive, extensive, preeminent One, the centrality and universality, the center and the circumference, of God's economy—1:15-18, 27; 2:16-17; 3:4, 10-11; Eph. 1:10; 3:11:
 - 1. Colossians reveals the all-inclusive Christ—the One who is God, man, and the reality of every positive thing in the universe—2:9, 16-17.
 - 2. In God's economy Christ is everything; God wants Christ and Christ alone—the wonderful, preeminent, all-inclusive Christ, who is all in all—Matt. 17:5; Col. 3:10-11.
 - 3. The all-inclusive, extensive Christ is the center of God's economy; God's dispensing is altogether related to Christ and focused on Him—Eph. 3:17a.
 - 4. God's will, His intention, in His economy is to work the wonderful, all-inclusive, extensive Christ into our being as our life and everything so that we may become the corporate expression of the Triune God—Col. 1:27; 3:4, 10-11.
- D. The will of God is that the all-inclusive, extensive Christ be our portion, our life, our constituent, and our peace—1:9, 12; 3:4, 10-11, 15:
 - 1. In 1:9 God's will refers to Christ; the will of God is profound in relation to our knowing, experiencing, and living in the all-inclusive, extensive Christ.
 - 2. God's will for us is that we would know Christ, experience Christ, enjoy Christ, be saturated with Christ, and have Christ become our life and person—3:4, 10-11; Eph. 3:16-17.
 - 3. God's will is that we, having the all-inclusive, extensive Christ, should walk in Him—Col. 2:6:
 - a. To walk in Christ is to live, act, behave, and have our being in Him.
 - b. As we walk in Christ, we will be rooted in Him to have downward growth and be built up to have upward growth—vv. 6-7.
- E. We should estimate and evaluate everything according to the all-inclusive, extensive Christ—v. 8:
 - 1. Christ is the governing principle of all genuine wisdom and knowledge, the reality of all genuine teaching, and the only measure of all concepts acceptable to God.
 - 2. Only when we have a clear view of the place of the all-inclusive, extensive Christ in God's economy will we be able to see through delusion and deception.
- F. We need to be infused, saturated, and permeated with the all-inclusive, extensive Christ until in our experience He is everything to us—1:27; 2:16-17; 3:4, 10-11:
 - 1. The all-inclusive, extensive Christ is in us, but we need to see Him, know Him, be filled with Him, be saturated with Him, and be absolutely one with Him.
 - 2. We should allow the all-inclusive, extensive Christ to fill our whole being and to replace our culture with Himself—Eph. 3:17a; Col. 3:10-11:
 - a. The more Christ replaces our natural life and culture with Himself, the more we will be able to declare, "To live is Christ"; to us, to live will be the Christ who takes full possession of us, occupies us, and fills us with Himself—Phil. 1:21a.
 - b. The all-inclusive, extensive Christ desires to replace every element of our natural life and culture with Himself so that we may be the one new man as His corporate expression; this is the message of the book of Colossians—3:10-11.

Message Two

Knowing and Experiencing the All-inclusive, Extensive Christ as the Good Land—Our Allotted Portion

Scripture Reading: Col. 1:12; 2:6-15, 19; Exo. 3:8; Deut. 8:8-9; 26:9

I. Christ as the preeminent and all-inclusive One is the allotted portion of the saints—Col. 1:12:

- A. *The allotted portion* refers to the lot of the inheritance, as illustrated by the allotment of the good land of Canaan given to the children of Israel for their inheritance—Josh. 14:1.
- B. The New Testament believers' allotted portion is not a physical land; it is the all-inclusive Christ as the life-giving Spirit—Col. 2:6-7; Gal. 3:14:
 - 1. The riches of the good land typify the unsearchable riches of Christ in different aspects as the bountiful supply to His believers in His Spirit—Deut. 8:7-10; Eph. 3:8; Phil. 1:19.
 - 2. By enjoying the riches of the land, the believers in Christ are built up to be His Body as the house of God and the kingdom of God—Eph. 1:22-23; 2:21-22; 1 Tim. 3:15; Matt. 16:18-19; Rom. 14:17.

II. The purpose of God's calling is to bring God's chosen people into the enjoyment of the all-inclusive, extensive Christ, typified by the good land flowing with milk and honey—Exo. 3:8; cf. 1 Cor. 1:9:

- A. Milk and honey, which are the mingling of both the animal life and the vegetable life, are two aspects of the life of Christ—the redeeming aspect and the generating aspect—Deut. 8:8; 26:9; cf. John 1:29; 12:24:
 - 1. The redeeming aspect of Christ's life is for our judicial redemption, and the generating aspect of Christ's life is for our organic salvation—1:29; 12:24; Rev. 2:7; Rom. 5:10.
 - 2. The symbols of the Lord's table signify the redeeming and generating aspects of Christ's life for God's complete salvation; thus, the good land has become a table, a feast for our enjoyment—Matt. 26:26-28; 1 Cor. 10:17.
- B. We must be "in the light" in order to enjoy the all-inclusive Christ as the good land in His redeeming and generating aspects—Col. 1:12; 1 Pet. 2:9; Isa. 2:5:
 - 1. God is light—1 John 1:5.
 - 2. The word of God is light—Psa. 119:105, 130.
 - 3. Christ is light—John 8:12; 9:5.
 - 4. The life of Christ is light—1:4.
 - 5. The believers are light—Matt. 5:14; Phil. 2:15.
 - 6. The church is a lampstand shining with light—Rev. 1:20; Psa. 73:16-17.
- C. We must eat God's words to enjoy the all-inclusive Christ as the good land in His redeeming and generating aspects; God's word is milk for us to drink and honey for us to eat—John 6:57, 63, 68; 1 Pet. 2:2; Psa. 119:103; Ezek. 3:3.
- D. By enjoying Christ as the land of milk and honey, we will be constituted with Him as milk and honey—"Your lips drip fresh honey, my bride; / Honey and milk are under your tongue"—S. S. 4:11a:
 - 1. Honey restores the stricken ones, whereas milk feeds the new ones.

2. The seeker has stored so many riches within her that food is under her tongue, and she can dispense the riches of Christ to the needy ones at any time—Isa. 50:4; Matt. 12:35-36; Luke 4:22; Eph. 4:29-30.
3. This sweetness is not produced overnight but comes from a long period of gathering, inward activity, and careful storage—S. S. 4:16; 2 Cor. 12:7-9.

III. We can walk in Christ as our living land and absorb Christ as our rich soil, in which we have been rooted, so that we may grow with the elements that we absorb from the soil—Col. 2:6-7; cf. 1 Cor. 3:6, 9; Col. 2:19:

- A. Colossians 2:8-15 presents a full description and definition of Christ as the soil in which we do not lack anything; as we take time to absorb Him as the all-inclusive land, the facts in these verses become our experience:
 1. Christ as the soil is the One in whom all the fullness of the Godhead dwells bodily—v. 9:
 - a. *Fullness* refers not to the riches of God but to the expression of the riches of God; what dwells in Christ is not only the riches of the Godhead but also the expression of the riches of what God is—v. 9; 1:15, 19; 3:10-11.
 - b. When we are rooted in Christ as the soil, we are made full in Him; we are filled up with all the divine riches to become His expression—Eph. 3:8, 17, 19.
 - c. In Christ as the soil we are filled, completed, perfected, satisfied, and thoroughly supplied; we do not lack anything—cf. Phil. 1:19.
 - d. Christ as the soil is the history and mystery of God with all the riches of His person and processes—Col. 2:2.
 2. Christ as the soil is the Head of all rule and authority—v. 10.
 3. In Christ as the soil there is the killing power, which puts the flesh to death—v. 11.
 4. In Christ as the soil there is an element that causes us to be buried—v. 12a.
 5. In Christ as the soil there is an element that causes us to be raised up—v. 12b.
 6. In Christ as the soil there is an element that vivifies us—v. 13.
 7. In Christ as the soil there is the wiping out of the handwriting in ordinances—v. 14.
 8. In Christ as the soil there is the victory over the evil spirits in the atmosphere—v. 15.
- B. We must take time to enjoy the Lord as the all-inclusive land so that all the elements of Christ as the rich soil may be absorbed into us for us to be made full in Him in our experience—v. 10a; 4:2:
 1. If we would absorb the riches of Christ as the soil, we need to have tender, new roots—cf. 2 Cor. 4:16.
 2. We need to forget our situation, our condition, our failures, and our weaknesses and simply take time to absorb the Lord; as we take time to absorb Him, we grow with the growth of God in us for the building up of the Body of Christ—Luke 8:13; Matt. 14:22-23; 6:6; Col. 2:7a, 19.

Message Three

The All-inclusive, Extensive Christ Having the Preeminence in All Things

Scripture Reading: Col. 1:15, 18; 3:4, 10-11, 17; Rev. 2:4; Dan. 7:9-10

I. God's intention in His administration is to give Christ the preeminence in all things, to cause Christ to have the first place in everything—Col. 1:15, 18:

- A. The entire world situation is under the rule of the heavens by the God of the heavens to match His intention in His economy, of which Christ is the center—Dan. 7:9-10; 4:34-35; Eph. 1:10.
- B. For Christ to have the preeminence in all things, God needs a people; apart from God's having a people, there is no way for Christ to be made preeminent—Col. 1:18; 3:10-11.
- C. Under His heavenly rule God is using the environment to make Christ the centrality (the first) and the universality (everything) to us—Rom. 8:28; Col. 1:18, 27; 3:4, 10-11.

II. Christ has the first place, the preeminence, in God's economy—1:18; Eph. 1:10:

- A. Christ is the preeminent One, the One who has the first place in everything—Col. 1:18.
- B. Christ is preeminent in the triune Godhead; the first, the Father, exalts the Son, and the third, the Spirit, always testifies concerning the Son—2 Cor. 13:14; Phil. 2:9; John 15:26.
- C. Christ is preeminent in God's exaltation of Him—Acts 2:33a; Eph. 1:22:
 - 1. Christ has been exalted to the right hand of God in the third heaven—Acts 2:33a.
 - 2. In God's exaltation of Christ, He has been given to be the Head over all things—Eph. 1:22.
- D. Both in the old creation and in the new creation, both in the universe and in the church, Christ occupies the first place, the place of preeminence—Col. 1:15, 18.
- E. For Christ to be the first means that He is all; since Christ is the first both in the universe and in the church, He must be all things in the universe and in the church—3:10-11.

III. Christ should have the preeminence in our personal universe—v. 17; 1 Cor. 10:31:

- A. As those who have been chosen by God to be His people for Christ's preeminence, we are under His heavenly rule—Dan. 4:26; Matt. 5:3.
- B. Christ, the preeminent One, must be the centrality and universality in our church life, family life, and daily life—Col. 3:17; 1 Cor. 10:31.
- C. Under God's heavenly rule everything is working together for our good; this is especially true of the things in our personal universe—Rom. 8:28:
 - 1. Our personal universe includes ourselves, our families, and the church.
 - 2. In our personal universe many things happen day by day for the purpose of making Christ preeminent; we need to realize this and be submissive to God's heavenly rule—Eph. 1:11; Rev. 4:11.
- D. In order to give Christ the preeminence in all things, we must be willing to be adjusted, to be broken, and to be made nothing so that the Lord can have a way in us, through us, and among us for the building up of His organic Body—Eph. 3:17; 4:16.
- E. If we have a vision of the preeminence of Christ, our living and our church life will be revolutionized, for we will realize that in all things Christ must have the first place—Col. 1:18.

IV. Christ should have the preeminence in our love—Rev. 2:4:

- A. To give the Lord the first place in all things is to love Him with the first love; we need to maintain and develop our first love toward the Lord—v. 4.
- B. Whatever one loves, his whole heart, even his whole being, is set on and occupied and possessed by—1 Tim. 6:10; 2 Tim. 3:2-4; 4:8, 10a; Titus 1:8.

- C. Whether there would be a day of glory in the church's victory or grievous days of the church's decline depends on what kind of love we have—Rev. 2:4; 2 Tim. 3:2-4.
- D. Our love for the Lord must be absolute; we should not love anyone or anything above Him—Matt. 10:37-39.
- E. We love the Lord because He first loved us, infusing His loving essence into us and generating within us the love with which we love Him—1 John 4:19, 8, 16.
- F. We love the Lord according to the divine dispensing of the Divine Trinity as love—Rom. 5:5; 8:35, 39; 15:30.

V. Christ should have the preeminence in our tripartite being—Col. 1:27; 3:4, 10-11, 15-16:

- A. We worship the enthroned Christ in the heavens, but we experience, enjoy, and partake of the indwelling Christ in our spirit; we are one with Him in a very subjective way—v. 1; 1 Cor. 6:17; Eph. 3:17:
 - 1. The Christ who indwells us is not a small, limited Christ but the all-inclusive, extensive, preeminent Christ—Col. 1:15-16, 18-19.
 - 2. We need to be infused, saturated, and permeated with the all-inclusive, extensive, preeminent Christ until in our experience He is everything to us—2:16-17; 3:4, 10-11.
- B. Because Christ is our life, all He has and all He has attained and obtained become subjective to us; universally, Christ is extensive, but in our experience, He is our life, our being—v. 4; Rom. 8:34, 10.
- C. The content and constituent should only be the all-inclusive, extensive Christ—Col. 3:10-11.
- D. We should allow Christ to fill our entire being and replace every aspect of our natural life with Himself—Eph. 3:17; Col. 3:10-11.

VI. Christ should have the preeminence in our spiritual experiences—1:18, 27; 2:9-13, 20; 3:1-4:

- A. The history of Christ is the experience of the Christian, and the experience of Christ is the history of the Christian—1 Cor. 1:30; Rom. 6:3-5; Gal. 2:20; Eph. 2:5-6:
 - 1. The history of Christ becomes our experience and our spiritual history—John 14:19b; Gal. 2:20.
 - 2. In the organic union with Christ, whatever Christ passed through has become our history—John 15:1, 4-5.
- B. In Colossians a number of phrases point to our experience of Christ; these expressions give us a complete picture of the proper experience of Christ—1:27-28; 2:6, 8, 13, 19-20.

VII. Christ should have the preeminence in our human living—3:18—4:1:

- A. God desires that Christ be expressed through human life—Phil. 1:19-21a.
- B. The living of the believers must be in union with Christ; this means that in our living we need to be one with Him—1 Cor. 6:17; John 15:4-5:
 - 1. We need to be one with the Lord Jesus just as He is one with the Father—10:30; 14:10; 6:57.
 - 2. We and Christ should now have one life and one living; the Son's life becomes our life, and our living becomes the Son's living—Gal. 2:20.
 - 3. The living of the believers in union with Christ results in the expression of Christ in their human living—Col. 3:18—4:1.
- C. We should do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus—3:17:
 - 1. The name denotes the person, and the Lord's person is the Spirit—2 Cor. 3:17a.
 - 2. To do things in the name of the Lord is to act in the Spirit; this is to live Christ and to give Him the preeminence in our human living—Col. 1:18.

Message Four

Knowing and Experiencing the All-inclusive, Extensive Christ as the Reality of All Positive Things

Scripture Reading: Col. 2:16-18a; John 14:6a, 17; 1 John 5:6; John 16:13

I. “Let no one therefore judge you in eating and in drinking or in respect of a feast or of a new moon or of the Sabbath, which are a shadow of the things to come, but the body is of Christ. Let no one defraud you by judging you unworthy of your prize”—Col. 2:16-18a:

- A. As with a man’s physical body, the body in 2:17 is the substance, and like the shadow of a man’s body, the rituals in the law are the shadow of Christ, who is the substance and reality of the gospel; Colossians unveils such an all-inclusive Christ as the focus of God’s economy—1:17a, 18a; 3:11.
- B. Daily, weekly, monthly, and yearly, Christ is the reality of every positive thing, implying the universal extensiveness of the all-inclusive Christ:
 - 1. Daily, Christ is our food and drink for our satisfaction and strengthening—1 Cor. 10:3-4.
 - 2. Weekly, Christ is our Sabbath for our completion and rest in Him—Matt. 11:28-29.
 - 3. Monthly, Christ is our new moon as a new beginning with light in darkness—John 1:5; 8:12.
 - 4. Yearly, Christ is our feast for our joy and enjoyment—1 Cor. 5:8.
- C. The all-inclusive, extensive Christ, who is full of attractiveness and rich in magnetism, is the essence of the Bible—Luke 24:44; John 5:39-40; Matt. 1:1; cf. Rev. 22:21.
- D. According to the context, “the prize” in Colossians 2:18 is the enjoyment of Christ as the body of the shadows; to be defrauded of our prize is to be defrauded of the subjective enjoyment of Christ—cf. Gen. 15:1; Phil. 3:8.
- E. Our need is for the subjective Christ to become our enjoyment to complete the divine revelation within us; if we are short in the experience and enjoyment of Christ, we are also short concerning God’s revelation—Col. 1:25-28.
- F. Whatever we do day by day should remind us of Christ as the reality of that thing; if we follow the practice of taking Christ as the reality of all the material things in our daily life, our daily walk will be revolutionized and transformed, and we will be full of Christ—2 Cor. 4:16; Phil. 1:19-21a.
- G. We need to enjoy Christ day by day as the reality of all our necessities:
 - 1. Christ is our breath—John 20:22.
 - 2. Christ is our drink—4:10, 14; 7:37-39a.
 - 3. Christ is our food—6:35, 57.
 - 4. Christ is our light—1:4; 8:12.
 - 5. Christ is our clothing—Gal. 3:27.
 - 6. Christ is our dwelling place—John 15:5, 7a.

II. The all-inclusive, extensive Christ is the reality of all the positive things in the universe—cf. Rom. 1:20; Eph. 3:18; *Hymns*, #496:

- A. Because the universe with the billions of things and persons in it was created for the purpose of describing Christ, He, in revealing Himself to His disciples,

- could easily find in any environment something or someone to serve as an illustration of Himself—Col. 1:15-17; John 1:51; 10:9-11; 12:24; Matt. 12:41-42.
- B. The Old Testament uses six major categories of things as types to describe Christ—human beings, animals, plants, minerals, offerings, and foods:
1. Human beings typify Christ, such as Adam (Rom. 5:14), Melchizedek (Heb. 7:1), Isaac (Matt. 1:1), Jonah (12:41), and Solomon (v. 42).
 2. Animals typify Christ, such as a lamb (John 1:29), a lion, an ox, an eagle (Ezek. 1:10), and a gazelle (S. S. 2:9).
 3. Plants typify Christ (who is the tree of life—Gen. 2:9), such as the vine tree (John 15:1), the apple tree (S. S. 2:3), the fig tree, the pomegranate tree, and the olive tree (Deut. 8:8); the different parts of a tree are also types of Christ, such as the root, the stump, the sprout, the shoot, the branch, and the fruit (Isa. 11:1, 10; 4:2; Luke 1:42; Rev. 5:5).
 4. Minerals typify Christ, such as gold, silver, copper, and iron (Deut. 8:9, 13), and different kinds of stone: the living stone (1 Pet. 2:4), the rock (1 Cor. 10:4), the cornerstone (Matt. 21:42), the topstone (Zech. 4:7), the foundation stone, and precious stones (1 Cor. 3:11-12).
 5. Offerings typify Christ, such as the sin offering, trespass offering, burnt offering, meal offering, peace offering, wave offering, heave offering, and drink offering—Lev. 1—7; Exo. 29:26-28; Num. 28:7-10; cf. John 4:24.
 6. Foods typify Christ, such as bread, wheat, barley, grapes, figs, pomegranates, olives, milk, and honey—6:35; Deut. 8:8-9; 26:9.
- C. In the New Testament, Christ is the Spirit of reality who makes the untraceable riches of all that He is real to us, guiding us into Himself as the divine reality—John 14:6a; 1 John 5:6; John 14:17; 16:13.
- D. The elements of the reality of all the types are in the Spirit, and the Spirit transfuses and dispenses all these riches into us through the Lord's words—Phil. 1:19; John 6:63; Col. 3:16; Eph. 6:17-18; Rev. 2:7.

III. The very Christ who is the reality of all positive things is the One who is the Head of the Body; thus, to hold the Head is simply to enjoy Christ as the reality of all positive things—Col. 2:19:

- A. Since the Christ we enjoy as our everything is the Head of the Body, the more we enjoy Him, the more we become Body-conscious:
1. This indicates that the enjoyment of Christ is not an individualistic matter but a Body matter—cf. Eph. 3:8; 4:15-16.
 2. The more we enjoy Christ, the more we love the other members of the Body—Col. 1:4, 8.
- B. Because Christ's headship is in resurrection (v. 18), the enjoyment of Christ spontaneously brings us into resurrection and saves us from our natural being.
- C. The enjoyment of Christ brings us into the heavenlies in ascension; we can be experientially in the heavens only by enjoying Christ, the Head, as the life-giving Spirit in our spirit—3:1-2; 2 Cor. 3:17; 2 Tim. 4:22; Rom. 8:10, 34.
- D. As we enjoy Christ and hold Him as the Head, we absorb the riches of the all-inclusive, extensive Christ; these riches become in us the increase of God by which the Body grows for its building up—Col. 2:19, 6-7; Eph. 4:16.

Message Five

Knowing and Experiencing the All-inclusive, Extensive Christ as the Mystery of God

Scripture Reading: Col. 2:2-3, 9-10; John 1:1, 14, 16; Eph. 3:8, 17

I. The all-inclusive, extensive Christ is the mystery of God—Col. 2:2:

- A. God Himself is a mystery, and Christ is the mystery of this mystery.
- B. *The mystery of God* indicates something incomprehensible and inexplicable.
- C. As the mystery of God, the all-inclusive, extensive Christ is the definition, explanation, and expression of God—the Word of God—John 1:1, 14.
- D. As the mystery of God, Christ is the history of God; the whole “story” of God is in Christ and is Christ—Col. 2:2:
 - 1. Although God is infinite and eternal, without beginning or ending, He also has a history, a story—Rom. 16:26; Psa. 90:2.
 - 2. The all-inclusive, extensive Christ—the mystery of God, the mysterious story of God—is the history of God.
 - 3. God’s history refers to the process through which He passed in Christ so that He may enter into us, and we may be brought into Him; this process includes incarnation, human living, crucifixion, resurrection, ascension, glorification, and enthronement—John 1:12-14, 29; 3:14; 12:24; 14:20.
- E. In the all-inclusive, extensive Christ as the mystery of God, all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge are hidden—Col. 2:3:
 - 1. Wisdom is related to our spirit, and knowledge is related to our mind—Eph. 1:8, 17.
 - 2. God is the unique source of wisdom and knowledge—Rom. 16:27; 11:33.
 - 3. This is the spiritual wisdom and knowledge of the divine economy concerning Christ and the church—Eph. 1:10; 3:9; 5:32.
 - 4. Wisdom and knowledge also refer to all the “stories” of God.
 - 5. All the wisdom and knowledge pertaining to God’s stories are hidden in Christ, who is the mystery of God—Col. 2:2-3.

II. As the mystery of God, Christ is the embodiment of the fullness of the Godhead—v. 9:

- A. *All the fullness of the Godhead* refers to the entire Godhead, the complete God—v. 9:
 - 1. The word *Godhead* refers to deity and strongly indicates the deity of Christ.
 - 2. Since the Godhead comprises the Father, the Son, and the Spirit, the fullness of the Godhead must be the fullness of the Father, the Son, and the Spirit—Matt. 28:19; 2 Cor. 13:14.
 - 3. For Christ to be the embodiment of the fullness of the Godhead means that the fullness of the Triune God dwells in Christ in a bodily form—Col. 2:9:
 - a. This implies the physical body that Christ put on in His humanity, and it indicates that all the fullness of the Godhead dwells in Christ as the One who has a human body—John 1:14; Rom. 8:3; Heb. 2:14.
 - b. Before His incarnation the fullness of the Godhead dwelt in Christ as the eternal Word, but it did not dwell in Him bodily—John 1:1.
 - c. After He became incarnate, clothed with a human body, the fullness of the Godhead began to dwell in Him in a bodily way, and in His glorified body (Phil. 3:21) now and forever it dwells.

- B. *Fullness* in Colossians 2:9 refers not to the riches of God but to the expression of the riches of God:
 1. The riches are the quantity of an object, whereas the fullness is the flowing out, the overflow, of the object to become the expression of the object.
 2. What dwells in Christ is not only the riches of the Godhead but also the expression of the riches of what God is:
 - a. God's fullness is the overflow of His riches, and this overflow is God's expression.
 - b. The fullness of the Godhead is the expression of the Godhead, the expression of what God is—v. 9.
 3. The Godhead is expressed both in the old creation, the universe, and in the new creation, the church—1:15, 18.
- C. When the Son of God was incarnated as a man, with Him was the fullness of God, and of this fullness we have all received—John 1:14, 16:
 1. In John 1:16 *grace* does not refer to the riches of grace but to the fullness of grace; the riches of grace are in God, but the fullness of grace is in Christ Jesus—Col. 2:9.
 2. The grace we receive is the fullness of grace; beginning from the time we are saved, we may receive grace upon grace.
 3. The phrase *grace upon grace* in John 1:16 can be compared to the rolling waves of the sea that come in wave upon wave without ceasing.

III. As believers in Christ, we are made full in Christ, in whom all the fullness of the Godhead dwells bodily—Col. 2:9-10:

- A. The Greek word translated “full” in verse 10 implies completion, perfection.
- B. Because all the fullness of the Godhead dwells in Christ and because we have been put in Him, we have been made full in Him, filled up with the divine riches—1 Cor. 1:30; Eph. 3:8:
 1. All those who believe in Christ have been put into Christ; therefore, we are identified with Him and are one with Him—Gal. 3:27; 2 Cor. 5:17.
 2. We the believers have been put into the all-inclusive, extensive Christ, identified with Him, and joined to Him as our Husband; hence, we are one with Him—Col. 1:28; Rom. 7:2-4; 1 Cor. 6:17.
 3. Because we are one with Christ, we partake of all that He has accomplished, obtained, and attained; we inherit all that Christ has experienced and passed through, receiving all that He is and has.
 4. All that He has passed through is now our history, and all that He has obtained and attained is our inheritance.
 5. The result is that all that He is and all that He has belong to us, and all that He has experienced has become our history—Col. 2:11-13; 3:1.
- C. We need to have a full realization of what we have in Christ and to exercise faith to partake of all that is ours in Christ—Eph. 3:17.
- D. Because this fullness is all-inclusive, it accomplishes everything for us, it fully satisfies and supplies us, and it makes us full, perfect, and complete—Col. 2:9.
- E. We have the all-inclusive, inexhaustible fullness that dwells in Christ bodily, and in Him we are made full—Eph. 3:8; Col. 2:9-10.

Message Six

Knowing and Experiencing the All-inclusive, Extensive Christ as Our Life and as the Constituent of the New Man

Scripture Reading: Col. 3:1-4, 15-17

I. We need to know and experience the all-inclusive, extensive Christ as our life:

- A. In order to experience Christ as our life, we need to see that we have one position, one life, one living, one destiny, and one glory with Christ—Col. 3:1-4; cf. 1 Cor. 6:17:
1. Our position is that we are in Christ; because we are in Him, we are where He is—sitting at the right hand of God—Col. 3:1; John 14:20; 17:24; Eph. 2:6:
 - a. The Son's position is in the Father (John 10:38; 14:10); we are in the Son (1 Cor. 1:30a), so we are in the Father (John 14:20; 1 Thes. 1:1; 2 Thes. 1:1).
 - b. It is when we are in the spirit that we are in Christ, in the Father, and in heaven practically and experientially (cf. John 14:20):
 - (1) There is a transmission taking place from Christ in heaven to us on earth by means of the all-inclusive Spirit in our spirit—Eph. 1:19, 22-23; 2:22.
 - (2) The very Christ who is sitting on the throne in heaven (Rom. 8:34) is also now in us (v. 10), that is, in our spirit (2 Tim. 4:22), where the habitation of God is (Eph. 2:22).
 - (3) Since today our spirit is the place of God's habitation, it is now the gate of heaven, where Christ is the ladder that joins us to heaven and brings heaven to us—v. 22; Gen. 28:12-17; John 1:51.
 - (4) 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; our spirit is the receiving end of the divine transmission, whereas the throne of God is the transmitting end—Heb. 4:16.
 2. The life of God is the life of Christ, and the life of Christ has become our life—Col. 3:4; John 5:26:
 - a. For Christ to be our life means that He is subjective to us to the uttermost—1:4; 14:6a; 10:10b; 1 Cor. 15:45b; Rom. 8:10, 6, 11.
 - b. It is impossible to separate a person from the life of that person, for a person's life is the person himself; thus, to say that Christ is our life means that Christ has become us and that we have one life and living with Him—John 14:6a; Phil. 1:21a.
 - c. With Christ as the believers' life there are three characteristics, which distinguish it from the natural life:
 - (1) This life is a crucified life—Gal. 2:20.
 - (2) This life is a resurrected life—John 11:25.
 - (3) This life is a life hidden in God—Col. 3:3-4; Matt. 6:1-6, 16-18.
 3. To seek the things which are above and set our mind on them is to join ourselves to the Lord in His heavenly ministry, His divine enterprise; this is to live Christ, to have a living that is one with Christ's living—Col. 3:1-2:
 - a. In His heavenly ministry, Christ today is living as the High Priest to intercede for the churches—Heb. 8:1; 4:14; 7:25; 4:16; Col. 4:2.
 - b. In His heavenly ministry, Christ today is living as the heavenly Minister to supply the saints with the riches of Christ—Heb. 8:1-2; Eph. 3:8.

- c. In His heavenly ministry, Christ today is living as the universal Administrator of God's government for the accomplishment of God's purpose—Rev. 4:1-2, 5; 5:6; Eph. 1:10-11:
 - (1) From the throne in the heavens, the divine transmission brings the things above into the local churches—vv. 19, 22-23.
 - (2) In Revelation 4 and 5 we have a vision of our “central government,” and in Revelation 1 through 3 we have a vision of the local churches as the “embassies”; through the seven Spirits what is in the heavenly “headquarters” is transmitted into the churches as the “embassies.”
 - (3) What takes place in the local churches should be under the direction of the throne of God in heaven; in order for the recovery to be the *Lord's* recovery, it must be under His direction—Col. 1:18; 2:19; Rev. 4:2-3.
- 4. Our destiny is glory; Christ is leading us into glory for us to be manifested with Him in glory—Heb. 2:10; Col. 3:4.
- B. Our life is the Christ who dwells within us, and this life is hidden with Christ in God; the Christ hidden in God is typified by the manna hidden in the golden pot—vv. 3-4; Exo. 16:32-34; Rev. 2:17:
 - 1. Christ as the hidden manna is in God the Father as the golden pot; the Father is in Christ as the Ark with His two natures, divinity and humanity; and Christ as the indwelling Spirit lives in our regenerated spirit to be the reality of the Holy of Holies—cf. John 14:16-20; 2 Tim. 4:22.
 - 2. When we eat Christ as the hidden manna, we are incorporated into Him for the mutual abode of God and man—John 15:5, 7; 8:31; 6:57, 63; 14:23.
- C. That Christ is our life is a strong indication that we are to take Him as life and live by Him, that we are to live Him in our daily life—Col. 3:4a:
 - 1. Christ must be our life in a practical and experiential way; day by day we need to be saved in His life—v. 4; 1 Cor. 15:45b; Rom. 5:10.
 - 2. The new man is the spontaneous issue of our taking Christ as our life and living Him—Col. 3:3-4, 10-11.

II. We need to know and experience the all-inclusive, extensive Christ as the constituent of the new man:

- A. In the new man there is room only for Christ; He is all the members of the new man and in all the members; He is everything in the new man—vv. 10-11.
- B. In the new man Christ is the centrality and universality; He is the constituent of the new man, and He is all and in all in the new man.
- C. If we would live Christ as the constituent of the new man, we need to be ruled by the peace of Christ (vv. 12-15) and inhabited by the word of Christ (vv. 16-17):
 - 1. We need to allow the peace of Christ to arbitrate in our hearts—vv. 12-15; Eph. 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 dissolves our complaint against anyone—Col. 3:13.
 - 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 shall 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 shall not offend others or damage them; rather, by the Lord's grace and with His peace, we shall minister life to others.
 - (4) This peace should bind all the believers together and become their uniting bond—Eph. 4:3.
2. If we would live Christ as the constituent of the new man, we need to let the word of Christ dwell in us richly—Col. 3:16-17:
 - a. When the peace of Christ arbitrates in us and keeps us in a situation full of oneness and harmony, we become the place of God's speaking, His oracle—vv. 15-16; Rev. 2:1, 7:
 - (1) God's speaking requires oneness; division causes God's speaking to diminish, even to cease altogether—Lev. 1:1.
 - (2) Since oneness is a necessary condition for God's speaking, we need to let the peace of Christ arbitrate in our hearts—Col. 3:15.
 - (3) For the word of Christ to dwell in us richly means that it has adequate room in us to permeate and saturate our whole being; it is crucial for us to let the word of Christ enter into us, dwell in us, prevail in us, and replace our concepts, opinions, and philosophies—Psa. 119:130; cf. Rev. 21:23; 22:5.
 - b. We need to allow the word of the Lord to have the first place in us so that we may experience the functions of the word of God operating within us and ministering the riches of Christ into our being—Col. 3:16:
 - (1) The word of God enlightens (Psa. 119:105, 130), nourishes (Matt. 4:4; 1 Tim. 4:6), and waters us to quench our thirst (Isa. 55:1, 8-11).
 - (2) The word of God strengthens (1 John 2:14b; Prov. 4:20-22), washes (Eph. 5:26), and builds us up (Acts 20:32).
 - (3) The word of God completes, perfects (2 Tim. 3:15-17), and edifies us by sanctifying us (John 17:17).
 - c. By allowing the word of God to inhabit us, we can become a proper human being, a God-man filled with Christ as the reality of the attributes of God—Col. 3:16-25; Phil. 4:5-8.
 3. If we allow the peace of Christ to arbitrate in us and if we are filled with the word of Christ, we shall have the new man in a practical way; all the saints in all the churches throughout the Lord's recovery will be living Christ in the one new man.