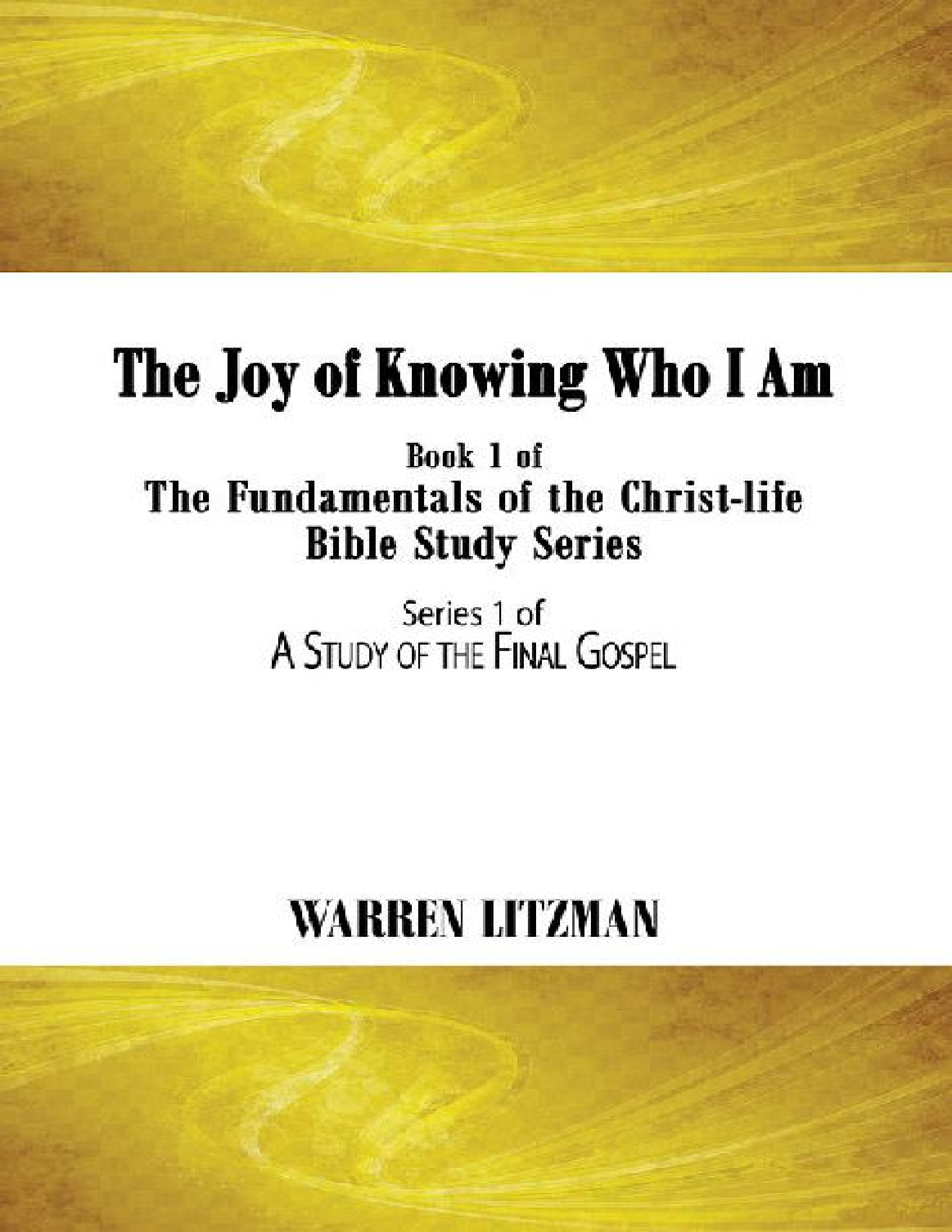




The Joy of Knowing Who I Am

**Book 1 of
The Fundamentals of the Christ-life
Bible Study Series**

Series 1 of
A STUDY OF THE FINAL GOSPEL

WARREN LITZMAN



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For more information on the Christ-life message, visit Christ-life Fellowship's web site at www.christ-life.org/.

The Joy of Knowing Who I Am,

Book 1 of The Fundamentals of the Christ-life Bible Study Series, Series 1 of A Study of the Final Gospel

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Congratulations!

Acknowledgement

A Study of the Final Gospel comes directly from Warren Litzman's recorded teachings in fellowship meetings which were originally sequential Bible Study audio and video sets.

These recordings were developed into lessons and culminated into Bible study workbooks through countless hours of dedicated, detailed work. We want to thank Sandy Pretorious, Jane Snyman, Teresa Ferraro, and Roger Bodary for creating The Joy of Knowing Who I Am, Book 1 of The Fundamentals of the Christ-life Bible Study Series, A Study of the Final Gospel, through their commitment and hard work for the in-Christ message.

Preface

Welcome, students of the Bible! The fact that you have approached this book signals you are searching for something more — a deeper understanding, a deeper relationship with God, a true experiential change in the way you think and do life.

The in-Christ message focuses our minds on Christ, the Son of God, and brings us to a more intimate, personal relationship with God as our Father. This knowledge is the meat that feeds the soul, the nourishment that grows us to strong, mature children of God. This Bible study series addresses students who are born-again believers of Jesus Christ, God's Son. It focuses on salvation, the Christian life, and how to correctly read and understand the Bible, while touching on everything from God's plan before Creation to the end times. Lessons include study activities to develop a richer learning experience both for individuals and small study groups.

This in-depth Bible study builds from fundamental concepts to advanced topics. So, it is vitally important to follow the sequence of the lessons, starting with lesson 1 of Book 1 and progressing in order. All students, even seasoned believers, need to first solidify their foundational understanding so advanced lessons can be understood.

Approach every lesson with your King James Version Bible and a journal in hand, or journal in the book. Mark key ideas in your Bible. Making notes in your Bible will help solidify your new understanding of the In-Christ message each time you study your Bible in the future. If a topic seems to give you a problem or confusion, don't worry about it. Just set it on a shelf

in your mind, and the Holy Spirit will open your understanding of that subject when you are ready. Feast! Take time to savor each lesson. Absorb as much as you can. Enjoy.

Three Levels of Learning

The Fundamentals of the Christ-life offers flexibility for readers to decide how much they want to get out of their Bible study.

1. If one wants to simply read the text, the format of these books certainly allows for easy reading. Just move past the activities and keep reading.

2. For those wanting to step it up to the next level, short activities throughout the chapters highlight important points for a closer look, prompting those with the heart of a student to reflect on their own personal experiences and consider how these concepts apply and how they change understanding. This extra step delivers deeper learning of the material.

3. Those who want to investigate and really dig in to see for themselves the in-Christ message in God's Word will want to make use of the Explore More sections after some of the chapters. The more one digs, the richer the learning experience. We love those light-bulb moments!

Lesson 1

What Is the Christ-life?

As we get underway in our lessons, the very first thing we will consider is the question, What is the Christ-life? Now that is a new term to some people. We get the term Christ-life from Galatians 2:20, where the apostle Paul said, The life I now live in the flesh is Christ (Gal. 2:20). We consider the in-Christ message as the apex truth of the Christian's life because the Christ-life is the Christian life.

One of the best translations for Christian is "Christ-person" (2 Cor. 2:10), meaning Christ's life in operation. So, a person who has the Christ-life is a Christian with the knowledge that the very person within him is Christ. Then again, the Christ-life is more than that. It is a deep, spiritual truth. There was a time when this knowledge was hidden from God's people. Even now, multitudes of God's people have no concept of the fact that they are Christ-persons. That is why I give my life for these principles, these truths: that the only person in me is Christ and that Christ is the person whom I am growing up into. The only person in you is Christ. He is the only person you can grow up into. There is no life of your own because you no longer live; you were crucified with Christ, and the life you now live, indeed, is Christ (Gal. 2:20).

The Present Truth

This brings us to the very first verse of Scripture I would like to deal with. Never forget these particular verses in 2 Peter 1:12–14:

(12) “Wherefore I will not be negligent to put you always in remembrance of these things, though ye know them, and be established in the present truth. (13) Yea, I think it meet, as long as I am in this tabernacle, to stir you up by putting you in remembrance; (14) Knowing that shortly I must put off this my tabernacle, even as our Lord Jesus Christ hath shewed me.”

— **Look Closer:**

I want you to see specifically what is stated for us in verse 12, where Peter used the term present truth. Think about these questions:

Is there a present truth with God?

What is truth?

Pontus Pilate asked the second question directly to Jesus in John 18:37–38:

(37) “Pilate therefore said unto him, Art thou a king then? Jesus answered, Thou sayest that I am a king. To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth. Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice. (38) Pilate saith unto him, What is truth? And when he had said this, he went out again unto the Jews, and saith unto them, I find in him no fault at all.” —

See how Jesus responded earlier to this question by his disciples. “Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me” (John 14:6). To be factual, all truth is a person, Jesus Christ. We will find out in our study that God doesn’t really give truth; He is truth. Jesus Christ is obviously that truth because He said, “I am the truth” (John 14:6). That is one of Jesus’ great “I am” statements. Truth is a person.

So, is there a present truth? Is there a truth more greatly emphasized and taught by the Holy Spirit at a specific time? We believe there is. We believe, along with Peter, there is such a thing as present truth. We believe present

truth to be Christ alive in human beings, the Christ-life. What is the Christ-life? It is the present truth of God. We believe God is now bringing forth this present truth. You might say there has always been this present truth if Peter spoke of it over 1,900 years ago and we are just speaking of it now. It has always been in existence; I will not deny that. But I will say that, with God, in every generation of time since Christ left this earth, the present truth has been centered in the person of Jesus Christ. God has always worked to bring that truth. Then why did men not recognize it as I do now? Quite simply, men's minds are so polluted with doctrine, theology, and manmade religion that they totally ignore God's present truth. I think God has always brought the present truth, but I believe men's minds can become so contaminated with men's ideas, human doctrine, and satanic religion that they miss God's present truth. I see this happening generation after generation from Christ's Cross forward. I have been learning Christ in me for the past 45 years and have never been disappointed.

This great truth of Christ in us as our hope of glory was profoundly expressed in the days of the apostle Paul and the apostle John.

— Look Closer:

Carefully read Colossians 1:25–29 below and note/underline the key words and phrases in each of the verses (i.e. the dispensation of God, given to me for you, the mystery, hid, etc.).

(25) “Whereof I am made a minister, according to the dispensation of God which is given to me for you, to fulfil the word of God; (26) Even the mystery which hath been hid from ages and from generations, but now is made manifest to his saints: (27) To whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory: (28) Whom we preach, warning every man, and teaching every man in all wisdom; that we may present every man perfect

in Christ Jesus: (29) Whereunto I also labour, striving according to his working, which worketh in me mightily.” —

That gospel had to be Christ in us as our hope of glory. But, within a few years after Jesus left this earth and Christ began living in human beings, the gospel of it was lost, the truth of it was lost, the theology of it ceased to grow so that our world became unaware that the real Jesus Christ lived in believers. That means for the next 1,700 or 1,800 years, our world has not had this present truth as Paul taught and wrote about in his epistles.

The present truth is Christ in us is our hope of glory. That is God’s whole intention, and it is man’s entire need — Christ in us. How did it get lost? It got lost because when a person is baptized into Christ — simple salvation, a re-birthing — the Christ in him is a lamb with a lamb spirit and will not war, will not force that believer’s mind to come to the understanding that another lives in him to be his life. If Paul’s message is not preached, if the Scriptures are not studied, then a great number of believers will never enter God’s fullness.

— Look Closer:

Read 2 Corinthians 4:2–6 below, and note how truth can be hidden or lost or even not made known.

(2) “But have renounced the hidden things of dishonesty, not walking in craftiness, nor handling the word of God deceitfully; but by manifestation of the truth commending ourselves to every man’s conscience in the sight of God. (3) But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost: (4) In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should

shine unto them. (5) For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord; and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake. (6) For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." —

Now, what would Satan do to keep people's minds so polluted and focused on carnal things that they have no concept that Christ is in them? This would keep their minds unrelenting to the Christ in them. If you were Satan, what would you do? You would pollute that mind with human doctrine, fill it with religion, keep men so busy with doctrines, self-works, and noble hopes that there would never be a place for the Lamb within to flow forth into their mind. So they would never know the truth.

I believe as recently as around 1980, one of the most remarkable things that ever happened since the days of apostle Paul and apostle John took place. God, by His grace, began bringing forth voices declaring this message of Christ in you as your hope of glory, and that would bring men to a oneness with Christ so that the only life they live would be Christ.

Jesus Christ is being revealed in human beings now as never before. Not since the days of the apostle Paul has there been such a grand and total move of God upon this earth. Well, you say, what about all these other things that have happened here in the outer realm. I will just speak boldly, frankly. Most revivals, most deliverances, most signs, wonders, and miracles are still in the outer realm — men doing things, not Christ alive in them, not men as containers with Christ as the only life in them. That is what has happened. That is the difference in this move of the Spirit. God, by His grace, is raising up literally thousands who are now going forth proclaiming, "The only life I now live is Christ." That is our purpose in studying this verse on present truth. The one present truth let loose in our universe today is this truth of Christ in us. So, God does have a present truth.

Understanding Christ in Us

Now, notice I didn't say men were coming to life, that believers were just now coming to life. I mentioned men are seeing greater revivals, outer things, human things, men filled with the Holy Ghost, men with great gifts, men with great power, men with great talent. That is outer; it is not this inner knowledge that Christ now lives in us as our hope of glory. Christ in us.

You see, if we know Christ is in us, we don't go around saying, I have power. I have this gift. I have these works. Look how many I have gotten saved. Look how big my church is. Look how much money I am raising. Look at the work I do for God. That is men, maybe in power by the Holy Spirit in their own understanding, but that is not what God is doing in present truth. In present truth, He is bringing forth His Son, not men but His Son. We have been birthed by Almighty God to be a different and unusual group of people than we have ever had on this earth. That is what God is doing. He is raising up a group of people in this present time who are seeing Christ as their life. That is truth. That is Peter's statement, "present truth."

Peter said, "I will not be negligent to put you always in remembrance of these things, though ye know them" (2 Peter 1:12). Now, I am talking about truth, a revelation, a vibrant knowledge, revelation knowledge. Paul mentions revelation eight times. That is what I am talking about. I am not talking about being saved, but life after salvation, understanding salvation and your life in Christ. I hope if you haven't believed on the Lord Jesus Christ, you will and be saved, be born again. But I am not talking about you getting life. I am talking about the Christ-life, about you knowing truth, understanding it.

(1) "For this cause I Paul, the prisoner of Jesus Christ for you Gentiles,
(2) If ye have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God which is given me to you-ward: (3) How that by revelation he made known unto me the

mystery; (as I wrote afore in few words, (4) Whereby, when ye read, ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ) (5) Which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit.” (Eph. 3:1–5)

The Holy Spirit’s Role

You probably have already been born again. You probably already have Christ in you, the hope of glory. But maybe you don't know that; maybe you haven't come to the revelation, and neither can you until the Holy Spirit reveals this knowledge to you.

I bring this great idea of God's, that He would put another person in the human by a birthing. "Ye must be born again" (John 3:7). God's Son would live His life through the human. That is the liberating secret revealed in our world. It is the first, most basic, fundamental truth of our oneness with Christ.

I pray the Holy Spirit will so move in your life, that He will teach you, because He is the only one who can teach you these things. I want to establish that fact. He is the only one who can possibly teach these truths. They can't come by me or by any human. They have to come by the Holy Spirit.

— **Look Closer:**

Read 1 Corinthians 2:6–16 below. Note the contrast between man’s wisdom, knowledge, and mind and the wisdom and knowledge of God.

(6) “Howbeit we speak wisdom among them that are perfect: yet not the wisdom of this world, nor of the princes of this world, that come to nought: (7) But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world unto our glory: (8) Which none of the princes of this world knew: for had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory. (9) But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. (10) But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God. (11) For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God. (12) Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God. (13) Which things also we speak, not in the words which man’s wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual. (14) But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. (15) But he that is spiritual judgeth all things, yet he himself is judged of no man. (16) For who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct him? But we have the mind of Christ.” (1 Cor. 2:6–16) —

— **Points to Ponder:**

Now, reflect on what you just read. Journal and/or discuss your understanding of how a believer comes into the revelation knowledge of Christ. —

The Holy Spirit teaches us Christ, working to bring about a people who are seeing who they are in Christ, and they are beginning to live that. They are beginning to reckon themselves dead, no longer trying to improve their life, no longer any positive thinking, any prosperity or health teaching to make them better. They see they are already spiritually perfect in Christ, and they are going on and living in that life of peace, rest, and happiness. Oh! That beats anything man can come up with because that was God's plan even before He created the world.

Revelation knowledge is only taught by the Holy Spirit. You must begin to see that, get hold of it, and begin to bask in it as you would lay in sunshine. You have got to let your whole being be warmed, permeated, and heated by that tremendous truth, that there is another person living in you, a person whose life you can now live, and that life is Christ.

The Birthing: A Spiritual Re-Birth

When did this glorious and wonderful life in Christ come about? It is simple. It came when you believed on the Lord Jesus Christ. The moment you believed on Christ, you were taken, by God, out of Satan, who was your death life because his was the nature in you. We will spend a lot of time dealing with the fact that Satan once indwelt you; for Jesus told the Pharisees, “Ye are of your father, the devil” (John 8:44). John also wrote:

“He that committeth sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil. Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God. In this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil” (1 John 3:8–10).

We will deal with this topic later.

At Calvary, God did a marvelous thing by the death of Jesus Christ in offering His own Lamb. He was able to take Satan out and put Christ in human beings when they believe on the Lord Jesus Christ. The moment you believed on the Lord Jesus Christ, God wonderfully and gloriously placed another person in you. There is no you. What happened to you? There never was a you. There was a Satan-you. Now that you are born again, there is a Christ-you; but there never was a you-you, spiritually. There never was you as you. It has always been you by another nature in you, first Satan, now Christ. It is important to know this because it is a fundamental truth of the gospel of Jesus Christ brought by Paul.

When did this marvelous thing happen to you? It took place when you believed on the Lord Jesus Christ. When you simply believed, this marvelous act of God took place. A spiritual re-birth took place; you were

born again. You were first birthed, as it were, by Satan your father, giving you his sin-nature.

— **Look Closer:**

Read John 8:39–44 below. Jesus and the Pharisees have different understandings of father. Underline and note in the margins the different meanings of father (earthly/spiritual).

(39) “They answered and said unto him, Abraham is our father. Jesus saith unto them, If ye were Abraham’s children, ye would do the works of Abraham. (40) But now ye seek to kill me, a man that hath told you the truth, which I have heard of God: this did not Abraham. (41) Ye do the deeds of your father. Then said they to him, We be not born of fornication; we have one Father, even God. (42) Jesus said unto them, If God were your Father, ye would love me: for I proceeded forth and came from God; neither came I of myself, but he sent me. (43) Why do ye not understand my speech? even because ye cannot hear my word. (44) Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it.” (John 8:39–44)

Now, read Ephesians 2:2–3. Note the time reference “in time past” referring to the believer’s nature before the new birth.

(2) “Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: (3) Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others.” (Eph. 2:2–3) —

— **Points to Ponder:**

In Ephesians 2:2–3, note what spirit “now worketh in the children of disobedience.” What does that mean? Also, note they are (and we were) “by nature the children of wrath.” Where do we get our nature? What is in one’s “nature”? Journal and/or discuss. —

When you believed on Jesus Christ, you were born again, giving you Christ’s Spirit, God’s nature (1 John 3:8–10; 2 Peter 1:4; Rom. 8:14–17). We will go into the depth of that later on.

— **Look Closer:**

Read the verses below. Mark “new creature” and “old things are passed away.”

“Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.” (2 Cor. 5:17)

“For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature.” (Gal. 6:15)

Considering the “spirit” and “nature” in people, what do you think Paul meant when he said those in Christ are a new creature and old things are passed away?

Now, read the following verses, mark the phrases that refer to who you now are in Christ.

(1) “Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not. (2) Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is. (3) And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure. ... (8) He that committeth sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil. (9) Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God. (10) In this the children of God are manifest, and the children

of the devil: whosoever doeth not righteousness is not of God, neither he that loveth not his brother.” (1 John 3:1–3; 8–10)

“Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.” (2 Peter 1:4)

(14) “For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.
(15) For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father.
(16) The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: (17) And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together.” (Rom. 8:14–17) —

One reason our world today hasn’t come to the knowledge of the Christ-life is they don’t really know when this marvelous thing took place. The moment you believed, God put another in you as your hope of glory, your hope of being in His eternal plan. This wonderful thing took place the instant you believed. We call it ‘now’; you became a ‘now’ believer. When I deal with people on the subject of the now, I simply call it the ‘now generation.’ That is what I would like you to understand — the marvelous truth of the now generation. What do we mean by the now generation?

More than 100 verses speak to the now generation. That is a lot of Scripture, a lot of truth. If you are really hungry to know God, this is where you start. You ought to get a good concordance or King James Bible app and search out that truth. You start with what happened the moment you believed on the Lord Jesus Christ. I am not talking about what happened the next day. Maybe you doubted your salvation the next day. Maybe a few days later you went to church and got all confused, or quit God for 10 years

and didn't go back to church. Maybe a lot of other things happened to you. But, I am talking about what really happened to you the moment you believed on the Lord Jesus Christ because I will stake my whole existence on this; I will stake the whole Bible on this; I will stake the whole universe on this.

The moment you believed on the Lord Jesus Christ, you stepped into the now generation, and over 100 verses of Scripture verify this. Don't take my word for it. In fact, never take my word for anything. Go to the Scriptures for everything I bring to you. Be like the Bereans in Acts 17:11, who searched the Scriptures more diligently than other believers, so that you will know who you are in Christ. I want you to be a Scripture-searcher. I want you to know what you believe and what I say in these studies is based on the Word of God, the truth, the present truth. Praise God!

You are in the now generation; you have always been, since your salvation, "in the now." Satan may have come to your mind and caused you to doubt. Preachers may have come along and confused you. Religion may have come along and put you to work and got you to be a doer rather than a be-er, to be who you really were. Maybe you never found out how to be a be-er. We all found out, by religion, how to be doers because the moment we showed any intention to the Lord God and to serve God, somebody put us to work. We started classes; we attended church; we mowed the lawn; we painted the building; we prayed at the prayer meetings; and we fasted. We did everything we were told to do because we were doers. But doers seldom ever find out who they are; they are never be-ers. That is what is in this now generation. This now generation ceases to be doers and starts to be be-ers. They start being who they are in Christ because they know who they are by Christ in them.

Let me encourage you. You are in the now generation. If you believed on the Lord Jesus Christ, if you surrendered your life to God and said, I count

myself lost to be found in Christ, if you ever took that step, you are in the now generation.

— **Points to Ponder:**

Now, reflect on what you just read. Journal and/or discuss your understanding of the differences between religion and believers living by the life of Christ in them. —

I plucked out a few of the ‘now’ Scriptures, which stare at us right in the face. Look into some of them with me.

Galatians 2:20

“I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.” (Gal. 2:20)

This ought to be the golden text of the Bible because in this one verse of Scripture we are able to see the whole entity of the now generation. “I am crucified with Christ.” That is something you may not know, or it may be something you always say but don’t know anything about. I am certain there are multitudes of believers who run around talking about being crucified with Christ but don’t have the slightest concept of what it is, and they feel like being crucified with Christ is kind of overcoming some little problem they have. They don’t see themselves totally crucified with Christ and totally alive in Christ. They see a little crucifixion for this habit, a little crucifixion of that bad relationship, a little crucifixion for something they shouldn’t have done; but they do not see that they are crucified with Christ.

You have to take the “I am.” “I am crucified with Christ.” It was old Satan who said you could be a god of your own, you could be your own person. That is a lie, so the “I am” has got to be crucified. I am crucified, cancelled out. The Greek for that says, I am cancelled out with Christ, nevertheless I live. Oh! That is a paradox. It almost looks contradictory. “Nevertheless I live.” How do I live? “Christ liveth in me.” That is the Christ-life, and that is where I get the term first and foremost. Christ liveth in me.

Now, I couldn’t be any bolder in telling you what the Christ-life is than in that first line of Galatians 2:20. A man is killed out from his natural life at Calvary, but he still lives by another life placed in him, Christ in him. I no longer live. “Christ liveth in me.” That is the Christ-life. Praise God!

— **Points to Ponder:**

Now, reflect on what you just read. Journal and/or discuss your understanding of your death in the phrase “I am crucified with Christ.” —

Salvation is not what we are dealing with here. We are discussing life after salvation. The now generation still has something to come after salvation: “And the life which I now live.” Mark that word now. You have got to see the ‘now.’ Where do you live it? In the flesh. “The life which I now live in the flesh.” A lot of people have an idea that the Christian life is some glorious thing, and we are all in glorified bodies, we are highly anointed, or we are all cued up for some joyous thing. That is not what it is at all. I am not talking about the outward things, like people who have to smile all the time, rejoice all the time, or have victory all the time. These are religious clichés. It isn’t that they are not based on the Scriptures, but they are religious clichés because that isn’t the Christ-life. The Christ-life is a ‘now’ life; whatever you are now, it is Christ as you. It is Christ living through you. He doesn’t come to take a back seat; He comes to be your all. It is Christ in you as your all.

The ‘now’ life is lived in the flesh. When you go to bed at night, it is Christ as you going to bed. When you get up in the morning, it is Christ as you getting up. When you get in your car, it is Christ as you getting into your car. It is Christ as you working the job. It is Christ as you keeping the house. It is Christ as you cooking the meal. It is Christ as you mowing the lawn. It is Christ as you wherever you go and whatever you do. It is a life in the flesh.

I don’t want to mislead anybody. It is a life of the Spirit. We are to walk in the Spirit, live in the Spirit. It is Christ’s Spirit manifesting Himself through us. How does Christ live in me? He works out through my mind. It is Christ in the now, in my flesh. What does that mean? That means it doesn’t matter how or what you feel right now or what you think about God, the Bible, or

spiritual things. Maybe you don't have an ounce of victory, and you don't feel any liberty or any anointing. Christ still operates out of you.

You need to be careful because it didn't say it is a fleshly operation where we give mind to the body and create fleshly, carnal operations. That isn't what he means. He means Christ lives in this body of flesh. Your mind and your body constitute flesh; and Christ has elected, by a marvelous miracle of God, to come and live in your flesh. It isn't some highfalutin, glorious, highly-lifted-up relationship with God that makes a believer; but a true believer is one who has Christ operating out of him, out of his flesh. "The life I now live in the flesh is Christ." "Christ liveth in me." Where does He live? He lives in my flesh. Well, some people don't think they are a Christian unless they are going to church, praying prayers, fasting, giving money, or doing some good and noble act. No, Christ operates through our flesh. That means everything we do, everywhere we go, every little detail of our life is Christ operating — Christ operating as we are, out of our flesh.

There is a little verse which says God will not honor any man's flesh (Rom. 3:20; 8:8). What does that mean? How can Christ be my operation and expression? It is because He takes my flesh, and it is His. My body is His body; my mind is His mind. Paul said, "But we have the mind of Christ" (1 Cor. 2:16). My life is His life. I am swallowed up by Him so that I no longer live; it is Christ expressing and living His life through me. The life I now live in the flesh I will live by the faith of the Son of God who loved me and gave Himself for me. Right where you are, even if you feel fleshly, Christ works out of you.

Well, you say, I haven't been bringing forth very many Christly things; I sure haven't been expressing Christ. That is because your mind hasn't been renewed. That is the purpose of these lessons, so the Holy Spirit may take these words and renew your mind to what God is saying to us. The renewed

mind is what it is all about. You are the now generation. Right now, in your flesh, it is Christ alive. That is important.

— Points to Ponder:

Now, reflect on what you just read. Journal and/or discuss your understanding of “not I, but Christ liveth in me.” —

1 John 5:11–12

“And this is the record that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life.” (1 John 5:11–12)

In 1 John 5:11, we need to mark something very important. Apostle John, in verses 11 and 12, gives us the strongest foundation stone I can lay for you concerning your life. Maybe you thought your life was made up of what you have done today, what you have to do tomorrow, bills you have to pay, where you are going, troubles you are in, problems you have to face. If you did, it is because your mind is not renewed because you don't have a problem right now that is really your problem. You think it is; religion tells you it is. There are all kinds of faith people telling you what your problem is and discerning your need, but I want to tell you a foundational truth to the Christ-life; it is the strongest foundation stone we can ever lay.

Look at 1 John 5:11, “And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life.” Do you believe that? The Lord gave me eternal life. Look at the next little line, “And this life is in His Son.” He didn't just improve your life. He isn't just interested in all the little problems you conjured up and what you think your life is. The only life you have from God is in His Son. That is explosive isn't it? Well, you probably thought, I have to do something with my life. I am always hearing somebody say, I have to fix up my life; my life is really in the doldrums. I am really down and out. I have got to do something with my life. You don't have a life of your own. You have never had a life of your own. You had a Satan-life before you were born again; but now that you are born again, you have the Christ-life. Why? The only life the believer has is in the Son.

As I said before, our problem is we don't know and understand that. We think, I have my life over here, and over there I have the Christ-life. You don't have two lives; you only have one. When you die, you only die once.

That relationship with body will end, but this Christ in you now lives. This Christ who lives in you will go on. In time, your soul-mind will be transformed.

But it is 1 John 5:12 which settles it once and for all and makes this verse of Scripture one of the strongest foundational blocks you will ever lay in your life, as far as revelation knowledge is concerned. “He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life” (1 John 5:12). I don’t know how any writing could be any more frank than that. I just can’t imagine God’s Word being any more powerful in announcing the truth than those two verses. These verses say the only life you have is in the Son. You don’t have some other life; you don’t have a religious life. You don’t have a church life, a business life, a home life, and a carnal life. The only life you have is in the Son.

I went into this because a lot of people don’t understand Galatians 2:20, where Paul said, The life I now live in the flesh is Christ. The only life you have is Christ. What did you do today? You got up this morning. You may have had a fuss with the wife; you may have been cranky with the kids; you may have stomped off to work; you may have fussed about things that went on at the job, all day long grumbled and griped and you say, Well, that is me. The only ‘me’ you have is Christ. You didn’t express Him as He is; you expressed Him as you are. That is the Devil’s lie. The Scripture says the only life you have is Christ.

What if you had known when you got up this morning and started out that wherever you went today, you are a vehicle carrying Jesus, Christ alive in you? The Scripture says the only life we have is in the Son, and he that hath the Son hath life, and he that hath not the Son hath not life. The Scripture is plain. You don’t have another life. Well, you say, I have another way. I have my own nature. There is no such thing. The only nature you have now is a God-nature. You are a partaker of divine nature (2 Peter 1:4). He does not

commingle that with the old Satan-nature. God doesn't have anything to do with Satan's nature; that is what you had before you were saved. Right now, the only life you have is Christ. You don't have another life. You have other ways, another mind. You can give a mind to body, to carnal knowledge; you can give a mind to flesh and do and think fleshly things. But what you think you are is not what you are because you have been born again. Who you think you are isn't really who you are.

I have had numbers of believers come and say, I don't know if that is working in me or not. I don't know if I am a good Christian or not. I don't know if I am really saved or not. You believed on the Lord Jesus Christ, so the only life you can have is Christ. The trouble is you don't know that; it is not fixed in your mind. Once that knowledge is fixed in you, once you come into oneness with Him and understand, The only me there is is Christ, you won't have any trouble walking in the light. You won't have any trouble walking in the Son of God; for He said, For as I was on this earth, so are you. You won't have any trouble walking in that. That is the Christ-life. But better than just being a theology, it is in the now. The only life you have now is in the Son.

— **Points to Ponder:**

Now, reflect on what you just read. Journal and/or discuss your understanding of 1 John 5:11–12: “And this is the record that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life.” —

1 John 3:2

“Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is.” (1 John 3:2)

“Beloved, now.” That is another important now for the now generation. “Beloved, now are we the sons of God.” You are not going to be a son. Right now! You are a son of God. I heard somebody say, “When I die and go to heaven, I am going to be a son of God.” Impossible! You are already a son of God or you can’t go to heaven. Somebody said, “Whenever I follow all of the rules of my church and the catechism or really get the Holy Ghost, I’ll be a son of God.” Baloney! If you are born again, you have God’s Son in you now, with the Son’s nature. The seed is the Son. Christ in you is your hope of glory. You are that right now. Beloved, right now are we the sons of God. That is glorious news for those who are in the now generation.

I have to renew my mind by that every once in a while. I take the blessed Bible and begin to hear what it is saying. I begin to see, Litzman, now you are a son of God; and your Father is Almighty God. Have you ever reckoned that? Has it ever crystallized in your mind that your Father is Almighty God?

Think about Jesus being birthed by God. God put His Son in Mary, and the virgin bore a son. That was the Son of God. Don’t you see? That is what you are. Now, right now, you are a son of God.

First John 3:1 says, “Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us.” Do you know what the greatest act of love is? The greatest act of love is where one human being puts his seed in another human being and reproduces themselves. That is the greatest act of love. It is the bearing of that seed. We have a new Father; we are sons. Can you fit that into your

thinking? Is that really in your mind here and now? “Beloved, now are we the sons of God.” Right now. You are not going to be a son; you are now growing up as a son.

We may get confused by bumper stickers that say, “God isn’t finished with me yet.” Spiritually, you are a birthed son and stand perfect with Christ in you. You will never be any more a son of God than you are right now. Right now, this very instant, you are all God ever intended you to be as a son by the birthing. Now, you are not all that you are going to be in your mind. Your soul continues to be transformed throughout life. You are not all the Bible says you can be; but you are all God intended you be by the birthing. That is the essence of the Christ-life message. “Beloved, now are we the sons of God.”

Let’s look at the rest of this verse. It is filled with explosive joy. First John 3:2 says, “And it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is.” Let’s look at this verse backwards. Paul gives us another Scripture which says it is like a believer looking through a mirror and seeing the face of Jesus (2 Cor. 3:18). That is what we are doing in our earthly walk. We are looking in the Word, learning who we are by Christ in us, allowing the Word to tell us. As we see Jesus as the Word, we are seeing who we are. When I read about Christ in the Scriptures, I am seeing who I am. That is why searching the Scriptures is so very important because it is how we see who we are by Christ in us. When we see Christ on the Resurrection Morning, we will see that everything we looked for in the Scripture has taken place. When we see Him, we will be as He is.

The now for the believer means his whole advance into the things of God and his earthly walk is training him to be a Christ-person. That is what we are after. Not a Christ likeness. I don’t want to be just like Jesus. He is in me, and He is as me. It is His personhood that I am after, not just a likeness.

There is a big difference there, and we will try to distinguish that as we go along. All Christians want to be like Jesus, but you don't have to be just like Him. You can be as Him as your mind perceives from searching the Scriptures. So we see Him in the Scriptures, and we grow up into this one who we see. On the Resurrection Morning, every true believer will see that the whole intent and purpose of this earthly walk was to be as Christ.

But the verse also says something else about the believer who is not so intent, not so hungry, not so interested in the things of God as he ought to be. He has got to be changed, for God will have no sons sitting at His table who are not everything He intended them to be. So when they see Him on the Resurrection Morning, they are going to be changed, and they are going to be just like Him. My love affair with Christ causes me to say, I want to be as Him now. I have fallen in love with Him. He is my all. He is my everything. I want to be as Him now.

The answer to your needs, whatever they are, is in Christ. Maybe you are sick. Others can lay hands on you, but it is the Christ in you who is going to heal because He is not out there somewhere. He is not hanging on a tree. He is seated at the right hand of the Father, but Christ's Spirit is also in you. Christ in you is your hope of glory. If you have business problems, money problems, or health problems, the answer is within you.

How do we get Christ to live out through us? By renewing our minds. The more we see Jesus, the more He comes forth in our lives like a river of living water flowing out of us. You are in the now generation; right now, Christ is in you. You only need to understand Christ is in you. Christ wants to come up through your mind with His wisdom, His understanding, His healing, and His power. Then your mind will discharge it to your body and tell your body to express it. That is how a Christian lives Christ. We are expressers of Him, but He is in us.

Every need you have can be met by the Christ in you. We pray to the Father to meet our needs. How will He do it? By the Christ who is in us. That is where Jesus is right now. He is in us.

Maybe you have been tricked by Satan all your Christian life into thinking you were not growing and you were not becoming the Christian you should be. You can't become any more Christ than you already are by the birthing. You can come to greater knowledge of it; that is why we will have these lessons. But you can't be any more than God has already made you. Right now you are a child of God. If you can get that fixed in your mind, if you can go to the Word and see who you are by that birthing, you will begin to live the Christ in your flesh.

It doesn't matter how sordid, dirty, or messy your life is, or how much you hurt. It doesn't matter if the doctor says you only have six weeks to live. Christ will flow right out of you. To get your answer, you don't have to wait; you don't need some special healing; you don't need a tingling; you don't need a fall out; you don't need to dance; you don't need to holler; you don't need to sing. You need to know who you are by your birthing. All these other things may be spontaneous, but that is not your answer. Your answer is to know Him in whom is eternal life. This is the one big thing I want you to know more than any other. That God wants to answer all of your questions and needs in just one way, and that is by showing you more of His dear Son.

— **Points to Ponder:**

Now, reflect on what you just read. Journal and/or discuss your understanding of who you are in-Christ and Him in you as you. —

Scripture References

Galatians 2:20

2 Peter 1:12–14

John 14:6

John 8:44

Acts 17:11

1 Corinthians 2:16

1 John 5:11–12

1 John 3:2

1 John 3:1

Lesson 2

Our Oneness with Christ

God never intended that his people be bound by religion. Religion was brought into the Garden of Eden by Satan. God's intention was that man be free by another nature in them, His very nature. That is what is happening all over the world right now. God is preparing a people for Himself who are seeing the glorious freedom we have in Christ so we can go ahead and live our lives knowing we are God's direct, distinct offspring, able to carry out what was His intention before He created this world.

My purpose in dealing with the fundamentals of the Christ-life and our oneness with Christ is to show how you stand acceptable before God at all times. To come to a thorough understanding of this and to walk in this glorious truth, it is necessary that we go through this painstakingly, line upon line and precept upon precept in this teaching. I hope the Holy Spirit is able to do something in each lesson to make a great difference in your life, that you will be able to see and hear clearly, not from me — but from the Holy Spirit — what God has said in His blessed Word.

Our whole mission is to teach this liberating secret God has for His people in these closing days of time. We welcome you to a message which the Holy Spirit must ultimately and finally teach you. He is the teacher. I am just speaking what the Spirit is saying. I trust your heart is open to hear the Spirit. We make no pretense about it. What we are saying is generally revolutionary to those locked in religion. Their security is based on what they believe, their doctrine, and what the Lord has taught them up until

now. But you see, God is doing a more powerful thing over the earth than He has ever done before: restoring the message He gave to apostle Paul, which men lost by the operation of religion through the centuries. God is restoring it right now. We often like to say this message of “Christ in you, the hope of glory” (Col. 1:27) is the final fulfillment of the reformation message which was begun by Martin Luther. The restoration of the full biblical truth came, in fact, almost 500 years ago by Martin Luther. Over that period of time, God has constantly added to and brought greater truths to His Church. Using the same Bible, men did not see what God intended until God was ready for it. The Lord has now opened up this glorious truth we call the Christ-life message. It is the message of life. Just like God made His Son the Word, so this message we are bringing to you now is life. Just as Jesus is the Word — not just in the Word, but is the Word — so is the message Christ. John said, This is the message which we have heard of him and declare unto you (1 John 1:1–3).

Now, we go into the very rudiments of what makes this message real to you as life, how these glorious truths can renew your mind, for the renewed mind is what you need. Never in this message do we say that a person who has believed on the Lord Jesus Christ is any different or less spiritual than anybody else. You see, anyone birthed of God is His own offspring, a full heir of God, and distinctively alive by the only begotten Son God placed in them to be their only life. So we never say someone has less or more of God. That is impossible. We are all birthed by the same God, and the same seed is in us. Christ in us is our hope of glory. But where we lack is in the understanding of that, and thus the whole New Testament is literally dedicated to that understanding and knowledge of who and what we are in Christ.

In Christ

In Christ is our focus right now. In fact, we are dealing with those very specific words in Christ. Over 200 times, in-Christ terminology is mentioned. It is a doctrinal statement, not just a figurative term used by the apostle Paul. In much of my past ministry, I overlooked those prepositional phrases of being in Christ. So often in Paul's epistles, it is listed as in Christ, in Him, in the beloved, and many other ways; but the term in Christ is the strongest doctrinal statement in the Bible and is the reason for the whole universe. By that I mean the reason the sun comes up every morning has to do with the little term in Christ.

— **Look Closer:**

Search the Scriptures yourself. Mark the prepositional phrases in the verses below that refer to “in Christ,” “in Whom,” “in Him,” “by Him,” and so on, just from the first chapter of Ephesians. Whenever you see in-Christ phrases as you read your Bible, continue marking them to keep this very important point at the forefront of your studies.

(3) “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ:
(4) According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love:
(5) Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, (6) To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved. (7) In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace; (8) Wherein he hath abounded toward us in all wisdom and prudence; (9) Having made known unto us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure which he hath purposed in himself: (10) That in the dispensation of the fulness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even in him: (11) In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will: (12) That we should be to the praise of his glory, who first trusted in Christ. (13) In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise, (14) Which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory. ...
(17) That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him: ...
(20) Which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places.” (Eph. 1:3–14, 17, 20)

(5) “Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;) (6) And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus: (7) That in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus. ... (10) For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.” (Eph. 2:5–7, 10) —

Well, you can see, if Satan is going to work on the Church, God’s people, to keep them from truth, what would he keep them from most of all? That simple in-Christ statement because if God’s whole plan for the universe depends on understanding what it means to be in Christ, then certainly Satan would want to keep us from the truth of what it means to be in Christ. This comes very sincerely and lovingly right out of my heart on this subject. The one message most difficult to find in the Christian church today is the believer’s position in Christ. Now, many churches and many doctrinal people practice this, but to know what it means to be in Christ is what is lacking; for they still keep Christ separate, away from them, out there somewhere; and they never do see the Christ who is literally in them. So the term in Christ is the strongest doctrinal statement in the Bible, and it is this statement which answers the purpose for all things.

Now, that is an outlandish statement from me; but I want to make it just as I believe the Bible tells it. The reason for everything — every hurt, every pain, every war, every famine, every act of Satan — everything that goes on in this universe has its center, its purpose, its reality, and understanding wrapped up in this simple statement in Christ. If the Church does not properly teach that — even though it is the number one message in the New Testament and 146 times it refers to our oneness with Christ — then when will we as believers take hold of what is ours and what God intended for us by the simple in-Christ statement?

We are ready now to look at these tremendous realities. I don't want to deal with something that is figurative or a set of doctrines where you say, We believe this; we believe that. I'm dealing with life. I am dealing with the life that is in you already because every born-again believer has this life in him right now. It is not coming, a 'will be,' or 'I hope so.' It is a present reality that Christ is in you who have believed and accepted salvation through Him. It is not figurative. It is not spiritualization or a fantasy. It is not an illusion. It is the actual reality of every born-again believer that Christ is in you.

Now, if you make it a fantasy, an illusion, or spiritualization and say, Well, He is in us, but it is not really Christ; it is the Holy Spirit, you will be trapped in error. If you say, I received the Holy Spirit; that's Christ, that's still error because the Holy Spirit and Christ are two distinctive persons. We intend to see that further in this study as we go along. In fact, all of these seemingly bizarre statements I make will be absolutely proven, not from God's Word only, but from your very life and experience we will show it. You are in Christ; Christ is in you. That is an actual reality. It is not a series of words; it is what it means to be born again; it is what it means to be rebirthed by our Heavenly Father.

Let's see what it really means to be in Christ, what's the focal point. The in-Christ truth deals with our oneness with Christ. Oneness is the big word you need to put into your vocabulary. Our oneness with Christ is the final definition of in-Christ. In fact, the in-Christ statement is given 146 times in the epistles of Paul; and it translates directly from the Greek as "in Christ."

Maybe you don't understand oneness. Maybe that's a new term to you. For so many in Christianity, the very term has become figurative. What does oneness mean? In the simplest definition, if you put a tea bag into hot water, the water is no longer water but hot tea. It is not as if they are one; they actually become one. Do you see what religion did to us? It made us say it

is as if Christ was in us by the Holy Spirit or we are like Christ. There is no if about it. It is an actual reality. Oneness with Christ is a reality. It is not something that is going to happen, can happen, might happen, or will happen on the Resurrection. This is the actual reality of what happens to you when you are born again. God actually makes the two become one. That's what in Christ means.

— Look Closer:

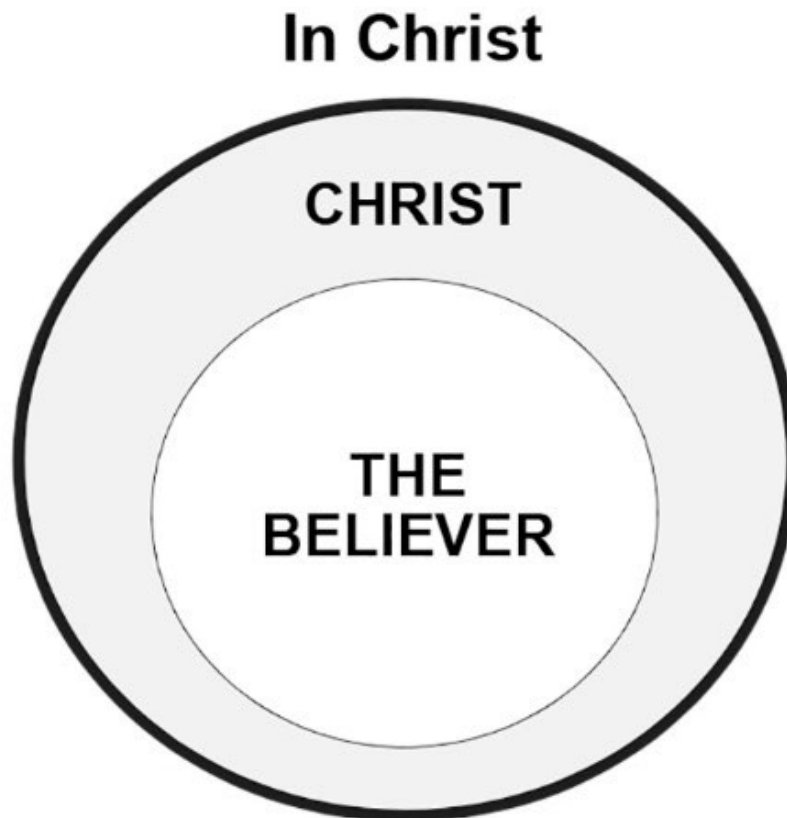
Search the Scriptures. Mark the prepositional phrases in the verses below that refer to oneness between Jesus and the Father.

(7) “If ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also: and from henceforth ye know him, and have seen him. (8) Philip saith unto him, Lord, shew us the Father, and it sufficeth us. (9) Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? he that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Shew us the Father? (10) Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? the words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself: but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works.” (John 14:7–10)

(19) “And for their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth. (20) Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word; (21) That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me. (22) And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one: (23) I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me.” (John 17:19–23) —

— Points to Ponder:

Now, reflect on what you just read. Journal and/or discuss the oneness between the Father and the Son. Now, how would you define the oneness between the believer and Christ? —



The believer is literally in Christ.

This simple diagram shows the believer in Christ. The believer draws all his strength, all his life, all his resources from Christ's Spirit. The born-again believer has no other life than Christ. He is shut off from human life because he has been born again. He is a human being all right, but there is no such thing as human life or human nature. His only life and nature are now Christ. He has been re-birthed, born-again. Somebody says, You need to spiritualize that. That is not reality. You see, that is the difference between the Christ-life and the error in religion. When I was born-again, it was a total spiritual re-birthing from my first birthing by my parents, with a

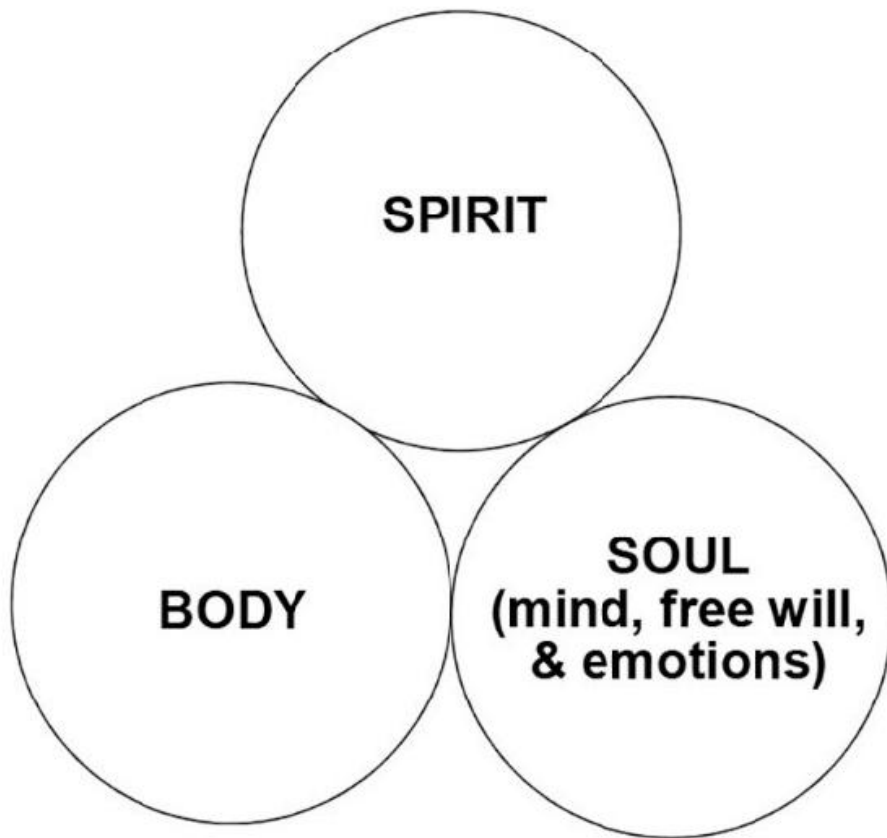
whole new Father, a new nature, a whole new life. That is what it means to be born again. I was never intended to be anything but a spiritual being. This body is merely a vessel, just an earthly existence. It is only the third dimension in a four-dimensional reality.

So, the believer in Christ is solely in Christ with no other life than what he draws from the Lord Jesus Christ. So, what is this thing of drawing life from Him? That is really what our oneness is all about. Christ is your only life.

— Look Closer:

You see, you have a spirit, a soul, and a body. This is the tripartite man, with three distinctive parts. Even Paul distinguished them.

Tripartite Man



“The very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.” (1 Thess. 5:23)

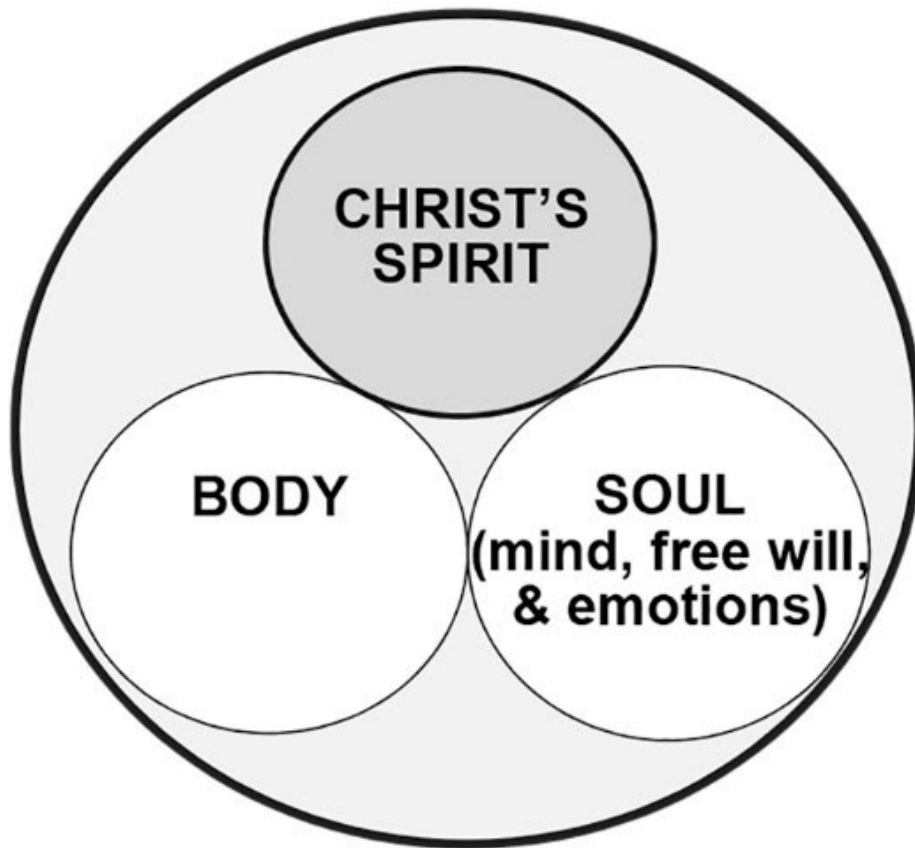
The body is the earthly container of the soul and spirit.

“And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul.” (Gen 2:7)

Man is the only creature on earth with a living soul created by the very breath of God. All other creatures were spoken into being. Man's soul involves of the mind, the free will, and the emotions. It is the center of thought, reasoning, decision-making, desires, feelings, knowledge, and understanding. Man's spirit comes by faith. When Adam chose to trust the serpent, he inherited the sin-spirit and passed it down to all humanity. Each individual is born with the sin-nature, which leads to spiritual death, and needs a spiritual change. Being born again is that spiritual re-birth. —

Man is so interlaced together, he does not run around separating body, soul, and spirit. He is one total man, a whole human. But that whole man is made up of body, soul, and spirit. What we mean by our oneness, shown in the 146 times the Scripture denotes it, is that this tripartite man has been absolutely joined together to become one with the Christ placed in him.

Christian: A Christ-Person



The body, soul, and spirit of a believer in Christ has become so interlocked together in a oneness with Christ that the believer grows up to become total Christian, a total Christ-person. His own identity is lost, and now he is a Christian, a Christ-person. Why? His total whole person and existence becomes Christ. What happened to him? He is joined to Christ in body, soul, and spirit until there is nothing but Christ.

The believer's source of life is Christ. He once had Satan's life, by his first birthing by his parents, by a corruptible seed, bringing him into the world in sin. Satan's nature was in him. But in his re-birth, he now has Christ-life. Born again means a second birth.

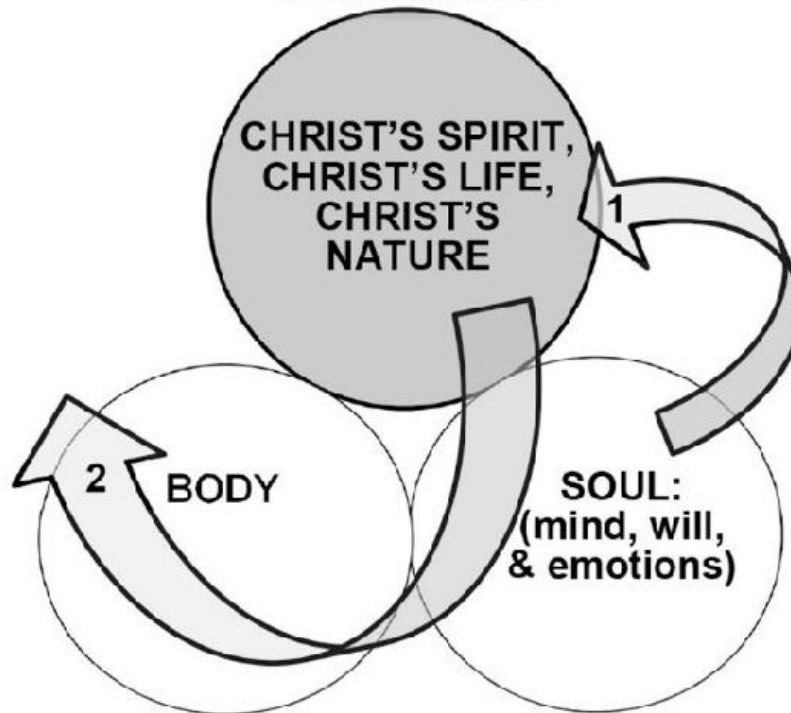
“Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever.” (1 Peter 1:22)

The believer now has Christ’s nature in him rather than Satan’s nature, which is death. So, the soul, the mind, must also be given to Christ to make an expression through the body.

— Points to Ponder:

Now, reflect on what you just read. Journal and/or discuss your understanding of the tripartite man and the three distinctive parts of man: the body, the soul, and the spirit. —

**The Christian Living the Christ-life
Romans 8:29**



When the Christ-person gives the soul-mind to Christ, Christ in turn can express Himself through the soul and body.

This is what a Christians is. Christians are Christ-persons who have given their mind to Christ. They allow. “Let [allow] this mind to be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus” (Phil. 2:5). He now expresses Himself through their bodies, through their daily living, through their daily operations of life.

What really happened is their one source of life began to flow through them like a river of living water, but there must be a oneness. Where is the

oneness then? The oneness takes place in the spirit the moment you were born-again; the only life you have from that moment until now is Christ. You don't have just a human life. You don't have a human nature. You don't have just a human existence. You are a spirit re-birthed by another Father so that the only life you now have is Christ. That is the way it has always been; but most believers, when they are born-again, don't know that. They don't understand that marvelous life, that the only life they have is Christ.

Very often, religion keeps it from them. Many preachers know the only life the believer has is Christ; but to promote religion and programs in the church, they keep that glorious truth from their members. Religion has never figured out how the believer can be turned loose to be who he is in Christ and still be a good denominationalist or religionist. Religionists never figure that out, so they keep believers doing something to be who they already are rather than bringing them to the knowledge that they can't be any more than they already are by the birthing.

After salvation, you have always been spiritually perfect before God because you are His child. Christ has been the only life you have; and when God looks at you, He sees Christ as your only life. Well, if you did not know that, you could not live it. What is our oneness with Christ? Why is the in-Christ truth the most-often mentioned truth in the whole of the Scripture? It is because we don't know that. Now, coming to the knowledge that Christ is your only life and that you have no other life other than Him is the work of the Holy Spirit, bringing the believer to oneness with Christ.

Oneness in the Christ-life, in its simplest definition, is the expression of Christ through you, by you — in mind and body — of the only nature you have, the God-nature, Christ as you. That is really what the Christian life is all about. So, the message is all about the mind being renewed. His life in you means nothing unless you give Him your mind, your renewed mind.

(10) “Always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body. (11) For we which live are always delivered unto death for Jesus’ sake, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh.” (2 Cor. 4:10–11)

A multitude of believers have Christ in them, but they have not given Him their mind. Thus, they have no mind of Christ. Oh, they have Scriptures going through their minds; they have sermons and ideas going through their minds. But it isn’t the mind of the Christ who is within them, and that is what our hope of glory is. The mystery that comes to you is Christ possessing your mind as His own, Christ taking hold of your mind and then you, by body, expressing the Christ who is in you. The Christ who is in you is your only life, and the mind is the means by which you come to oneness to express this Christ and begin to literally live who you are in and by Christ.

— Points to Ponder:

Now, reflect on what you just read. Journal and/or discuss your understanding of the importance of our mind in expressing and manifesting Christ in us. —

There are seven points I want to deal with which have to do with this all-important subject.

Point 1

This life which is in you is a common life. This is a term I want you to see. Christ in you is common. Common to Him as life, and common to you as life. What do I mean by interjecting this word common, that Christ is our common life? I mean you have no other life in you; you have no other nature. You have no human nature, and there is no human nature mentioned in the Scripture. There is no human life anymore since you have been born-again. Why? The only life you now have is Christ. You have resurrection life in you. More than this, the Scripture calls this eternal life. You have eternal life. John says:

“And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life. These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God” (1 John 5:11-13).

Christ in you is your only life, and only by a oneness being formed between you and Him does His life ever come forth from you, expressed by you.

So, the first important truth we must see is that oneness is this sharing of a single, common life. Not an amalgamation, not Christ added on to you. That is the error of religion. That is why people get sick and tired of religion and sick and tired of their human works. It is because it isn't Christ added to you; it is Christ as you. As you grow up in Him, He is your only life.

Turn with me to 1 Corinthians 6:17 where we have this very pertinent statement, “He that is joined unto the Lord is one spirit.” Now, I know I have just plucked that verse out of a very heart-rendering portion of Scripture, where the apostle Paul is dealing with the outer manifestation of

the human being in sin, in debauchery, and so forth; but it is important to see he that is joined to the Lord becomes one Spirit. Christ's Spirit and the Holy Spirit are two distinctive, different persons; for Christ is a person even as the Holy Spirit is a person. The spirit of a person is their nature, their life, which is entirely different from the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is in the believer's soulish part; He is the teacher who transforms your mind by showing you the truths of Christ; but it is the Spirit of Christ who is joined to the believer in spirit, who is the spiritual life of the believer, who is the believer's savior. They are distinctive entities unto themselves. The Holy Spirit is always a converter, a teacher, and a guide.

Christ's Spirit joins to the human spirit, man's spirit, and becomes one. "He that is joined unto the Lord is one Spirit." Well, obviously it isn't man's spirit and Christ's Spirit; and when that joining takes place, out of the source flows life. The source that is to flow through this oneness is Christ's life, the only life the believer has is Christ. Paul says, I no longer live. Christ liveth in me (Gal. 2:20). That's foundational; it is primary. If you don't see that, you are not ready to go on in the Christian life. You have got to see that you no longer exist in this revelation dimension, this fourth-dimensional truth, which comes from the Holy Spirit. You no longer exist as such. It isn't that man's spirit is joined to Christ's Spirit. It is that Christ's Spirit becomes total source and total life, and He flows through the human being. It is Christ's Spirit. So much so that Romans 8:9 says, "If any man hath not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his." There are multitudes of believers who do not have Christ's Spirit operating through them. I did not say they did not have the Holy Spirit. I did not say that Christ was not in them. I simply said Christ's Spirit is not flowing through them because they don't understand the oneness we have with Christ. So Christ's Spirit, Christ's life, becomes our only life in spirit at our birthing; and if we want to live that life on earth, we need to allow Him to swamp and overwhelm us in everything we do.

— **Points to Ponder:**

Now, reflect on what you just read. Journal and/or discuss your understanding of the difference between the Spirit of Christ in us and the Holy Spirit. —

Point 2

We not only have a common life, the Christ-life, but I want to add another word, in-Christ-ed. Every born-again believer, regardless of denomination, regardless of church, regardless of what they know or don't know about God, every believer who has been born-again is in Christ. But I add the word in-Christ-ed because they may not know that their total existence, their whole spirit and whole life is in Christ. Maybe they don't know that; maybe they don't feel that. They think, I have my life, and there is the Devil, and here is Christ. It isn't like that. You have been born-again, with a new spirit. You are a whole new creation in Christ Jesus; so, you no longer have the Devil's sin-nature. There is no sin-nature in you at all, dear friends. You have been born again. The sin-nature is out. Christ is your life.

In fact, once you have been born again, you cannot commit sin. We will deal with 1 John 3:9 a little further down the line; but it is a whole new existence to God. I didn't say you could not sin. John says, "If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us" (1 John 1:8). So, we have two different kinds of sin here. We will deal with that a little later. What we are dealing with now is the simple fact that the believer has become overwhelmed or in-Christ-ed. That means his whole mind has now become the mind of Christ. Christ has taken over his total being. He not only has one life, the common life, Christ, but He also is in-Christ-ed by that life.

Now, that simply means his whole being, his whole expression, his whole world has become a Christ-oriented, a Christ-knowledge, a Christ-operated existence. Now that is different. It means Christ is all. There is a verse in Colossians which says, "Christ is all, and in all" (Col. 3:11). You just can't escape or get away from that glorious idea of what it means to be in Christ. We are now in Christ. That means His Spirit is our spirit. His life has overtaken the human being. Not just figurative words, not a spiritualization; it can come vibrantly to you so that Christ is all.

Well, does that mean we run around like a bunch of monks or nuns just too holy for any good? Far from it. The doctor is now in Christ. The lawyer is now in Christ. The painter is now in Christ. The housewife is now in Christ. The mother is now in Christ. What does that mean? It means they no longer live. It's the mother as Christ. It's the lawyer as Christ. It's the doctor as Christ. It's the painter as Christ. It's the preacher as Christ. It's the believer as Christ. Everywhere he goes, he is filled and obsessed with the one idea, Christ alone is my life. I have no other existence. So, that it is Christ doing the lawyer's work. It is Christ doing the doctor's work. It is Christ doing mother's work. Christ alive. He fits into every occupation. He is every occupation. All things were made by Him and for Him, and aside from Christ there is nothing in existence. (Col. 1:16–17). That is what it means to be in-Christ-ed.

— **Points to Ponder:**

Now, reflect on what you just read. Journal and/or discuss your understanding of Colossians 3:11, “Christ is ALL, and in ALL.” —

Point 3

The same ingredients that are in Jesus Christ are in the born-again believer. I use the term ingredients because this is sort of a modern term. The apostle Paul put it another way. In 1 Corinthians 1:30 he said, Christ is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption. Christ is in us as His wisdom, His knowledge, His sanctification, His redemption. Do you see what it says? It simply says in 1 Corinthians 1:30 that the very same ingredients that are in Christ are in the believer in Christ.

Now, that is what religion would deny you. Religion would say, If you don't promote our program, if you don't give money to build our buildings, then you can't be a good Christian. The Bible says Christ is already in you who have been born again; and by His virtue and His life pouring out of you, you are perfect before God. It simply means you are nothing by what you do. You are what you are by the birthing. It is that simple. Nothing you do makes you who you are any more than your baby that you have birthed can be any more by his doing. He is what he is by birthing. Now, he can learn more about what he is and operate better at what he is by knowledge, but he can't be any more than he already is by the birthing. Isn't that marvelous.

Every believer is walking around with Christ in Him. He is literally a walking Christ. I didn't say he was Jesus of Nazareth. Paul said to move on from that. "Henceforth know we no man after the flesh: yea, though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we him no more" (2 Cor. 5:16). That Jesus no longer exists; but the Christ who was in Jesus of Nazareth, the God who was in Him and the God seed which is in you is the same. Same ingredients. You just happen to have a body which is a sinful body, a corruptible body, and you are not able to work Christ out of you. In fact, the modern, religious church has so blinded and hidden from us who we are in Christ that we haven't been able to function properly, but all of these things are ours in Christ. These marvelous ingredients of Him as us have been denied us. That is what God is doing in this move of the Spirit; this marvelous move of the Spirit is beginning to operate gloriously

once again among the people. They are real Christians with Christ in them. That is what a Christian is.

Point 4

Everything the Bible says about those who are in Christ, it says to you. What does that mean? It means the promises are not something we are to lay hold of, that we are to take into our mind and make work; that is Old Testament. New Testament presents the birthing. That means all of these glorious things said about in-Christ in the Scriptures are what you already are right now. Right now. That is different. Everything the Scripture says that belongs to those in Christ is what you are already. Why? Because your source is Christ. Everything Christ is, you are.

Now that does not mean you have got it in your mind. The oneness hasn't taken place because the mind hasn't been renewed; it has never come alive with the facts of what you are in Christ. Far from you, then, is the expression of those things. I am going to state it again. Every single thing the Bible says about those who are in Christ, it says about you. They are not promises; they are facts.

Point 5

In the epistles, Paul's great revelations, he speaks of the realities of the Christ-life. That is why you have to live in the epistles until you come to see who you are by Christ in you. The epistles speak of the realities, not the promises, not things that can be, not things that are going to be. We have eternal life dwelling in us now. So, the Resurrection Morning, the Tribulation, and the next dispensation of the Millennium have absolutely nothing to do with who I am. I am who I am through the birthing. I am already in eternal life. I can't be destroyed. Oh, you can get rid of this body; but you can't get rid of the real Christ because the real me is Christ; and everything the Scriptures say He is, I am. Everything the Scripture says about a person in Christ is what I am. That is not what I am going to be if I do right, if I am honest, if I am sincere, if I give my money, if I go to church, if I pray, and if I win souls. Those are works. They don't save you and don't make you an iota more than what you already are by Christ in you. The epistles speak of the realities. They are not promises; they are in you right now. You just don't know it, and you are not living it because you don't know who you are.

The average believer today is like the poor man who doesn't know that somebody has put a million dollars in his bank account. He is poor; he is sickly; he can't go to the doctor; he can't buy medicine; he can't eat the right food; and he doesn't wear warm cloths even though he can afford them. He is dumb and he is ignorant, yet he has a million dollars in his bank account. That is the way the average believer is. That believer already has everything in him that is in Christ.

(9) "For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily. (10) And ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power." (Col. 2:9-10)

It is not a 'going-to-be' thing. It is there already by the birthing. It came into the believer the moment he was born again. It is in the seed. It is in the nature of God, which is in the seed. The seed is Christ, and Christ is in you. "Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever" (1 Peter 1:23).

You have it all. You have it totally; but because you don't know it, you don't live it. You are like the poor man who had it all, but he lived death because he didn't know what was his. That is why we are so stirred about this Christ-life message. The Church has been robbed long enough of what we are and who we are in Christ. We have been robbed long enough in what the Scriptures have to say about the believer in Christ, and these glorious realities are not promises. I have heard so many preach them as promises and say, "If you live right, you will have them. If you do what the Scripture says, you will have them." No. I don't get to be who I am by doing one blessed thing any more than a little baby coming into the world; just by his coming into the world, he becomes what he is. That was done by his father. Everything you are has already been accomplished by your Father because He put His seed in you, His one Son in you. He is the firstborn among many brethren (Rom. 8:29). You are a son of God; and when you begin to act that and live that, that is when you will be liberated and overcome in this world.

— **Points to Ponder:**

Now, reflect on what you just read. Journal and/or discuss your understanding of how a believer already has everything of Christ in him. —

Point 6

Search the Scriptures; this is a form of meditation and is what renews the mind. I have always believed that the average believer is slow to search the Scriptures. He is quick to read the Bible. Everybody reads the Bible, but that is not searching the Scriptures. What do I mean by searching the Scriptures? I would like to relate it to something Jesus said in John's gospel. He was talking to the Jews about how they could have known Him from the Old Testament, and he said, You search the Scriptures, and you do not come to life because you do not see me.

(39) "Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me. (40) And ye will not come to me, that ye might have life." (John 5:39-40)

When I search the Scriptures, I am reading about Him who is my life. I am looking for Jesus. I am not looking for what Abraham did. I am not looking for promises that will bless me. I am not looking for Scriptures that will fill me up and make me strong. I am looking for the life I am, Christ. Jesus said to the Jews, You search the Scriptures, but you don't get any life from them because you don't see me. Well, I take that literally. If you would search the Scriptures looking for Christ, you would see your very life. The only way you will get anything out of Abraham is if you see Christ in him. There is no spiritual help from Moses; there is no life in Moses unless you see Christ because the only life God has is in the Son.

These Old Testament saints didn't have that life. Now, they had the blessings of God. They had a lot of things, and we will explain all this later. But, they did not have the Christ-life. They didn't have Christ in them, and it is only as we see Christ-attitudes and Christ-illustrations and Christ-life as it were operating through these Old Testament saints that we will get anything out of it. Well, that's not easy to do. It is hard for some people to see Christ in the Old Testament, and that is why you need to get over and

search the New Testament. If you only search one verse of Scripture, if you only see one line a day and you see Christ in it, you will be fed; that is food. That is the bread which comes down from God out of heaven, and it will feed you. It will liberate you and set you free. It is the Christ-life. Searching the Scriptures, meditating upon the Scriptures, taking time to think about who you are by those Scriptures will renew your mind.

You see, you already have all the ingredients in you which are necessary to perfectly please God and to be who God intended you to be; but until your mind lays hold of that, until you give that mind to the Christ who is your only life, you will never express this glorious life we are talking about. The Christ-life can never be expressed until it has the mind, the Christ-mind, so I encourage you to search the Scriptures. It is by searching the Scriptures that the joint which ties your life into Christ becomes one and is made perfect. That's why God gave us the Scriptures. But it is not searching in the Scriptures for eschatology ideas, for spiritual ideas to make us better, or for religious ideas to make us something. That is far from it. The searching of the Scriptures is solely and simply to help us see Christ because if you don't see Him, there is no life. The only life there is in the Son.

If you want the fruit of Christ in you to rise up, you have to give Him a mind. I know it is a little blunt, but I need to state this boldly. The average Christian has a mindless Christ. You only believe and Father puts that life in you. But until you give Christ a mind, that life can never be expressed, and you will never know oneness with Him. You must give Him that mind. That is your love affair. There can be no love without giving the mind.

If Christ is our all, then we settle it once and for all. We give Him the mind. The mind is no longer being given to the body, which is the work of the flesh. The mind now is given to this Christ who is birthed within us and is our only life. The mind of Christ isn't automatic. I preached the gospel for 13 years before I ever knew and understood that Christ was in me and my

only life. Oh, I ran around saying “in Christ,” but it didn’t mean anything. I didn’t know what it meant. The Christ in me didn’t have a mind. I had a mindless Christ. When you give Him your mind, that is when you begin to live by oneness; you begin to express who and what you are by the Christ who is in you.

— **Points to Ponder:**

Now, reflect on what you just read. Journal and/or discuss your understanding of searching the Scriptures to learn Christ in you. —

Point 7

In Paul's epistles, he prayed seven prayers, and all seven are generally directed toward one single theme. That one theme is that the believer would ask God to give him understanding, wisdom, knowledge, or revelation of who he is in Christ. Now, don't take my word for it. You search the Scriptures yourself to see whether or not that is so. You see, everything Paul has to say, everything he is involved in, centers in our oneness with Christ.

Paul prayed that the believer may ultimately come to this knowledge. The believer has a mind. Christ needs the believer's mind. So Paul prayed these prayers, like in Ephesians 1:17 and 3:17–18, I am praying for you that you may have the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him. That you might know what is the length, breadth, height, and depth of what is yours in Christ Jesus. That is Paul's whole theme because if the human being doesn't come to know who he is by the new birth, he has missed the whole point of being a Christian.

— Look Closer:

Read the following verses of Paul's prayers and mark all the key terms that refer to the believer's renewing of the mind.

(15) "Wherefore I also, after I heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus, and love unto all the saints, (16) Cease not to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers; (17) That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him: (18) The eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints, (19) And what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power." (Eph. 1:15–19)

(14) "For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, (15) Of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named, (16) That he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man; (17) That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, (18) May be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; (19) And to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God." (Eph. 3:14–19)

(9) "For this cause we also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray for you, and to desire that ye might be filled with the knowledge of his will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding; (10) That ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God." (Col. 1:9–10) —

What Paul's prayers are really saying is that when you give your mind to Christ, you have a whole new consciousness. The consciousness is, I am a Christ-person. Christ is my only life, my total life, my only existence. Your consciousness is no longer, If I don't do certain things, my human life is going to be snuffed out one of these days. Did you know there is a way of living, by a new consciousness, that you are alive forevermore? Right now, you are alive forevermore. If your earthly house of a tabernacle is dissolved, you have a new building in Christ Jesus. Did you know that is two entirely different levels of understanding? The higher level, the level which comes from the mind of Christ says, I cannot be destroyed. Spiritually, I stand sinless before God because He who is me cannot commit sin. "Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God" (1 John 3:9). That is a statement of our spiritual condition. That is another level of understanding which takes the hurt, the pain, the guilt, and the humiliation away from the human being as he sees who he is in Christ. He is lifted to a new consciousness.

Did you know that your every prayer should be like Paul's prayer, that you want to come to more and more of this knowledge and understanding? You see, I still believe in reading the Bible and praying, but it has taken on a new dimension, a greater dimension. When I read the Bible now, there is no life-food in it for my inner man unless I see Jesus. When I pray, my prayers are for this consciousness to take place. My praying, my meditation, and my Scripture-searching is that I might come to a new consciousness that Christ only is my life, that I stand perfect and sinless before God and ready to go on living in this life.

I still commit sin; but those are sins of the flesh; and all I need do is confess them to my Father and get up and go on and keep on living. You say, Well, what is to stop you from sinning? My love affair. This new consciousness begins to tell me that the real me is Christ, and I am in love with Him like a wife is in love with her husband. Christ becomes the head of my life. He becomes my all. He is my husband, my Christ-husband. I am the wife-

believer, and I fall in love with my husband so that He becomes my all. That is the new consciousness.

These seven points are the essential aspects of oneness. In these lessons of The Fundamentals of the Christ-life, again and again from different aspects and different understandings, we will deal with oneness because that is what I want you to come to. I want you to come to the understanding that you and Christ are one. Right now, you are probably two. A lot of people think they are three; they have the Devil, themselves, and the Lord all lined up as different natures — a sin-nature, a Spirit-nature, and a human-nature. I am here to tell you that while there is a Devil, and while there is a you, there is only one nature. We who are born again are now partakers of divine nature (2 Peter 1:4), and the divine nature does not share or commingle with Satan's nature.

So we are right back to Galatians 2:20 where, sooner or later, you have got to say, "I no longer live." What does that incorporate? That says there is no Satan-nature operating by me, for I no longer live. There is no human-nature, for there is no human being operating aside from what I am in Christ. What does it mean that I no longer live? As a me, I no longer live. As a human being I still live, but I live by the life of another.

My language very often is, "The real me is Christ." I didn't say I am Jesus Christ. I said the real me is Christ because His life is the only life I have. I didn't say I live like Jesus of Nazareth. Second Corinthians 5:16 says we are no longer even to know the Christ who was in the flesh; the Christ we now know is the Christ who is in our flesh. It is Galatians 2:20 saying, The life I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God.

Oneness is God's divine prerogative for your life. It is not a promise or something that will happen to you if you do this or that. You are merely to

give a mind to the Jesus who is already in you, and you will begin to express this oneness. That means the source, Christ in you, will begin to flow through you and out of you once He has a mind. The mind is the oneness-joint; the mind is what joins you and Christ together until Christ becomes all.

It is very obvious that we don't know this, we don't practice this, and we need to listen to these truths again and again. Remember, I can't teach you anything. I want to confirm what the Spirit is already saying to you and has been saying to you through the years. I want to be a confirmer. I want the Holy Spirit to teach you these divine truths because that is where the life is. The real life is in the Son.

— **Points to Ponder:**

Now, reflect on what you just read. Journal and/or discuss your understanding of the contrast between the divine nature and the sin-nature. —

Scripture References

1 John 1:1

1 Corinthians 6:17

Galatians 2:20

Romans 8:9

1 John 3:9

1 John 1:8

Colossians 3:11

Colossians 1:16–17

1 Corinthians 1:30

John 5:39–40

Ephesians 1:17

2 Corinthians 5:16

Philippians 2:5

Explore More

A. To get an idea of how central the in-Christ message is in Paul's teaching of the gospel of grace, search the following phrases using a Bible app on a digital device such as a computer, tablet, or smartphone. We recommend downloading the e-Sword app, but there are many good Bible apps. Just be sure to use the King James Version of the Bible. For students who do not have access to digital apps, we provide the verses below; but for those students who can, we urge you to do your own searches and read what the in-Christ gospel teaches about our new life in Christ. Some of these have more meat in them, speaking more to the meaning and substance of the Christ-life. Mark these in your Bible to continue reminding yourself through future Bible study. Note: This is not a comprehensive list. There are more in-Christ verses using other phrases, such as "in the Lord." Our oneness with Christ is also exhibited by "Christ in us," "Christ in me," and "Christ in you," and such phrases in many other verses.

In Christ: 74 Verses

Rom. 3:24; 8:1–2, 9, 39; 9:1; 12:5; 16:3, 7; 16:9–10.

1 Cor. 1:2, 30; 3:1; 4:10, 15, 17; 15:18–19, 22, 31; 16:24.

2 Cor. 1:21; 2:14, 17; 3:14; 5:17, 19–20; 11:3; 12:2, 19.

Gal. 1:22; 2:4; 3:17, 26, 28; 6:15.

Eph. 1:1, 3, 10, 12, 20; 2:6, 10, 13; 3:6, 11.

Phil. 1:1, 13; 2:1, 5; 3:3, 14; 4:21.

Col. 1:2, 4, 28; 2:5.

1 Thess. 2:14; 4:16; 5:18.

1 Tim. 1:14; 2:7; 3:13.

2 Tim. 1:1, 9, 13; 2:1, 10; 3:12, 15.

Philem. 1:6, 8, 23.

In Him: 17 Verses

Rom. 10:14; 15:12.

1 Cor. 8:6.

2 Cor. 1:19–20; 5:21; 13:4.

Eph. 1:4, 10.

Phil. 3:9.

Col. 1:19; 2:6–7, 9–10.

2 Thess. 1:12.

Heb. 2:13.

In Whom: 11 Verses

Rom. 10:14.

2 Cor. 1:10.

Eph. 1:7, 11, 13; 2:21–22; 3:12.

Col. 1:14; 2:3, 11.

In Me: 11 Verses

John 6:56; 10:38; 11:25, 26; 14:1, 10–11, 20; 15:2–7; 16:33; 17:21, 23.

Gal. 1:16; 2:20.

Col. 1:29.

1 Tim. 1:16.

B. Note the different names the Word uses for unbelievers and believers.
Distinguish the two natures or spirits working in unbelievers and believers.

Unbelievers:

Children of the Devil (John 8:41-44; 1 John 3:8, 10)

Children of the night/darkness (1 Thess. 5:5)

Children of this world, the world (Luke 17:8; 20:34; John 14:17; 15:18–19; 16:8, 20; 17:14, 16)

Children of the wicked one (Matt. 13:38)

Children of disobedience (Eph. 2:2; 5:6; Col. 3:6)

Children of wrath (Eph. 2:3)

Believers:

Children of God (Luke 20:36; John 11:52; Rom. 8:16, 21; 9:8, 26; Gal. 3:26; 1 John 3:10; 4:4; 5:2)

Children of light/day (Luke 20:34; John 12:36; Eph. 5:8; 1 Thess. 5:5)

Not of the world (John 17:14–16)

Children of the resurrection (Luke 20:36)

Note the different conditions of the world and believers

The world cannot receive, see, or know the Spirit of Truth, the Holy Spirit; but He dwells in believers (John 14:17, 19; 15:18–19).

The world does not know the Father (John 8:19; 17:25).

Lesson 3

The Importance of the Birthing

In the now generation, it is so important that you understand what God has done. What He literally did was to work out a plan whereby He could take a part of Himself, an intricate part of Himself known as God, the Son, and place Him in every human creature who believes on the Lord Jesus Christ. That is such a marvelous and unbelievable work of God that it defies our imagination.

In the Christ-life, we call that the birthing, when a sinner believes on Christ for salvation and God places His Son in the believer as His spirit. Jesus said to Nicodemus in John 3:3–7, You must be born again or you cannot see the things of God, or know the things of God, or enter into the things of God. Jesus really laid it on the line to this ruler of the Jews, one of the highest religious leaders of the day, when He said there is no way you can know about God except you be born again.

— Look Closer:

Jesus was speaking of spirit, and Nicodemus focused on earthly things, man's physical body, and completely misunderstood the meaning. Read the following verses and mark all the key phrase that show Jesus speaking of a spiritual re-birth.

(1) "There was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews: (2) The same came to Jesus by night, and said unto him, Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God: for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him. (3) Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God. (4) Nicodemus saith unto him, How can a man be born when he is old? can he enter the second time into his mother's womb, and be born? (5) Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. (6) That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. (7) Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again. (8) The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit. (9) Nicodemus answered and said unto him, How can these things be? (10) Jesus answered and said unto him, Art thou a master of Israel, and knowest not these things?" (John 3:1–10) —

I have learned this in the Spirit's school — the school where the Holy Spirit is the only teacher — not from some man, not from religion, and not from human theology. Those who go on to the deeper, richer things of God base the entirety of their conclusions on the birthing. What do I mean by that? There is a key to understanding the Scriptures: everything in the Scriptures is based on the birthing, the fact that you must be born again. Everyone who enters into God's plan does so just by being born again, and understanding the birthing as the core of one's life and the core of God's plan allows us to be able to really live the life God has given us. The present truth for God's

children is who and what they are in Christ; the starting point for that is the birthing.

Levels of Understanding

We often say, “If you don’t start right, you won’t end right.” You have to have the right starting point. What is the right starting point in understanding the things of God? You have to start with the birthing. It is the same as Jesus said to Nicodemus in John 3, You cannot see the kingdom — you can’t even see what God is doing — except you be born again.

Everybody has a key to their understanding of the Scriptures. To some people, the key to the Scripture is water baptism; for them, everything hinges on water baptism. They teach that you must be baptized in water to be finally saved, to get into the church, and to be a Christian. Their key to the Scripture is water baptism. For others, the Scripture is sanctification. They teach everything leads to and flows out of man being sanctified, that becoming what God intends them to be by sanctification is what brings it all about. That is their key to the Scripture. There are some to whom the key to the Scripture is eschatology. They teach everything has to do with the end times. They believe they are a special people, like the 144,000, so everything they read in the Scripture has the key that we are this special group of people and we are especially spoken to by God, by special verses in the Bible. That is their key. They ignore everything else and rely upon that one key to be all of their understanding. And there are others who hold on to faith and healing as their key. I know some preachers who believe that the whole of the Bible says you must prosper and be in health; and every place they read in the Bible, that is what they see, and that is all they see. Their key to the Scripture is health and prosperity.

Well, we in the Christ-life have a key to the Scripture. After many years of preaching this gospel, I came to the place where it was imperative for me to find out God’s ultimate intention, what He has really set out to do, and what He is doing about it.

During my walk with God, I have had several keys to the Scriptures. When I first started preaching, I preached with International Youth for Christ; and our key to the Scriptures was to save the world by winning young people. Once they were won, the older folk would be automatically won by the preaching of the youth. Our key to the Scripture was soul-winning. I then entered into another phase, another level of understanding, divine healing. I believe in healing, and I practice healing to this very day. In fact, I believe that the only healer there is in human beings is Jesus Christ. He is the healer of all our diseases, even as the Scripture has declared. So healing was a phase I went through, a level of understanding. Everywhere I read in the Scriptures, I read that God wants to heal; God wants to give you a miracle. I taught that if you didn't get a miracle, there was something wrong with your faith and you were not where you ought to be. That God is a God of miracles, and you need to get a miracle every day because God is a good God. I preached that blessed message, but it was only a level of understanding which was far short of God's ultimate intention. Next, was the baptism in the Holy Spirit. I believe in the baptism of the Holy Spirit, but I am going to present it as one level of understanding that I had to go through. I believe it just like the Scriptures teach in Act 2:4, 1 Corinthians 12, and 14. I believe those ministries and miracles are for us today. However, I believe them differently than I first did. When I first started, I believed man was the one filled with the Holy Spirit and did great works. Now, I believe that man is crucified with Christ and Christ is alive in me, which is a whole different gospel, the gospel Paul brought us.

When I went through the phase of the baptism of the Holy Spirit, I saw in the Scripture that unless you were filled with the Holy Spirit, you could not go on with God. My level of understanding and my key to the Scriptures during that time was that you must be baptized in the Holy Spirit, as in Act 19:2 where the apostle asked, "Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed?" I believed that for everybody, that unless you have received the Holy Spirit, you could not possibly go on with the Lord. I then moved on to another level of understanding, to what we call the faith level, where health and prosperity was the key. The key was that God wanted, above all things, for us to prosper and be in health, and so my Bible once again took on a

new meaning. Everywhere I looked in the Bible, I found those Scriptures for health and prosperity. I taught that God wants you to be somebody, that God wants you to be great on this earth.

I went through all of that, but all of these levels were like steps on a ladder that led me to the fullness of God. I am saying this right now to some of you who may be at one of these levels; and you may be highly argumentative; but I am not going to argue with you. I encourage all Christ-life believers not to argue with anybody on any subject because I believe if the Holy Spirit is the teacher, He is going to bring us all along alright; so we really don't want to argue on any subject. I do want to point out that you may be at a level of understanding different from somebody else, and you will swear — as I have done several times in my life — that your level of understanding is where God has you at this time. But, you must not stay there because, ultimately, God wants you to learn the Christ that is in you, and that level of understanding starts with the birthing. That is where God wants you.

You may have to go through these different levels of understanding to come to God's ultimate intention; and in the Christ-life, our whole hope is that we will see God's ultimate intention and flow in it because as long as we do what man wants us to do, we are falling short of the glory of God. To fall short of the glory of God or the plan of God is miserable. Multitudes of believers are miserable because they are doing what man wants them to do. Man says, This is the key, the thing God is doing. This is where God is today. This is what God wants. I get letters from people who say, The Lord showed us that this is what He is doing. He is building great churches. He is concentrating on this mission field. Or, He is concentrating on this project, this program.

It is necessary that believers go through such phases. There is a key to the Scriptures that the Holy Spirit ultimately leads you to which overwhelms

everything else you have been taught by the Spirit. It is so simple. It is unbelievable; that is probably why many believers never come to know who they are in Christ.

I preached from John's third chapter innumerable times on every level of understanding I went through. I always preached Jesus and Nicodemus. I always preached that you must be born again and the wonderful story where Jesus took time to preach a sermon to one man that is so acute to the whole plan of God. But every time I preached it on a different level, it took on a fuller and more comprehensive meaning. In all of the understanding I had of the different levels, they were understandings God could only trust me with at that level of understanding.

Somebody says, I believe this is what we ought to do. Everybody has got to be filled by the Holy Ghost. Everybody ought to have faith and get a miracle every day. Everybody ought to do this, ought to do that. I won't argue with you, but I am going to tell you that God, in time, has a level of understanding solely taught by the Spirit that you will never have to defend. Why, I would never defend the Christ-life message. I would give my life to be able to preach it to hungry hearts, but I don't have to defend it. I defended every level of understanding I came to until I came to the Christ-life. I argued with people, bringing out all my Scriptures. I proved every level of understanding I was on, using the Scriptures. That is probably what some of you want to do. You probably want to prove your level of understanding.

It was in John's third chapter that I finally found the key, the key to everything. When Nicodemus came to Jesus, he wanted to talk about the great miracles Jesus was performing and theology. He said, "We know that thou art a teacher come from God: for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with Him" (John 3:2). So obviously that is what Nicodemus wanted to talk about. He wanted to talk about the authority

Jesus had as a miracle worker, but Jesus needed to establish God's intention.

Now this was a ruler of the Jews, and the Jews were not living in God's intention. They were a long way from fulfilling God's intention. Jesus knew that God's intention must be established sooner or later, and before He discussed any of the issues brought up by Nicodemus, I suppose Jesus looked him straight in the eye and said, Nicodemus, it won't do us a bit of good to talk about miracles, to talk about me being a great teacher, or about me being sent from God because until you have been born again you can't see or enter the things of God.

— **Points to Ponder:**

Now, reflect on what you just read. Journal and/or discuss your understanding of your own Christian walk and briefly describe the levels of understanding you have moved through. —

Understanding the Birthing Is the Key to Understanding the Gospel

The most devastating message the Bible brings to a religionist is that we must be born again and that alone is what saves us. You can call a religionist anything you want; and it won't affect them nearly as greatly as if you said to a religionist, You can't even see or enter the things of God until you have been born again.

I once said until you are baptized in the Holy Spirit, you won't go on with God. I can't say that any more. I once said until you are sanctified by some man's ritual or sanctification, you are not what you ought to be for God. I can't say that any more. I used to say you have to be water baptized, join the church, and do good works to prove you are a valid Christian. I can't say that anymore. My level of understanding has now reached a place to where it is beyond me. I do not and cannot comprehend this thing I am bringing to you because it is Spirit-taught; but what I do need to lay before you is simply this. You must be born again to understand the things of God, to even see the things of God.

Now, if you are born again, it isn't a big deal to hear that people must be born again. You may be born again and may not lack in spiritual gifts, but it is by understanding the birthing that we understand what God is doing.

Now

Right now. Now! The birthing is now. It either happened or it didn't happen. If it has happened, it is instantaneous; there is no future event to it. It is complete. It is like a woman getting pregnant. She doesn't get partly pregnant or hope she is pregnant and that makes her pregnant. She is either pregnant or she isn't. She either has a child, another person, within her or she doesn't. There are no two ways about it.

If you don't see that Christ is in you, totally in you, it would be very difficult for you to realize your oneness with Him. You need to be able to say, The only life I have is Christ. When did that happen? Did it happen when you went through the rituals of religion? No. Did it happen when you got baptized in water? No. Did it happen when you joined the church? No. Did it happen when you finally came to a full understanding of your salvation, His Spirit bearing witness with your spirit that you are a child of God (Rom. 8:16)? No. When did it happen then? The moment you believed on the Lord Jesus Christ. That's it. That is ultimately and finally it. The moment you believed on the Lord Jesus Christ, you had another person in you. You became pregnant with another person whose life is your only life. That is now.

I know many people have believed on the Lord Jesus Christ yet have no concept that everything God had planned for them had already taken place because they are so geared to religion which said, Do this and do that and progressively you will get a little bit more. That is knowledge; it has nothing to do with the birthing. A woman gets pregnant; that is final. Her knowledge of that may take her months to realize, to find out what happened to her. Don't confuse our growth in knowledge with what God did when you were born again.

That is why we are going into these blessed Scriptures that deal with this all-important word now because it is only by this word that apostle Paul

was able to ultimately determine what was to take place. I want to put a big emphasis on the now because I want you to see that right now God has done everything He could do for you, and what you need to do is to fix it in your mind and get up from where you are — from your lethargy, from your weakness, from your infidelity, from your disbelief, from your unbelief, from your fear — get up from that point and go on and live as a Christian. You will begin to live this oneness the moment you realize that all you need is in you now. Now!

We are going to look into some Scriptures that emphasize this word now, and I want you to mark them in your Bible. There were over 100 occasions in the New Testament where the word now signified the importance of this key to the Scripture that comes by the birthing. Only the new-creation-race of people who know who they are will see that. There will be multitudes of people on different levels who are not going to see that; but the people who know they are one with Christ, that Christ is their all, and that He is their only life, they are going to see that right off.

Let's go to one of the most prominent now verses. Romans 8 is such a powerful now. Romans 8:1 is the final summary of everything that was talked about in Romans 7. The verse says, "There is therefore now." Circle that. It is in the now, right now, for the believer. "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." This is a powerful now. "There is therefore now no condemnation."

Resting

If you could ask me what is the greatest single virtue a child of God could ever manifest, it would be rest. Rest! If I could tell you that God is going to give you your heart's desire, whatever you have faith to believe you will receive, that you could have any kind of a miracle you could want, you would probably ask for something else. But a God-loving, God-fearing, Bible-believing, Spirit-filled believer, if he could have anything on this earth, he would ask for rest.

— **Look Closer:**

Read Hebrews 4:1–6 and underline the word rest.

(1) “Let us therefore fear, lest, a promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of you should seem to come short of it. (2) For unto us was the gospel preached, as well as unto them: but the word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it. (3) For we which have believed do enter into rest, as he said, As I have sworn in my wrath, if they shall enter into my rest: although the works were finished from the foundation of the world. (4) For he spake in a certain place of the seventh day on this wise, And God did rest the seventh day from all his works. (5) And in this place again, If they shall enter into my rest. (6) Seeing therefore it remaineth that some must enter therein, and they to whom it was first preached entered not in because of unbelief.” (Heb. 4:1–6) —

Later, we will deal with rest because it is one of the strongest tangents of the trilogy of the ultimate intentions of God. Condemnation and guilt keep us from God’s rest. God’s people today are so condemned and guilty. I think if there is any one heartbreak with God, it is that His people have not entered into His rest on this earth. We can talk about resting places, going home to rest from our labor; but we have to die in body to get there. God’s ultimate intention before the foundation of the world was that He would have people who entered into rest here and now. How can you do that? Well, it doesn’t mean God is going to give us a cloud to float on, and we will have everything we want. It means God is going to remove something from us that is contrary to the Christ-life, contrary to the person in us. What is He going to remove from us? Condemnation. There is no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus; that is a spiritual statement. “Who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit” addresses the soul and how we decide to live life.

Rest is God's greatest virtue flowing out of the nature of Christ in us which God would like for us to exemplify. I have been in the Lord's work a long time, and I can tell you I prize resting in Christ more than any other thing. I know God is taking care of the world and will take care of me. He is taking care of my loved ones. His plan is working out. I am not influenced by the rebel-rousing preachers who say the world is about to end and everything is falling apart, that sin is going to ruin us all, and the Devil is taking us all to hell. I don't believe that. I don't believe Bible-believing people believe that. I believe we will have it rough and we will have tribulations; but it won't be like the Great Tribulation at all. We will have tribulation unto death, but that will be a blessing. Paul said it doesn't matter if you die (Rom. 14:8).

We will have troubles and trials on earth, but let me tell you something. Rest is the greatest virtue of God you will ever find. If you are sick in your body and don't know if you are going to make it, rest is more important than health. If your business is falling apart, you can't make ends meet, and you are struggling in self-effort — thinking, trying, and doing everything you can to fix it — I promise you the greatest virtue you will find is rest, knowing God has taken care of it. If you have family problems, children problems, teenager problems, and they have brought you to the brink, I promise the answer to those problems would not be nearly as important as you entering into the rest He has prepared for those who love Him.

The thing that keeps us from that rest is condemnation. Believers today stay so condemned because of the law-preaching all around us so that they are never able to live who they are. They can't enter into this oneness with Christ and be who they are. The end result is they keep trying to buy answers and miracles from God. The most prominent message in our day from all of the big preachers and the super-churches is if you give something to God, He will give back to you, and you will get your miracle. That works, sometimes once, sometimes twice, sometimes three times; but it doesn't work continuously. It wasn't intended to work continuously, and it wasn't intended to be a rule of life. It was intended to be a grace of God, a love act of God. It wasn't intended to be anything else.

Many preachers today teach, If you keep on giving, if you keep doing something, you will get your miracle. Your miracle is not what you need; but if I preach enough condemnation to you, I will make you feel that getting your miracle is what makes you what God wants you to be. If I preached faith hard enough to you, I will make you feel that getting faith, being a faith-person, is what God wants you to be, when all the time you couldn't be any more godly than you are by Christ in you, by the birthing.

What does that preaching do? It puts you in condemnation. I could tell you, Folks, you must send me an offering to keep me on this program and you will get your miracle. Thousands are getting miracles because they are sending their offering in and I am praying for them. When I say that, what have I done? In your mind, I have separated you from the Jesus who is in you so that you no longer trust Him for your very life, for your existence, and you begin to lean on men. You say, But isn't that scriptural? Only partly because if you are separating yourself from Christ, you are going to find that I planted the seed of condemnation to make it work because if you don't do that thing to get your miracle, you will be condemned, you will feel guilty. The next thing you know, you will be out doing some great, big thing to try to wipe it all out and get rid of condemnation. Our text says to the now generation that those who are in Christ Jesus have no condemnation.

Do you know what that means? It means very significantly you don't have to do one blessed thing to receive the blessings of God. Oh, you can't disobey, and if you love Him you won't do that anyway. If you know Christ is in you, you will walk in the light you have. There is nothing you have to do to be who you are; and after being born again, there is nothing you have to do to be God's son. Instead of you going out trying to get faith to be something aside from who you are, why don't you reason this: Christ is in you; you are a son of God right now?! You are an heir of God, a direct, distinct, birthed heir of God. Think about that for a moment. If you could

get that fixed in your mind, you don't have to go on a guilt trip, you don't have to go the way of condemnation. You need to get fixed in your mind, I am a child of God right now. In fact, John said, "Beloved, now are we the sons of God" (1 John 3:2). It is not later. Now we are the son of God! It is not something that is coming; it is something that is right now.

— **Points to Ponder:**

Now, reflect on what you just read. Journal and/or discuss your understanding of rest and what prevents or keeps believers from entering into the rest of Christ. —

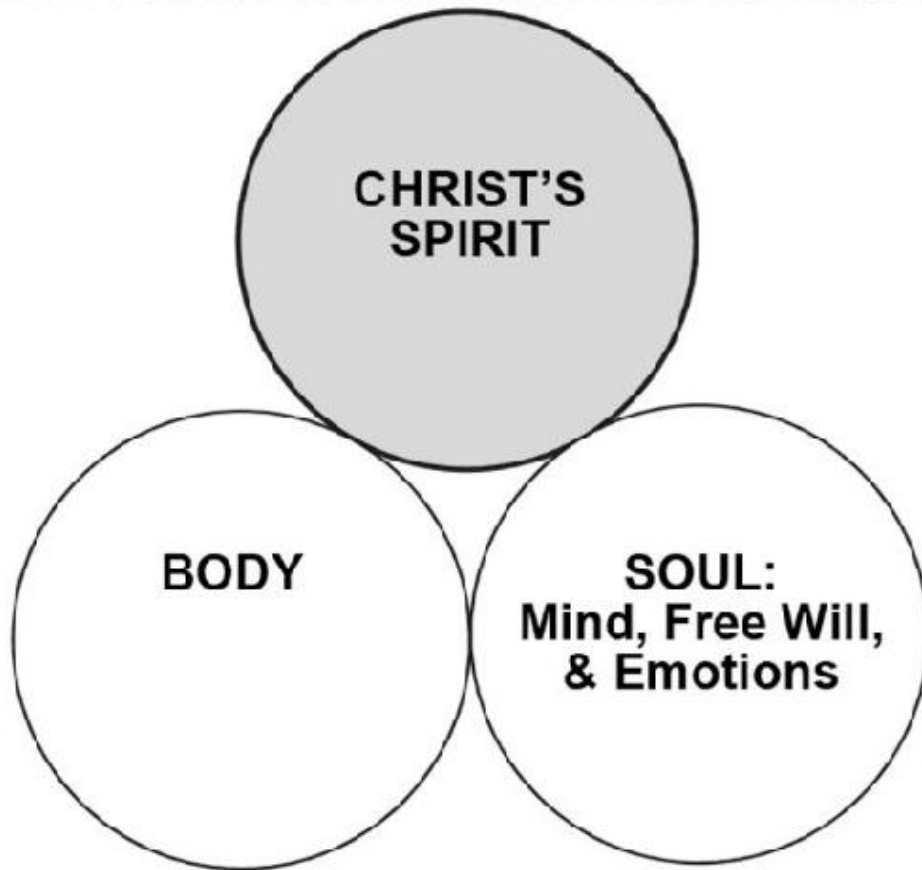
What really keeps you from being who you are? It is guilt, condemnation. Guilt and condemnation are Satan's greatest ploy against the children of God; and very often, he uses godly people to teach it. There is no condemnation if you know you are in Christ Jesus. The now generation knows that.

Furthermore, these days we have seen our Heavenly Father attack, as it were, the guilt and condemnation that is being spread abroad by Satan. He has set a move of the Spirit to break God's people away from guilt and condemnation. I know we are right down to ground level, where the rubber meets the road, as they say. But if you want to be who God intended you to be in Christ Jesus, then you must get free from guilt and condemnation. The way I put that, it would appear that believers need to go out and do something or go somewhere to get free of condemnation. Far from it. Look at Romans 8:1:

“There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.”

You need to memorize this and fix it in your mind. Maybe you need to read it over a hundred times. Maybe you need to say it out loud every time you turn around. Maybe you need to write it on the wall, put it on the door of your refrigerator, or make a bumper sticker; but you need to see that you are in Christ Jesus, “Therefore there is no condemnation.”

I Am Free from Guilt and Condemnation.



You may ask, How is it that I, a born-again believer, didn't know this? How come I am not living this? How come I keep on doing these things to try to make me somebody when I don't have to be made somebody? I am somebody. I am God's child. Why do I have to do these things? It is simple. The latter part of this verse tells us, "Who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit."

You are going to find in a later study that, while the apostle Paul uses the word Spirit again and again, particularly in Romans 8, sometimes it refers to the Holy Spirit and sometimes it refers to Christ. In Romans 8:1, I believe it refers to Christ, so let me read it like that, There is therefore no condemnation to them who are in Christ Jesus and who daily do not do what their flesh wants them to do but what the Christ in them wants to do.

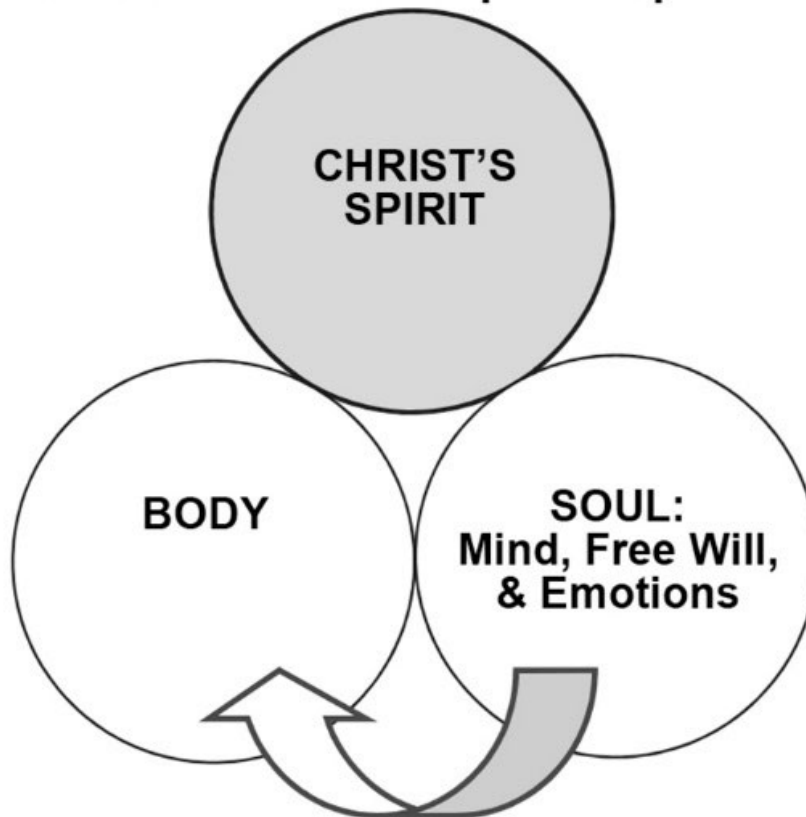
There is where your oneness makes a difference. That is where you, as a container, have become one with this marvelous Christ within you. There is no condemnation to those that live the Christ-life.

How do you live it? By knowing, I do not give mind to my flesh. I give mind to this Jesus who is within me; and as Christ has my mind, He spontaneously flows out of me like a river of living water blessing, healing, providing, saturating, and filling up everything around me. That's the glory of the Christ-life; Christ in us blesses, fills up, saturates, and covers everything around me by that marvelous flow. But here is the problem. We too often give a mind to the flesh. Why? Because we don't know who we are.

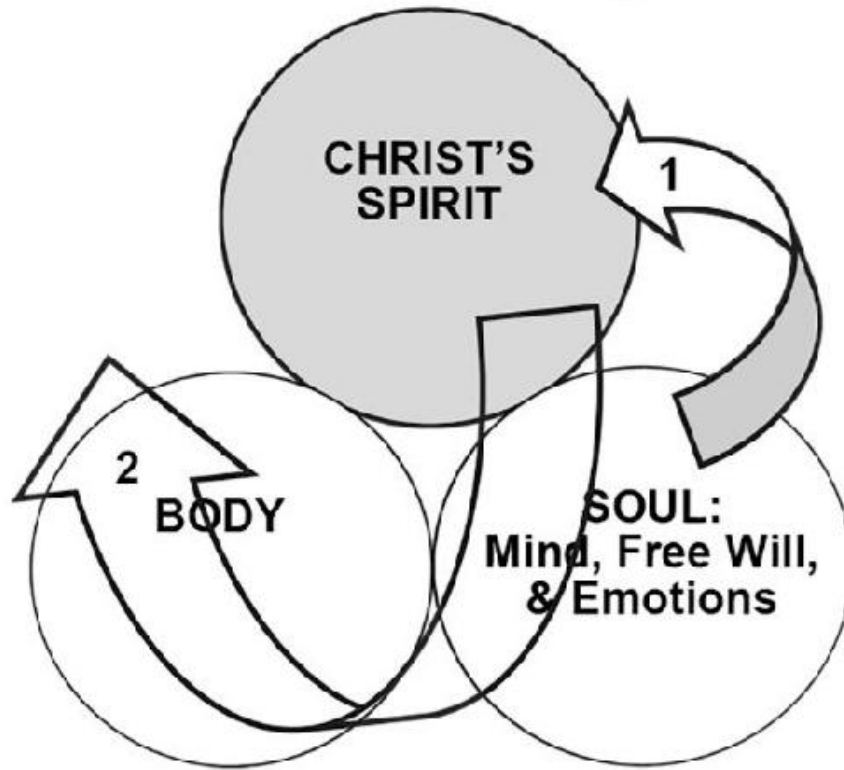
Years ago, a lady received an inheritance. She was a faithful child in her giving to God, and so she talked to her pastor and said, "You know, I have more money to give to God than I have ever had before; and it is such a great honor that God has given me that I came to ask you, who you think I ought to give this money to? Who has the greatest ministry where the money I give could be the greatest blessing and I could get the greatest reward from the minister?" This pastor told me later that he was putting up a building and had struggled. In fact, he had stopped the building program for lack of money, and the money she had to give would have kept them moving right along, but he was distressed at her words that she wanted to give her money to a great ministry that would make her somebody. The pastor said to me later with tearful eyes, "I realized I may have failed in preaching the true gospel to have had a person like that in my congregation who didn't know who they were except by what they did for somebody else or to something else." When you do that, it is giving a mind to the flesh because you don't know who you are. You see, the little lady thought she would be greater in the kingdom of God if she gave her money to a great ministry. That is a deceitful lie of the Devil because she is not going to get any greater than she already is. She is a child of God already; she can't be any greater than she is by the birthing.

You say, It sounds like you are against all great ministries. No. I am against any force that keeps you from coming into the perfect oneness with the Christ who is already in you. Why do I speak so harshly and endlessly on these subjects? Because God's message is that people should no longer try to become, by their own effort, what they already are by the birthing. If you are born again, you are a child of God. You come behind in none of God's blessings. Fix that in your mind, and don't give a mind to the flesh or you will have the flesh reap corruption; and that is what happens to multitudes of believers.

**If You Give Your Mind to Your Flesh,
Your Flesh Will Reap Corruption.**



When You Give Your Mind to the Christ within, He Spontaneously Flows out of You Like a River of Living Water.



Do you know why so many believers befall the erroneous gospel of ‘God wants you to prosper and be in health all the time’? It is because they are in error. They are full of guilt, and they constantly must do something to get their miracle or to be someone. Those in the now generation are free of guilt and condemnation because they will not give a mind to the flesh.

— Points to Ponder:

Now, reflect on what you just read. Journal and/or discuss your understanding of the contrast between walking in the flesh and walking in the Spirit of Christ? —

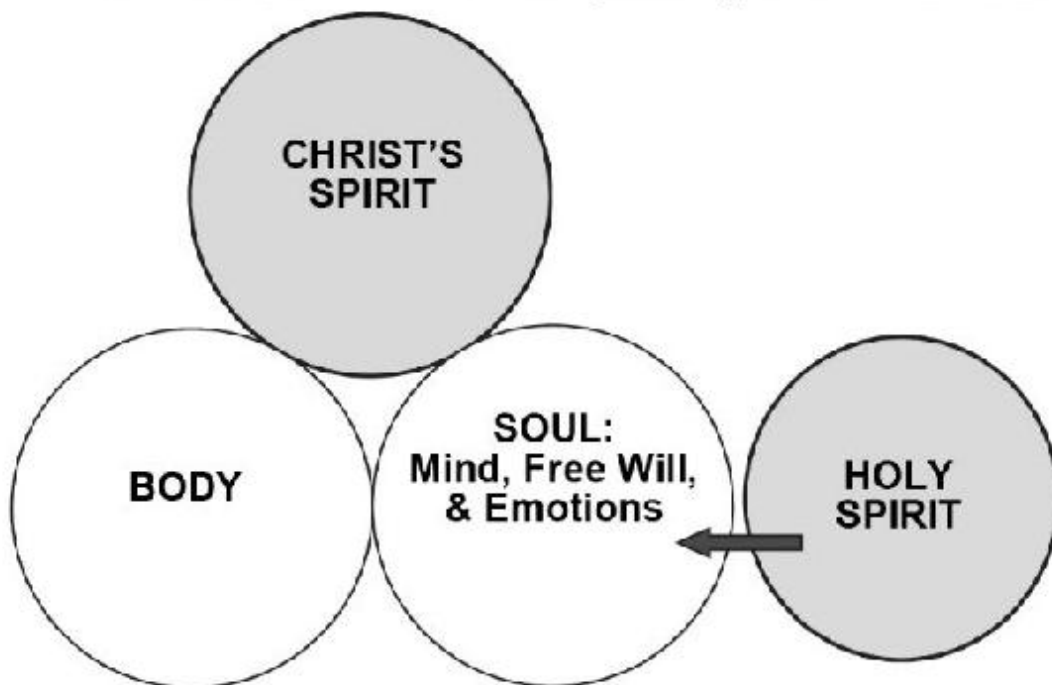
Let's go to 1 Corinthians 4:8. The word now begins this verse. It says, "Now ye are full." There are not very many of God's people who think they are full, that they are complete; but Paul says it right off here. The first now in this verse is, "Now ye are full." The second now is, "Now ye are rich." There is a lot more in that verse, but we won't go through them now. It goes on to say, "Ye have reigned as kings without us: and I would to God that ye did reign, that we also might reign with you." That is a whole other subject Paul deals with there in treating one of the problems that were in the church, but I like the way he approached the answer to that problem. He said, "Now you are full, now you are rich."

That opens up to me what we must clearly see right now by the birthing. Don't you realize what happened when you were born again? God put His nature in you, the nature of God. You are the literal offspring of Almighty God, and that nature in you is Christ. Right now we are partakers of divine nature by Christ in us (2 Peter 1:4). How much more could God possibly put in that seed than He already has, by Christ in you? First, Paul says, "Now you are full." There are a lot of renderings we can give the word full. It is the same word that is used in Colossians 2:9, "For in him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily." That's fullness! The fullness of the Godhead is resident in Christ, and Christ is in us. How much fuller could you get? There could be no greater fullness than that. You see, the trick of religion is to keep you always trying to get full or to get more.

When the baptism of the Holy Spirit was my level of understanding, one of the strongest aspects of that teaching was that you need to get and stay full of the Holy Spirit. There was no mention that Christ in you is fullness, that the fullness of the Godhead dwells in you because you are birthed. I was constantly saying, You have got to stay full. You have got to do something to get full and keep full. I used to tell people by the hundreds, Get down to the altar; you need a refilling; you need to get full; all of it leaked out. I had sermons on how people had leaked out and how they were empty

containers. Then, Paul comes along with the new-creation-race gospel, another level of understanding where Christ is all, where Christ by the birthing is taught. He says, “Now you are full.” Right now you are full. The Holy Spirit is resident in our soul, our mind, to teach us Christ. But I am not talking about that kind of filling. I am talking about you now being full of Christ. You couldn’t have any more of Christ in you than you have right now.

**The Spirit of Christ Is Resident within You.
You Are Full. You Are Complete by Christ in You.**



**The Holy Spirit lives in your soul, in your
mind, to teach you Christ. He fills your
mind with the things of Christ.**

Some say, Why don't you tell people they need to pray, they need to seek God, they need to get down to business with God? Do you know why I don't say that? It is because if you start doing that, you will never stop. You will be tricked and trapped, and you will be doing that all the days of your life, and you will never know you are already full. What you do is take the precious promise which says, “Now you are full,” and you say, That is what

it says; that is what I am. I am full of Christ right now. I can't have any more of Christ in me than I have right now. You are not going to have it; it is not coming later. It doesn't come in bits, pieces, and parts. I have all of Christ in me right here and now. Now you are full; now you are completed. There is no other completion to take place in your life than there is in operation right now. In spirit, you are totally complete and full right now.

Notice the second now in this verse. "Now you are rich." I guess if I treated that word right, I would have to take a long time to go through it; so just in a capsule of truth, I want to bring to you what it means to be rich. Riches, real riches, are when a sinner — dirty, unclean, and hell-bound — senses he cannot save himself and cries out to God to save him. And as dirty and filthy as he is, God takes the sinner and places His own seed, Christ, in the sinner. Then and there he is saved; he is born again; he is regenerated the instant he believes. That is being rich.

What does it mean to be rich? It means that in time, you will realize the Spirit-taught knowledge — the revelation knowledge which comes from the Holy Spirit that lifts you out of the understanding of this third dimension of time, space, and matter which we now live in, and lifts us to a position where we know that Christ in us is already victorious. We don't fight the Devil at every turn, thinking he is in control. We fight him when we need to, and we lick him when we know he is there. But everything is not Satan; everything is not evil. Why? Because He who is in us is already victorious over Satan. I don't speak too often about the Devil doing this and the Devil doing that because he is not doing anything my Father doesn't allow him to do. He is only doing what God permits.

Third-Dimensional and Fourth-Dimensional Understanding

A lot of things will happen to us that we will think are surely of the Devil and couldn't be of God, that they are too mean, they are too bad; but when you come to this understanding that I lay before you, you will be lifted above that. There is a fourth-dimension knowledge above this third-dimension world. It is Paul saying, I have overcome the grave and death with Christ. It is Paul saying, Grave and death, you have no power and you have no victory, for I rule over you. That is another understanding which is not fixed on time, space, and matter and on this third dimension which we live in. That is a new and greater understanding which comes by our knowing who and what we are in Jesus Christ. That is being rich.

I'll tell you what it means to be rich. It is when you come to the understanding that the healer of all your diseases is within you, that it isn't by your self-effort that He heals, that it isn't by your faith that you live. You now live by His faith. You come to the understanding, Whatever happens to me, this is His body, it is His life lived through me. I rest in Him. Someone says, "Well, you just gave up." No, I just rested. Nobody who enters into God's rest gives up. They don't have to because when they enter into His rest it is His battle, it is His life, it is His body.

The glorious thing we will see in this teaching is that the only healer in the universe is resident in us, not out there somewhere. He is in us. The healer of all our diseases is right in us, and when He begins to flow out of us with His life, He carries the pollution, the filth, and the evil that is in our very body. It flows out like the flow of living water. Praise God! He decontaminates; He detoxifies. Jesus does that by His flow out of you when you know the healer is within you.

Maybe you have to go to the doctor, but you know the healer is within you, and the healer will only use the doctor if He so elects. When you know you must take some medicine, you will know the healer in you will cause the

medicine to heal because He is the only healer. There is no healer aside from Him. He is life; He is your life. When you know that, when you begin to live that, then truth flows, then are you rich.

There is another way of living which is not contingent on health, prosperity, and this third dimension. It is contingent on the finished work of Calvary where God gave to us everything He had, and we can live it if we dare to believe it.

The anointing of Christ is in you right now. It is a part of that flow; and if you yield to it, it will bring you the answer to all of your needs. What is the answer to all of your needs? There is just one answer to every one of your needs. God will answer all of your needs, all of your problems, and all of your questions in just one way; and that is by showing you more of His dear Son in you. Now how much clearer can I make it?! How much plainer could it be? Christ in you is your hope of glory; and as you see Him, you begin to enter into that flow; and you come to that knowing, to that rest. No condemnation, now are you full, and now are you rich. Second Corinthians 4:17–18 says:

(17) “For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory; (18) While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal.”

— **Points to Ponder:**

Now, reflect on what you just read. Journal and/or discuss your understanding of the differences between the third and fourth dimensions. Where do you focus your mind throughout your daily life? —

— **Look Closer:**

Look up the Scripture references below. Be sure to slowly read them and highlight all the key words and phrases that refer to the third and fourth dimensions. —

Scripture References

John 3:16

John 3:3

Romans 8:1

1 John 3:2

1 Corinthians 4:8

Romans 14:8

Acts 2:4

1 Corinthians 12

1 Corinthians 14

Acts 19

Colossians 2:9

Lesson 4

Our Foundation Is Jesus Christ

It is wonderful to explore the depths of God's love. That is really what our message is all about, the love of God. Somebody once said, "How can anybody love the principles and the truth of the Christ-life?" It is very simple. God loved us, and when you experience that love, it will take hold of you. In fact, the only way anybody can be a Christian is to begin to learn of love, experience love, experiment in love. In every situation, in every difficulty, you experiment in the love of God. That is what Jesus Christ is all about. John 3:16 says, "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son." Now that is radical love. It is not just love that gave a Son, but that God gave His Son in death. God literally killed Him in order to allow us to be able to experience love.

Learning Precept Upon Precept

I want to start off by dealing with the subject of precept upon precept.
Isaiah 28:9–10 says:

“Whom shall he teach knowledge? and whom shall he make to understand doctrine? them that are weaned from the milk, and drawn from the breasts. For precept must be upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little, and there a little.”

God’s purpose for human beings on this earth is to learn and grow by precept upon precept, line upon line, from His Word and from the teaching of the Holy Spirit. God brings people to know who He is, what He is doing, and what is involved in His grand and glorious plan by precept upon precept, line upon line.

— Look Closer:

Christ said in John 17:3, “And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.”

So how do we come to know God? Christ said many times that we know God the Father through the Son. Read the verses below and mark those phrases.

“Then said they unto him, Where is thy Father? Jesus answered, Ye neither know me, nor my Father: if ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also.” (John 8:19)

“But if I do, though ye believe not me, believe the works: that ye may know, and believe, that the Father is in me, and I in him.” (John 10:38)

“If ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also: and from henceforth ye know him, and have seen him.” (John 14:7)

“Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? he that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Shew us the Father? Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? the words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself: but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works. Believe me that I am in the Father, and the Father in me: or else believe me for the very works’ sake.” (John 14:9–11) —

— Points to Ponder:

Now, reflect on what you just read. Journal and/or discuss your understanding of how we can know God. —

You see, knowing God, learning Christ, as Paul would put it, is imperative to our everyday life. Our earthly life is intricately involved in knowing God's purpose for us in this world; everything else falls on this tremendous idea that God wants us to know Him by His Son. That is the purpose of human beings on this earth. I believe the only reason this world was made was so God would have a place to train us as sons. We are God's sons by the one Son He gave in death so that He would be able to bring many sons into His household. That is the purpose of the world. If we miss that understanding, if in our walk in earthly life we don't have that understanding and knowledge, we have missed God's purpose. It doesn't matter how much money we make. It doesn't matter what kind of life we live. It doesn't matter how we live or when we die. What really matters is whether or not we come to know God in His purpose for the creation of the world and us being born into this world.

Coming to know God is not a simple thing. In fact, it is a most awesome responsibility. Men all over the earth are bent on trying to know God. Islamic people, Buddhists, all sorts of cults and religions are all involved in trying to know something about their god. We are a little bit different from any other religion or people on earth because we, as Christians, have been birthed by our God. To my knowledge, no other religion ever said anything like that. Buddha never birthed his people. Mohammed never birthed his people; no cult ever birthed its own people. They all carry out the ideas of their progenitor. Someone got an idea and said, This is the true religion. Christianity is the only people on the face of the earth who have been birthed by Almighty God.

It is a marvelous plan God has, so marvelous a plan that He was able to create the whole world, the universe we live in, to be compatible with the idea of the making of sons and of bringing us to the knowledge and understanding of who and what we are by the birthing. Our re-birthing is a part of God's plan for humans as much as the creation of the world is an intricate part of His plan.

If you take the universe with all of its startling information that we have learned already — how many planets there are, how many stars there are, all of God's creation — it does not compare to the most startling information we ought to know: why God put us in this world, living in this universe, and the fact that God made us compatible to Christ. Colossians 1:16 says all things were created by Him and for Him; and John 1:3 says there is nothing in existence aside from Christ. Everything in this universe is to push us to the knowledge of who we are in Jesus Christ. We have been birthed by a heavenly Father whose purpose is for us to come to know Him, to know His ways, and to do His will.

Obviously, that information is so great and so powerful that no human being could ever come to know the whole of it. So at least 700 years before Christ was born in Bethlehem, God by His grace began to expound upon the purpose of His ultimate intention for human beings. What He said way back then is in Isaiah 28:9–10, If they want to know knowledge, if they want to know true doctrine, they will come to it line upon line and precept upon precept.

That is my introduction to the awesome subject I am going to deal with in this lesson. God's whole purpose is that we, by living in this world, will come to know Him in a way that will constitute true doctrine and real knowledge.

Everybody would like to have knowledge on some subject, on some thing, in some area; but I am here to tell you that all knowledge and all understanding is lived through the person of Jesus Christ. And God's purpose for human beings is that they, little by little, come to that knowledge. Certainly, we couldn't grasp it all at one time. This is the sad thing about modern religion because it teaches that we can make our set of doctrines, we can put up all of our Scriptures we know and understand, and we can say, This is our doctrine. This is the end of it, and if you come to see this and you believe this, you will be all right. But the real facts are all truth is taught line upon line and precept upon precept, here a little and there a little, until we come to full understanding.

In your life, everything that happens to you is going to fit into the idea that it is line upon line and precept upon precept, that God is going to give a little here and a little there. It is for this reason we will take line upon line and precept upon precept and deal with it. It is my prayer that I will stimulate you by bringing you the bits, pieces, and parts which are given to us on this awesome subject of knowing God, and that you, in taking this subject, will become so hungry for God that the Holy Spirit will need nothing else but your ear and your heart to be able to tell you about the things God wants you to know. It is important you see that it comes little by little, here a little and there a little, so there is not anything that happens to you in your life that doesn't have to do with godly precepts.

— Points to Ponder:

Now, reflect on what you just read. Journal and/or discuss your understanding of the purpose of the believer's life on earth. —

Learning through the Good and the Bad

I know this is kind of outlandish for some people and a lot would rather hear a gospel that says, It is only the good things that are teaching me; only the blessings are helping me. But that isn't so. Anybody who has lived very long in this world has already come to understand that it is the troubles and trials, as well as the blessings, which bring us to knowledge and understanding. It is really your circumstances and situations in life — which appear at first to be negative — that are really bringing you to the knowledge and understanding of what God is doing.

You see, there is a negative side to God. John 3:16 speaks of it. I know there are some people who don't like to hear this at all, but it is a fact. God so loved sinners — hell-bound sinners, bound by Satan, who literally have Satan's life and nature in them. He so loved them that He took His only Son and killed Him so that He might have a right to redeem and save those hell-bound sinners. That is a negative side of God. That isn't the beauty and the glory we like to think about God. We like to dress it all up and put away the awesome facts that God literally took His Son in death, in exchange for those sinners who were hell-bound, but that is what God did. He took His Son to death; and by that, you and I were saved.

So there is a negative side to God. We call it the dark side of God, and later on in our study we will deal with this darker side of God. But the simple fact is it is by the troubles and the trials we have in life that we come to understanding. So, everything that happens to you, everything that is taking place in your life, teaches you line upon line, precept upon precept; for that is the way our life is lived. We wake one morning, and we have a certain set of circumstances. The next day the circumstances change. We then forget those circumstances, and have a whole new set of circumstances. It is line upon line, precept upon precept, here a little and there a little that we are coming to knowledge and the true doctrine. All the other things which lead up to the knowing of Christ as our Savior are merely by-products of the one, great doctrine. We will join with John and declare to all, Our doctrine is simply Christ (2 John 1:9).

Growing into Christ

I think a lot of people get the idea that the Lord is growing in them, but He isn't. He has been birthed in you. Christ is birthed in you, and so there is no growth there. We come into His full stature; we come to His understanding; we come to His image.

— **Look Closer:**

Read the following verses and underline the key terms that refer to believers' spiritual growth in Christ.

(11) “And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; (12) For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: (13) Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ: (14) That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; (15) But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ: (16) From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love.” (Eph. 4:11–16)

“For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren.” (Rom. 8:29)

“But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.” (2 Cor. 3:18) —

Christ is full and complete in every one of us; and so as we grow up in Christ, we are becoming faith stones in the foundation of what He is doing. In fact, that is what we really are. We are foundation stones. In this universe, God is building something. What is He building? He is constructing Him a Body likened unto His only begotten Son, the Body of

Christ. He is making that body. We call it the Church, the Body of Christ, and the Bride of Christ. We have a number of names for this select group of people who have been birthed by a heavenly Father. But God, by His grace, is fitting these people together into a body; and so we are foundation stones.

In order to be a foundation stone, which is to carry the superstructure of all that is to be built and all that is to be added on, the stones must properly fit together (Eph. 2:20–22). That is what God is doing through the Christ-life and other ministries. We are certainly not a select group of people at all. We are just blood-washed, led by His Spirit, and used for His glory. We are nothing special aside from Him; and don't think by anything I say that we are. We believe we are no different from any other blood-washed, Spirit-filled, born-again, child of God. All of His children are the same. The difference between any of His children is knowledge and understanding. Love is what enhances the knowledge and understanding.

If there are going to be foundation stones properly fit together, we have to be interested in what the Father is doing. What is God really doing? What is God's interest in your life? Do you ever stop to think about it? A lot of us have a very egotistical idea about ourselves. We think we were hell-bound and God loved us so much and we were so special that He saved us. Well, that is true; but we ought not to have ego about that because whosoever believes on the name of the Lord and cries out His name shall be saved. So there is nothing really special about it. We are not special people other than we are God's redeemed children; and among God's redeemed, there are no special children. We are all His by the blood. The only thing that separates and even divides the birthed children of God is their understanding. If we were to really become what is God intends, really be what He wants us to be, it would be necessary that we start right in our walk with Him.

I want to tell you why so many believers have such difficulty in understanding God in their circumstances and situations. To me it is very

simple. They didn't start out right. If you don't start out right, you can't end up right. That is one of the most important truths we will teach in the Christ-life. It is true with science; it is true in any truth you explore. It is absolutely necessary if you are going to be a Christ-person, a Christian, that you start right. How do you start right in knowing God? How do you start right in being what God intended for you to be?

The first thing I want to tell you is no group, no denomination, no service, no progenitor of religion has ever come up with the fullness of everything God was saying and doing. I don't mean to hurt anybody by that, but it has got to be stated. That is why we bring these Fundamentals precept upon precept, line by line, because God is ever unfolding, ever revealing His divine truth to human beings. You see, it is very important we understand this. You must start with the understanding that, There is so much for me to know and to understand about God that I can't fit it into my little brain. I can't fit it into my capsule of doctrine, my religion, or my denominationalism. If you don't have the idea that it is precept upon precept and line upon line, you may never come to know God in His fullness.

That is the first important place to start. You start with this simple understanding: I don't know God, but I am going to learn. You think, I am going to learn Him by everything that happens to me, line upon line, and precept upon precept. Now, if you have that understanding, you are at the right starting place.

— **Points to Ponder:**

Now, reflect on what you just read. Journal and/or discuss your understanding of how a believer grows in Christ. —

Bringing the Church Back to the Christ-life

It is so important we have the Christ-life understanding because this has been woefully lacking in Christians. Within 100 years after the death of Jesus of Nazareth, church history records that there were not, within the Christian churches, any of the doctrines and truths to the extent that they are given to us in the Bible. Now, do you know what that means? It means that Paul's great revelation of the Christ-life had been lost just 100 years after the death of Jesus Christ. That means the early church, which had this grand and glorious truth that exploded in the world, was over; and religion had taken over with manmade ideas which did not start with the fact that we must learn God and know God. We don't know Him by the miracles we see or by experiencing early New Testament-church blessings. We only know God daily by learning the Christ who is in us. This idea was lost after Paul because the early church didn't start in the right place.

Within the third century after Christ was born, Romanism had taken over, and there was none of the vibrant teaching that justified believers shall be saved by simply believing on the Lord Jesus Christ. It was lost. It was lost for the next 1,500 years through what we call the Dark Ages in Christian history. Until Martin Luther came along, there was no pretense that anything taught in the early New Testament church was vibrantly alive by the teaching of the Holy Spirit.

Now they had bits, pieces, and parts of everything the Bible has taught because they still used the Bible, but they didn't have that vibrancy of New Testament living. Martin Luther restored it when he said the just shall live by faith, that believers are born again, that the church doesn't save, that men are saved by Christ, and only by and through Christ can they have life. It was 500 years ago that Martin Luther made his great declaration and wrote his 95 Theses which he put on the church doors.

Since that time, God has remarkably and marvelously moved His body of believers, His hungry hearts, back to Paul's great truth, that it is Christ in us who is our hope of glory (Col. 1:27). Our hope of glory is not in a church. Our hope of glory is not in the next miracle, a healthy body, or a prosperous life. Our hope of glory is Christ in us.

Now God, by His grace, is training a group of people over the face of this earth. Praise God, He has found them, and we are just one little voice crying out, as it was in the wilderness, that it is by precept upon precept that God is restoring what has been lost since the days of the apostle Paul: Christ in us, our hope of glory (Col. 1:27). That swamps and overwhelms everything else we have been a part of because the whole of God's purpose is that we express and manifest His Son and have perfect oneness with Him.

Well, you see, if we are going to come to know what God is doing, we have to start out right. What is the first important thing about foundation stones? They are hewed; they are cut; they are fit together. What God is doing in His church today is laying a sure foundation for His ultimate intention that Christ shall be Lord of every life and shall be the life of every born-again believer (Rom. 5:10). A sure foundation. Have you ever wondered, Do I have a sure foundation? Do I have anything the Holy Spirit can use? Is there anything in my life the Holy Spirit can build upon to bring me to the fullness of Christ? Because you see, I bring things which are unconventional to some people, things they have never heard before, which are not in religion or in churches. They are truths which come directly from the Bible, and that sort of upsets and frustrates some people. Don't feel bad if you get a little upset and frustrated, especially over me, because it comes right out of the blessed Bible and is way out and beyond anything we have ever dreamt before because God has that great explosive power to bring forth a foundation for our Church today that has been rooted and grounded in the person of Jesus Christ as the believer's very life — not the works of churches, but rooted and grounded in the person of Christ.

Christ, the Foundation

We are not dealing with what God can do; God can do abundantly above all we ask or think. We have, in the years past, seen God do the miraculous, but that is not what the message is today. The message is not what He can do. The message is who He is. It is not what He did to you that makes you a Christian. Now you see, that is where we have gone into error. We think Calvary did something to us, that God did something to us, that Christ did something to us. No. We were re-birthing. It isn't about us. It is who Christ is in us, and we are growing up into Him. That is different you see. Calvary is not something God did that saved us. Calvary is the ways and means by which God had a right to birth in us His Son to be our very life — Christ in us, our hope of glory (Col. 1:27). That is where you start, where you lay a sure foundation. All the way through the Scriptures, we are admonished to lay a sure foundation.

I want you to go with me into some verses of Scripture because I believe they will help establish this fact in a perfect way. First, in Isaiah 28:16, "Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD, Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner stone, a sure foundation: he that believeth shall not make haste." Obviously, Isaiah is speaking prophetically of the person of Christ. The Lord God said, I am going to lay a foundation. But notice the three things He said about this foundation. He said the foundation would be a stone able to be built upon. It would be a tried stone, which knows and can overcome. It would be a corner stone and a precious stone. I know of no word more explanatory to the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ than precious because the Father needed a Lamb and the Son said, I will be your Lamb, Father, and die so that they might be saved. A precious corner stone. Remember, the corner stone is that which holds up the super-structure outwardly. Then it is a sure foundation. That is what we are by Christ; that is what God is doing by Christ in us. You see, that is why I say it isn't what Jesus does for us; it is because of what He is in us.

Do you know what kind of Church the Father is building? It is the Church which has in its foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner stone, and a sure foundation. That is His Church. You may not get that picture looking around where you are. Sometimes I am exasperated looking at what the local Body, the local churches, are doing as far as the Word of God is concerned. Well, I have this assurance that what God is doing in building His true Church, which we can't see with our eyes, is made up of all of these character traits of Christ — a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner stone, and a sure foundation. We have them through Jesus Christ, and that is what you are building on in your life. You are not building on your good works; you are building on Christ.

Somebody came to me and said, “Well, I am trying to be a good Christian. I am doing a lot of fasting and praying.” I said, “You would do better to build on Christ.” It doesn't mean Christ wouldn't fast and pray, but you do nothing aside from Him. You have no life aside from Him. The life you now live is Christ. You get that fixed in your mind, and that is your sure foundation.

— **Points to Ponder:**

Now, reflect on what you just read. Journal and/or discuss your understanding of a believer's "sure foundation." —

Wisdom of Christ

Go with me to Matthew 7:24, “Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock.” Jesus is outspoken here. He is basically talking to Israel here, and He is attempting to restore the kingdom to Israel. In the end, they are going to reject what He is saying, but He is giving some very good truths here. And while it is not primarily to you and me, it prophetically does affect us because He is saying to you and me, If I am your foundation, if you are building on me, if you know I am your only life and you build on that, you are not only going to have a sure foundation, but you are going to be like a wise man who built his house on a rock.

If you were to ever ask me what is one of the greatest Christian virtues a believer could have, I would tell you it is wisdom. A believer can exercise the wisdom of the Christ who is in him, and that wisdom literally flows up and out of him. That is the greatest virtue I think a believer can have. We have access to that. First Corinthians 1:30 says Christ has been made unto us wisdom. That literally means the Christ in you now — your foundation upon which you are building — is your wisdom. He has been made unto you wisdom; and that wisdom can flow like a river with living water, a river would flow out of you as if it were a fountain bubbling up within you and coming out. That living water would come forth with wisdom. You have the very wisdom of the Lord in operation.

What is wisdom? Wisdom is knowing what to do. Before we finish these lessons, you will come to know what to do. Wisdom will begin to flow. That is why Jesus said, Whosoever builds his house upon a rock I will liken him unto a wise man. Whoever builds on this rock, Jesus Christ, is likened unto a wise man. The wisdom of the Lord will begin to flow out of you. I want to show you how, in time, your thoughts, desires, and inclinations can be by the wisdom of the Lord. When that time comes, God can trust you to do what you want to do, because you will want God’s will. God can trust the desires of your heart and give you the desires of your heart when you operate by His Spirit and His nature. You will have His wisdom. You are

like the wise man who built his house upon this sure foundation; you have His wisdom flowing forth. The time will come when God will allow you to do whatever you want to do because you are His child. He knows, by the teaching and the training of the Holy Spirit, that you would have come to a place where He could trust you to do whatever you want to do. That is the blessing of the Lord. It comes to the believer who grows up in Christ.

But let's move on to another verse of Scripture. First Corinthians 3:11 says, "For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ." No other foundation can any man lay other than the one which is already laid. There is no more powerful verse of Scripture that states any more plainly in the English language why we are so dogmatic of the Christ-life message. There is no other foundation other than Jesus Christ.

— Points to Ponder:

Now, reflect on what you just read. Journal and/or discuss your understanding of the wisdom of Christ and how a believer walks in His wisdom. —

What Christ Does vs. Who Christ Is

Very often people write to me and say, “You are not balanced. You are always just talking about Jesus Christ. If you talk about something other than Jesus Christ and kind of work that in, we would know you are balanced.” I often write back to these people and say, “Well, I would appreciate you telling me what balance is.” One person wrote back and said, “Real Christian balance is you preaching the four-square gospel: Jesus saves, Jesus heals, Jesus filled with the Spirit, and Jesus is coming back again.” I then have an insight into what they think balance is. You see, that is what Jesus does and there is no life in what He does. I know that falls hard on some ears when I say there is no life in what Jesus does, but whatever He does is temporary; it is not life; it is not eternal. Everything He does is temporary; it is who He is that is life.

Fourteen times John, in his gospel, straightens us out on this subject. Fourteen times he has Jesus saying, “I am.” “I am the bread” (John 6:35, 48, and 51); “I am the life” (11:25; 14:6); “I am the door” (10:7, 9); “I am the shepherd” (10:11); “I am the resurrection and the life” (11:25); and so forth. He is everything we need to have life. That sounds radical, but if that is not the Bible, if that is not what the Holy Spirit is saying in the Bible, then we are of all men most miserable. Certainly, the 14 times John tells us Jesus says, “I am” something, he is trying to get the message across that Jesus is not just taking care of sheep as an ordinary shepherd. He says, I am the good shepherd who cares for the sheep, gives His life for them. I am the door into which men must walk to enter into the things of God. “I am.” He doesn’t give; He is.

Why would Jesus say it like that? He says it like that because God birthed Him in us; we are born again. God put His seed in us, and that seed is Christ. That is the “I am.” Christ in us, our hope of glory (Col. 1:27). So he doesn’t give us anything; He is our all. We are not just receivers; we are bearers. We are expressers of Christ. That is why they were first called Christians, Christ-persons, because Christ was in them, a gift of God in the

birthing. So you see, there is no foundation other than Jesus Christ. He is not giving us special blessings; He is that blessing.

In our walk with God, we will go through a period where we will want to get everything Jesus has. I used to have a lot of sermons on getting what God wants you to have. I'd say, Get your blessing, get your double portion. That was my understanding. My level of understanding at that time was that you need to get everything you can from God; get your prosperity, get your miracles, get your faith, get your blessing, get your healing. I didn't know that Jesus is in us. But all the time I was preaching and ministering that, I faced a bewildering problem. It was a frustrating problem because everybody I saw who got something from God — and multitudes did get things from God, they were truly blessed by God — came back again and again and again. People could be healed of one thing one night in the meeting and come back the next night for another thing or come back for the same blessing again; they had lost their healing, or it had left them.

So the bewildering question came to me, If this is something God did — He really did it; He healed the sick; devils were cast out; miracles were performed, but here the people were back again — how do they ever come to a love affair with Him not based on what they can get? That was my frustrating question. That was one of the things that caused me to want to know God, to really want to know God, not just get my blessing, even though I was going to heaven, would sweep through the pearly gates, and have a mansion up there. It was more than that. I wanted to know God. I had an insatiable desire within me to know God, and the one thing that drove me to that desire was the fact that people were getting temporary blessings. They were seeking and living for their next temporary blessing; that's the only way they understood God. I could have a financial miracle; and in a few days, there would be a greater need than I'd had before. Some needs were met, but some were never met; people were healed, but never fully healed; people were blessed, but never continuously blessed.

Then I would read in the Scriptures that they that know the Lord have their answers. They that wait upon the Lord receive strength and are able to live. I saw in the Scriptures another side to the thought that God can give and we can have lasting blessings, lasting prosperity, and lasting health. That is when the Spirit began to show me that there is no other foundation but Jesus Christ. That is what God builds on, not what He does. I was preaching what He could do — and we must thank God for what Christ does; thank God for answered prayer, that He does give us miracles. We need them; we could not operate this ministry without them. But that is not where life is. There is no life in it. Blessings? Sure! But there is no life in it. You have got to have another blessing, and another and another.

The sure foundation is Jesus, Himself; and when you build on that, you will enter into life, eternal life, because you begin to see it is not what He does but who He is that gives you life. The life is in the Son. John said, “God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life” (1 John 5:11–12). Life is in Christ. He does not give life; He is life. The “I am” says, “I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live” (John 11:25). He didn’t give them life; He is life. Believing in Him as your life is eternal life.

We must start right. We must start right with Christ, not just in the center, but He is the all. I used to preach a Christ-centered gospel. In fact, I called a lot of the ministries I was in Christ-centered ministries, and I would boast that I was a Christ-centered preacher. But do you know what? That isn’t my theme anymore. He is not the center; He is the all. He is the circumference and the center. He is the total because Paul said, “Christ is all, and in all” (Col. 3:11). That is the foundation.

Turn to 1 Timothy 6:19. Paul says to Timothy, “Laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay

hold on eternal life.” Now, it appears they may be working for their salvation here and, of course, that isn’t so. What the Scripture is saying is that these people, by their understanding, are coming to the good foundation of Christ as their only life; and by this they are beginning to manifest or express eternal life. That is what we call oneness. We will be talking a lot about oneness as we progress along in these lessons because oneness life is really what God intends, that every human being on this earth be one with Christ.

You see, every human being on this earth was made to possess God’s nature. Adam, our forefather, made the decision for Satan to be the nature by trusting him; but at Calvary, God, by killing His Lamb, was able to put Satan’s nature out of the human being. As many as believe on the Lord Jesus Christ have in them God’s nature — the Spirit of Christ, God’s Son, God’s Seed. Now, that doesn’t make us gods or Jesus Christ; but it means we are vessels (2 Cor. 4:7), which are made to hold a nature. We once had Satan’s sin-nature; now we have Christ, God’s nature. By God’s grace, we have now laid hold of His life, eternal life. Paul said it in vivid terms. He said, The life I now live is Christ (Gal. 2:20). Now that is dynamic. It means the life the believer lives is not like Christ, not hoping to be like Christ, but is Christ. Why? That is the life, the only life, the believer has.

That is why we are talking about a foundation because that is what happened to you when you were saved. God laid in you a foundation. Now, it is up to you if you want to build on that. Once you begin to see Christ as your life and the only foundation in you — not Baptist doctrine, not Methodist doctrine, not charismatic truth — but when you begin to see Christ as your only life, then you can begin to build on that; and you can begin to daily live the glorious principles laid down again and again by the Apostle Paul in the New Testament. That is inaccessible to hungry believers until they begin to see that Christ is the only foundation you can take hold of for eternal life. That means you begin to live this principle; you begin to live this Christ who is in you. That is the glorious provision God has made for those of us who hunger and thirst after Christ’s righteousness.

— **Points to Ponder:**

Now, reflect on what you just read. Journal and/or discuss your understanding of the contrast between what Christ does and who Christ is. —

A Sure Foundation

Let's go to 2 Timothy 2:19:

“Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his. And, Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity.”

Nevertheless, the foundation of God stands assured. I like that verse because it means when you were born again, Christ is the perfect foundation in us. It has never changed; it has always been there, and it is possible for you to build on.

I have had the glorious experience of telling many mothers whose children went astray that they laid the foundation by teaching them Christ and that foundation was still there; and in time to come, the Holy Spirit can build on that foundation. Through the years, I have seen that happen again and again. I have seen many sons and daughters come back to God because there is a foundation there. That is what this verse is speaking about. Nevertheless the foundation of God stands assured. It is like the Scripture says in Proverbs 22:6, “Train up a child in the way he should go; and when he is old, he will not depart from it.” That is the power we have through the Scriptures. It is the power we have through understanding what God is doing by the Holy Spirit's teaching. So Paul says, Nevertheless the foundation of God stands assure, having this seal.

Of all the ways I think of the word seal, I think of the Holy Spirit. The blessed Holy Spirit is the one who does the sealing. He takes what we know, and He causes us to understand it and to want to live it. He is our teacher. The work of the Holy Spirit is to seal this thing which God has done. You have been sealed by the Holy Spirit to this foundation of Christ, this life of Christ who is within you. If you have been born again, Christ is

in you. You say, Well, I don't live like that. The foundation is still sure. You say, I don't practice the things of Christ. The foundation is still sure because God did His work properly. He did everything that was necessary to secure you spiritually, whether you know or not. The Holy Spirit has sealed you spiritually and will work in your soul to teach you Christ.

Paul would say to Timothy, "The Lord knoweth them that are His" (2 Tim. 2:19). Aren't you glad for that? You may ask, Does the Lord really know me? If you have been born again, sure He knows His offspring! We are God's direct and distinct offspring. Sure, He knows us. He knows who and what we are; and He says when you come to the knowledge of who and what you are in Christ, you will depart from iniquity. Do you know what will stop Christians from willfully sinning? When they know Christ is their only life. As long as they think they are trying to be religious, trying to do good, trying to obey the doctrines of their church and preachers and teachers, that is when they will fail. They will depart from iniquity, cease from sin, when they know that the Christ in them is their eternal life. Right now! Not going to be, can be, or hope to be, but right now they have eternal life dwelling in them.

A Good Foundation: Knowing Christ

1. When you have this foundation of knowing Christ in you as your only life, eternal life right now, every situation in your life becomes a God-situation. This is one of the most important points we will bring in the Christ-life. Every situation in your life is a God-situation. Now, if you listen to the Devil, that is because you don't know who you are. If you turn toward wicked people, you just don't know who you are. Every situation in your life is a God-situation to bring you to understand who you really are. You say, But I have had some awful things happen to me; the old Devil did this, the old Devil did that. It is a God-situation. I am not saying the Devil wasn't involved, but God uses it for good. He can redeem the bad stuff and make it serve His purpose. If you have been born again, you are God's offspring. Your life is chartered, mapped, guided, and directed by a heavenly Father whose one purpose is that we come to the fullness of Christ, line upon line, precept upon precept. That is God's whole intention for your life.

Maybe you have a business problem or a sickness. Maybe you're dealing with death or some awful problem today. Every one of them is a God-situation. Once you face that situation as a Christ-person, face it by seeing what and who you are in Christ, you will rule over it. Oh, that doesn't mean it is going to pass away, but you will have the strength and the power to go through it. You must remember that Jesus of Nazareth on this earth, who was God in human flesh at that time, had plenty of situations. Sometimes He performed miracles; sometimes He didn't. Sometimes He made a way; other times he bore the brunt of it. But every time, He was victorious. In death, in punishment, and in derogation, He was victorious. When He was made sin, He was victorious. When He was thrust dead into a tomb, He was victorious. It was a God-situation, and so it is in your life. The Christ in you has been through every awful trouble and trial a human being could experience; and yet, He is victorious.

2. A good foundation in you breeds hunger. When you start seeing Christ in you, you will hunger to know more. I think the biggest disappointment I

have in the modern church is that people are no longer hungry for God. They want to do something; they don't really want to know God. It is in knowing God that you have a sure foundation by which you move and live and have your being. Many just don't want to know God; they want Him to do something. But by Him doing, you don't get to know Him. When you begin to see that the only life you have is Christ, it brings a hunger in you. A real hunger begins to develop; and that hunger will be to know God, to know your Father who birthed you because His nature is in you. The Father who has birthed you has put His nature in you; and you will have the desire to know him, not just to know the Bible. I think a lot of people are tricked there. Maybe religion tricks them. It isn't to know the Bible; it is to know God. It isn't to know doctrine or ecclesiastical truths; it is to know God. There are a lot of preachers who know theology, but they don't know God. We know a lot of church men who know doctrine who don't know God. We have a lot of people who know all the promises in the Bible. They can pray the prayer of faith, but they don't pray to know God.

Knowing God is what hunger is all about. He is bringing you to oneness with His dear Son in your soul-mind, and that dear Son still cries out to know Him. Let's never forget Paul, the man who preached Christ greater than any man in the Scripture, said in Philippians 3:10, "That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death." When you have a sure foundation, you will have the desire to know God; and you are not going to know God by what He does. You can come to know God as a Savior by what He does, but you can't know God as Father by what He does. You can only learn that by experience, by the teaching of the Holy Spirit, by seeing this foundation of Christ in you brought about and growing until all you see and know is Christ.

3. When you recognize that your foundation is Christ and Christ is your only life, then you will begin to understand the plan of God. One reason people have great difficulty with the Scriptures and the reason there are so many different kinds of Baptists and other denominations is because they

have never seen the plan of God. The reason there are so many cults is because they have never seen the plan of God. When you begin to see Christ as your only life, Christ in you as your hope of glory, when that really takes hold and you have a revelation of Christ, that will bring God's plan into focus. Have you ever asked, Why am I here? Who am I? What was I made for? What am I doing in this world? What is God's plan and purpose? What is it really all about?

The true foundation, Christ in you, will teach you God's purpose and plan. You will know that all things will work together for good for those who love the Lord and are called according to His purpose (Rom. 8:28). In our lives, everything that has happened to us has purpose, divine purpose, holy purpose; it is a God-situation.

It is my prayer for you, whatever situation you are in, that you will be able to rise above the fear and the hopelessness of the situation and declare it a God-situation because, you see, God works through the adversity as well as through the blessing. God's ways are past finding out, so you don't really want to try to pin it down and say, I don't see God in this; somebody show me where God is in this. His ways are past finding out. Don't try to pin Him down. Declare it to be a God-situation. Look up to your Father and say, Father, this is your situation because I am your offspring; and I cannot handle the world by myself. When you declare it a God-situation and recognize you rely on Christ in you, I promise you this miracle: the Holy Spirit will then begin to reveal the Christ who is in you; and when He begins to reveal Christ, you begin to see, I can do all things; I am more than a conquer; I am a victor. Christ is my liberty, my life. You will begin to exercise that and when you do, victory will come. It may not be the kind of victory you wanted, but you will be victorious because you will begin to see Jesus as your all in all.

That is why I like to tell you that whatever your need is, whatever your burden is, whatever you don't think you can handle yourself, it is not about getting an answer to the problem; your need is to see more of Jesus, more of the Christ who is in you. Begin to build on that. You have been born again. You are saved, filled with His spirit; you come behind in no spiritual gifts. Yet you may be weighed down with problems. Build on what God has become to you. He is life in you. It is "Christ in you, the hope of glory" (Col. 1:27).

Scripture References

John 3:16

Isaiah 28:9–10

Colossians 1:16

Isaiah 28:16

Matthew 7:24

1 Corinthians 1:30

1 John 5:12

John 11:25

1 Corinthians 3:11

1 Timothy 6:19

Galatians 2:20

2 Timothy 2:19

Proverbs 22:6

Philippians 3:10

Romans 8:28

Lesson 5

Chosen in Christ

If I were to offer you a simple definition of the Christ-life, I would say it would be from these words of Paul where he says, “The life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God” (Gal. 2:20). With that idea, we are able to get a little bit of understanding and knowledge of what the Christ-life is. The Christ-life is Christ alive in the believer, but not just alive in the believer. The only life the believer has is Christ. That is different. My life is Christ. Christ is in me by the gift of God; and, if you have been born again, He is in you by the gift of God. It is more than something God gave you; it is something God is in you. He literally loved you in the greatest act of love and birthed in you His dear Son.

We are not trying to live like Jesus; the life we live is Christ. Neither are we seeing Jesus outside of us; we are seeing Him in us. This is what the New Testament teaches and with boldness. God has given us the liberty, in this marvelous move of the Spirit, to teach, to preach, and to advocate these glorious truths that the life we now live is Christ. I have no other life.

I want you to see right now that the only life you have is Christ. You don't have another life. You say, There is me; there is the Devil; there is the flesh; and there is Christ. No! The only life you have is Christ. Now, there is a Devil, and there is a you. But when you were re-birthed, you were given a whole different life so that you have no life of your own. That is Galatians 2:20: I no longer live. That means I have no life; there is no life for me. This is a New Testament idea; it isn't my idea. For many years, I preached

my ideas that there was a me and there is Christ and somehow there is more me than there is Christ, as if I had a life of my own. I have a mind of my own that I can let flesh control and violate who I am, but there is no me with a life. What was me, before I met Christ, was crucified. That is Paul saying, I am crucified, cancelled out; the me no longer exists as a me. Then who are you, Paul? I am a Christ-person. The only life I now have is Christ. That is what the Christ-life is all about.

All of us who have ever had a taste of heavenly things and a taste of the world to come have known that there is far more than we now understand. There are multitudes of people in religion locked into a third dimension, who have at times, by the Holy Spirit, sensed that there was more of God than we now have, that there is greater truth than we now advocate, that there is something about God, something about the Holy Spirit, something about the Bible, that we have never come to know and understand. Well, there is. There is another dimension of living right here in this third dimension of time, space, and matter. There is a whole other life we can now live. It is as Paul declares, The life I now live is Christ. That is what the Christ-life is.

I have long, as a teacher of God's truth, admonished students to never get an idea and fit it to the Scriptures because you can fit anything to the Scriptures. There is not an idea on the face of the earth that you can't find a Scripture for. But what I am telling you is that everything I say to you is the Word of God. It doesn't just fit the Word. You don't just shove it in and say, I have Scripture for this. It is bigger than that. What I am talking about is what the Word of God produces. The Word is a person, Christ, the same Christ who is in you. The words we bring to you are inseparable components. You can't separate the two. They are one and the same.

If you get hold of some things which are new and seem a little strange, hold on. Don't turn them aside just because you don't understand it, because

some big preacher didn't preach on it, because some church didn't advocate it, because you didn't read about it, or because it is somebody's doctrine. God is doing a new thing today. There is a move of the Spirit going on over the face of the earth which beats anything we have ever seen or known before. The chronology of what God is doing is fitting this right now.

The twentieth century witnessed several great moves of the Holy Spirit worldwide, emphasizing the need for the Holy Spirit's work. All of that was necessary to bring us to where we are right now, because you can't come to know what God is doing right now without the help of the Holy Spirit. He is the key. Church can't give it to you. Doctrines won't give it to you. You can read the Bible until your eyeballs fall out, and you won't find it. It takes the Holy Spirit. He breaths upon the Word, and He brings it alive in the person of Jesus Christ.

So if you get hold of something new or strange, just put it on a shelf until the Holy Spirit fits it in because this is a new and glorious move of God. We are excited here in the Christ-life Fellowship because God is moving, by His Spirit, all over the face of the earth. We get letters from people in England, Africa, the South Sea Islands, Australia, China, Germany, and Holland who are coming to this marvelous understanding. All over the earth, it is a move of God. People say, Why did we not know this before? Because revelation knowledge is a God-thing. The Christian Church has been blinded by manmade religion and programs and has taught a different gospel.

"I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel: Which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ. But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed." (Gal. 1:6-8)

This move of God is something I have just got to tell you about. God is doing a new and a greater thing, as He said two or three times in Isaiah's prophecy. We are coming to this marvelous understanding of what God is doing in bringing life in the believer through His Son. So if you don't understand some part of it, if you can't grasp it, don't be upset; don't worry. It is God's move; it is God's plan. I am just a confirmer and a believer of what God is saying and doing.

What is God saying and doing? God is revealing His Son in believers (Gal. 1:15–16). That is what made Paul say, "I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified" (1 Cor. 2:2). It was what made Paul say, "But we preach Christ" (1 Cor. 1:23). We don't preach doctrine or theology. We don't preach stories. We preach Christ. That is where the food is; that is where the life is; and that is what will bring us, in these closing days of time, to the most priceless, the most glorious benefits and attributes of God available to human beings. What are these attributes? Rest and peace. "For he that is entered into his rest, he also hath ceased from his own works, as God did from his" (Heb. 4:10). That is what God is bringing His family to right now, a rest and peace we have never seen or known before.

I believe God has a plan, an eternal plan from before Creation that runs the universe. I believe that is what brings the sun up every morning. It is not some scientific discovery of man's which makes the sun come up and rotate around the universe and work with the moon, the tides, and the temperature, and so forth. I believe what brings the sun up every morning is an eternal plan of God in operation. Can you get your mind centered to that? What brings out the leaves on the trees? What brings air into your lungs that keeps you alive? It is the eternal plan of God in operation. There is, essentially, a plan of God which runs and operates this universe. God has a plan, and He is working that plan right now.

We are going to look into the first verse of Scripture that alludes to this great plan of God, this marvelous thing God is doing.

— Points to Ponder:

Now, reflect on what you just read. Journal and/or discuss your understanding of the Christ-life. —

Ephesians 1:4

Ephesians 1:4 is a key verse which begins to unlock for us what is in the plan of God. This was the first big God-thought there was. A God-thought. Can you ever imagine that? This is a God-thought that happened way back before anything was ever created in the world. Nothing was created at this time when God had this thought, but this thought composed His eternal plan, and Paul wrote about it in Ephesians.

Ephesians 1:4 is the one verse of Scripture where we unlock the value of God's whole plan. "According as He has chosen us in Him before the foundation of the world that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love" (Eph. 1:4).

We are just going to deal with a small part of this verse. We will note something right off, and you need to underline it, the word according. "According as He has chosen us in Him." Now that according takes us back to the first God-thought that happened before anything was created, before the foundation of the world was laid. According to what? According to that first God-thought.

In the first chapter of Ephesians alone, the word according is used six times. The greatest document in the whole of the Word of God, as far as I am concerned, is the first chapter of Ephesians. The one thing that ties all of the truth together in Ephesians 1 is the word according because all that is happening in this chapter is according to God's original thought.

I have told you that the plan of God brings up the sun every morning. Let's look at that for a moment. According to the first God-thought, before the foundation of the world, the sun comes up every morning, there are leaves on a tree, and you are breathing air to keep you alive. Well, that is kind of far out, isn't it? You probably never think of the universe in that simplicity.

But God, before He created anything, had these thoughts so everything He did in creation, everything He says to human beings in the Bible, everything He does by His Son Jesus Christ, is according to these first God-thoughts.

Now you can go through the Scriptures and pick out every little thing you want to, but if you don't start understanding God before the foundation of the world was laid, you are never going to come to know God. You are not going to come to know God by what is said in the Bible alone, though the Bible is by revelation of God. Then what do I mean? I mean nothing that has happened — in the Bible, in time, in the third dimension, in Creation and beyond — rules this universe. What rules this universe and has to do with all mankind is this God-thought. That is why the word according is so important because everything in this universe is according to the fact that God chose human beings to be in Christ. So all Creation, everything the Devil has to do with, all of his evil, all that is sinful, is according to God's intention, according as God has chosen us in Christ.

This is probably the most-weighty thing we could ever get from the Scriptures because if you don't see this first 'according' in Ephesians 1, nothing else will fit together—not Calvary, not the Day of Pentecost, and not even what is happening in your life. This is a powerful dissertation from the apostle Paul showing the first God-thought and how everything in the universe is according to this one thought. Now, what is this one thought? That we have been chosen in Christ.

— **Points to Ponder:**

Now, reflect on what you just read. Journal and/or discuss your understanding of the significance of the phrase “us in Him before the foundation of the world.” —

Chosen

This is a verse of Scripture the average preacher would like to just skip over. I know because for years I wanted to do that. The average preacher today who has some education and a little theology immediately sees the word chosen and is thrown for a loop because this word has become one of the most divisive terms in all Christianity. But, this is the most important thing God ever did before He created anything. It is absolutely non-divisive, and it should never have become as divisive as it is. You see, when we read this word chosen, theologically you immediately are made to think, That has to do with election, predestination, and foreknowledge of God. This God-thought is the foreknowledge of God, the omnipotence of God in operation, the God who knows it all and operates the universe by that all-knowing. Certainly, the terms election, foreknowledge, and predestination come to our mind immediately if you have a little bit of training; but the circumference and the center of all of these verses is Jesus Christ. Seeing this, you will never have a problem with those three divisive terms again.

Those terms are divisive because whole denominations have been started out of the understanding and the misunderstanding, the interpretation and the misinterpretation of these three terms. Isn't it strange that just a perception of one word in the Bible could become so divisive that some people say, If you don't believe it our way, you are going to hell. Others say, If you don't believe it our way, you can't go to heaven. That is what religion has done to us. Let's look at this verse without religion being at the center of it all. Let's remove John Calvin, Jacobus Arminius, Martin Luther, and all of the greats of the reformation church. I don't want to discredit them at all, for many of them knew and saw God greater than anybody does today, but all of them saw something in this verse that became divisive to the rest of the Body of Christ. So let's dismiss that for a moment and see what this word chosen really means.

To me, the word chosen really doesn't have anything to do with election. Election is where you choose something, make a decision for something. I see in this verse that everything in the universe is according to the fact that

God chose human beings to be in Christ. You need to see Christ as life. That is the center, the whole of this verse. You have got to see Jesus. If you don't see Jesus as the center of it, you are going to be lost; you are going to have to go back and argue over the Greek or the Hebrew or whatever you think it ought to say or somebody says, and you are going to lose the meaning. The fact is God chose human beings to have another life in them; and according to that, the whole universe is put together. That is what the first line in Ephesians 1:4 says.

What runs the universe? That God chose human beings to be in Christ. Manmade religion says He chose and predestined this person, but He didn't choose that person, that He predestined that one to go to hell, and this one He chose to be His. That is manmade religion. What did He choose? He chose human beings to be in Christ. What does that mean? That means human beings were created in the image and the likeness of God to possess another life. It was never God's intention to give human beings a life of their own.

Human beings have never had a life of their own. They have always had another life in them, another nature in them. There has always been another ruling spirit in human beings. There are only two ruling spirits, Satan and Christ. Before you were saved, your nature was Satan; your father was the Devil. You were his offspring, and you had his nature in you. Now that you are born again, you have been re-birthed, there is another nature in you; and that nature is Christ.

So Paul tells us in this verse the whole intent of God. Before anything in this world was made, God had chosen human beings to be in Christ, Christ in them. They have another life in them. How do they come to that life? They believe on the Lord Jesus Christ. The word chosen here isn't saying that God chose this one to be in Christ, and He chose that one not to be in Christ. It isn't saying that God chose this church to be the true church and

that church not to be the true church. That isn't what the word chosen means. It isn't what happened to men; it means what Christ is to men, that human beings were chosen for Christ to be their life.

Well, obviously, not all human beings have the Christ-life. They must believe on the Lord Jesus Christ; they must be born again; they must accept Christ as their personal savior. That is not something aside or separated from you; it is Christ in you who is your saving life. His blood takes away your sin, but His life is your life.

So the word chosen does away with the divisiveness of religion. There is no divisiveness. It isn't my doctrine that will bind us together; it is Christ. It is like John says in 1 John 1:3, "Truly our fellowship is with the Father, and His Son Jesus Christ." Our fellowship isn't with church members. It isn't with doctrine or with the rest of the denomination. Our fellowship is with His dear Son. When you get that fixed in you, then you will get rid of all this divisiveness. Men separate and divide over terminology in the Bible because they don't see Jesus. When you read this first line of Ephesians 1:4, "According as he hath chosen us in Him," you ought to see the "in Him." You ought to see that it is in Christ. You ought to see that Christ is the center, that it was not God's intention that men, by doctrine, attempt to be the center. The center is Christ. He alone is the center; He alone is the all and in all. So, we have been chosen in Him.

If you see Christ, the terminology and the predestination argument get swallowed up. In time, your knowledge of the Christ-life will swallow up election, predestination, and foreknowledge. We will study predestination a little later. Predestination is not a separation. It really doesn't have anything to do with sinners at all. By this Word of God, by this person who is the Word, by Christ who is life, we will show you that predestination belongs only to the children of God who have been predestined to be as Jesus, predestined to be sons of God.

So election, predestination, and foreknowledge can be very divisive; they separate men. But when you see Jesus, they all join together. What does foreknowledge mean? That is the first God-thought, which God planned from the very beginning: that human beings would have another life in them, Christ in them.

What is predestination? It means God planned all who accepted His gift of life would grow up into Him. The whole world was created to force that predestined idea. Everything in the universe is predestination at work, bringing the believer to the full knowledge and understanding of being a son of God.

What does election mean? It means God elected those whom He created in His image and likeness to be His. It doesn't mean they are all going to be His, but He elected them to be His because He created them in His image and likeness. That means our sinner friends, the unbeliever, the agnostic, the communist, even the most ungodly. We were all created in the image and likeness of God so that if they heard the gospel and they believed on the Lord Jesus Christ, they would be what God's intention was before the foundation of the world.

Well, you see, the words according and chosen have far-reaching consequences, so way out and beyond anything we could possibly imagine. That is why we need the Holy Spirit revealing and bringing to us the very essence of what God is saying in His precious Word.

— **Points to Ponder:**

Now, reflect on what you just read. Journal and/or discuss your understanding of foreknowledge, predestination, and election. —

Chosen in Him

Now we get to the heart of the matter. The whole facts are that Ephesians 1:4 — which goes back to the first God-thought we have record of in the Scriptures — hinges on one little statement and on one person. It all finally centers in Christ. Notice it says, “As He hath chosen us in Him.” “In Him.” Do you know what that means? It means no human being was chosen by God, of himself, to be God’s child. Now I hope I can explain this to you. I know it is mind-blowing, but no human being was chosen by God to be God’s child. This verse is plain. It does not read, According as He has chosen us before the foundation of the world. That is what religion has told us, that we are God’s chosen people, that Jesus chose us to be His, that when we believe on the Lord Jesus Christ we became chosen people. No. Believers are not chosen of themselves to be God’s children.

We have got to wade through a lot of garbage here because there are a whole lot of people saying, We are the chosen ones; we are the best ones; we are the biggest ones; we are God’s elect; we are a little deeper than the rest; we are a little bit more important than the rest; we have more doctrine than the rest; we have more theology than the others; we have more holiness; we are the sanctified; we are the only ones who are going to go up in the Rapture; we are the only ones who are going to live through the tribulation; we are the only ones who are going to rule and reign. All sorts of ideas come up because they read this Scripture wrongly, saying He has chosen us before the foundation of the world. That is error. Nobody was chosen for who they are, for what they do, or for what they believe. Then how were we chosen? We were chosen with another in us as our life. We were chosen in Him.

You can go to church a long time and never come to that understanding. You can hear a lot of gospel and never hear that truth. You say, That is just a little verse. It is just a little idea in this verse, and there is no sense to make a lot of it. Somebody said to me, “You just take little things and spin them out of proportion,” speaking of in-Christ position. Someone wrote me a

letter one time and said, “You are way out of bounds. You are making mountains out of mole hills.”

Let me tell you about the center of this first line of Ephesians 1:4, and it is important. It says, According as He has chosen us human beings to be in Christ. That is very important. You need to see it plainly so you never forget it because, outside of the death of Jesus Christ as the Savior of the world, it is the most important thing I have ever found in the Bible. “In Him.” You can buy religious books from fundamental and evangelical commentators who will take these two words and say, “That is merely Pauline language.” “That is a connotation Paul often gives to his ideas,” or, “That is merely a descriptive term, strictly a prepositional phrase.” But you cannot understand Ephesians 1:4, nor can you understand hundreds of other verses in the Bible, unless you understand these two words. God never chose the human being as a self to be saved. He only chose human beings to be saved by being in Him. We were chosen in Him, chosen with another life in us. God never chose you to be His. He chose you to be in Christ. Do you realize how important this statement is? If you read over this first chapter of Ephesians, you would see this statement at least 13 times.

If somebody came to you and said, Friend, you are saved, Spirit-filled, a God-lover, and a Bible-lover. What is the most important thing in God’s Word? What is the heaviest weight of truth to be found in the Bible? Would you have an answer for that? Well, before I came to see Christ as my all, I would have said it is the scarlet thread, starting in Genesis 2 and going through to Revelation 22, was the heaviest weight of Scripture — the shed blood of Jesus Christ. That is probably the greatest theme running through the whole Bible, but it is not the heaviest weight of truth which comes through God in the Bible. Is it salvation? Would you say it is the baptism of the Holy Spirit, faith, or love? If you said yes, I would tell you that all of these are secondary as Bible truths and doctrines. Did you know the statements such as “in Him,” “in Christ,” “in whom,” and “in the beloved” are mentioned over 200 times in the New Testament and by Paul 146 times? Did you know those in-Christ statements are the most often singularly used

doctrinal truth in the Bible? Not even faith as a doctrinal statement, which is the second most-used statement in the New Testament, is used this many times. The word faith is used many more times, but the word faith as a doctrinal statement, is used less than 200 times. Love is used far less. Salvation is used far less. Holy Spirit, far less. Baptism, far less. “In Christ” is the most-often singularly used doctrinal statement in the New Testament.

That should give us a bit of gravity to what we are saying. I have said this is the furthest-reaching, most mind-blowing, greatest truth in all the Bible. How can I prove it? By this statement right here in Ephesians 1:4. This first God-thought introduces us to what operates this universe — Christ in the human being, Christ in believers. That is what it is all about and what runs this universe. That is why it is so important you grasp what the Spirit is saying in this current move of God right now. You have been chosen in Christ. You weren’t chosen for yourself. You weren’t chosen as a self-onto-self. You have been chosen to be another person, other than self. You have been chosen to be a Christian. God made every human being as a container to possess Christ. Our forefather, our great-grandfather Adam, led us into sin by accepting Satan’s word. He believed Satan, and Satan’s nature was birthed in him. Therefore, we were born into sin, and Satan became our father. That is why Jesus came along and said you must be born again.

If you thought you were saved because you grew up in the church or you were baptized as a little baby or you joined the church, or if you thought of yourself as a Christian because your parents were Christians, I must thoroughly demolish this idea. Your first birth, into sin, cannot be corrected by the church, by anything your parents did, by religion, by doing good works, or by you believing that Jesus Christ existed. You can only do away with your first satanic birthing by confessing your sin, asking Christ for forgiveness, trusting in Christ as the Son of God for your salvation; this is what it is to be born again. You must be born again. Satan’s nature is out and Christ’s nature is in. Only Christ in you is your hope of glory. From the foundation of the world, God’s idea was that you would be possessed of another, that Christ would be in you and would be your only life.

What really are human beings then? Human beings are containers made in the image and likeness of God. That is what you are. You contained Satan's sin-nature before you were saved; now you contain Christ because you have been re-born. You are a container. Then why do you think there is a you, a self-into-self? Why do you think you are independent and can do as you please? It is because your mind is not renewed. It isn't because there is a you as an independent self. It is because you, in your thinking, in your ignorance, have believed that. That's why God gave us the Holy Spirit and the Bible, so we would know we needed a change, and, after we are changed, we would know who and what our Father is and how He has re-born His own dear Son in us.

The number one message in the Bible is the statement "in Christ." That is the heaviest weight of Scripture in the whole Bible. What good would it do for somebody to expound to you what the number one theory is, the number one theology, the greatest doctrines, or who is the best church, who has the best water baptism or the most power, who is the most Charismatic, who operates the greatest gifts? None of that really matters if you don't see Christ as your life.

You have got to begin to operate in that. That is where the move in the Spirit is; that is where God is leading His people now — to operate in Christ. Seeing it isn't me doing any more. All that I do and all that I am is Christ alive in me. It is not me sitting here writing to you; it is Christ alive in me. He moves my fingers. They are His fingers, His hand; these are His eyes; these are His ears; these are His arms; this is His life, the Christ-life, Christ in me, Christ alive in me. I don't have a life of my own. I no longer live (Gal. 2:20). The Bible has stated it again and again. We missed it because we didn't catch the little statements like "in Him" and "in Christ."

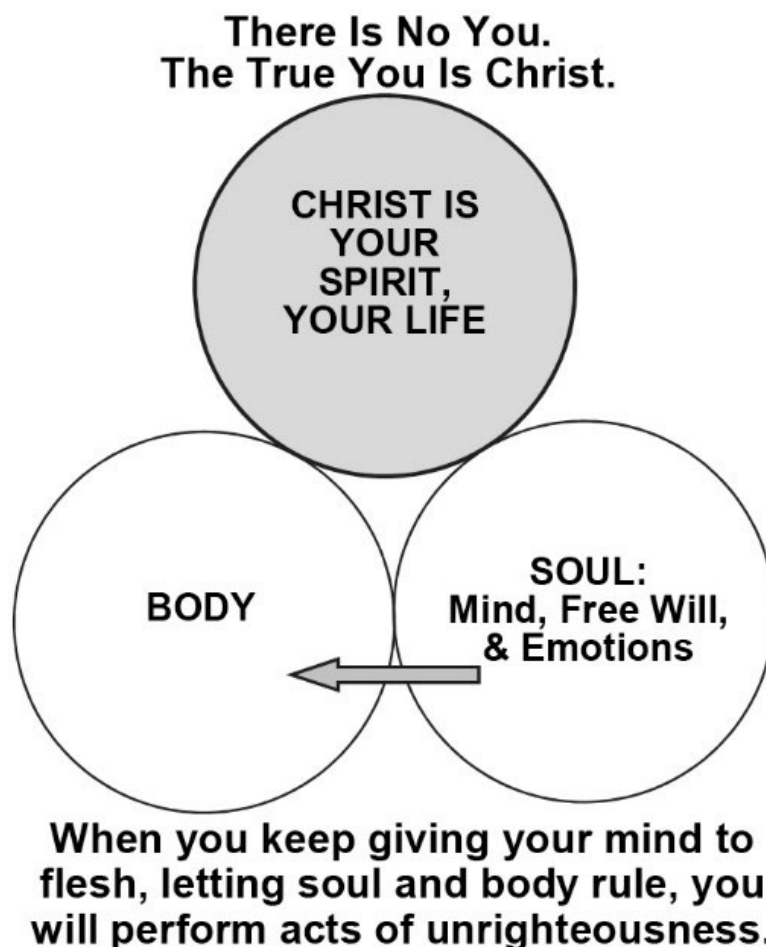
That is where the Christ-life starts. It starts with this understanding; it starts with you beginning to see that you literally are in Christ and Christ is in you. Always remember there is no difference in those statements, “in Christ” and “Christ in you.” It is like you put a sock in the water and the water is in the sock. You are in Christ and Christ is in you. You can’t separate the two ideas. Don’t let somebody come along and tell you we didn’t all get Christ in us when we were saved or we are all not in Christ because we haven’t grown.

If you have been birthed by my heavenly Father, if you have been born again, Christ is in you. That is the seed. He is the life. He’s your only life. You don’t have a life of your own. You have a mind of your own, and when you allow your mind to obey body or flesh, you do acts of unrighteousness, acts of sin and rebellion; but that is not the true you. The true you is Christ. The real you is Jesus.

— **Points to Ponder:**

Now, reflect on what you just read. Journal and/or discuss your understanding of “chosen us in Him before the foundation of the world.” —

You will come to liberty, rest, and peace when you begin to see, The real me is Christ. Christ lives in me. Then you will begin to operate as that. Religion wants to keep you saying, I have got to do this, I have got to do that, or I won't make it to heaven, and God won't love me. Religion says, If I don't do this, and I don't do that, I won't be pleasing to God. Christ is birthed in you. It isn't what you do that pleases God. What you do is a result of Christ being there, if you know Christ in you and walk in that. If you don't know He is there, then you keep on giving your mind to flesh, to body, and you perform acts of unrighteousness.



I want to bring you to a life which goes beyond all finite comprehension. I want to bring you to the revelation dimension. The revelation dimension is another dimension altogether than this world we live in because the good news of the gospel began before this world started. Before the foundation of this world, you were chosen to be in Christ. So, there is another knowledge; there is another understanding.

That is what the Christ-life is all about. Believing on the Lord Jesus Christ placed you in a dimension of living which beats anything you will find on this earth. You can watch every TV program, listen to every soothsayer and every promoter. You can go to every religion on this earth and see every miracle there is, but you will never come to the peace there is in Christ. Peace is knowing, I have Christ in me as my only life and, therefore, I stand perfect before God. Religion won't like that. Religion will want to say, You are not perfect; look at what you do. I am spiritually perfect because there was spiritually birthed in me another life, the Christ-life. I am not perfect in living it; I am not perfect in expressing it; I am not perfect in working it out right, but I am learning.

Oh! I don't express who and what I am perfectly, but I am doing it better all the time. That is where the Holy Spirit is helping me. He occupies my soulish part. He deals with my thinking, my mind, my choices, and my expression. He is that blessed Spirit in my soulish part who is bringing forth this Christ who is my Spirit in the spirit-part of me. And so it is with you. Christ is in you if you have believed on the Lord Jesus Christ. That is the biggest truth in the whole Bible. It swallowed everything which had to do with Israel because Israel lived by law. The believer who has been re-birthed no longer lives by law. He obeys the law of God because he is re-birthed. He does not obey any law to become what God wants Him to be. He is what he is by the birthing. That swallows up Abraham, Noah, Adam, and Eve. It swallows up everything God did because this was His initial intention. His ultimate intention was that He would have sons likened unto

His only begotten Son, and He would birth them Himself by placing that one Son in them as their life. That is the Christ-life.

If you don't know Jesus as your personal Savior, you need to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ is the only Savior for you. The moment you believe He died as you, you will come to resurrection life where Christ as you now will be your all. Believe on Him.

If you are a believer and you have not heard these overcoming, liberating truths of the Christ-life, then God has much to say to you, a lot of glorious things to teach you.

Scripture References

Galatians 2:20

1 Corinthians 2:2

Ephesians 1:4–5

Explore More

With a computer or digital tablet, use a Bible app to search for the following exact phrases. Then, copy these verses and paste them into a new document and save it as ‘God’s Plan Scripture Collection’ showing God’s plan before He even started creating the world. You may want to include some of the verses around a few of these verses to show their proper context. We encourage students to discover these passages through their own searches; but for those without access to a digital Bible app, we have provided the Scripture references which result in these searches. You can use this collection for making notes while working through the next chapter.

“Before the foundation” (John 17:24; Eph. 1:4; 1 Peter 1:20),

“Before the world” (John 17:5; 1 Cor. 2:7; 1 Tim. 1:9; Titus 1:2),

“From the beginning” — Because a whole-Bible search produces too much material outside this topic, search for this phrase only in the writings of Paul and John. (John 6:64; 8:25, 44; 15:27; Eph. 3:9; 2 Thess. 2:13; 1 John 1:1; 2:7, 13–14, 24; 3:8, 11; 2 John 1:6).

Lesson 6

The Joy of Knowing Who I Am

We are dealing with Ephesians 1:4. “According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love.” As I said before, there is no more-explanatory verse I know of in the entire Bible telling God’s eternal plan than Ephesians 1:4. While we have dealt with several aspects of this verse so far, I want to separate just one word out of this text and help you see what I think the Spirit wants to say in this lesson. The word is simply foundation. That is the time element of where God’s whole plan was actually developed, produced, and finished — before the foundation of the world. I pick out this word foundation because this is where you will be able to see just how the whole plan of God came about. Before the foundation of the world, God developed His plan based on events which took place before anything in the world was created.

That is very important to the Christ-life message because nothing that has happened in this world has produced the plan of God. This world has merely carried out the final aspects of the plan of God. The whole plan of God was developed before anything happened in this world. Do you know how far reaching that idea is? That means Adam and Eve, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob or Israel, and the early New Testament Church — none had a part in the development of the plan of God. It was all done before the foundation of the world. Not only was God’s whole plan thought out before the foundation of the world, but God developed it. He actually worked it out before the foundation of the world. We are going to see that in the verses we will go through.

Ephesians 1:4 says, “He hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world.” All were chosen, not this one chosen and that one not chosen. The human race was chosen to possess another in them, Christ in them. That fact was settled before the foundation of the world. First Peter 1:19–20 tells us the Lamb was slain before the foundation of the world. So the price was paid for sin; the price was paid for God to have sons likened unto Himself, before the foundation of the world. We then go to study Hebrews 4:3 where it says all His works were finished before the foundation of the world and God entered into His rest and we ought to fear lest we fail to enter into that rest.

The whole of God’s plan rests in this glorious idea, before the foundation of the world. Now it is my calculation in the Scriptures — in fact, it is only mentioned in the New Testament with this doctrinal aspect — that the whole of God’s plan was developed and finally executed by the slaying of the Lamb, before the foundation of the world. That means we are not developing God’s plan today. We are not developing time and eternity today. It is finished on God’s part. It means He has a time when the Rapture of the Church is going to take place and Jesus is coming back. Jesus spoke of this very specifically when He said the gospel of the kingdom would be preached in all the world for a witness. That will eventually happen. So, we see right off that God has a time in His mind. Jesus said no man knows that time but the Father (Matt. 24:36), but God has it all finished. That is where our rest is. I want you to see that all of this was developed before the foundation of the world. At least 14 times in the New Testament, references of this word are strategically used to definitely pinpoint when God’s plan was developed and how it came into operation. We want to look into some of these Scriptures.

— Points to Ponder:

Now, reflect on what you just read. Journal and/or discuss your understanding of how the entire plan of God rests upon the verses that reference “before the foundation of the world.” —

Acts 15:18

“Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world.”

I am plucking a line out to show you the use of the word foundation because I want to get it fixed in your mind that God’s plan, including your life and your purpose, is already set with God. Day by day, what is happening in you is working out God’s plan. If you trust in Him, if you are really in love with Him, if you see Jesus as your only life, you have nothing to fear.

Beginning is another term signifying the word foundation. Actually, the word beginning is used some 14 times, in the same way as “from the foundation of the world.”

God’s whole plan is centered in something “from the foundation of the world,” from the very beginning.

I must add another factor. The knowledge which comes to the believer “from the beginning” is father-knowledge. First John 2 gives three levels of understanding human beings go through. The first level is child level, where they know God does everything for them. The second level is son level, where they try to do everything themselves and know they have power over Satan. The third level is father level; and the Scripture says, concerning the father level, that the believer knows Him from the beginning. The father level is one who knows from the foundation of the world. That is why we are so adamant you understand, “from the foundation” and “from the beginning.” Acts 15:18 says, “Known unto God are all His works from the beginning of the world.” That is the father level of understanding. You must not base your relationship with God on the Old Testament; you must not base it on what has happened to you. You must go all the way back for the clearest understanding of who you are, that the works of the Father were

known from the beginning. That is where I rest, praise God! God is not working it out. He has worked it out, and I am living it out, praise God! That is why He put Christ in me, so that the other in me might be the life I now live because He lived before God perfectly.

Ephesians 3:9

“Which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God.”

That is why we believe God has done a great and wonderful thing in our lives as Christ-life believers. This truth has been hid in God from the beginning. It is the most specific, strategic idea of God ever released to human beings. It was something God had in Himself. The way it is all working out, the way the Holy Spirit is revealing Christ in you, was hidden in God. You can't find it in the canons of a church; you can't find it in church doctrine; and you can't find it in men's rules. You can only come to know what was hidden in God when the Holy Spirit takes you back to the beginning because that is where the fact was established.

Colossians 1:18

“Who [Christ] is the beginning.”

Christ is the beginning, the foundation stone, chief corner stone.

2 Thessalonians 2:13

“God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation.”

Back at the beginning, at the foundation of the world, before anything was created in this world, we were chosen by God to salvation. I need to keep this before you because if we walk by manmade religion and theology, which says this means predestination, where one was chosen and another wasn't chosen, I am saying it is the very opposite. God chose human beings to possess the life of another because it is the life of the other, the life of Christ, that is salvation. That is what Paul says here because God, from the beginning, chose you to have salvation. Christ is not only my life, He is my salvation (Rom. 5:10). Salvation isn't given to me; salvation is a person. That is what God chose from the beginning. This verse says God chose from the beginning to put Christ in human beings as their salvation. So we were not only chosen to be Christ-persons, we were chosen for Christ to be our salvation. He does not give salvation; He is our salvation. Gloriously, God is revealing this now to hungry hearts near and far.

1 John 1:1

“That which was from the beginning.”

John uses this term beginning several times in his epistle.

1 John 2:7

“The old commandment is the word which ye have heard from the beginning.”

The Greek term *logos* is used here for word, the same *logos* referring to the Word, Christ, in John 1:1–2. So, the old commandment which you have heard from the beginning is the Word, Christ. Hold on to this when we go into verse 24. That is the Holy Spirit’s teaching who and what we are to be in Christ from the foundation of the world.

1 John 2:13

“Known him that is from the beginning.”

1 John 2:14

“Known him that is from the beginning.”

1 John 2:24

“Let that therefore abide in you, which ye have heard from the beginning.”

What have we heard from the beginning? The Word. It is mentioned twice in this verse. John stipulated here that the Jesus we are to know is the one who from the beginning was chosen by God to be our salvation and our only life. You don't have a life of your own. You don't have a nature of your own. God chose Christ, from the beginning of the world, to be our one and only salvation. If you have it in your mind that salvation is joining a church, water baptism, fulfilment of some laws, adhering to a doctrine, attending a church, or doing good works, you are misled. Salvation is nothing you do; it is the birthing of another person in the believer.

You may have said, I received the Lord Jesus Christ when I got saved. You don't have a life of your own. You have never had a life of your own, and so it is not the changing of your life; it is the exchange of Satan for Christ as your life. That is what we hear, from the beginning. That is why man cannot, in his progressive knowledge, bring us divine truth. We don't have divine truth brought to us aside from God's great knowledge of who and what we are in Christ. That is where the Holy Spirit comes in. He is the teacher of these marvelous and divine truths. First John clearly and firmly establishes this.

John also tells us something about what took place “from the foundation” and “from the beginning.” Look again at 1 John 2:24, “Let that abide in you, which ye have heard from the beginning.” This brings us to a wonderful understanding of what happened in our lives. Every one of us have this working in us, through us. Christ is our very life, our very all in all. Have you ever not had these impulses, a drive from within which said, “Do this,” “Be this,” “Go here,” or “Go there”? That is Christ within you, who from the beginning was God's intention to be your very mind, your very understanding. But your mind usually rejects these feelings you have

because somebody says, You can't depend on your feelings. That is because you didn't know Christ is your salvation. He doesn't give salvation; He is salvation. Salvation is not a thing; it's not a feeling that comes from water baptism, from joining a church, or some confession of sin you did at the altar. As important as those things are, that is not what you bank on. You bank on the person who is in you because when you believed on the Lord Jesus Christ, God birthed in you another person.

If you can understand that, then you can hear Him, who from the beginning has been your life. Ever since you have been born again, you had this living, glorious Christ in you; but He doesn't get much access to your mind, to your heart. If you do not know He is there, if you do not understand that that was God's plan from the foundation of the world, you can live all of your life as a frustrated, brow-beaten, misunderstanding believer. You can heap on yourself baptisms, glorious experiences, signs, wonders, and miracles; but you can never have the life God intended you live aside from the Christ who is within you. That is what you need to get fixed in your mind because that is what we have heard from the beginning.

The Holy Spirit is our teacher; what is He really teaching? He is not teaching churchianity, man's theology, eschatology, the end times, or world issues. I have heard voices again and again saying, Oh, the Holy Spirit told me Jesus is coming. The Holy Spirit told me who the anti-Christ is. No. The Holy Spirit isn't doing that. The Scripture is plain. The Holy Spirit is teaching us Christ (John 15:26; 16:13–14). He teaches us "all things" (which are Christ's), and He guides us in life. Christ said He would take the things of Christ and show them to us. He would not speak of Himself, but of Christ. He is not teaching you Jesus of Nazareth. Jesus of Nazareth was Christ living in the body given to him by Mary. What Jesus is He teaching? John says He is teaching the Christ we heard of from the beginning. Let that Christ abide in you which you have heard from the beginning.

What does that do? It takes it out of the hands of preachers. I am not to teach you anything; the Holy Spirit is the teacher. You can't depend on the saints going by what the Spirit says because they will all have a different idea and there will be a thousand and one different doctrines. There are a lot of people crediting the Spirit for teachings which aren't so; but if they hear what the Spirit says in conjunction with the Word, it will be truth. If anybody says, The Holy Spirit told me this, and it doesn't measure to the Word of God, that is where you have untruth and get into trouble because the Holy Spirit will never leave the Word. You can read this Word with your natural mind a lifetime and never get what the Spirit is saying. So, you need both of them. You need the Holy Spirit to tell you what is from the beginning. He speaks of nothing but Christ. When He comes, Jesus said, He will speak only of me. He will take the things of mine and reveal them unto you. He will not speak of Himself. The Scripture is clear. So the Holy Spirit is going to teach us the person of Christ. That is why the Jesus we need to know is the one which we have heard from the beginning and that is why these verses out of 1 John are so important.

1 John 3:8

“For the devil sinneth from the beginning.”

That means Satan has been the sinner and the issuer of sin from the beginning. We will deal with this when we get into the book of Romans; but for this generalization right now of what happened from the foundation of the world and seeing what took place from the beginning, it is important to see that the Devil is the arch enemy of God and is the death-life in every believer by Adam's choosing in the Garden of Eden. So, it was Satan who was the sinner from the beginning. But you need to notice the line which says “from the beginning.”

Revelation 1:8

“I am the Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending.”

That says who Jesus is in God's time element. Christ is the Alpha and the Omega. Those are the Greek words for “the beginning” and “the end.” He is the beginning and the end of God's plan. I get letters every once in a while from people who say, Can't you talk about something else other than Jesus? They think they have rebuked me when actually that is the highest praise I can be given. Paul said, “For I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified” (1 Cor. 2:2).

Imbalance, to me, is when the church becomes more important than Christ. Imbalance, to me, is when doctrine becomes more important than Christ, or when getting somebody healed, saved, filled with the Spirit, or delivered is more important than Christ. When our marriages are more important than Christ, we have an imbalance. When our business is more important than Christ, we have imbalance. You see, if Christ is your life and your all, everything else will be perfect to God; and until Christ comes to His rightful place as your life and your all, there is no balance in your life. Why? Because the only life you have is Christ; and only when He flows out of you — through all of these different areas of church, witnessing, experiences, marriage, home, children — do you have perfect balance. So knowing only Him is the issue of the human being because He is your life.

There are multitudes of people who can't make it work. You can go into the average book store today and find a book on how to have a happy marriage, how to make the church work, how to raise money, how to build a new building, how to witness, how to cast out devils, how to heal the sick. You will find all the how-to books, but none of them are going to work to God's satisfaction until all you see is Christ in your life and as your life. The only thing a believer is to know is Christ. Why? The last occasions in the Scriptures where the Alpha and the Omega are mentioned are in Revelation

1:8; 3:14; 21:6; and 22:13. All of these, with the exception of Revelation 3:14, which we will talk about in a moment, speak of Christ being the Alpha and the Omega. He is the beginning and the end. That doesn't mean Jesus gave you something 1,900 years ago on Calvary, you accepted Him as your Savior, and now you are going to be a good Baptist or a good Methodist and you are just going to live your life. No, it isn't like that. You don't have a life to live. When you accepted Jesus by His work on Calvary, you accepted His life; His life is your only life now. You don't have some other life.

John says three times in the book of Revelation that He is the Alpha and the Omega; but more strategically, he uses the word beginning. Christ is the beginning and the end. What does that mean to you? That means your life, real life, only began with Jesus, and it will end with Jesus. You may say, I don't know all about that. How does my life end with Jesus? Looks like my life ends when I die, when I quit living in this body. No, the end of your life is Christ. "To die is gain," the apostle Paul said (Phil. 1:21). Why would he say that? Because death is the beginning of Christ — Christ in another form, Christ in another idea. The beginning and the end is Christ. That is God's plan. Everything began with Christ being your life in the beginning. When you were saved, born again, Christ was everything. You had a death-life up until then; now you have the Christ-life; Christ is in you. Christ is the beginning. You are going to leave your body one day; Christ is the beginning and the end.

If Christ is all in the beginning, if He is all in the end, what is the middle? That is why God created a world, filled with circumstances and situations; so that the part between the beginning and the end might cause us to see Jesus. That is why there is a world, and why I call the world a schoolhouse, because the world is the place between the beginning of your earthly life and the death of your body, and Christ is your eternal life in another form. God wanted you with your earthly mind, your finite mind, to come to know that Christ is all, and in all, right now; and that is why you are in this world.

The apostle Paul, on a couple of occasions, said God had chosen to reach the world with the gospel by the foolishness of preaching. By finite men echoing the message that Christ is all, you come to the purpose of your being in this world right now. That is the purpose of the middle, between the beginning and the end. By the preaching of the gospel, you come to know who you are in Christ. Why does God leave that to you as a human choice? It is simple. He wants love. He can't and He won't have the kind of love He needs and wants unless we make that choice. So, what did He tell us? He said, Christ is your beginning and Christ is your end. Now, I want you to find out how Christ — who is all and all to me — can be your all and all. He wants us to come to that knowledge. He wants us to be filled with the idea that Christ is all. Well, how else can we get it except in the world, except through your situations and circumstances, your troubles and your trials? Your adventures in this world are where you come to see that Christ really is your all, that you are one with Him, and that He is living His life through you.

— Points to Ponder:

Now, reflect on what you just read. Journal and/or discuss your understanding and the significance of the phrase “from the beginning.” —

Revelation 3:14

“These things saith the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of the creation of God.”

This verse speaks of Christ the witness, the beginning of the creation of God. Now, to me, Creation has two entities to it. God created a human being by giving him a soul and a body — first Adam, and then through Adam, the whole human race — created in the likeness and image of God in soul and body. Man was not given spirit; spirit is eternal. At the Fall, the first sin, Adam made his choice for spirit when he believed Satan. If Adam had believed God, he would have had eternal life; but instead, he received Satan’s spirit of death, eternal death, eternal damnation to the body and soul. Eternal death was his choice. That is why you must be born again, because you have to get rid of that death-life, you have to get rid of that Satan-life. But Creation had the entity of man being created in the image and likeness of God.

The second part of Creation is the world which was created by God. Look in Colossians 1:16–17 where Paul says,

“For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers; all things were created by him, and for him: and he is before all things, and by him all things consist.”

John said, “All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made” (John 1:3). Aside from Christ, there was not any purpose, any reason, or anything in creation.

What then do we have in Creation? We have two aspects. We have a human being created with a body and soul, and we have a world created for the human being to live in. That is what Creation is all about. There are several things about Creation we are going to study along the way. One thing is that Creation is not eternal. Nothing, not one thing that is created, is eternal. All things created including heaven and earth will pass away. They are only for use by God for a short period of time. Spirit will never pass away; it is eternal. But human bodies will; they are not eternal. God breathed into man and made him a living soul; so the only thing of God put into created substance that is eternal is that breath of God. But that is not Spirit; it is soul. God made the mind (intellect), will, and emotions, which comprise a living soul. Adam had to have a soul to be able to make his choice in the garden; he had to have a soul — a mind to think and decide, a will to want and to choose, emotions to feel — to believe Satan.

Notice that even though the creation of man in body and soul and the creation of the world are temporal in a sense, God used both of them for His glory and to the end of His purpose. What was the big thing He had in mind in Creation? That Christ might live in human beings. That is the liberating secret. The greatest truth of God in all the universe is that Christ might live in human beings.

God made a human body to contain another. The human being was created by God with a body and a mind to contain another who would be spirit and life. There is no spirit life in the body. The body was made as a container to hold Christ, and the world was made by and for Christ, with all of its evil and all of its situations and circumstances in it, to push men to Christ. We will study this in time to come so you will have a good understanding of what we call converging powers in the universe.

I want you to see that all of Creation has to do with God's plan from the beginning. Evolutionists, agnostics, atheists, humanists, and soothsayers

have no answers because they don't see God's plan from the beginning. Isn't it ironical that Satan has a lot of Christian people arguing over evolution and Creation when the real fact is God created all things for the purpose of having sons to live in His house one day with knowledge. The purpose of your life right now on this earth, is to see Christ as your all. The purpose of your life in this world is to be pushed to that knowledge by everything that happens in your life.

That is what the Christ-life is all about. It is a message which we have heard from the beginning. First John 1:5 said, "This then is the message which we have heard of Him." The message from the beginning is Christ. He is the Alpha and the Omega; He is the beginning and the end; He is the foundation; He is the chief corner stone; He is the all and all in God's plan. This is what runs the universe. This is what makes the flowers come up, the rain come down, the storms, and the earthquakes. Everything in the universe has to do with Jesus Christ. Until you see that, until you come to know that, your life is incomprehensible, knowledge-wise; and it is incomplete as far as God's intention for your life. That is the Christ-life message. This is the message the Holy Spirit is bringing to hungry hearts.

This message is life. It is a message because Jesus is the Word, the written Word, the spoken Word, as well as the living Word in us. He is a message. Our message is Christ; our life is Christ. You can't separate the Word of God from the person of Christ. You can't separate the living Word from the written Word. They are one and the same; they are Christ.

Now, men translate them differently, but that is manmade religion. You can't, as a Christ believer, separate these things. It is just one Son, one life. He is in heaven with the Father seated at the right hand. He is in every other believer in the universe. He is in you and me right now. One Christ, that is the mystery of God in us.

If the Christian next to you reached over and lay a hand on you, it could be a healing hand, a comforting hand, a hand of encouragement, a hand with a word of knowledge, a hand with super-natural powers. Why? Because that hand belongs to one in whom Christ lives and moves and has His being. If you need healing, trust Him. If you need His love, receive it from the believer next to you. If you need a miracle, join with that believer next to you. It would be as if you touched the hem of His garment because the nearest Christ you will find is in you and in the believer next to you. Don't look on outward appearance; don't see their flesh; see Christ in them. They may seem weak and insignificant. They may even have a child-like faith. They may not be one you outwardly care for. But if they are born again, Christ is in them. Trust Him. See Christ in them; let the Christ in you flow out like a river of living water to them. That is why the Holy Spirit came on the Day of Pentecost, to announce to you that there is a river of living water in you for the glory of God.

Scripture References

Ephesians 1:4

1 Peter 1:19–20

Acts 15:18

Ephesians 3:9

Colossians 1:18

2 Thessalonians 2:13

1 John 1:1

1 John 2:7

1 John 1:5

1 John 2:13–14

1 John 2:24

1 John 3:8

Revelation 1:8

1 Corinthians 2:2

Revelation 3:14

Colossians 1:16–17

John 1:3

Revelation 22:13

1 John 1:5

Acts 15:1

1 John 2

Revelation 3:14

Revelation 21:6

Explore More

A. Reviewing your “God’s Plan Scripture Collection” from the last lesson, find references to the following topics; write and discuss your thoughts on each:

The relationship between God the Father and God the Son before Creation.

The plan of salvation before Creation.

The goal of God’s plan.

Find yourself in God’s plan before salvation.

B. Study and comment on the three levels of understanding for believers in 1 John 2:12–14.

Note where each level focuses and how focus changes moving to each level.

Reflect on your own growth in one or more of these levels of understanding since you trusted in Christ.

Consider the levels of understanding of other believers around you. Everyone is on their own learning curve, guided by the Holy Spirit using

the tools of the Word, revelation, and life's circumstances and situations (the C & S gang). How does this change your view of other Christians?

Lesson 7

Holy and Without Blame

In our lessons in The Fundamentals of the Christ-life, much of our foundation has been laid in Ephesians 1:4. This is the farthest-reaching, most consequential truth in a single verse dealing with God's plan that I know of in the whole Bible. You will hear me say on other occasions that the greatest verse of Scripture explaining God in the whole Bible has to be John 12:24, the corn of wheat Scripture: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit"; but Ephesians 1:4 explains what God is doing. Ephesians 1:4 says, "According as He hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love."

Now obviously, I've been breaking this verse down into words or lines; and the last word we dealt with was the word foundation. God's plan was conceived, developed, executed, and finished before the foundation of the world. That is a far-reaching thought. I don't have within me the ability to tell you all there is in that, but the whole Bible confirms it. If you don't get distracted with the temporal and you look for the eternal message in the Bible, you will see that God's whole plan was conceived and finished before anything was created in this world; although it is still being lived out. This means God went to great lengths to get what He wanted. Now we want to deal with what God wanted. What was He really after? What was God's intention in Creation and in the development of His plan?

Creation itself is only a component of the plan; the plan is more powerful and conclusive than Creation. God had a plan; and Creation was only a part of it. God did not develop His plan out of Creation, but Creation came as an important part of His plan. If you can see that, you can understand why I am taking all this time to deal with what God wanted before anything came into existence, because that is what is working. God's plan is working in your life. It's the reason you have ups and downs, and troubles and trials, why you have been so frustrated, confused, and brow-beaten over the things happening in life. You didn't understand that your life was planned, conceived, and executed by God, as far as His part was concerned, before anything was created. We have allowed all the created things to affect us, to begin to dictate to us, to tell us who and what we are; and that is not where we get our information, our stabilization for life, our understanding on how to live. We should get that from what happened before the foundation of the world.

Holy

What was God really after? That is told in the last line or so of Ephesians 1:4. Paul said God wanted us human beings, in whom God has chosen to put Christ, to be holy. He wanted us holy. Now notice that the holiness of the human is not based on what the human would do when he came in this world. This verse of Scripture, and many others, tell us that our holiness is based in a person, Christ, and not based on anything we do, say, or become a part of in this world. Now, that is not to remove from the believer any responsibility he has to walk uprightly and holy before Him; but it is to tell us that God was after something far more consequential than anything we can come up with through doctrine, churchianity, and religion in this created world. He says here, I want a people who will stand before me holy. God must have said, How am I going to get a people who stand before me holy? It is simple. I will put Christ in them? We were chosen in Christ. The first line of Ephesians 1:4 says, “According as He hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love.” We stand before God holy.

The most devastating thing that happens to a born-again believer is his misunderstanding and frustration over righteousness and holiness. Usually, the person who wants to quit God is faced with the idea, I am not what I ought to be, so there is no use in me trying. There are people who gave up their walk with God, saying, I can't be what the Scriptures, the preachers, and church tell me I ought to be. So many say, I have tried to achieve righteousness, and I can't become righteous. I can't become what others want me to be. I am in frustration and confusion and have literally given up because I couldn't face the issue of holiness and righteousness.

I am going to settle this issue as best I can. I can't deal with what your church or religion say; but I can settle it once and for all by what God says. Shouldn't that be important to you? What God thinks is not important to a lot of people. They are going to try to be what they want to be regardless of what God expects or what God has already made them when they were born again.

When God placed Christ in you, He made Christ your holiness. Now, unless you are really hungry to listen, you won't understand that statement. Unless the Holy Spirit is really helping you, it won't mean anything to you. If you are still listening to people roar, You better quit doing that or you won't be holy, then you won't grasp the fact that we were chosen in Christ and we stand before God in holiness.

Now we could split hairs here and say righteousness is Christ in us and holiness is our expression of that. We would then be making holiness and righteousness co-equal, and they are not because what I express is not what I am at all. What I am living may not be what I am at all. This falls hard on religionists' ears; they can't quite accept this. They make expression reality, and that really isn't so. It isn't really what we express that makes us who we are to God. Now, that may be who we are to others around us because human beings only have one standard that they put on a human being that says, If you do what is right, I believe you are okay. If you say what is right, I know you are okay. If you love, I know you are loving. That is a human evaluation. When Paul came into the revelation knowledge, he said that we are no longer to judge one another on that basis. We are not to put that kind of judgement on one another. Why? Because we are only to see Jesus in them (2 Cor. 5:16–17).

That is so hard for us to do, especially all of us who have been raised in law; and I really don't know anybody in our generation who hasn't come through law. I don't care what church, what denomination, or what background you come from. You came through law, and the law says, You have to do it like this to be who you are. The born again experience says, You are who you are by a birthing and not by what you do. Some people will immediately think, He doesn't believe we have to live right. That isn't what I am saying. I am laying a foundation stone. If you don't get this stone, all your attempts to cease from sin will fail because your end of sin is not you ceasing to express sin. It is the exchange of a nature within you.

Either Christ is in you and He stands holy and righteous before God, or He isn't.

Get it fixed in your mind who you are. Are you still a Satan-person just trying to be a Christ-person? If that is so, then there was no exchange of natures. You still have your same Satan-nature, and you are trying to make it better. If that is what you are, then everything I am saying will mean nothing to you. But if you know being born again means your old nature is out and your new nature is a God-nature, then you are ready to hear this. You were placed in Christ; Christ is your righteousness. He was put in you as your righteousness and your holiness. It isn't your expression that makes it so; it is God's gift.

If you don't believe God exchanged natures, then you are going to be saying the church did it. If you don't believe you are birthed by God, then you are going to say, I am changed because I went to the altar, and they told me to repent, to confess my sin, to go do works of righteousness, to get baptized in water, to join the church, to read my Bible, to pray every day, and to witness. What is that? It is doctrine, which will keep you from being who you already are by trying to be something through your flesh. I didn't say not to do these things or there is anything wrong with these things. I said they were in the wrong place. If you thought, when you came to God, that you had to do these things, then you have left that place of simply believing and have said, I must do these things to be what I believe I am. That is error. That is Satan's greatest work against a believer. It isn't your expression that makes you who you are. You may not witness, pray every day, read your Bible, be baptized in water, or join the church, things men say are expressions of salvation. Expression is never spiritual reality; it is your understanding and translation of it. Salvation is not something you did or something you understood. Salvation is a gift of God; for God put another person in you, Christ in you, who is your life.

That is why I am still going through this subject and why I still hang on to Ephesians 1:4 as our study verse. According as He has chosen Christ in you, that you might stand before God in holiness. Your expression is not who you are. It is who you think you are, who you translated yourself to be. And until you see and know Christ as your all, your expression will not be Christ. Your expression is indicative of your oneness with Christ.

A marriage is when two are joined together as one, but they are still individuals of themselves. A person is still a husband regardless of what the wife does. If they are joined together, then they are making an expression of that marriage by the very fact that they are married. There is a marriage even if the wife doesn't come under the husband, even if the husband and the wife are not one together. But the marriage begins its expression when the two become one. That is when you have a marriage expression. That is why you can look at a lot of individuals and say, They don't look like they are married. They may be married, but expression comes out of the oneness. The living of it, the daily speaking of it, two minds are one, two hearts one, two activities become one. That is expression.

That is the way it is with you and Christ. Christ is in you, but you may not have a marriage, you may not be in oneness. Your attitude may be, I will live my own life. I have got to work out my own life. I have got to do my own thing. That is an erring wife; it is a wife who says, I won't come under my husband; I won't be one with him. It didn't break up the marriage, but they are in a state of separation; they are not expressing oneness. Oneness is expressed, and that expression is indicative of their oneness.

If God was going to have us one with His Son, could He depend on us, or must He depend on His Son for righteousness and holiness? First Corinthians 1:30 says Christ has been made unto us righteousness. Christ doesn't give me righteousness. I don't become holy by what I do. I am holy because of who I am. That may not be my expression, but that is who I am.

You see, when I don't express Christ perfectly, that is an illusion; I am an actor. I am in a fantasy world because that isn't the real me. I may have reverted back in my mind to an old-man syndrome, my old way of doing things; but that is not the real me. I am not that old man; he is crucified. "Behold, all things are become new" (2 Cor. 5:17). I don't become uncrucified. I am crucified with Christ, and I no longer live (Gal. 2:20). If I revert back to thinking, acting, and expressing that, it is an illusion; it is not real because that is not who I am. Who I am came by a birthing.

Now, do you have that settled? Christ is your righteousness and your holiness. God had to fix it like that. You may be worried about sin, worried about what is wrong with you or with somebody else, but the secret of Christian living is getting fixed in you that Christ is your life. It must be fixed in your knowing. When that is fixed, then you overcome sin. But, if you don't get it fixed in your mind that you are a Christ-person and will not sin before God because of who you are, all of your effort will be self-effort, and you will fail every time. That is why God chose us in Christ to stand before Him in holiness.

If you are worried about your expression and your sinning, your sins of the flesh, you will always be defeated. But if you see who you are by Christ in you, you'll overwhelm and defeat the sins of the flesh. But to do that, you'll have to give up yourself as a self, an erring wife-believer state. You will have to quit reverting back to your old way of doing things and take on a new knowledge, the knowledge of your husband, Christ, and begin to live under His authority, which is blessed, which is protection, comfort, and real life. Once you do that, you will still have sins of the flesh, but they won't be continuous nor ruinous; and when you sin — as John said you would — you'll have an advocate, an instant advocate (1 John 2:1), Jesus, saying, That is not the real them; the real them is me, and the Father will forgive (1 John 1 and 2).

Christ has been “made unto us holiness” (1 Cor. 1:30). We stand before Him holy. What if God was waiting for the Church today to become holy in order for Christ to come back and fetch us? Let’s figure this out hypothetically. I have preacher friends everywhere who are preaching that until the Church is holy, Christ won’t come back. Tell me when that will be. When will the Church of Jesus Christ be holy enough to provoke the Lord’s coming back? Look at history. There must be something far greater ahead than we have ever had in history, if that is what we are looking for. It must be that nobody in the early Church has ever had enough holiness for God to come forth. Dear friend, God couldn’t be banking on the Church coming to some position of holiness. If He was, we would all be lost. There would be no hope. Because you could take the very best people, you could take those in our most recent history in Christianity, and the greatest, the most important people. The most greatly used tools of God have miserably failed. Since we have radio, TV, and worldwide communications now, no preacher fails that everybody in the world doesn’t know it. Show me who doesn’t fail; show me who doesn’t fall short of the glory of God; show me what church is perfect; show me what doctrine is perfect? You won’t find any. So, we are not waiting on God to make all of us perfect according to somebody’s rules. God said from the beginning, I put them in Christ, and they stand before me holy.

Now, when you get a hold of that, holiness and righteousness will be your expression, it will flow out of you. But your expression is not always indicative of who you are, if you have been born again. I want you to see who you are; and then you won’t want to sin, you won’t want to live in the flesh because when you see who you are you will overcome.

— **Points to Ponder:**

Now, reflect on what you just read. Journal and/or discuss your understanding of the phrase “that we [born-again believers] should be holy and without blame before him in love” from God’s perspective. —

Blameless

So in Ephesians 1:4, Paul first says we are holy; those in Christ stand before God holy. The second thing he says is we are without blame. I would like to separate that little line, “without blame,” because there is a big difference between a believer being sinless and a believer being without blame. I have discovered that most believers sin because they take erroneous blame to themselves. They blame themselves for something they shouldn’t have. They take guilt over something they shouldn’t have. The scriptural word for that is condemnation. Believers condemn themselves unto malfunctions and sin.

Sometimes, sins of the flesh are because people misunderstand condemnation and blame. One of the terms given to the Devil is the “accuser of the brethren.” Have you ever read that little line in Revelation 12:10? What does it mean? He lies to them about them. For instance, when we do or say something we shouldn’t, or go somewhere we shouldn’t, what happens? The Devil accuses us by saying, Hey, if you were who you are supposed to be, you wouldn’t have done that. He is a liar. Satan doesn’t know anything about me. I am God’s creature, created for God in His likeness and image. Satan can only misuse me. He doesn’t know who or what I am. That is why I keep telling believers to be careful of chasing devils everywhere because you get your mind on the Devil and you forget who you are. You have the one in you who is triumphant. He is triumphant over Satan and has already beat him. If you stand in that liberty, you won’t have half the trouble with the Devil that you do. I don’t mean the Devil is not real and not there. He is; but you won’t be troubled by him once you get hold of the fact that by Christ in you, you stand before God blameless.

Satan will misrepresent who you are and falsely accuse you. So, let me tell you something precious about God’s love and about Christ in you. When God put Jesus in you, He wanted you to express Christ as you are. He didn’t want you to express Christ like Jesus of Nazareth. You couldn’t do that because you are not the body of Jesus of Nazareth. You can’t express Christ like a great preacher, like Grandma, or like a saint. The only way you can

express the Jesus who has been birthed in you is like you are. You can't be like someone else. If you are like somebody else, it is an illusion, a fantasy. You are not being real, but Christ in you as you is real.

What does that mean? It means Christ comes out of you as you are. He can't come out of you any other way than like you are. If you are German, He comes out of you in a German fashion. He is expressed by others in Mexican, Scottish, Irish, African, or Asian fashion. Now in Christ, there are no Germans, Mexicans, Irishmen, or such; we are all one in Christ.

“There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus.” (Gal. 3:28)

“Where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, Barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free: but Christ is all, and in all.” (Col. 3:11)

Christ comes out of us like He made us. It is Christ as me. So Christ as me is doing or saying something you wouldn't do or say. That is what the Bible says more than any other one truth. That is the number one truth God wants to bring to the human race, that Christ is in us, and He can only come out of us like we are. He makes every one of us different. We are all like flowers. No two flowers are alike; no two petals on a flower are alike; no two fragrances are alike; no two leaves or stems are alike. We are all different and we bring forth the glory of God by who we are, like we are. Praise God!

You may do things differently than I. You may go places I couldn't go; you may say things I couldn't say. If you are in religion, religion will say, Hey,

wait a minute. We are going to all do the same thing. If we don't all do the same thing, you are a sinner. We are going to all say it the same way. If we don't all say it the same way, you are a sinner. We are going to all go to the same places. If we don't all go to the same places, you are a sinner. What did religion do to us? Religion opened the door for the accuser to come in. What does he accuse us of? He blames you. He says, You are not like them. You went to the wrong place; you did the wrong thing; you said the wrong thing; you are with the wrong crowd. You are wrong; you are wrong; you are wrong. He accuses the brethren, and you are blamed; you are in condemnation. So, be sure you are listening to the Holy Spirit, and not the accuser. The Holy Spirit will correct you when you need correcting, but that is not spiritual condemnation. It is to provoke a change in your attitude and choices in response to your Father as His child, out of love and respect. It is never an attack on who you are, your worth, or your relationship with your Father. Those never change!

If you are tricked by Satan, that is a soulish thing; it is a mind-thing. You haven't been listening to the Holy Spirit who is in your mind. If you are tricked into condemnation and you condemn yourself and say, I am no good, that is because you have let Satan come through an open door in your mind, and you haven't listen to the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit will tell you that you can do all things through Christ (Phil. 4:13), that you come behind in no spiritual gift (1 Cor. 1:5–7), that Christ is all, He is all in you (Col. 3:11). That is what the Holy Spirit will tell you. Do you know what that does to you? You begin to say, I don't have to do something to be somebody. I don't have to sin to feel good. I am somebody. I am whole. All that Christ is is in me. Praise God. You have been chosen in Christ without blame.

Because of the death of Jesus Christ on Calvary, you will always stand before God without blame. Somehow religion and the world has painted the picture that every believer is out here standing alone on a big, open wilderness as a wretched believer before God, shuddering and scared to death. It isn't like that at all. Every believer stands before God with Christ's

Cross between him and God. God cannot see a believer except through the Cross, and a believer cannot see God except through the Cross.

So when Ephesians 1:4 says we stand before God “without blame,” it is saying a very important thing. Without blame means God doesn’t look at sinners anymore as wretched sinners who ought to go to hell. That is the picture religion paints. God looks at sinners through the Cross, and He sees that they are dead in Christ. The moment those sinners, by the help of the Holy Spirit, believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, that Cross delivers them; the Cross sets them free. They become new creations in Christ Jesus. The blame is taken off the sinner by Calvary.

The only reason religion would advocate men being so wretched and sinful without the Cross is because of the law. The law says if you become condemned enough, you will do something in self-effort to make up for it. Religion operates off the law and the church is full of law-preaching. That is why I stand so sure-footed against the law-teaching. It is because sinners can’t come before God because of that law, and the law is not a means God uses. God uses Calvary. Calvary is where God took care of sin, not men trying to do better within themselves, which is the law. It is the Cross which makes the difference.

The word blame means God took the blame off the sinner at Calvary. God sees you through the Cross. He doesn’t see you as a better person, as a good person, as a non-sinning person, as a person trying to do right, or as a person hopeful of pleasing God. God doesn’t look at you that way at all. He looks at you through Calvary where you were made a new creation, so don’t look at God saying, I will never be good enough; I will never be righteous enough; I can never be that way. God doesn’t look at you like that, so quit looking at God like that.

Do you know what you need to see? You need to see the Lamb hanging on a tree. Do you know who that Lamb is? That really isn't Jesus. That is who he looks like, and that is who it was, but that is you as Him hanging there. That is what you need to see. When you take a look at God, look at God through the Cross. It is Calvary that causes God to love you, and it is Calvary that will bring God's love to you without blame. You are without blame, so don't put the load on yourself. Don't run around saying, I'll do better. I'll make up. I'll try to get better. I'll try to make it right. If you do, you are trapped by Satan who says, You are not really going to stop your sin, though you want to do good. You know you are going to do this sin again. You are going to do this bad thing again. You are not really ready to be right. He has trapped you, putting the blame on you.

Don't you realize that thing within you which makes you feel incapable of serving God is the old Satan-mind? The moment you believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, you receive Christ and the Holy Spirit can now teach you Christ in you as your life. He will tell you that you have a new nature in you who loves God and your wanters have gone; the taker-spirit has gone. You are now a giver, and you will give your life unto God.

— **Points to Ponder:**

Now, reflect on what you just read. Journal and/or discuss your understanding of the phrase “without blame.” —

In Love

The last line of Ephesians 1:4 says we stand before God “in love.” We stand before God holy because we are in Christ. We stand before God without blame because we are in Christ, and now we stand before God in love. First, I would like to take it as it is written because it doesn’t really mean it the way it sounds. We stand before God in love. Sure, I am in love. “I am in love with the lover of my soul,” the old song says. I am in love with Jesus. That is so, but that is outer. That is me in love with Him. That is an outer thing.

Do you know why people continue in sin? They are not in love with God as their Father. They still love self and serve self. Self is their god. Do you know why a young fellow keeps running around on his bride to be? He is not really in love with her yet. Do you know what makes a husband stop his philandering? He falls in love with his wife. Do you know what causes the home to have the atmosphere whereby children can grow up and be honorable citizens? It is because a father falls in love with his children. Those are hard words, aren’t they? Everybody wants to say “I love” but not really be in love. This little line says the believer stands before God in love. Isn’t that blessed? I am in love with him. I keep on doing what I do and keep on going all the time because I am in love. I am in love with this Jesus within me and I want Him to pour out of me as I am.

Some people say, I just can’t understand this Christ-life message. I just can’t get to the meetings. You will when you get love in you. Husbands and wives will love each other; sons and daughters will love each other; and believers will love each other when they really fall in love with Jesus. The issue is really love. This outer love was spoken of by Christ to His disciples. “Lovest thou me more than these?” (John 21:15) If you love me, feed my sheep (John 21:15). “If ye love me, keep my commandments” (John 14:15). Love is His last message, but that is the outer love; that is what we do because of the deeper, richer, more powerful aspect of love.

But that is not the whole meaning, the deep meaning of the line, “stand before Him in love.” That is the love of God which is in us. That is the love of God that is the person of Christ because God doesn’t give us love; God is love. What I do to you and what I give you is outer expression, outer love; but the love I am is God’s love, God in me, God operating by me. What I do and who I am are two different things.

Who you are is a lover — a deep, rich, God-lover — because God is love, and you have God’s nature in you. You have Christ in you who is the epitome of that love. Romans 5:5 says the Holy Spirit, our blessed teacher, spread abroad in our heart the outer mechanism of love, spreads abroad in our heart the love of God so that we express it to others. But you can’t possibly express what you are not. That is what is happening in religion. If religion and people in religion do not know and understand that Christ is in them, that He is the lover, then what they express will not be the love of God. That is why we see believers attack one another, accuse one another, argue with one another. That is outer expression. Do you know what is wrong? Those believers do not know that God is in them and He is love. You, within yourself, can’t love with true love; you can only express God’s love for it to be true. If you love on your own, it will fall short. I have never seen a believer who was upset with another believer when they failed to meet the code of holiness who didn’t say, “I love them, but” That is not the love of God.

If you are judging somebody’s holiness by what they do, that isn’t the love of God. What you should do is say, They are born again. God is in them. They don’t express what I like, but the God in me sees the God in them, and the love of God doesn’t say they must correct their outer expression for me to love them because the same God who loves them is in me, and He loves them by me. Now that is hard to take because you like to get people fixed in categories where you think, “I will love them, but....” I love them, but they are so bad. God’s love is in them, the same as His love is in you. You may not fellowship with them or have anything to do with them, but the same God who is in you is the God who loves them and is waiting on them to

become what He wants them to be. We stand before God in love. I can't love people I dislike. I can't love things I dislike. I can't love to be in places I dislike. But He who is in me loves through me, and He does it perfectly. I don't always express it perfectly, but He does it perfectly.

I am learning to express the love that is within me. I am learning to take others in my arms and love them by the love that is in me and carry them through hard times, remembering I have been through hard times. I don't ask you to love buildings. I don't ask you to love my needs. I ask you to love this message. That is really what we aim at in the Christ-life, that you would love this message, this Word, this person, Jesus, who must flow out to a whole world which does not know Him and who He is. I am asking you to love this message of bringing Christ to the nations, Christ to the world. Love it so much that you eat, drink, sleep, work, and labor in life so that your purpose for existence on this earth is to bring this living Christ to a dying world.

Consider yourself pregnant with Christ, just like Mary of Nazareth. She carried Christ through the months of her preparation to childbirth to bring a living Savior to a dying world. Christ in you — that's your only reason for existence — bringing this living Christ to a dying world. Your next-door neighbor doesn't just need to be saved in the connotation of religious talk; he/she needs Christ in him/her, and to understand that. People need that message. Maybe someone is already saved and in church but they bear no expression of a Christ-person. That's because they don't know who they are. That's why you should take some time and invite them for a cup of coffee. Invite a co-worker, a loved one, or a neighbor, and tell them the liberating secret of Christ in them. Don't tell them what they need; give them Ephesians 1:4 in your expression and example. Tell them they were chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world to be holy, without blame, in love before God. How can you hold this Christ in you without exploding with it? God will help you and give you the words.

— **Points to Ponder:**

Now, reflect on what you just read. Journal and/or discuss your understanding of the phrase “in love.” —

Scripture References

Ephesians 1:4

1 Corinthians 1:30

2 Corinthians 5:17

Galatians 2:20

Revelation 12:10

John 21:15

John 14:15

1 John 1:1–2

Explore More

A. Journal any changes this chapter made in your perspective about your relationship with God, Christ, and the Holy Spirit and your role/responsibility in those relationships.

B. Share these changes with your study group and discuss each other's shifts in understanding.

Lesson 8

The Lamb

Revelation 13:8

Our joy, our peace, and our happiness all flow out of the Holy Spirit being able to do what God sent Him to do. The Holy Spirit was basically sent to convict the sinner, reveal Christ in the believer, then guide and teach us through life. Christ is our life, and power is in His life. The Holy Spirit has been sent to reveal that glorious truth to us, the glorious truth that Christ is in every one of us who have been born again.

The Christ-life ministry is dedicated to seeing the sons of God come to know their full inheritance in Jesus Christ. To think that our Father has made us heirs, full heirs of His, and joint-heirs with Jesus Christ is the most astounding fact I could possibly bring to you. It would be an outright shame if we lived our life and never did come to understand just exactly what God was doing. This series of lessons called The Fundamentals of the Christ-life is bringing line upon line, precept upon precept, a little here and a little there to anchor you to the one liberating truth which runs the universe. A lot of people come into this world thinking it is God's plan and purpose that they be bound and tormented and that all their days they wrestle with the Devil and wrestle with circumstances; but the facts are God, by Calvary, has been able to place His own dear Son in every one of us so that the life we now live is Christ. Not like Christ; the life we now live is Christ.

A lot of good writers write on being Christ-like. Preachers are always talking about being Christ-like. But that is not the Christ-life. It isn't Christ-likeness because if you try to be like Christ, you will not only fail but you would have become nothing but an actor. God knew human beings would try to be like Him, so He birthed His own Son in us by placing His seed in us. So, it is not just us being Christ-like; it is being as Christ. Why? He is my life, so I am not acting; I am not in an illusion; I am not trying to mimic, act like, or be like. I am. He who said, "I AM THAT I AM" (Ex. 3:14), has now transferred His very nature to His children; and they are offspring of the Great I Am, birthed by our Father. We are not trying to be like Christ; we are His seed in action as sons. God put into you His very nature and likeness. That is such an astounding thought that it would be very difficult

for any of us to just read a book or watch a video and say, I got it. People who do that really only have head knowledge because the knowledge of this truth is so astounding that it has to do with the whole universe. The whole universe has to do with Christ being in the human being. That takes in science, economics, religion, and government; it takes in every single aspect there is in the universe. All of it is complimentary and a part of Christ being in the human being. “All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made” (John 1:3). Not only that, everything in the Bible has to do with the one liberating theme that God intends Christ to be the life of every human being.

So you see, there's no such thing as getting a simple lesson and coming to full understanding of what Christianity is, of what the gospel is. No. By what happens to us in this world, in circumstances and situations, we are coming to the understanding of who and what we are. That is why we are still on this earth. There is no such thing as us just getting a little head knowledge here and being done with it. The fact is I'm getting new circumstances and situations every day, and I'm growing up through them. By this knowledge of Christ in me as my life, I'm overcoming in every one of them; and so shall you.

We are talking about precept upon precept. That doesn't mean you just get a little here and a little there and say, I got it. All the days of your life you are growing up in this astounding knowledge and understanding of who and what we are in Christ. So, you will get a little out of this lesson, a little out of the next, and a little out of another. That will never stop; it will continue on endlessly.

We saw in a previous lesson that the foundation of the world had to do with the word beginning, as it is given in the Scriptures. Three very powerful statements were given to us in the New Testament which had to do with God's plan. In the plan of God, we have three unbelievable truths which

rule the universe. I am an old-fashion believer that God is still in charge of the universe. I don't believe science has taken it over or evolutionists have anything to do with creation. I don't believe religion is running the world. I don't believe economics is running the world, and I sure don't believe human beings are running it. I think all of them play a part, but the operator of this universe is my Father. God made the universe as a schoolhouse whereby we would come to know and understand what was His thoughts and intent in the creation of human beings. If we miss that in life, in this world, we miss the whole purpose of our being. So, in a nut shell, I believe there are three portions of Scripture which runs this universe.

The first portion of Scripture we already dealt with is the truth in Ephesians 1:4. The first great truth in the universe is the choosing. God has chosen human beings to be possessed of another nature, Christ in us. Ephesians 1:4 is the ruling tangent that is on top of everything else. The means by which God did this is the second tangent. The second thing which runs this universe is what we are dealing with in this lesson. It's in Revelation 13:8, which explains to us the nature of God, which would be put into human beings who were chosen by God? That nature of God is the Lamb-nature. Then the third tangent that runs this universe is found in Hebrews 4:3; it is rest, a godly time of rest while on this earth. All three of these terms have to do with Christ.

We were chosen to be in Christ (Eph. 1:4).

The Lamb slain before the foundation of the world is Christ (Rev. 13:8).

And the rest we enter into is the Christ-life (Heb. 4:3).

That may appear simple to you, but I don't want to make it so simple that you miss the importance of what God is saying by this message. We have already taken time in our lessons to deal with Ephesians 1:4. We are now ready to deal with the second tangent of the triangle, the trinity, the trilogy of God.

The second tangent has to do with the killing of the Lamb. Revelation 13:8 clearly announces what is in God's mind in this truth. It reads, "And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world." It is pretty obvious there are other things being dealt with here, especially for people who ought to have known the Lamb but their names were never written in the Lamb's Book of Life. That is primary to understanding this verse, but it isn't the primary meaning we want to deal with here. Right now, we are looking at the announcement concerning the Lamb, Jesus. It says the Book of Life has to do with Christ, the Lamb, who was slain from the foundation of the world. Not just before, but from the foundation of the world.

Now that has got far-reaching consequences in it. If the verse had said He was slain before the foundation of the world, that might have inferred that it was a killing once and for all, that it was only a theoretical thing in the mind of God, that He killed the Lamb. But that really isn't how the verse reads. It says the Lamb was slain "from the foundation of the world," indicating that the Spirit of lambship continued well past the foundation of the world up to Calvary, and finally up to you and me now, because that Lamb is the nature of God. We won't really understand that, I don't think, if we don't understand something about God. Why would God take His most priceless possession and kill it? Now, that is a crude way to say it, but there are at least three or four verses of Scripture which outright tell us that God, Himself, was in charge of the slaying or the killing of the Lamb. While men were used, and even Satan was used, God was in charge. The reason for that is the Lamb is really God's Lamb. We'll come back to that later.

Why would God have this need to slay the Lamb before the foundation of the world? There was no sin before the foundation of the world. You can talk about Satan's rebellion, but that happened after the creation of both heaven and earth (Gen. 1:1), when Satan was cast down to earth (Isa. 14:12; Rev. 12). Also, there is no inference anywhere in the Scripture that Satan was ever to be saved. So, the Lamb is not slain to save the Devil. God used this rebellious one, who was put out of the Father's house because he thought he was bigger than God. He is a tool; by tricking Adam and Eve in the garden, he set into operation His marvelous plan. God knew what He was doing. He had His hand on the whole thing. But, God's didn't slay His Lamb before the foundation of the world to take care of pre-existing sin or to save Satan.

I need to make a point here because many people are misled into thinking everybody is going to be saved in the end, including Lucifer, and the whole world is going to turn right side up and nobody is going to hell. Some teach that there is no such thing as hell, and no such thing as judgement. I have friends, even preacher friends, who really believe even the Devil could be saved in the end. I don't believe that; it goes against God's Word. The reason I make a point of this is to get your attention as to why God slayed the Lamb from the foundation of the world, before sin in human beings came into existence. That is a stimulating thought. That is very important to the Christ-life.

You see, there was no one really involved but God. It wasn't our sin that made God kill the Lamb before the foundation of the world, because Adam and Eve were not yet created. They had not yet sinned, and you and I had not yet sinned. Obviously, God killed the Lamb on behalf of the sin we would commit, but there is another reason the Lamb was slain from the foundation of the world. It was something in God. What is in God that makes Him kill His most precious possession to get what He wants? What was so important to God that He, in his mind, slayed His Lamb long before Calvary?

By the time Calvary came about and we see the dying Lamb, the human race had 4,000 years of built-up rebellion, ignorance, and open sin before God. It isn't hard to look at the Lamb on the cross and say, Ah, He is dying for sin. He is dying for sinners. He is dying for you and me. But there was none of that rebellion when the Lamb was slain before the foundation of the world. So, there had to be something in God Himself, so I will answer one of the biggest questions you will ever get in mortal life. And that is the question, Why death? Why suffering? Why hurt? Why pain? Why did God do that?

Just like he slayed His Lamb before the foundation of the world, so are we treated today. The same thing that was in God that caused Him to do that is the same thing that is in operation in our lives today and makes us say, Why, God, why? You see, there is a thing in God, a suffering, a pain, a hurt; and for God to be true to Himself, He must honor that. What do I mean by all this?

Look at it like this. Our God, our Heavenly Father, is not somebody we create. Now, that probably sounds a little strange to you because you probably never thought we create God; but you see, most people in religion create God. They create their own God, or at least they take the true and living God and reshape Him to their own idealisms. We studied in theology, when I was in seminary, that most people's God is the epitome of their idealism. By living in this world, people have built up attitudes, understanding, and certain things about God in their mind. By those things, they have created who they believe God is. The fellow who never got an answer to prayer says, Ha! God never answers prayers. He has created a God who doesn't answer prayer. Somebody who is sick says, God doesn't really love or He wouldn't have let this happen to me. He wouldn't have done this to me. They have created a version of God by that. Some people create God because they get a miracle every once in a while and they say, He is a miracle-working God. God is miracle-working, but He is not that

specifically. Specifically, who is God then? I don't know how God became like He is, but I know that in God is a thing which says all of life must come out of death.

— **Points to Ponder:**

Now, reflect on what you just read. Journal and/or discuss your understanding of the second tangent, “the Lamb slain before the foundation of the world” in reference to the ultimate plan of God. —

The one verse that is most explanatory of who God is ought to have been the golden text of the Bible; it is John 12:24. It is the words of Jesus where He says, “Verily, verily, I say unto you, except the corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit.” You have read it probably hundreds of times, but did you ever know the depth of understanding in that verse? That verse is telling us that in God there is a law — a literal rule by which He lives — that all of life must come out of death. Well, you see, we haven’t really believed that. Even creationism and its doctrines have a hard time with that. God starts with death to bring life. He starts with nothing to bring life. When we look at God, the first thing we need to see is that He brings life out of death. Well, for Him to do that, there is something deep inside of God. I mean, there is a deep thing in God which says life must come out of death.

You can live your life in religion and churchianity and almost all you will ever hear about death is its fearsome force and power. We look at death negatively, as an enemy. In fact, we call it our last enemy. We say, “Death is swallowed up in victory” (1 Cor. 15:54); and by talking that way, we are assuming spiritual death is the same as physical death. We make no distinction between the two. I need to explain the difference to show you who God is. You see, there is a big difference between God’s understanding of spiritual death and our understanding of physical death. The facts are we don’t understand physical death. We have perhaps seen somebody die or we have had death working in us. Every woman who bears a child has travailed and had death working in her to bring forth life. We have pain, hurt, anxiety, and the travail of death; and we groan that we might get out of these bodies, which is a form of physical death, but we may have never understood spiritual death as God understands and sees it.

When I talk about a believer being crucified, the first thing a carnal church member thinks is, He is after my things again. He is after me being poor, wretched, lost, and undone, and just trusting God for my next breath and my next meal. You see, you don't understand spiritual death. When we talk about the old man dying, that is spiritual death. That kind of dying is spiritual. When we speak of being crucified, we immediately think it is physical death, which is outer; and we draw back from going on with God. I used to write books on crucified living, the crucified life, and so forth; and I found most people would look at the titles and draw back immediately because they believed that to be physical. It is in spiritual death that you come to an affinity with God — a camaraderie with your Heavenly Father — and you, for the first time, exercise and express the Christ who is within you. We call that lambship because, basically, our God is a Lamb. That is who He is.

You may not understand the difference between spiritual death and physical death. There is a writer we read of in the Christ-life Fellowship whose name is Jacob Boehme; and he saw Christ as all and in all. He wrote on the very important theme of the dark side of God. When I first came across this idea, my retaliation toward it was, There is no darkness in God; and so I rejected the very idea. Then the Spirit let me go into the truth of it and hear what the man had to say. Darkness in God's plan, but we don't want to look at it because it has to do with death. That doesn't mean there is darkness in God; it means God uses contrast, the good and bad, to fulfill His plan, for His glory. It is like the side of the coin we don't want to look at, the thought we don't want to think. We can comprehend light when we've seen darkness. God's plan for Christ's sacrifice shows us a dark side in God's plan. Christ is not just the light of the world; He also shines on a part of God to let us really get to know Him. You are not really going to get to know God unless the light shines on that side of God that allows pain and darkness and uses it. By the light of Christ, we see and know God for the first time as He is. If you don't want to look at it, you will never come to know God, never see God, never understand God as He truly is. Only by the Lamb who now

dwells in you can you understand the dark side of God's plan. What is that dark side? God brings life out of death.

I had another friend, Alan Parker, who was a lawyer at the University of Tennessee. He wrote a book entitled, *The Cross in the Heart of God*. That is a different way of saying our God is a Lamb, that life comes out of death. There is a Cross in God's heart. Now, that is an understanding of God we don't like to think about. We don't like to think that God, to be true to Himself, to be sovereign, may hurt sometime, may have pain, may have gone through difficult and hard places. We don't like to face that idea; but the simple facts are there is something about God which makes pain, hurt, and suffering necessary.

I never could accept this from the apostle Paul. I must be frank. He is my favorite writer, and I believe he is the greatest prince of God who has ever been, the most-knowledgeable person about life, death, Christ, and God who ever walked, even in the Bible. But the one thing I couldn't accept from the apostle Paul was that we glory in our suffering, in our pain, in our hurt, and we thank God for our infirmities (2 Cor. 11:30; 12:5, 9–10). That just repulsed me. Surely there was something he didn't know. In fact, I have heard modern preachers say Paul didn't really know God well enough or he would never have made those statements. What Paul knew was that God had a Cross in His heart. He knew there was something about God that when God created the universe and human beings and when He sent His Son, He knew it could never work without the Cross. Don't you see that there is no way possible God's plan could work without a Cross?

I'll be bold here. Men can build crystal palaces, they can build 20,000-seated auditoriums and 5,000 people at the altar every time they give an altar call, they can raise a million dollars every Sunday and preach to the ends of the earth on TV, radio, and internet; but if they don't preach the Cross, which is in the heart of God, they will not bring men to understand

their need to be spiritually re-birthing. When Zion travails, sons are brought forth, children are brought forth. When that hurt, that pain, and that tribulation is felt, that is the spiritual death by which life comes forth. It is in God.

Now do you think by any stretch of the imagination that Almighty God could have taken a part of Himself, God the Son, called Him a Lamb, put that Lamb, Christ, in every re-birthing believer and have each believer never come to that understanding, that knowledge? Do you think it would be possible for Almighty God to take Christ, the Son of God, and put Him in the believer and that believer not come to know that deep thing in God, that dark side of God, that Cross in the heart of God? By no stretch of the imagination can we have Christ as our Savior and our life and us not come to the understanding of that Cross which is in the heart of God.

— **Points to Ponder:**

Now, reflect on what you just read. Journal and/or discuss your understanding of the “Cross in the heart of God.” —

Long before I knew of Jacob Boehme, Alan Parker, the themes of the dark side of God or the Cross in the heart of God, the Spirit taught me this thing about God. I didn't see this clearly at that time as I do now or as I did when these other godly men showed what the Spirit had given them, but what the Spirit gave me was this simple theme that the love of God is a hurt-love. The final manifestation in the hardest, most difficult place is that the love of God comes as a hurt-love. I saw that when “God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son” (John 3:16), that the giving of the Son was out of hurt; the dying of the Son was in hurt, and the receiving of the Son by mortal beings would bear the same hurt. Not that we suffer to be Christians, not that we suffer to be saved, or that our suffering has anything to do with

sin; but the nature that is in the Son is the nature of God, and it comes to us as hurt-love. It comes to us as lambship.

You can't separate lambship from lordship. You can't have lordship without lambship, which is what churches want today. Churches today want Jesus to be Lord, but there are not many people crying for Him to be Lamb. Jesus is the Lamb first. He must be Lamb before He can be Lord; there had to be death before there could ever be life.

Do you understand the far-reaching consequences of death coming out of life? Do you understand that God created this world on the premise that life could only come out of death? Do you understand that the fall of man in the Garden of Eden brought man the spiritual death necessary to bring forth the life of Christ? Do you understand that when the first Adam failed, he took on death? That was absolutely necessary in order for the last Adam, Christ, to bring us into life? Don't you understand that everything in the creation of the world was life coming out of death? When God created what is in the universe, it is marked by death; and that death brings new life. Every tree dies that it might bring forth new life. In the seasons, as it were, things die in the winter and come to vibrant life in the spring. Everything in the universe operates off the theme that life comes out of death.

If our evolutionist friends, even Christian evolutionists, came to know God, they would never have a problem over life, death, the universe, and Creation because the whole thing is based on this thing in God that all life comes out of death and without death there can be no life. I am speaking spiritually. The universe is run by that. Creation is run by that. If most of the insects did not die when they bear their young, we would be taken over by insects. People who are anti-God think of the world operating like that, you see. They imagine birds or insects taking over the universe. They made movies where birds, insects, or rats take over. They imagine dinosaurs coming into the world again. They imagine all sorts of weird things

happening because they don't know God; and if you don't know God, you are not going to understand the universe. The whole universe was made by Christ and for Christ, and aside from Christ there is not anything in existence (John 1:3; Col. 1:16–17). If you get these ideas locked into your thinking, you are going to come to see what God is doing.

— **Points to Ponder:**

Now, reflect on what you just read. Journal and/or discuss your understanding of the statement, “You can't separate lambship from lordship. You can't have lordship without lambship.” —

So the second most-important tangent of the trilogy that runs the universe, stated for us in Revelation 13:8, is simply that our God is a Lamb. Now, you can say God is a great Creator; you can say God is Lord of all. I have known people in religion who have spent their whole lifetime arguing over what name to give God. Kind of interesting I think because some of them are interested in Him being the I Am, and they have a whole list of doctrines which flow out of that. We have gotten bogged down by not knowing who God is; and so whatever our fantasy or illusion is, we flow with it.

What is God? What does the universe say God is? What does the Bible say God is? First and foremost, our God is a Lamb. Don't you see that written all the way through? This hurt-love of God, this dark side of God, comes through in every place in the Scripture. Even when Adam and Eve rebelled against God by the master sinner, Satan, deceiving them, don't you see what God did? When God came on the scene, what did He do? He said there can be no life, no hope for this couple except out of death. So, He killed an innocent animal, and by the skin of that animal, He covered the sin, the nakedness of Adam and Eve. Out of death came the only life they ever had. From that point on, all the way through the Scriptures, thousands upon

thousands of times, the only way men could ever have life was out of death. Life flows out of death. That is why they offered all those sacrifices. Lambs, goats, turtle doves, and so forth. That is why the priest, once a year, went in and offered a sacrifice of an innocent lamb. Why? That was all indicative of God. It was saying who God is. It was saying how God operates. How does the world run? How does life carry on? It comes out of death. Life comes out of death. This is the richest, deepest principle I could possibly bring to you.

Revelation 13:8 is one verse we like to use in the Christ-life message; but there are other verses you ought to mark. Look at Hebrews 9:26, "For then must He often have suffered since the foundation of the world." Remember, I made a point in Revelation 13:8 that the Lamb was not slain before the foundation of the world in the wording there, but He was slain from the foundation of the world. A slaying took place continually. Notice what Hebrews 9:26 says, "For then must He often have suffered since the foundation of the world." It says, "Since the foundation of the world." But now watch. "In the end of the world hath He appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself." The "end of the world" mentioned here is the end of the world of sin. The end of the world of iniquity was put away; it was done away with at Calvary when Jesus died.

What literally happened was God, in His mind, took His most priceless possession and killed Him before the foundation of the world. Calvary is only the outworking of it, where our sins are borne and done away with and an end is put to the world of sin. It's beautiful the way the Scriptures say it. It was all done before the foundation of the world or from the foundation of the world.

It is interesting to see that the way God would deal with sin is out of His hurt and pain. He would take all of the wretched and hurtful issues in the universe and swallow them up by death, spiritual death, the death of an

innocent substitute. You see, that is what was done from Adam all the way through to John the Baptist, for over 4,000 years of time. God said some innocent substitute will put an end to your hurt, your pain, and your suffering; so, you must do what I tell you. Accept this innocent substitute because that puts an end to what keeps you from being godly. Jesus was God's answer to sin.

Look at 1 Peter 1:19–20, “But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot who verily was foreordained.” From the word foreordained, I get the terminology “a God-thought.” The death of Jesus Christ in the mind of God was an irreversible, indisputable God-thought that happened exactly as He thought it. “Who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifested in these last times.” When was Jesus committed to die? Before sin came into the world. When was that manifested? At Calvary, at Golgotha.

You must see first that God is a Lamb. Lambship is the strongest theme in the nature of God. The characteristic of God working out of believers now by the Holy Spirit is God as a Lamb. Lambship is the strongest character trait there is in the believer who understands Christ in them. But more so, if you go through the book of Revelation and look for the word lamb, you would find in this one book, at least 27 times God honors the Lamb. Isn't that interesting? To get what He wanted in human beings possessed of the Christ-life, God worked out of death to bring life. In the end, when all of God's children are home and all things are consummated upon the earth, Israel will be restored, covenants will be fulfilled, and God's plan will finally be worked out. All during that time, God will bring honor and glory to the Lamb. From Revelation chapters 4 to 22, Jesus is called a Lamb over and over. At least 27 times, God honors this fact that death is the only thing that can bring life, that Jesus is the only life there is, and He must die before there can ever possibly be any life. Everything in the book of Revelation revolves around lambship. The city is the city of a Lamb. The throne is the throne of the Lamb. The elders are the elders of the Lamb. The inheritance is the inheritance of the Lamb. The Book of Life is the Lamb's Book of

Life. Everything in the book of Revelation centers around the Lamb because that is the strongest theme in God. Life out of death. Our God is a Lamb. When He took a part of Himself, His seed, and put it in you and said, Christ is in you, what did you have in you? You had lambship. The Lamb for sinners slain is in you.

— **Points to Ponder:**

Now, reflect on what you just read. Journal and/or discuss your understanding of the statement “God is a Lamb” and the idea that the Lamb is in you? —

Do you know why the world doesn't have the gospel? The characteristics of the Lamb are not working out through believers. I don't think the lambship message is poor or degrading. My God has streets of gold. The marriage supper of the Lamb will be a banquet that beats anything you ever heard of. So, the idea of us being lambs is not to be poor, wretched, and undone. That was one of the disgraceful churches in the first three chapters of Revelation. That is not what we are. Lambship has to do with character, with us seeing that only as we decrease does He increase (John 3:30). That is in the mind-soul; it is reckoning yourself dead (Rom. 6:11). Only as we deny ourselves, our self-interest, and pick up the Cross and follow Him can we do what His character within us yearns to do. We lay down our life for our brother; that is lambship. You could give all you have away, and you wouldn't be a lamb. You wouldn't be the Christ who is in you. You could be nailed to a cross in this world, and you still wouldn't be the Christ who is in you. The Christ in you is God's characteristic of lambship which flows out of death, bringing forth life.

Why did God kill the Lamb before the foundation of the world? Because He would do something so unbelievable, that unless He paid the price to make it work, He would be untrue to Himself. God must be true to Himself. What

would He do that is so unbelievable? He would put a part of Himself into humans. From the time He puts that part of Himself into a human, He depends on Himself in the human and not the human at all. Christ has been made unto us righteousness (1 Cor. 1:30). What does that mean? God does not depend on our works of righteousness; they are filthy rags in His sight. Who does He depend on? He depends on Christ who has been made unto us righteousness. But, what right does He have to do that? How can He possibly be true to Himself wanting love returned to Him, free, genuine love. How can He possibly take a part of Himself, which is love, and put it in the human so the human can love Him back as He is? What right does He have to seal that? He has no right without the Cross.

You never thought of God like that, did you? You never thought of God saying, What right do I have? I have no right to do that; so this is what I am going to do. I am going to take my own Son, whom I am placing in the human to be life. I am going to kill my Son; and out of that death, I'll bring forth life. That is the most beautiful thing in the whole plan of God. God has the right, by slaying the Lamb, to work out a plan whereby for every sinner who believes on the Lord Jesus Christ — as dirty, wretched, unclean, and undone as they are — He will put His own nature in them. He paid the price when He killed the Lamb.

But there is a deeper dimension to that; it means something very important to you and me. The Lamb is not first and foremost our Lamb; He is God's Lamb. That Savior hanging on the old, rugged cross at Calvary is not first and foremost our Savior; He is God's Lamb. That is God's Lamb being offered that God might have the right to birth in us His dear Son. Oh, that is my sacrifice, too. It is my sin offering, too. It is me dying, too. Christ died for sinners. That is me; He died for me. But, that is not the ultimate. The ultimate of Calvary is that it is God's sacrifice; it is God's Lamb. That is why in the book of Revelation God honors the Lamb, because it was His Lamb.

— **Points to Ponder:**

Now, reflect on what you just read. Journal and/or discuss your understanding of why God killed the lamb before the foundation of the world. —

This message I bring to you now is the power of the gospel that is unto salvation. If you want to know more about Jesus, ask the Holy Spirit to reveal Him; because as you fully and totally have Christ in you right now, the Holy Spirit will reveal Him to you. You just ask Him. Whatever your problem, your load, your cares, your need is, God will answer every bit of it by showing you more of His dear Son who is in you. Trust Him to do that.

Scripture References

John 1:3

Isaiah 28:9–10

Rev 13:8

Hebrews 4:3

John 12:24

1 Corinthians 15:54

John 3:16

Hebrews 9:26

1 Peter 1:19

1 Corinthians 1:30

Ephesians 1:4

Explore More

A. Are you experiencing third-dimensional death in your life? Where have you suffered loss of outer, earthly things?

B. Have you seen your own fourth-dimensional death? Have you seen yourself crucified with Christ, dead to your own will, to your own plans, to your own needs and wants, and to sin? Have you yet given up your claim to this life, the idea that this is your life? Have you reckoned your flesh dead and your new life is Christ's life? Reflect on this. Write your thoughts and share with your study group what this means to you.

C. Read the following verses paying special attention to the Father-Son relationship, Christ's purpose, and His response to His Father. Whose Lamb, whose sacrifice, is Christ? Journal/Discuss your response.

John 17:5

John 10:30, 38

John 5:30

John 8:29, 42

John 10:15, 17–18

John 12:49–50

John 14:31

Mark 14:36

John 15:10

D. This same Christ, the Lamb Spirit, is inside you, inside each born-again believer. Write your thoughts on this or discuss this with your study group.

Lesson 9

Rest

We are dealing with the theme of life, the purpose of the universe, and what God is doing; because what He is doing has to do with you. You may think you are a long way from God, but the fact is everything God is doing has to do with you. Don't you think it would be wonderful if you understood what God was doing in this universe and how He was moving and working?

We are not religious. We don't intend to have anything to do with manmade religion. My definition of religion is trying to do something to become who we already are by Christ in us. That is religion. We are not going to do anything that will make us be who we already are. We are a long way from working for salvation; we have been delivered from all that. We hope you come to a rest and a peace. That really is what this lesson is about.

We hope you will grow and cause others to want to hear this liberating secret, that their lives are set free and they are charged by this fire which burns inside of us until every human being hears this message of "Christ in you, the hope of glory" (Col. 1:27). They will never come to the ultimate fulfillment of their purpose in this world without this knowledge. Wouldn't it be awful to live all your life and never come to what God intended you to be? Maybe you already have the feeling that, I am not really what I want to be. I am not really what I think I can be. I am not what I am supposed to be. You may be absolutely right because, until this knowledge comes to you, you will never be who you were supposed to be.

If you think that is an egotistical statement from just me, I want to correct you, because I am just one voice for this tremendous truth; and there are many voices all over the world saying these truths. What I am saying to you is Spirit; it is truth. It is from the Holy Spirit, and it is Christ in you rising up, reaching out to you because as a Christian, that is the only life you have.

We consider ourselves a wagon train in the Christ-life Fellowship. Long ago, we saw we had such a startling and powerful message which so many people did not know about that we considered ourselves as being like those who made the first trip across the American wilderness to the West Coast. On this wagon train are wagons which have come from all over the world. We are among the first to make this daring pilgrimage into the Christ-life and to make it known to the world. Bringing this message to hungry hearts is like the children of Israel of old headed from Egypt through the wilderness into the land of rest. We are glad your wagon is with us on the trip, that you have drawn your wagon in, and you are going to make this journey with us.

You see, it is not going to be an easy trip. Learning these truths and learning this Christ who is within us is not a very simple or easy thing, and there are going to be a lot of wagons that join us who are going to pull out. Some are going to start their own wagon train. We are going to have a bunch of fights with the Indians, and we are going to have some really difficult times forging the streams, crossing the rivers, climbing up the mountains, facing the cold, hard winter; and maybe we will run out of food. But do you know what? We are victorious. We are going to make the trip. Our wagon is going all the way to the Father's house, and every wagon that is joined with us has this one intention. We are going to be pleasing to the Father when we sit at His table because He will look at all of us and see His one Son. That is what motivates us. We are so glad you are part of it; and I hope you will even raise up workers where you are who will get up other wagons so they, too, will join our wagon train. I just want you to know that God is moving, and

the trip is worth the sacrifice. The hurt and the pain you may feel in the change of doctrines and the change from religion to Christ is worth it all.

I won't mislead you. You are going to suffer somewhat by coming to know Christ as your all; but until you make the change — until the transformation takes place and you know you are in the kingdom of the Son and the Son's kingdom is in you — you will still be lacking, and you will suffer. But, once you know it and see it, the pain of the transformation is gone; it doesn't hurt anymore. The pain of this world is then bearable when you have that knowledge.

When I first came to see Jesus, when I was first arrested by the Holy Spirit, I remember there was something about Jesus I did not know, and I can remember the pain I went through because that was the hardest thing for me to admit. I had it all. I had been a good Baptist, a good Assemblies of God believer and preacher, a good teacher in Bible college, and a good seminarian. I thought it was through the things I had done that I knew the Lord, but I didn't know the Jesus who was in me.

Now that is the big difference. There are a lot of people preaching Christ in the form of Jesus of Nazareth, and that is good. But, Christ in us as our life must be preached. Christians must learn of the Christ who has been birthed in us, by whom we have this born-again relationship with God. That highly-loved relationship where God, Himself, birthed in the human being His own nature by His Son, Christ, Christ in us. Until you come to that understanding and knowledge, you are still not who you were intended to be; you still haven't become who God intended you to be.

It looks to me like the search to find out who God intended you to be should be the search for every human being. When God put you on this earth, He gave you a certain physique, certain qualities, certain talents, and certain

abilities to use and to manifest. Wouldn't it be awful if you lived all the days of your life and never found out about those things, never had those things working in your life? That is what the Christ-life is all about. It is helping people know who they are by the Christ who is in them.

If you have been born again, if you have been saved, Christ is in you, the real living person of Christ is in you. Not just Spirit, you can't separate His Spirit from His person. You bear the fruits of the Spirit, which are His personality traits of love, joy, peace, longsuffering, and so forth. You have a new person within you, Christ in you. Oh, you say, I just have the nature of God in me. You can't have nature without character. The character of God is in His nature. You have God's nature in you so you have His character. What is that character? It is Christ. It is the Christ-life. That is what this message is all about. That is the message we have heard from Him and declare unto you, a message of a new life. You can't separate the life from the message; they are both one and the same thing. We have the life, Christ, in us; and the expression of that life is the message. The message is vibrant and alive.

Learning Christ

In the past couple of lessons, we have dealt with two of the tangents to the triangle, the trilogy, of us knowing and seeing who we are in Christ. As we have dealt with these, it has been my purpose to show you the fullness, the liberating power and purpose, that is in the person of Jesus Christ.

We are now ready to discuss the third of these trilogies of God's character. Everything that has to do with God comes in three parts, just like God is a Trinity: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. One element of the trilogy is Ephesians 1:4, which shows we were chosen in Him before the foundation of the world. The second element in the trilogy is Revelation 13:8, which shows the Lamb was slain from the foundation of the world. The third element in the trilogy is Hebrews 4:3, where our basic subject is rest and peace.

You may wonder how peace and rest could be one of the supporting tangents to the knowledge which runs this universe. I believe it is this trilogy of ideas and Scriptures which run this whole universe. I don't believe the universe is run by gravitational force, though that makes it technically work. I don't believe the seasons run the universe, though they technically work. I believe what runs and operates the whole universe are these three ideas. We were chosen before the foundation of the world; and to make it work, God killed His Lamb in order that He may bring human beings to peace and rest.

It may be a bit difficult for you to put all that together; but the whole of it is God's intention was to have sons, with His nature and character, living in His house. How would God get His character into a human being and that human being not become or be made a robot by that operation? He would have to create everything in the universe to flow out of that thought, and He did. Everything that has to do with God fits this plan that He would put

another person, His own Son, in the human and depend on Christ in order to have His house filled with sons.

You see, it is all premised on the fact that God had a house full of angels in what we call the First Estate. A third of the angels followed Lucifer in a coup against God to throw Him off His own throne (Isa. 14:12–15; Luke 10:18; 2 Peter 2:4; Jude 1:6; Rev. 12:9–14). God cast Lucifer and the angels to earth, putting into motion His plan to fill up His house with His own birthed children. Thus, He began His ultimate plan, the plan of salvation for human beings. God had a clean-cut, powerful God-thought to produce His own children. From the foundation of the world, before He created anything, He chose every soul born on earth (Eph. 1:4); then He would kill His Lamb (1 Peter 1:19–20) when the time came; and then humans would enter into His rest (Heb. 4:3). That was in God's mind before anything was created in the world. It would take time to work it all out, over 4,000 years, in fact; but He would finish it all perfectly in His time.

So you see, we mustn't get lost in religion that says the epitome of what we do for God is to make this little program work. You walk into some churches and see the banners and the promotions on the walls, you hear the preacher give the announcements of everything taking place, and you would think that was the plan of God. The simple truth is God had a plan which He put into operation before He created the world, and the world is an out-flowing of that plan. Without that knowledge, you are never going to make your life work in this world. You are living in a world that seems to be contrary to everything you are doing because you don't know these simple truths.

— **Points to Ponder:**

Now, reflect on what you just read. Journal and/or discuss your understanding of how a believer “learns Christ.” —

Hebrews 4:3

This next point is a powerful God-idea that so often escapes us. The Scripture at the heart of this is Hebrews 4:3. We have to begin reading in Hebrews 4:1 because this is a whole context of truth that has to do with the third verse. Hebrews 4:1 says, “Let us therefore fear.” It isn’t too often the Holy Spirit uses a term like this as it is translated from the Greek “to fear.” The fear that is used here is to have a godly reverence or respect. “Let us therefore fear, lest, a promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of you should seem to come short of it.”

We need to define the word rest. My very mention of the word has probably set your mind to thinking, Boy, I need to have some rest. If I had stayed home to rest, I would have felt a little better. When we mention the word rest, we talk about one of the most elusive items in life. The pill industry in America makes billions of dollars because the American people don’t have rest. It is obvious I am not talking about the same kind of rest that is in Hebrews 4:3. I am talking about physical rest, and that is what we all think about when we get on the subject of rest. We think about physically resting, where we are not tired anymore. That is not what this verse is talking about, although I know that is what comes to your mind, that we should fear lest we fail to enter into His rest. The key to it is in Hebrews 4:1. He is not talking about our rest; he is talking about His rest, God’s rest. In Hebrews 4:1 mark “his rest.”

What are we after here? Are we after physical rest so you and I don’t come home tired from work, so we aren’t tired in the morning? No. He is talking about Christ’s rest, entering into Christ’s rest. Let me paraphrase this first verse. Let the believer therefore have a godly reverential respect for the promise of God, the whole Word of God. We don’t want any part of God’s Word left out that would keep us from entering into the rest of Christ.

— **Points to Ponder:**

Now, reflect on what you just read. Journal and/or discuss your understanding of “entering into His rest.” —

Israel

Hebrews 4:2 says, “For unto us was the gospel preached, as well as unto them.” We are talking about some folks who had a promise of rest, but didn’t enter into it. You will be surprised at how much we are like those same people today. Who are the people he is talking about here? He is talking about the children of Israel, a people who never entered into their rest. “For unto us was the gospel preached, as well as unto them: but the word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it” (Heb. 4:2). Let me give you my translation of that verse. For unto us modern-day, born-again, Spirit-filled believers has been given the true gospel of Christ, the same gospel which was preached unto Israel. But, when the Word was preached to Israel, it did not profit them because it was not mixed with faith or God-knowledge in them who heard it. Israel rejected the gospel of grace and it was sent to the Gentiles.

A gospel is being preached to men today that they can enter into His rest; but like Israel, people today are not entering into His rest. The Israelites were in Pharaoh’s bondage in Egypt, slaves under a cruel task master. That is typical of sin; the sinner’s task masters are the Devil and sin. Israel was delivered miraculously through the red sea; then the waters came back and swallowed Pharaoh’s army; and Israel moved on into a wilderness. They, in fact, wandered and camped in the wilderness for 40 years, in utter disarray and disobedience to God, but God’s grace was sufficient to take care of them. That is a blessed note, isn’t it? That we can be way out of God’s plan, but God still takes care of us. We can be far from His plan, but His grace is still sufficient, and He will take care of us. What did God deliver Israel from Egypt for? Canaan. Canaan was presented as a land of rest, a place where they would come to where God would do it all.

Israel got side-tracked. They never did fully see that God would do it all and they just needed to trust Him. They didn’t understand rest. You see, in the wilderness it was their believing, their faith, their doing what God told them to do; but Canaan was where God said, I’ll go before you. I’ll tear down the strong-walled cities. I’ll defeat the enemy. They couldn’t see the

difference. They thought, If we stay here, we will get miracles; so let's stay in the wilderness. God said, If you go into the land of rest, I will do it for you; and all you will have to do is follow me. I will go before you.

There is a big difference between God going before you and you trying to make things happen by your own effort or your own faith. The believer who is still trusting in, and working by his own effort, his faith, his fasting, his prayer, his holiness, his righteousness, has never come to rest. He has never come to see God do it alone. When Moses sent the spies over into the land of rest, they saw the strong-walled cities, the big giants, and all of the negative things there; they forgot that God said, I will take care of that. All you have got to do is go. All they could think of was, Hey, we were getting miracles easily back there in the wilderness. Why go over there into Canaan's land where we have big giants and strong-walled cities and all these enemies? They didn't see God. They didn't know God. Joshua and Caleb came back with a bunch of grapes and a whole lot of evidence that God would do it; but the children of Israel didn't know any better than the average believer today. What is rest? Rest is God doing it and you trusting Him without self-effort.

I never make a statement like that or deal with this subject when someone doesn't say, But, aren't we supposed to do something? There are many things you will do. In fact, when Joshua got the children over in the land of Canaan, they did a lot of things God told them to do. They marched around the walls of Jericho seven times; they did a lot of hard work. But, do you know what the difference was? In Canaan, it was God doing it — not to tell them who they were. They were already God's chosen people doing God's will, and they no longer had to do one thing to be who they were. But back in the wilderness, before they came to this rest, they had to do something to make it work.

Today's Christian

The modern believer who does not know the Christ-life is always doing to be. He has got to do something to be a Christian. If he doesn't read his Bible, if he doesn't pray, if he doesn't go and witness, if he doesn't make every Church service, he is condemned. If not by the Devil, then by a preacher; or he feels defeated and thinks he's not a good Christian. He is always trying to be who he is; he has never entered into rest. He has never entered into the rest that, I am who I am by the birthing, and I can't be any more than who I am. The more we know who we are, the more we will express it; but you can't be any more than you are right now.

That is the true message. The true message is that you have been birthed by God. His seed is in you; and that seed is perfect. It is complete. It is not growing; it is not becoming more. God is not putting more input into the Christ in you. You have total Christ in you. He is total everything. What is growing is your knowledge, your understanding, your expression, your oneness with Him. That is your expression; but Jesus in you is not growing at all. He can't grow. He is total; He is complete; He is all in all.

The children of Israel are used as an illustration here because it was by their own works and effort that they kept going, kept singing, kept praising, doing, and working in the wilderness to get, to get, to get. The greatest evidence of this is that the greatest leader who God raised up in the Old Testament miserably failed God in doing to be who he was. You see Moses had to do what God said to be who he was. On one occasion, God told Moses to do something, and Moses didn't do it. So Moses was not who he was to God. He miserably failed God. God told him to speak to the rock, and he struck it. He said, If I go ahead and strike this rock, I will be somebody. God didn't need him to be somebody. God needed him to be obedient. Moses did not know the difference. He was so use to obeying a law to be who he was that when God simply told him to speak, he didn't do it.

That illustration is the clearest point I can make of what is happening in religion today. Believers are constantly being told to be somebody by their doing. They are not being told that they are somebody and that when they learn who they are, they will do all kinds of things. The reverse is taking place, and it is keeping people from their rest.

For many years, I worked my fingers to the bone to be a good pastor. I had all sorts of programs. I had people doing something all the time; and I said, If you do this, then you will be who you are. If you do this, then you will be what God wants you to be. If you do this, then you will be a good Christian and a good committed person. You will be a good disciple of Christ. Oh, if I had only known. That is law. That is the wilderness where men will get blessings from God but still live in disobedience to God. They have not entered into His rest. I should have told the people who they were in Christ. Be who you are in Christ. Get fixed in your mind that you are a birthed offspring of God. That is who you are. You have God's nature in you. It is total; it is complete. Now, begin to learn who you are; begin to see who you are; grow up in who you are. Quit doing something to be who you are because you can't become who you already are. Learn who you are by the birthing; and when you learn that, then you are at rest; you are at peace.

— Points to Ponder:

Now, reflect on what you just read. Journal and/or discuss your understanding of the contrast of doing and being. —

Rest

What is rest? What is this peace I am dealing with? It is the children of Israel entering into Canaan's land and letting God pull down the walls. You see, out of love —because they knew who they were, the chosen of God — they marched around the walls of Jericho; but that marching, by no stretch of the imagination did it. I've heard a lot of miracle-type preaching say their marching did it; their stomping on the ground did it. No, obedience to the love that made them who they were marched them around the wall. It was God who brought down the enemy; it was God who dropped the wall; and that is what He will do in your life. You can't, by doing, be who you are. You are already who you are by the grace of God; and because you know that, you are going to march around your enemy. It will always be God who defeats them. That is your rest. Your doing is an act of love. Your victory is an act of God — God, by Christ in you, defeating the enemy.

Let's move on to Hebrews 4:3, which is our prime verse in this tangent of this trilogy of knowledge. "For we which have believed do enter into rest." There it is. "As he said, As I have sworn in my wrath, if they shall enter into my rest: although the works were finished from the foundation of the world." This is such a powerful verse of Scripture. I have never read and commented on this verse of Scripture when I didn't think, Oh, Holy Spirit, the depth in that verse I know not. Surely, you will have to bring the people to the understanding of what that one little verse says. Let's break it down and take it line by line.

The first part of the verse says, "For we which have believed do enter into rest." What is our rest? The believer's rest is not a physical rest; the believer's rest is a knowing, knowing that he can be no more than he already is as an offspring of God. He can learn more about it; he can be more effective in it; and he can express it better. But, he can't be any more than he already is. He has entered into His rest. Everyone who has believed has entered into the rest that I can do nothing to be who I am. I am who I am by the seed of God that is in me.

“For we which have believe do enter into rest, as he said, As I have sworn in my wrath.” I have never known exactly how to handle that line, so I am just going to tell you what comes to me by the Spirit. You seldom, in the New Testament, hear God swearing. You probably didn’t think God swore, but He says, I swear here. Furthermore, you wouldn’t think of God as being one full of wrath, but the line says He swore in His wrath. That’s the most violent statement I can ever make about God. What is God’s wrath? The wrath of God is that those who disobey Him shall be punished; they shall suffer. God says, “As I have sworn in my wrath, if they shall enter into My rest.”

His Rest

We must watch the terminology here. It says “my rest.” He doesn’t say we would enter into our rest. Our rest is when we die in this body and go to heaven. He says, “If they shall enter into My rest.” What is His rest? It is His seed in us. That is His rest. There is no more God can do for us; so He says, This is so total, and complete that I swear in my wrath, by all the judgement that I can bring on the human race, that they enter into this rest of Christ being their life, their all. Canaan is the Christ-life, the land of rest where we do no more to be who we are; we are who we are by the birthing of God. God said, I swear by the wrath that is with in me, that that is what will happen to them.

It is pretty obvious that God has an archenemy here, if He swore that we would enter into that rest which is the Christ-life. Multitudes who have been re-birthed, are born again, are children of God, still haven’t entered into God’s rest. With all God’s swearing in His wrath, it still hasn’t happened. God has an archenemy, Satan. Satan’s work is not making people drunks, drug addicts, harlots, or perverts. His greatest work is keeping people from God’s rest. That is why God swore so violently here, “For we which have believed do enter into rest, as he said, As I have sworn in my wrath, if they shall enter into my rest.”

Do you know why there is such violent language there? Because God’s whole plan hinges on human beings being possessed of Christ and Christ being their all. God says, I can put no more in my seed. I can’t put any more life in the seed than is already there. You have total, everlasting life in Christ. I have put Him in you. I can’t put any more in you than what is in Him. That’s your rest. Quit working to be who you are. Quit doing things to be a good Christian. Quit going to church, being a good tithe-payer, a good singer, a good preacher, and a good teacher — quit all that to be who you already are by Christ in you. God said, I swear in my wrath that people will enter into my rest. They cannot be any more than they are by their doing than I have already made them by the birthing.

What is God's rest? It is Christ in us, the hope of glory. Where is my rest? My hope of glory is Christ in me. I wake up in the morning, and I don't have to worry about being the child of God; I am a child of God. Some mornings I pray; some mornings I don't pray. Some mornings I take my Bible and read; some mornings I don't. You see, that is a radical departure from my wilderness journey. I got a lot of miracles in the wilderness, but I had no rest. What did I do in the wilderness? I got up every morning and said, If I don't read my Bible, I won't get my miracle because I won't be a good Christian. If I don't pray then I am not a good Christian. If I don't get to this church service, then I am not good Christian. If I don't give my money, then I am not a good Christian. I had to be delivered from that. What is that deliverance? That deliverance is to stop doing to be, and let Christ be the doer in you and you be the be-er of Him.

Does that mean I stop going to church? No. Does it mean I stop giving my money? No. I don't give any money, go to church, read my Bible, and pray to be a good Christian. I give my money, go to church, read my Bible, and pray because I am an offspring of God. I don't have to do it an hour every day or three hours every day. That is bondage; it is law. You don't have to do anything to be who you are; but when you find out by the Holy Spirit who you are, nobody can stop you from doing the things that teach you Christ. You are free; you are liberated. You are free to be who you are, and you don't have to work at trying to be that.

A preacher once said to me, "If that was preached to my congregation, I wouldn't have anybody back next Sunday. It is because I tell them they need to come to church and give their money to be a good Christian that I get them there." My heart was grieved. He was honest; most preachers are not that honest. Most churches are not that honest with their program. The fact is, if people were taught the Word of God and who they are in Christ, you would never have to beg them to come to church. You would not have

to beg them to give. They would have entered into their rest. Their rest is, I am already what I am supposed to be for God.

This goes a step further. Far too many today keep saying, The Church is not right. The bride is not ready; so the Christian could not possibly go to heaven. That idea says two things. It says you can't depend on the Cross where we are redeemed; and it says the seed of God which is in the human being is a perverted seed. I hear Paul saying we may all be bastards in that case, and that is not the case. The fact is, we have the pure seed of God, Christ in us. God only has one; and if you have been saved at all, you have been saved by Jesus. If you have life at all, the life is in the Son. "He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life" (1 John 5:12). If you have the Son, you have life. If you don't have the Son, you don't have life. So there is no way Christians are going to become better people. They may express it better; but what they do doesn't make them better or more of a son. Only Christ in them is their hope of glory. That is this message of rest; that is why we have such violent language here, why God swears in His wrath that we enter into His rest.

— **Points to Ponder:**

Now, reflect on what you just read. Journal and/or discuss your understanding of God's rest. —

Finished

There is still more in Hebrews 4:3. God not only swore in His wrath that we enter His rest, but He said all His works are finished. Somebody may say, If you come over here to our church you will be a better Christian because we have more power, more people, more miracles, or more wonderful things happening. Do you know what? That won't make any difference because all God's works are finished. There are bumper stickers which say, "Be patient. God is not finished with me yet." All God's works are finished. We have to bring that little line home because that is a trick the Devil is playing on us. When we fail, we say, Well, God does it better than what I am. We are not talking about what you are doing. What you are doing has nothing to do with your birthing. You were birthed to be someone.

We will get to the doing later. When we get on the other side of the Cross where we see that we are redeemed and we can begin to pick up the cross and carry it, it is then we will see what love commandments are. What I am dealing with right now is law. Law will not make a Christian; and law says you have to do this to be a Christian. What you do doesn't make you a Christian. God finished all His works; He is done with that law. The law is consummated, fulfilled, done away with at Calvary, as far as we in grace are concerned. The law never did make a believer that God accepted in the first place. It took a Lamb; it took a Messiah; it took a Savior. All God's works are finished.

I don't know how to bring this thought home to you other than to hit right where it may hurt the most. As a pastor for many years, I always had programs which were always intermingled with eternity. In other words, everybody needed to help me with my programs because eternal life hinged on it. If we didn't do it, we failed God. If we failed God, we were so convicted that we didn't feel like we were saved. I don't think I ever had a real program or built a building that I didn't dump that kind of load on people.

Now that the years have gone by and I see Christ as my life and my all, a marvelous thing has happened. I have come to the revelation of that little line that all God's works are finished. I can see now that every vision I had that was never finished had nothing to do with who I am in Christ; I am still totally victorious. I can see now that every building I didn't get finished does not condemn me at all. All God's works are already finished, and I rest in that. If everything the preacher wants doesn't get done these days, it doesn't have anything to do with who he is in Christ or who you are in Christ. All God's works are finished.

Now, don't read into that that the whole world is already saved and there is nothing we are going to do. That is not what it says. It is saying the work of us being redeemed and being children of God, being chosen in Christ, was finished before the foundation of the world. "Although the works were finished from the foundation of the world." When did God finish this marvelous act of salvation in His mind? It was before the world was ever created. What keeps you and me from being the kind of people we ought to be? It is what is happening to us in the world, but the world doesn't have anything to do with who I am in Christ. We like to hear someone's testimony, about what he went through, all of the troubles and all the problems he had in being a drug addict and how God obviously saved him; but the fact is, all God's works for that drug addict were finished before the foundation of the world, and the world was only the manifestation of what was necessary to bring it about in his life. We love to hear about what men do and not so much of what God has done.

When Jesus dropped His dead head on dead shoulders at Golgotha, He cried, "It is finished" (John 19:30). What was finished? The plan of God, the works God finished before the foundation of the world. Jesus had merely manifested openly the finished work of God. All God's works were finished before the foundation of the world. If you could grasp that, you could come to rest. In your rest, you will be a harder worker, a greater worker for God than you were ever before. I work many hours more than I ever did when I was a pastor of a church. I have fewer, if any, days off now

because it burns in me to bring this liberated message to the world. Day and night, I am consumed with this effort to work, but none of my effort is self-effort; it is His effort. None of my works are mine; they are His. None of the words I speak are mine; they are the words of Him who sent me. Why? I am living Christ in the form of Warren Litzman. It is not I who live; it is Christ who liveth in me. His energy, His personality, and His fruit comes through me as me. It is Christ alive. I am doing more today than I ever did before, but I don't do one thing that makes me a better Christian or a better child of God. I was birthed a son, a child of God, a Christ-person. That is what I am. I can't be any more than what I was birthed to be. I am who I am by the grace of God, and so are you. Most of all, I am in love with Christ in me.

If I can lift that heavy load off of you — the load which says, I better do this or I will fail; I will be condemned — by telling you who you are in Christ, then you can enter into rest. Don't you see why God swore in His wrath that we would enter into His rest? Every force the Devil has will keep us from it. It is the Devil's trick to make us say, You better pray and read your Bible or you won't be a good child of God. That is a lie. As precious as praying and reading the Bible are, they do not make a child of God. Children of God are birthed by God when they believe on the Lord Jesus Christ. You were born again; God put His seed in you; and you are a partaker of His nature, His character. Christ in you is your hope of glory. Fix that in your mind; live that, and be free from the law that brings condemnation.

— **Points to Ponder:**

Now, reflect on what you just read. Journal and/or discuss your understanding of the works finished from the foundation of the world (Heb. 4:3). —

Scripture References

Hebrews 4: 1–3

1 John 5:12

John 19:30

Ephesians 1:4

Revelation 13:8

1 John 5:12

Explore More

A. Write out and study the following Scriptures and write your thoughts for each.

1. Work — Our Part

Romans 4:4–5:

Romans 11:6:

Romans 6:12–14, 16, 19, 22:

2. Work — God’s Part

Eph. 3:20:

1 Cor. 12:4–12:

Col. 1:29:

3. Rest

Continue trusting God, resting through life's C&S.

2 Cor. 7:4–6:

2 Cor. 12:9–10:

Heb. 4:1–11:

B. Discuss work and rest in Christ with your study group.

Lesson 10

The Now Generation

In these lessons, we are dealing with the now generation, and we are going to search some Scriptures to see just exactly what it means to be in the now generation.

Now

The word now is really the key word. Now. What do we mean by now? We mean that at a certain point, a creature—who was dead in trespasses and sin—has instantaneously come to life. The word now, as we established in our last lesson, is used over 100 times as a means by which new-creation-race believers come to an understanding of who and what they are in Christ. The apostle Paul uses this term more than anyone else in the Scriptures. Now means at an instant, a person who was dead came to life; resurrection life came into their being. Christ being raised from the grave is a vivid example of what happens to a believer when they are born again. The birthing takes place instantaneously as one believes on the Lord Jesus Christ. The instant you trusted in Christ and accepted Him, you were born again; a whole new creation was birthed by Almighty God. You are now a new creature. The old is gone.

In this now, there are at least three important factors.

1. In the now, the Father performed an act of love which beats anything the human being has ever known or been a part of. What is the birthing? Simply, it is when God, the Father, places His seed in a human being and causes another life to take form. Christ is formed in the human being by an act of love.

God, who is our heavenly Father, is love. He is love personified. He doesn't just give love or share love; He is love. Now, that is a bit hard for us to grasp or understand because all of us are given to the idea that if somebody is really lovely or a loving person, they constantly give. God is more than just a giver. He is a giver; He is innately a giver, but He is more than that. He is love personified. That means in His personality, everything flows out of love, even his wrath, even his judgment, even his dislike for things, flow out of His love; for He is a God of love. The golden text of the Bible so plainly declares, "For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten

Son” (John 3:16). To be able to give his most priceless possession meant He had to be love personified. So in the now is an innate act of love.

2. When you were born again, a total person was produced by Almighty God. It is very important you see this. When a person is born again, they are not getting a little bit of God, some of God’s blessing, or some of God’s attributes. They are a totally new person by the seed which is placed in them. Now the seed that is placed in them is Christ. By this act of love, instantaneously, the believer is born again. A total person came about which is called a Christian. This definition for a Christian is a Christ-person. So in the now is the creation of a total person by the placing of God’s seed in the believer. That means there is not some of God in you or part of God in you, but the total God-nature is in the born-again believer. That is all wrapped up in the word now. That happened instantly when you believed on the Lord Jesus Christ. This is what grace is. This is its best definition.

You see, religion would prolong this act of love and say you get a little bit of God when you get saved; you get a little more of God when you learn our doctrines; you get a little bit more of God as you have victories. No, you never get any more of God than the instantaneous birthing. In time, you learn more about God. You learn who you are by the Christ who now indwells you and is your very life. So we are not dealing with the Christian lacking in any regard at all. He is a total person, in the now, and that is what makes you a member of the now generation.

3. In the now, there is not a later event to take place which will add to the birthing. The now is present. Everything God is, you are by the birthing. That is why Jesus said to Nicodemus, You must be born again; until you are born again, you cannot even see or know the things of God (John 3:3, 5). So in the now generation, the God of love has produced a total person; and in this production, there is no more to be given in a later event.

That means God, by His grace, has seen to it that every born-again believer has entered into a relationship with Him which lacks for nothing. We, in fact, as believers, come behind in no spiritual gift (1 Cor. 1:7). Everything God could possibly be to the human being, He is now; it has all been given at the birthing. That is why we stress this word now. You see, when you come to this knowledge of who and what you are in Christ by the birthing, you enter into a dimension of living that goes beyond all human comprehension. In fact, you come to a place in the Lord, where only the Holy Spirit is able to teach you.

I am so glad the apostle Paul, when this revelation knowledge came to him, began to give forth these marvelous truths. Such truths that are found in 1 Corinthians 2:9–10, where he said the eye couldn't see, the ear couldn't hear, and the heart couldn't feel the things that God is preparing for them that love Him, but these things are revealed unto us by the Holy Spirit. All the way through Paul's epistles, we have this glorious idea that the believer is not to rely on his own human knowledge or his own grasp of understanding of God's things, but that the Holy Spirit will reveal these things unto him.

In the Christ-life message, the greatest understanding comes by seeing Jesus as taught by the Holy Spirit. Without the Holy Spirit's teaching, you will never come to know God in His fullness. Man can only take you so far. Your own human understanding will always limit you to the fullness of what is yours in Christ Jesus. It is only as you allow the Holy Spirit to move in your life, to move in your soul—for that is where He is, in your soulish part, to be filled with the Holy Spirit in your mind, in your thinking—only when that takes place have you, indeed, entered into the things which are yours in Christ Jesus. You will not come to knowledge aside from the work of the Holy Spirit.

Paul said in Ephesians 1:17, I am praying for you that you may have the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Christ. So you see, this is not coming through human effort and through human exploration. So many human beings are exploring to find God, to find the true God, to find the things of God; but it takes the Holy Spirit. He is the answer; He is the key.

The apostle Paul finally established this. He established this greater than anyone in the Scripture because it was God's intention that Paul do this. One way by which Paul established this knowledge of the now generation—this new-creation race of people—is by the emphases of the word now. NOW.

We are going to look at some of these now words as they are given in the Scriptures and allow the Holy Spirit to show you who and what you are in Christ Jesus right now.

— **Points to Ponder:**

Now, reflect on what you just read. Journal and/or discuss your understanding of the term now in the Scriptures. —

Romans 6:22

Here the apostle Paul says, “But now.” I want you to circle every one of these ‘now’ phrases when we come to them. “But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life.”

Sinless

To really explore the word now and to see all of the ramifications of it, we have to listen to every little detail the apostle gives us in these verses we are looking into. The first thing he says is now you have been made free from sin. Do you understand how you were made free from sin? I mean totally free from sin, so free from sin that the apostle John could declare, “Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin” (1 John 3:9) and, “We know that whosoever is born of God sinneth not” (1 John 5:18).

When I read a line like, “But now being made free from sin” (Rom. 6:22), I wonder just how free from sin I am because I spent a lot of my life in religion that kept telling me what a bad sinner I was, how I needed to get to the altar and repent, how I needed to make things right with God, and how if I didn’t get right with God, I may not be ready when Jesus comes. I was always repenting, always praying through, always going to an altar somewhere, always making confession, but never coming to freedom and liberty. This verse says, “But now,” in the now, the believer is made free. How in the world can that happen?

Well, this freedom we enjoy now was made by God on the basis of the sacrifice of Jesus Christ at Calvary. I hope you can see this. May the Holy Spirit move upon you and cause you to see this clearly. When Christ died at Calvary, innate sin, the sin-nature which was passed to us from Adam’s sin, had been poured into His body when His body at Gethsemane fell limp on the cross and died. So ended our innate spirit of sin, our old self. But that is not all that was necessary. That was the first part of making us free from sin. The other part of it was that God, by the sacrifice of Jesus Christ, was able to take that same holy, pure, righteous Christ and place Him in every believer, in the human being, as their only life. Spirit of sin out, and Christ’s Spirit in. That’s our new spirit, our new life.

I hope you have that settled. We will make a point of this again and again. The only life you now have is Christ. You don't have a life of your own. Ever since you have been born again, the only life you have is Christ. Before that, you had Satan's life; and death was in you. But now that you have been born again, the only life you have by this birthing is the Christ-life.

— **Look Closer:**

While John said, “If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us,” and “If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us” (1 John 1: 8, 10), John also was able to say, “Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God” (1 John 3:9), and, “We know that whosoever is born of God sinneth not; but he that is begotten of God keepeth himself, and that wicked one toucheth him not” (1 John 5:18). How could John make such opposing statements?

Here again, we must look at the tripartite man and distinguish soul and spirit in the Word as we discuss two important points.

First, note the spiritual statements and remember Christ is joined to the believer in spirit. These verses address man’s spirit:

“Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his [God’s] seed [Christ] remaineth in him: and he [Christ] cannot sin, because he is born of God.” (1 John 3:9)

“We know that whosoever is born of God sinneth not; but he that is begotten of God keepeth himself [is preserved through salvation], and that wicked one toucheth him not [Satan cannot touch our spirit, which is Christ].” (1 John 5:18)

“Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God.” (1 John 5:1)

“And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life [spiritual life], and this life is in his Son.” (1 John 5:11)

“He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life.” (1 John 5:12)

Christ is sinless. He does not commit sin; and the only life believers have is Christ. Now, that doesn't mean they won't have sins of the flesh; it means they will not have sin which separates them from God because such sin is not producible by the life that is in us. Christ does not sin, and Christ is my life.

— Points to Ponder:

Now, reflect on what you just read. Journal and/or discuss your understanding of how born-again Christians are free from sin. —

Second, the Word clearly distinguishes two kinds of sin, “There is a sin unto death: ... and there is a sin not unto death” (1 John 5:16–17). You haven’t been taught that, have you?

Indwelling sin (in spirit), Satan’s nature, is the “sin unto death.” Our innate sin-nature is gone, dead in Christ on the cross. But, remember, the moment you were born again, the exchange was in your spirit, but your mind remained the same. Sins of the flesh, “sin not unto death,” is sin produced by the soul (man’s mind, will, and emotions), which will continue the process of transformation by the Holy Spirit’s teaching. Therefore, yes, we do still commit sin by giving our minds to our flesh (following our own free-will, desires, emotions, and old knowledge); but our spirit remains sinless; and the sin we commit is not unto death, because what we do is not who we are.

Now, this is not a license for Christians to accept sin and continue in it, which is a fleshly, self-serving life which still leads to destruction in this life. It is not Christ’s life living through the believer, and it is not a relationship with God flowing out of love for the Father. Paul said:

“What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God’s” (1 Cor. 6:19–20).

“For he that is called in the Lord, being a servant, is the Lord’s freeman: likewise also he that is called, being free, is Christ’s servant. Ye are bought with a price; be not ye the servants of men [including self].” (1 Cor. 7:22–23)

When I think separately, independent of Christ, and act outside of this oneness with Him, that is a mind problem; and we will deal with that in another place. What I want you to see right now is that your sin died; the sin which separated you from God — Satan’s sin-nature — was killed, cancelled out, at the Cross. It doesn’t even exist anymore. It is Paul saying, I am crucified with Christ; I no longer exist as a sinner. I do exist, but not by my own life, but by the life of another, Christ, in me.

— Points to Ponder:

Now, reflect on what you just read. Journal and/or discuss your understanding of how the Word distinguishes two types of sin. —

If you have that settled, then you are able to move on.

Now, you have a new nature, the Christ-life, in you. “But now being made free from sin.” How am I free from sin? A two-sided coin. On one side, my sin was taken care of at the Cross of Calvary; when Christ died, I died along with all my sin. The other side, when He came back to resurrection life, He became my only life, and His life is righteous and sinless. So, I stand before God sinless through Christ who is my life. What a wonderful, marvelous plan this is from our Father! That is the inheritance of the now generation. That is yours right now in Christ.

Servants to God

Let's look a little further into Romans 6:22. The second thing it says is not only have we been made free from sin, but in the now we also have become servants to God. Servants to God. I like the way this is stated. I don't want to make a big play on little words like the word to, but I want to state that we are not just servants of God. We are servants to God. We are not separated from God at all. Many people who claim to be servants of God live in a separated state where they say, I am trying to serve God, to be what God wants me to be. I believe the Lord called me to a ministry, and I am trying to do what He wants me to do. That is a servant of God. But a servant to God is one who is that servant. Not trying to be or called to be, but is that servant to God.

A Christ-life believer is that servant because God's nature is in him. Do you understand that? We have the very nature of God in us (2 Peter 1:4); thus we are servants to God. Do you understand that ever since God placed His seed in you, that seed has produced the nature of God by you? Maybe not perfectly, maybe it has come out more raunchy than it has blessed; but God has placed His very nature in you, and that nature comes out of you. Maybe not always spontaneously, maybe you have to do it with a lot of self-effort, and that is not good. You will learn to be spontaneous and bear forth who you are, being the servant to God. But that nature is in you, flowing out of you by what you say, by what you do, by where you go, by all you participate in; that nature is coming forth from you because you, in the now, have been made free from sin to be a servant to God.

It simply means everything you do, everywhere you go, you are a servant to God. That makes a believer live above sin. That causes a believer to stand in the righteousness of Christ every moment of his life because he knows wherever he goes, it is God's nature working out of him. On the job, at school, at home, wherever you are, it is God's nature working out of you 24 hours of each day. There is no life of your own. There is no time you set aside to be yourself, to do your own thing. It is always God working out of you so that you are, in the now, a constant servant to God.

Bearing His Fruit

But that is not all this verse says. The third thing it says is, “Now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness.” In the now, you bear fruit unto holiness. I like the way the apostle put this because the fruit we have unto holiness depends on our oneness with the Christ who is in us. I don’t produce anything. I am merely a branch that expresses the fruit. I cannot produce it; I am a holder. Well, that is what a believer is. A believer is simply a container in which another person, Christ, lives. That is a Christian, a Christ-person, a container expressing the Christ in him.

I am bearing fruit unto holiness. The fruit I bear is His fruit; therefore, I can say I am producing holiness because that is what I am made to do. I am made to be a branch to the vine. The vine is producing the fruit, and I am bearing it. (See John 15.) Wherever we go, we are expressers of this life within us. That is simply who you are right now. Don’t put it off any longer. Don’t say, I need to study, to learn more, or I need to do this or that. If you have been born again, you are an expresser of His holiness. Think on that for a moment. There is no other holiness which you can express.

Maybe you say, I need to fast and pray. I need to get alone where I can learn who I am. You may do these works, and they may be godly works, but those works of self-effort will not produce one iota more of holiness. You can’t produce holiness by anything you do because holiness is produced by Him who is in you; you can only bear it. How do you bear it? You get it fixed in your mind: I have perfect holiness within me. Oh, that will jerk you up straight; it will make you stop trying to be righteous and holy on your own. You will begin to think differently. You will begin to express Him spontaneously, to say, Well, if He is in me, then that is what I am. If that is what I am, that is what I will do. If the only life I have is Christ, then the Christ-life is the only life I live. That is what you get fixed in your mind, and that is what you will begin to do.

This verse says a fourth thing. First it says, “But now being made free.” In the now, we are being made free. Second, in the now we become servants to God. Third, in the now we have fruit unto holiness. And fourth, in the now we have “everlasting life.” The life in you now is everlasting life. That is something you have in the now. It is what you have right now by being born again.

If Satan could ever trick you, he would trick you into believing it is not working, that it is not real, that you don’t have it all, that you haven’t really come to the place you ought to be in Christ Jesus. He will trick you, lie to you, and deceive to you, trying to rob you of the fact that you have everlasting life. One of the biggest tricks of the Devil, I have found, is to try to make believers have a life of their own. He will say, Do this and God will be blessed and you will bless God because you have done something good. Let me tell you something. You have no life of your own. The life in you is everlasting life. For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son that whosoever believes in Him shall not perish but have [have, in the now] everlasting life (John 3:16). Right now! Because Christ is in you, you have everlasting life.

That supersedes all knowledge which comes from the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil. The knowledge which comes from the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil says, I want to live a long time. I want to have a healthy body. I want to prosper. I want to be something on this earth. But when you are gripped with the greater idea that you now have everlasting life in you, that supersedes body; it even supersedes soul. It goes beyond mind because you are now gripped with the idea that says, The one who is in me is the real me, and it is everlasting. I am never going to be back again where I once was. I am never again going to be a charge of Satan. I am never again going to be bound by the earthly things. I have everlasting, eternal life dwelling in me right now. Praise God for the now! That is what you have right now in Christ Jesus. Eternal life. The end of all your bickering, all your scheming, all your faith, and all of your works is everlasting life. You can defeat the Devil with that. You can tell the Devil

you have everlasting, eternal life dwelling in you right now and defeat the Devil. You don't have to beat around the bush. You don't have to be tormented by Satan; you can tell him, I have eternal life dwelling in me right now. And that life will well up, swell up, and grow until you are lifted out of the earthly understanding into this dimension where you can say, I know in whom I have believed, and I am persuaded that He is able to keep that which I have committed unto Him against that day. You will come to that understanding, and you will walk in that peace and rest.

Romans 7:6

“But now we are delivered from the law, that being dead wherein we were held; that we should serve in newness of spirit, and not in oldness of the letter.”

Two Kinds of Law

This is a wonderful, powerful Scripture. This now verse says, “Now we are delivered from the law.” There are two kinds of laws I want to deal with for a moment. The first kind of law is the prominent law dealt with in the Scriptures, the law given to the children of Israel through Moses which came down on Sinai, a law that made Israel an earthly people. Earthly in that if they obeyed that law and did certain things, that law would produce certain blessings and certain miracles would take place, if they did what God told them. That law was given to Israel, but the essence of the law was never obeyed. It was discovered in the 1,700 years from the time Moses received the law on Mt. Sinai until the Day of Pentecost that Israel would have never kept that law perfectly. There was one part of the law which said if you don’t keep the whole of it, there is no use keeping any of it.

Israel became a very earthly, carnal, and secular people; and the end result was God showed the gap between His righteousness and man’s. He showed that no man could keep His law. But the law hung over human beings so that if they didn’t keep it, they couldn’t walk with God, they couldn’t have God’s blessings. So it was necessary, in time, that God do something about the law. The apostle Paul came along and said, “But now being free from the law.” The believer is free from the law right now.

What law are we free from? First, the Law of Moses, which no man was ever able to keep the essence of, and which God had to set aside in time by His Son, Jesus Christ. Well, you say, is the law completely set aside? Not at all. It is set aside by Jesus Christ. Let me explain. That is why God elected to put Christ in the human being. God is a God of laws, and He is a God of character, and He wants His offspring to be likened unto Himself. But there is no way human beings within themselves can ever match up to what God wanted. Thus, it was necessary that God, in His plan, put another in the creature who would match up and perfectly fulfill His law. The one who did that was Christ. That is why we see Jesus as one who never failed, who always pleased God, who never sinned, though He was tempted in all ways just like all human beings are. Christ never failed; He never sinned. God

had a sinless Son whom He was able to place in the creature. That is my life right now. Christ in me, my life, stands sinless before God.

But Christ is more than a sinless life. The Christ in me is the fulfiller and the keeper of the law. This is very hard on people who are destined to keep a law regardless because Satan groomed us for this. When we had Satan as our nature, he made us want to keep laws and do things to be right. He lied to us; he deceived us. He kept us always trying to do something good so that we would not have too much guilt and condemnation. He was a liar. Now Christ is in us; He is the keeper of the law. He perfectly keeps the law before God as my life and as my nature. I am no longer bound by the law. I am free of it, not free from keeping it—for my very life, Christ in me—keeps and fulfils the law. But I am in the now generation to where I am free from the law by Christ who is in me. That is one kind of law.

— **Points to Ponder:**

Now, reflect on what you just read. Journal and/or discuss your understanding of two kinds of law. —

Self-Effort

The other kind of law is a most notable sort of law which was emphasized by Judaizers in the New Testament-church period. Paul's epistles are filled with the works of the Judaizers, the people who said, We know Moses' Law is set aside, but believers still need to do something themselves to fulfill God's purpose for their life. It is not possible to just believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and be saved. You must do works, too. You need to be circumcised; you need to join the church; you need to go out and do some good works; you need to sing in the choir, or you need to give some money. You need to do something to make it all work or to prove that it is working. This was the other kind of law.

This is the most devious kind of law. It is the law Satan uses today. You see, none of us in the age of Grace are ever expected to keep Moses' Law; and Satan is smart enough to recognize this, so this is not where he works. He works with born-again people, Christians, to rely on their themselves, to get them constantly doing things that are unnecessary to be saved. He tries to make us work at being something we already are. You see, you can't be any godlier than you already are by the planting of God's seed. You can know more about it; you can express it better; but you can't have any more of God in you than you have right now. That is where Satan is tricking us.

Satan's greatest attack is trying to get you to keep some law. Do you know who Satan is going to use to make this trick work? He is going to use people who you think are godly—a church maybe, a pastor, an evangelist, some teacher, somebody well-meaning, somebody highly dedicated, or somebody greatly anointed. He is going to use them to get you working to be what you already are and, by that, cause you to never see Christ as your life, your only life. Satan says, It is not enough to say Christ is in you. You need to do a little something. You need to go to church. You need to give your money. You need to teach a Sunday school class. You need to read your Bible every day. You need to fast and pray. You need to do something to put it all together to make it work. No, you can do every one of these things and not please God one iota. You can do everything you can think of,

in human effort—good things, blessed things, like praying, fasting, giving alms, giving gifts, blessing people, winning souls—and still not be acceptable to God by what you do. None of these things will make you any godlier than you already are by the birthing. But because you have been born again, you are going to do all these things; but this takes the pressure off you because when you do them, you won't have to be successful on your own to make them all work.

You do what you feel led to do by Christ in you. That is Christ in you operating. Sometimes it will be successful; sometimes it won't. But the burden isn't on you to prove that you did right, that you had to do it a certain way, or that you had to get results. It is off you because you are what you are by Christ in you, not by what you do. That is the way the world is going to get the gospel, not by believers who say, I have to win so many souls. I have to be so righteous. I have to be so holy. I have to be this. I have to be that or the world will never get the gospel. The world is going to get the gospel by us being who we are in Christ Jesus.

— **Points to Ponder:**

Now, reflect on what you just read. Journal and/or discuss your understanding of “self-effort.” —

Enter into God’s Rest

I would like you to come to the rest we have in Christ Jesus. That blessed rest is where God says through the writer of Hebrews 4:1–3 that we should fear lest we fail to enter into that rest. What is that blessed rest? Very simply, it is Christ being our all—resting in Him being our all so that everything we do is Christ in operation, serving the Father, loving the Father, expressing the very nature of the Father.

You are now an heir of God, a joint-heir with Jesus Christ. Satan is mad. He wants to keep you working your own good works so you won't know what and who God has already made you by His Son in you, so that you don't see the Christ-life. Satan's greatest attack against the Christ-life is keeping believers from seeing who and what they are in Christ. If you hear the Word of Truth, if you hear by the Holy Spirit the sweetness of Christ in you as your hope of glory, Satan will do all he can to deceive you on this. He won't use liquor, drugs, pornography, or outer sin. He'll use religion to keep you from seeing Christ as your all. He will keep you repenting, working, fasting, and praying just to keep you from living Christ who is already in you by the birthing. If that is happening to you, you need to stand up straight before Satan and say, Satan, I am in the now generation. I have eternal life dwelling in me right now in the person of Jesus Christ. I am not going to get it. It is not going to come when I die. I have it right now. I have eternal life dwelling in me.

Romans 7:6 says, “Now we are delivered from the law, that being dead wherein we were held; that we should serve in newness of spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter.” We are delivered from the law. In the law we were dead. Just so you don't forget the point here, there are two kinds of law: Moses' Law and the law Satan puts on us to make us rely on ourselves to become what we already are in Christ, keeping us from God's rest.

Do you realize what happens every time you start trying to earn your salvation, earn the Holy Spirit, or earn faith? You don't need to earn anything. These are Christ's virtues. When you begin to see who and what you are in Jesus Christ, those things spontaneously flow out of you. Don't you realize the moment you start working to be who you are, you once again become useless to Christ in you because He will have nothing to do with your works? Your works, even works of righteousness and holiness, are as filthy rags unto God.

“But we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags; and we all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away.” (Isa. 64:6)

Romans 7:6 says, “Now we are delivered from the law, that being dead wherein we were held.” What does the law do? It binds like a vice; holds you in bondage so you are dead to the Christ in you. We are delivered from the law. We are no longer dead by the law which held us. If you are trying to have more of God or be more godly, you have fallen into a trap. Paul says your works are dead; there is no life in works. Only when Christ operates out of you is there life. He alone is life. “He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life” (1 John 5:12).

You may say, I am going through a critical period right now. I am in a bad circumstance and really upset. I don't know what to do. I need to go somewhere. Maybe you are tempted to go to a big meeting somewhere or call an 800-number to get someone to pray for you. Maybe you want to get some believers and have an all-night prayer meeting or fast and pray for three or four days. That would be wonderful if you knew who you are. But if you feel you must do these things to be who you are, you have nullified the life that is within you. Christ in you loves you, and He will not war against you. Christ, who is your head, will patiently wait until you come to Him and, as a believer-wife returning to her husband, say, Dear husband,

you are my everything. You will protect; you will take care of me. I will simply allow and serve. That is the believer's position.

You can be so easily tricked by Satan, so be careful. Instead of doing something to be more godly, stop and reason, If Christ is in me and is my all and all, then I want the Holy Spirit to tell me this again and again until it spontaneously operates through me.

— **Points to Ponder:**

Now, reflect on what you just read. Journal and/or discuss your understanding of how believers are “delivered from the law.” —

A New Creation

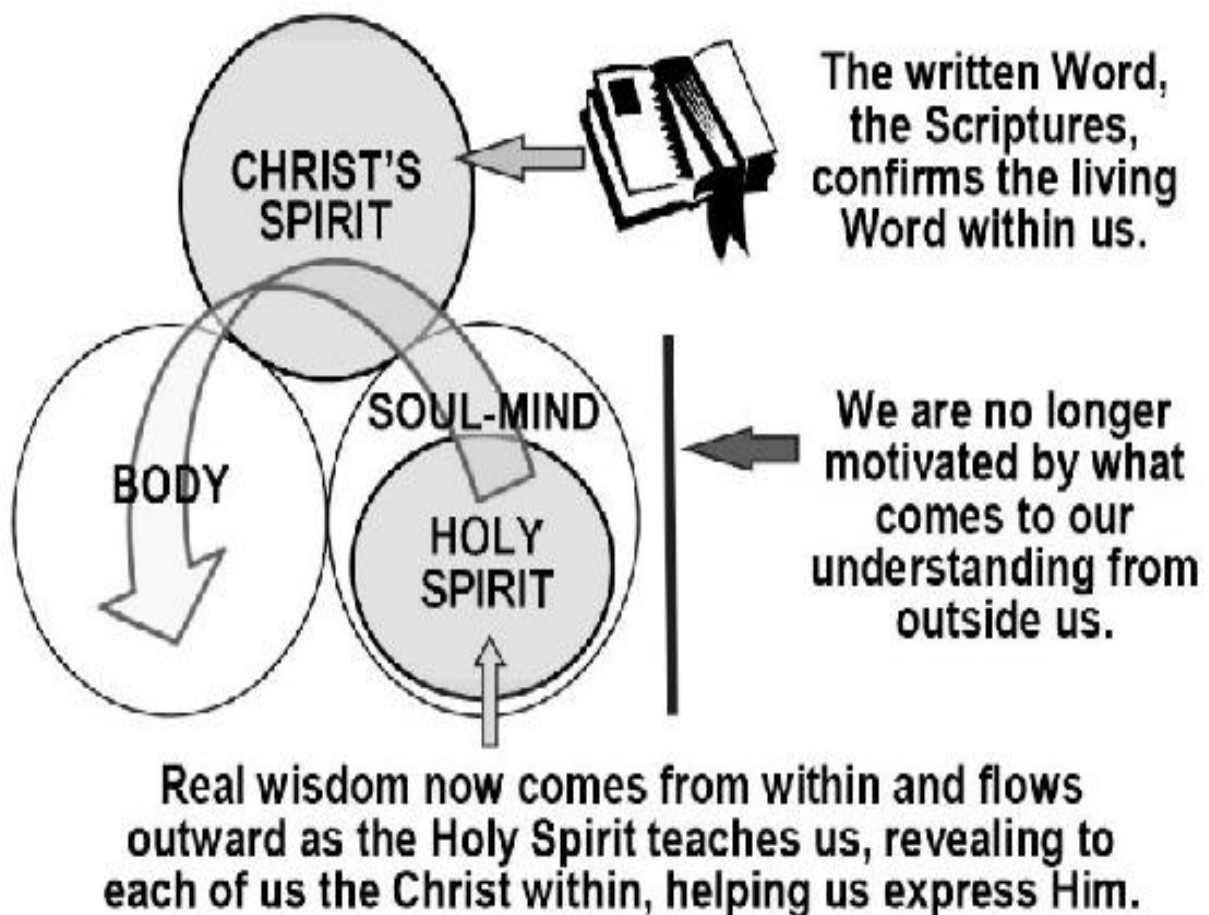
The latter part of Romans 7:6 leads us into the new-creation-race gospel. The term new-creation-race gospel, a favorite term of mine, comes from 2 Corinthians 5:17, “Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature,” a new race of people. We are that new race of people, and the latter part of Romans 7:6 alludes to that saying, “But now we are delivered from the law, that being dead wherein we were held; that we should serve in newness of spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter.” What is “in newness of spirit”? The believer, who is born again, now has a new spirit in him, Christ in Him; it begins to come up from within. Christ, like a fountain from within, erupting and flowing out of us. That is newness of spirit, a new way of doing things.

Before, I always sought the oldness of the letter. I always went outside myself, thinking, I need that advice. That is the way men operate in third dimension. If you want to know how to operate a car, you go to somebody who drives a car to learn to drive. If you want to repair a computer, you go to those outside of yourself to get the education of computers. We have done the same thing with religion. People say, I want to come to know God so I am going to go to a church, to a teacher, or to a book to learn about God. That is the only way human beings can do it in third dimension because there is no innate knowledge of those things.

You see, Adam could have had innate knowledge within him in the Garden of Eden; but instead, he rejected the knowledge of God—which I call fourth-dimension knowledge, faith-knowledge—and instead, he took on the knowledge of good and evil. He found out what good and evil was, but that doesn’t solve anything. Good and evil merely means the balance is in the universe. The whole universe now operates by this balance. That is the only way human beings can operate. They get a little good; they get a little evil. They say, I don’t want to be evil; I want to be good; and so they just go back and forth, back and forth. There is a balance to all of this. We have some good in life; we have some evil, and you are not going to get rid of it by the knowledge of good and evil. When that knowledge came, it wouldn’t fix this

world; but the world keeps on going because, finally, it is God who operates and runs the universe. It isn't Satan; it isn't men, and it certainly isn't the knowledge of good and evil.

Old knowledge comes by the letter, from outside of us. So the apostle contrasts it here. He says now that we are free from the law, and we are no longer dead by operating through the law. We have moved to a new kind of spirit, a new kind of understanding, not by training, education, learning by others' teaching and so forth. He says we no longer learn by that but, instead, by the newness of Spirit, something that comes out from within us. What does that mean? That gloriously means the Christ within us has been made unto us wisdom (1 Cor. 1:30). We are no longer motivated by what comes to our understanding from without.



Where is that wisdom? Not out there somewhere. He is not out there sitting on a church steeple. He is not at somebody's altar. He is not locked up in some preacher's closet. Jesus is inside every believer, and the newness of Spirit comes up from Christ within. Right out of my Spirit, which is Christ, comes this new understanding. Christ is made unto me wisdom. The real wisdom now comes from within and flows outward. But that is not the only source of understanding. We have the precious Word. We have the written Word, which comes to us from the Scriptures, which confirms the living Word that is within us. I believe this is what the apostle had in mind in this situation.

Let's look at the whole verse again. Paul says to the now generation, "But now are we deliver from the law, that being dead wherein we were held; that we should serve in newness of spirit, and not in oldness of the letter." We now have the distinctive, blessed contrast between receiving outer knowledge only and this newness of Spirit coming up from within us.

Have you begun to see Christ as your life and your all? If you have, that means your total reliance will be on Christ in you. That is what Paul wrote in Colossians 1:27, that it is "Christ in you, your hope of glory." You see, you have no hope outside of the Christ in you. It isn't Christ out there somewhere. Oh! He is seated at the right hand of the Father. That is good, but He is in you. He is in every believer, and that Christ in us is our hope of glory.

Doesn't it seem logical that we should learn of Him? Nobody outside of me can tell me that. I can tell you till my tongue falls out that Christ lives in you, but until the Holy Spirit tells you that, until you have an inner confirmation, until there is an inner revelation of that, it won't mean a thing, and it won't work.

In the now generation, right now, you are free from the law that binds you to do anything to be who you are. You are 1,000 percent free to be who you are in Christ Jesus. Coming to that knowledge is the purpose of this lesson. The Holy Spirit is the one who lodges in our mind, in our soulish part, that we might see this Christ in us, to teach us this Christ who has been birthed in us. That is why we are filled with the Holy Spirit.

Galatians 2:20 says, "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me." I would like to add one more word to what Paul has to say. I want to stop right there because that is where we are going to close with this lesson. He said in the now, it is no longer I. There is really no more you to do or to perform; there is only Him in you. There is only Him in you to do, and to be. That is exactly what the Father is working in your heart and life. Fix that in your thinking. You see, you persecute yourself; you feel guilty or hurt over things that happen to you. But the real fact is you are dead. Then who is it? "Nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me." The I is Christ. If you can come to understand that, then you are ready to see the blessed things that are yours in Christ Jesus.

The God we serve has wrapped His entire plan in one person, Christ. Just that one person, Christ, can answer every one of your problems. God, the Father gives you an answer to every one of your questions in just one way, and that is by showing you more of His dear Son.

Scripture References

John 3:16

John 3:3

1 Corinthians 2:9–10

Ephesians 1:17

Romans 6:22

1 John 3:9

1 John 5:18

1 John 1:8

Romans 7:6

Hebrews 4:3

2 Corinthians 5:17

Romans 7:17

Galatians 2:20

1 John 5:12

Explore More

A. Explore what is now true after the Cross for the born-again believer, the Now Generation. Read, journal, and discuss with your study group the following Scriptures:

Romans 6:22

Romans 5:9

Romans 5:11

Romans 7:6

Romans 8:1

1 Corinthians 2:12

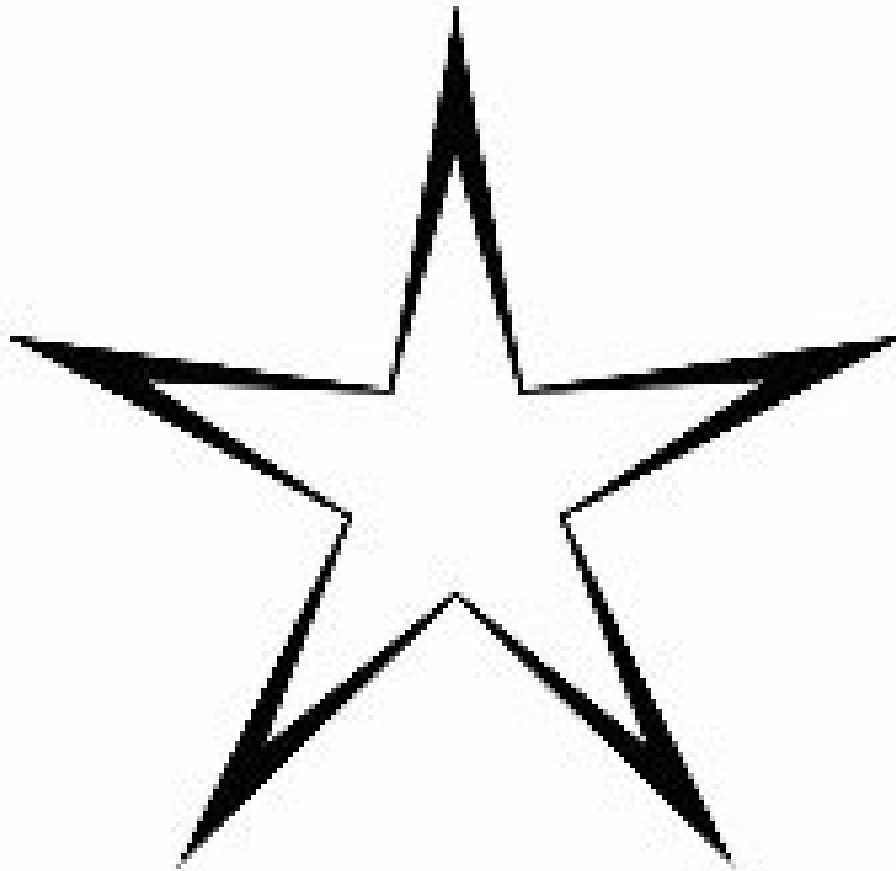
Galatians 4:28

Ephesians 2:13–19

Ephesians 5:8

Colossians 1:21

B. Study, journal, and discuss Paul's words about God making us new creatures and what that life looks like in 2 Corinthians 5:14–21 and Galatians 6:12–15.



Congratulations!

You completed Book 1 of The Fundamentals of the Christ-life Bible study series. We pray these lessons have helped you gain better spiritual understanding and helped you see Christ as your only life, enabling you to start relying solely on Him for everything.

Keep this workbook handy to refer back to these lessons and the new ideas you have learned as you move forward.

Keep going! Keep your momentum. It's time to move on to The In-Christ Position, Book 2 of The Fundamentals of the Christ-life series.