

Message Four

The Organic Building Up of the Church as the Body of Christ

Scripture Reading: 2 Sam. 7:12-14a; 1 Cor. 3:9; Eph. 3:14-21; Matt. 13:3-9, 19-23

- I. Second Samuel 7:12-14a is the unveiling of a prophecy through typology showing us that we need God to build up Christ into our intrinsic constitution so that our entire being will be reconstituted with Christ—Matt. 16:18; Eph. 3:17.**
- II. The believers, who have been regenerated in Christ with God's life, are God's cultivated land, a farm in God's new creation to grow Christ that precious materials may be produced for God's building—1 Cor. 3:9:**
 - A. According to the Bible, growth equals building; this takes place by the growth of the divine seed of life within us—1 John 3:9; Col. 2:19; Eph. 4:15-16.
 - B. Ephesians 3:17 reveals that the Triune God has come into us to do a building work with Himself as the element and also with something from us as the material; this is illustrated by the parable of the sower in Matthew 13:
 1. The Lord sows Himself as the seed of life into men's hearts, the soil, that He might grow and live in them and be expressed from within them—v. 3.
 2. The seed is sown into the soil to grow with the nutrients of the soil; as a result, the produce is a composition of elements from both the seed and the soil—v. 23.
 3. We have within us certain nutrients created by God as a preparation for His coming into us to grow in us; God has created the human spirit with the human nutrients along with the human heart as the soil for the divine seed—cf. 1 Pet. 3:4.
 4. The rate at which we grow in life depends not on the divine seed but on how many nutrients we afford this seed; the more nutrients we supply, the faster the seed will grow and the more it will flourish—Psa. 78:8; Matt. 5:3, 8:
 - a. If we remain in our soul, in our natural man, there will not be any nutrients for the growth of the divine seed, but if we are strengthened into our inner man and if we pay attention to our spirit and exercise our spirit, the nutrients will be supplied and Christ will make His home in our hearts—Eph. 3:16-17; Rom. 8:6; 1 Tim. 4:7; cf. Jude 19.
 - b. If we are going to have the Lord as the seed of life grow within us to be our full enjoyment, we have to open to the Lord absolutely and cooperate with Him to deal thoroughly with our heart—Matt. 13:3-9, 19-23.
 5. On the one hand, God strengthens us with Himself as the element, and on the other hand, we afford the nutrients; through these two God in Christ carries out His intrinsic building—the building of His home—in our entire being.
- III. The apostle's prayer in Ephesians 3 reveals that for the fulfillment of God's eternal economy, we need the Father, according to the riches of His**

glory, to strengthen us with power through His Spirit into the inner man, that Christ may build Himself into our hearts, occupying our entire being, that we might be filled unto all the fullness of God—vv. 14-19:

- A. To say that we need to be strengthened with power into the inner man indicates that we are not in the inner man, that we live mostly in the outer man—v. 16; 1:19-22; 3:20.
- B. Christ has the desire to occupy every room of our heart:
 - 1. The phrase “make His home” is only one word in the Greek, *katoikeo*, which basically means to settle down in a dwelling, to make a dwelling place, and the prefix of this word, *kata*, means “down”—v. 17a.
 - 2. As Christ makes His home deep down in our hearts, we are being rooted in love for God’s farm and grounded in love for God’s building—v. 17.
 - 3. As He makes His home in our hearts, we become strong to apprehend with all the saints the immeasurable Christ, whose dimensions are the dimensions of the universe—v. 18:
 - a. Our experience of Christ in the church must be three dimensional, like a cube (the breadth, length, height, and depth), and must not be one-dimensional, like a line.
 - b. Both in the tabernacle and the temple, the Holy of Holies was a cube—Exo. 26:2-8; 1 Kings 6:20.
 - c. Eventually, the New Jerusalem, God’s building, will be an eternal cube, the Holy of Holies, twelve thousand stadia in three dimensions—Rev. 21:16.
 - 4. Christ making His home in our hearts causes us to know the knowledge-surpassing love of Christ that we may be filled unto all the fullness of the Triune God for His corporate expression, His glorification—Eph. 3:19-21; cf. Gen. 24:47, 53, 61-67.

IV. God’s economy is to work Himself into us that we may experience a metabolic process of spiritual digestion and assimilation that produces a gradual and intrinsic change in life—2 Cor. 3:18:

- A. In order for God’s building to take place, we need to receive, digest, and assimilate the organic, pneumatic Christ, who is the life-giving Spirit, as our spiritual food, drink, and breath—John 6:51, 57; 7:37-39; 20:22:
 - 1. When we enjoy Christ by eating, drinking, and breathing Him, a metabolic process, a spiritual digestion and metabolism, takes place within us, and Christ is constituted into our being—2 Cor. 2:15; Phil. 1:20-21.
 - 2. This metabolism is transformation, and transformation is the building—cf. Rev. 21:18; 4:3.
- B. The organic building up of the church as the Body of Christ through the process of spiritual metabolism is actually what Jehovah prophesied to David in the way of typology in 2 Samuel 7:12-14a:
 - 1. It is only through this process that human beings can be transformed into sons of God.
 - 2. It is only through this process that something human—the human seed—can become something divine—the sons of God.