

## Message Three

### Experiencing the Indwelling Christ

Scripture Reading: John 14:16-18, 20; Rom. 8:9-10; Gal. 2:20a; 4:19; Eph. 3:17a

#### **I. Christ is a mystery, and His indwelling is also a mystery—Col. 1:27:**

- A. Christ's indwelling is very real and intimate because it takes place within us and is intimately related to us—John 14:20; Eph. 3:17a.
- B. The experience of the indwelling Christ is a real and subjective matter—Rom. 8:10; 2 Cor. 13:5; Gal. 4:19.

#### **II. While the Lord Jesus was on earth, He was the Comforter outside His disciples, but after His resurrection He became the Comforter inside His disciples—John 14:16-18, 20:**

- A. The Greek word for *Comforter* means “advocate,” “one alongside who takes care of our cause, our affairs.”
- B. While the Lord Jesus was on earth, He was with His disciples in an outward way as a tender, caring Comforter; although His physical presence with the disciples was wonderful, He could be with them only in an outward way since He was still in the flesh, limited by space and time—v. 16.
- C. In order to be the indwelling Comforter, the Comforter inside the disciples, it was necessary for the Lord Jesus to pass through death and enter into resurrection to become the Spirit of reality, the life-giving Spirit—v. 17; 1 Cor. 15:45b:
  - 1. The most precious result of our faith in Christ is that we receive Christ into us; He is now able to enter into us to be with us at any time and in any place as the Comforter within us—John 1:12-13; 3:15; 14:16-17.
  - 2. The “He” who is the Spirit of reality in verse 17 becomes the “I” who is the Lord Himself in verse 18; this means that the Christ who was in the flesh went through death and resurrection to become the life-giving Spirit, the pneumatic Christ—1 Cor. 15:45b; 2 Cor. 3:17a.
- D. The Gospel of John reveals that Christ became flesh to be the Lamb of God and that in resurrection He became the life-giving Spirit, another Comforter, to breathe Himself into the disciples—1:14, 29; 14:16-17; 20:22:
  - 1. It is as the Spirit that He was breathed into His disciples and that He can live in them and they can live because of Him—14:19-20.
  - 2. The Holy Spirit in 20:22 is actually the resurrected Christ Himself, because this Spirit is His breath; the Spirit is the breath of the resurrected Christ.

#### **III. As the subject of Romans, the gospel of God concerns Christ as the Spirit living within the believers after His resurrection—1:1, 3-4:**

- A. Christ has resurrected and has become the life-giving Spirit; He is no longer merely the Christ outside the believers but the Christ within them—8:9-10.
- B. The gospel in the Epistle to the Romans is the gospel of the One who is now indwelling His believers as their subjective Savior—1:1, 3-4; 8:10; 5:10.

#### **IV. The apostle Paul is a pattern of a believer who experienced the indwelling Christ—1 Tim. 1:16:**

- A. "It pleased God...to reveal His Son in me"—Gal. 1:15a, 16a:
  - 1. To reveal the Son of God brings pleasure to God; nothing is more pleasing to God than the unveiling of the living person of the Son of God.
  - 2. We need to be brought into a state where we are full of the revelation of the Son of God and thereby become a new creation with Christ living in us.
- B. "I am crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but it is Christ who lives in me"—2:20a:
  - 1. Paul did not say that the life of Christ lived in him but that Christ, the person, lived in him.
  - 2. God's economy is that the "I" be crucified in Christ's death and that Christ live in us in His resurrection.
- C. "My children, with whom I travail again in birth until Christ is formed in you"—4:19:
  - 1. To have Christ formed in us is to have Christ grown in us in full.
  - 2. Christ has been born into us, He is now living in us in our Christian life, and He will be formed in us at our maturity.
- D. "As many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ"—3:27:
  - 1. To be baptized is to be immersed into the reality of the person of Christ.
  - 2. We have put on the pneumatic Christ as our clothing; this means that, as our person, Christ is not only our inner being but also our outward expression.
- E. "That Christ may make His home in your hearts through faith"—Eph. 3:17a:
  - 1. God the Father is exercising His authority through God the Spirit to strengthen us into the inner man that God the Son may make His home deep downward in our hearts.
  - 2. If we allow Christ to have all the room within us and if we give Him the full right and full liberty to do whatever He wants within us, then our heart will become His home.
- F. "God is my witness how I long after you all in the inward parts of Christ Jesus"—Phil. 1:8:
  - 1. Paul did not live in his natural inner being; he lived a life in the inward parts of Christ, experienced Christ in His inward parts, and was one with Christ in His inward parts.
  - 2. Paul did not keep his own inward parts but took Christ's inward parts as his; Paul's inner being was reconstituted with the inward parts of Christ.
- G. "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus"—2:5:
  - 1. To let Christ's mind be in us is to allow the indwelling Christ to live in us by denying our natural mind and taking His mind.
  - 2. If we want to experience the indwelling Christ and live Him, we need to deny our mind and have our mind replaced by the mind of Christ—1:21a.
- H. "For also what I have forgiven, if I have forgiven anything, it is for your sake in the person of Christ"—2 Cor. 2:10b:
  - 1. Paul lived Christ in the closest and most intimate contact with Him, acting according to the index of His eyes.
  - 2. Paul was a person who was one with Christ, full of Christ, and saturated with Christ; he truly experienced the indwelling Christ—Col. 3:11.