

**ENTERING INTO THE FOURTH STAGE OF THE EXPERIENCE OF LIFE
TO ARRIVE AT A FULL-GROWN MAN
FOR THE FULFILLMENT OF GOD'S PURPOSE**

(Saturday—First Morning Session)

Message Seven

Arriving at a Full-grown Man

(1)

**Taking Christ as Our Person
and
Living the Life of a God-man**

Scripture Reading: Gal. 2:20; Eph. 2:15; 4:24; 3:17a; Col. 3:10-11; Phil. 1:21a

I. In order to arrive at a full-grown man for the fulfillment of God's purpose, we need to take Christ as our person—Gal. 2:20; Eph. 3:17a:

- A. For the new man we all need to take Christ as our person—2:15; 3:17a:
1. Christ is both the life of the Body and the person of the new man—Col. 3:4; Eph. 3:17a.
 2. In the one new man the natural man has no place; we all have no place in the new man, for here Christ is all and in all—Col. 3:10-11.
 3. Christ is in all of us, so we all have only one person—1:27; Eph. 3:17a.
 4. What God cares for is whether or not we take Christ as our person—John 6:57b; Phil. 1:21a; Col. 3:4; Eph. 3:17a.
 5. What is first is not taking Christ as our life but taking Christ as our person:
 - a. If we take Christ as our person, we will surely take Him as our life—1 John 5:11-12; Col. 3:4.
 - b. If we take Christ as our person, we will be able to grow and mature—2:19; Eph. 4:13-16.
 - c. Taking Christ as our person is for the growth of the new man—v. 13.
- B. When we live our life by taking Christ as our person, especially in making decisions, our living will be the living of the new man—John 4:34; 5:30; 6:38; 17:4; Rom. 15:32; James 4:13-15:
1. In the new man we take Christ as our person to make plans and to decide how we should live—Rom. 15:32.
 2. If we take Christ as our person, we will not decide anything in our life by ourselves—Philem. 14:
 - a. Once we see that we are a part of the one new man, we will not be able to decide things merely by ourselves.
 - b. Since we are part of the new man, our decisions and our living should not be ours; they should be the decisions and the living of the corporate new man.
 - c. The living of the new man is a corporate living; therefore, our decisions are corporate decisions and not our personal decisions—1 Cor. 4:19.
 3. Paul is a pattern of taking Christ as our person—1 Tim. 1:16; Gal. 1:15a, 16a; 2:20; 4:19; Eph. 3:17a; Phil. 1:8; 2:5; 2 Cor. 2:10.

- C. For the church as the one new man, we all need to take Christ as our person in the matter of speaking—Matt. 12:34-37; Eph. 3:17a; John 7:16-18; 8:28, 38a; 12:49-50; 14:10:
1. In the one new man there is one mouth to speak the same thing—Rom. 15:6; 1 Cor. 1:10.
 2. We need to consider *one new man* in Ephesians 2:15 together with *one mouth* in Romans 15:6 and *speak the same thing* in 1 Corinthians 1:10:
 - a. There is only one new man, and the one new man has only one person, so the one new man speaks with one mouth and says the same thing.
 - b. *With one accord* and *with one mouth* (Rom. 15:6) mean that even though we are many and all are speaking, we all *speak the same thing*—1 Cor. 1:10:
 - (1) The church is the one new man with only one person—Christ—and this person controls our speaking; thus, whatever He speaks is surely *the same thing*.
 - (2) If in our speaking we take Christ as the person, there will be one mouth, and everyone will speak the same thing.
 - c. In the one new man there is only one person—Christ—and only this person has the freedom to speak; there is no freedom for us to speak our own things—Matt. 17:5.
 3. Although we are many and come from many places, we all have one mouth and we all speak the same thing; this is because we all are the one new man having only one person—Eph. 2:15; 4:22-24; 3:17a; Rom. 15:6; 1 Cor. 1:10.

II. In order to arrive at a full-grown man for the fulfillment of God’s purpose, we need to live the life of a God-man—Gal. 2:20; Phil. 1:21a:

- A. In Christ God and man have become one entity, the God-man—Luke 1:35; John 1:14; Matt. 1:18, 20-23.
- B. Initially, the Bible speaks of the God-man; today this God-man has become the God-men—Rom. 1:3-4; 8:29:
 1. The Lord Jesus, the first God-man, is the prototype for the producing of the many God-men (1 Pet. 2:21); the many God-men are His reproduction.
 2. God became man (Rom. 8:3) to have a mass reproduction of Himself and thereby to produce a new kind (v. 29; Heb. 2:10); this new kind is God-man kind.
 3. We need to see that we are God-men, born of God, possessing the life and nature of God, and belonging to the species of God—John 1:12-13.
- C. The one new man is the corporate God-man—Eph. 2:15; 4:24; Col. 3:10-11:
 1. The first God-man, the firstborn Son of God, is the Head of this corporate God-man, and the many God-men, the many sons of God, are the Body of this corporate God-man—Rom. 8:29; Col. 1:18; 2:19.
 2. The God-men, as the regenerated children of God, constitute the new man—Eph. 5:1; 4:24:
 - a. The one new man is a corporate man, and this corporate new man is the aggregate of all the God-men—2:15.

- b. Through His death and resurrection, Christ produced many brothers (Rom. 8:29; Heb. 2:11) who, with Him, have become the universal one new man; this is the corporate God-man, who is God yet man and man yet God.
- D. For the one new man as the corporate God-man, we need to live the life of a God-man—Phil. 1:19-21a; 3:10:
 - 1. Christ’s human living was man living God to express the attributes of God in the human virtues—John 6:57a; 14:10:
 - a. His human virtues were filled, mingled, and saturated with the divine attributes—Luke 1:26-35; 7:11-17; 10:25-37; 19:1-10.
 - b. The Lord Jesus lived God and expressed God in everything; whatever He did was God’s doing from within Him and through Him—John 14:10-11.
 - 2. As the expansion, increase, reproduction, and continuation of the first God-man, we should live the same kind of life that He lived—1 John 2:6:
 - a. The Lord’s God-man living set up a model for our God-man living—being crucified to live that God might be expressed in humanity—Gal. 2:20.
 - b. The One who lived the life of a God-man is now the Spirit living in us and through us; we should not allow anything other than this One to fill us and occupy us—2 Cor. 3:17; 13:5; Eph. 3:16-19.
 - 3. A God-man who knows the excellent Christ should live a life conformed to the death of Christ by the power of His resurrection—Phil. 3:8, 10.
 - 4. A God-man who has Christ living in him should live and magnify Christ by the bountiful supply of His Spirit—Gal. 2:20; Phil. 1:19-21a.

Excerpts from the Ministry:

EXPERIENCING THE PERSON OF CHRIST TO LIVE IN THE CHURCH

Even though we can enter into the church when we touch our spirit according to Ephesians 1, we can have the church life only when we live according to the person of Christ in our inner man according to chapter 3. In chapter 3 our spirit is not only an organ but also our inner man (v. 16). Before we were saved, our person was centered in our soul because our life was in the soul. At that time, both our spirit and our body were organs. Our body was an outer organ, and our spirit was a deadened inner organ (2:5). Consequently, our person was related to our soul. After we were regenerated, the Lord entered into our spirit to be our life. Now that our spirit has life, it is no longer just an organ but a person.

There are two persons within us: one that is related to our soul and the other that is related to our spirit. This creates a complication within every believer, because these two persons are in conflict with each other. The way to be delivered from this conflict is to allow the cross to deal with our soul-life, that is, with our old man. The only place for our old man, the person of our soul, is the cross (Rom. 6:6). Our old man has been crucified, and he needs to remain on the cross. When our soul-life is crucified, the inner man of our spirit will live. Regrettably, even though we have been saved and our spirit has become new, our inner man is not very strong; instead, the old man, our soul, is still very strong. This is the reason that Paul asked the Father to strengthen the believers with power through His Spirit into the inner man (Eph. 3:16).

THE CHURCH BEING THE ONE NEW MAN

We often hear that the church is the Body of Christ, but we seldom hear that the church is a person. The church is not only the Body of Christ; the church is also a person. Ephesians 2:15-16 says, “Abolishing in His flesh the law of the commandments in ordinances, that He might create the two in Himself into one new man, so making peace, and might reconcile both in one Body to God through the cross, having slain the enmity by it.” The Lord created the two—the Jewish and the Gentile believers—in Himself into one new man. According to verse 16, the new man is the Body of Christ. The church is the one new man, and the person of this new man is Christ.

In the church none of us is an individual person; we all are members. I am a member, and you are a member; we all are members. We are joined in one Body, and this one Body is a person. Even if there are five thousand people here today, are we five thousand persons or one person? We are one person, because even though we are many in number, there is only one person in the church—the Lord Jesus.

When Christ is our person and we live by Him, the life in our spirit enters into our mind and rules in our mind. As a result, we are renewed in the spirit of our mind. When our mind is renewed, we put on the new man, which is the church (4:23-24). When we put on the church as the new man, the church grows unto maturity, becomes the bride of Christ, and displays the victory of Christ unto the glory of God. At this point, the church is glorious, mature, and rich. The Lord is longing for this, and we are waiting for this. In these last days, the Lord will take an accelerated way in order to arrive at this goal. The church is the new man with Christ as our person. (*Taking Christ as Our Person for the Church Life*, pp. 11, 14-15)

TAKING CHRIST AS OUR PERSON AND THE ONENESS OF THE CHURCH

The church is not only a vessel and a Body; the church is also a man. As a man, the church is the one new man. This new man is not composed of scattered individuals; it is a great corporate man. This great corporate man is a man in the spirit, and the person of this man is Christ. The church must not experience merely the power of Christ and the life of Christ but also the person of Christ. This experience must become real to every saint.

The genuine oneness in the church will be the issue of us all taking Christ as our person. When we all take Christ as our person, the church will be one.

I believe with my whole heart that the local churches will arrive at this point one day. The Lord will work continually among us until every one of us takes Christ as our person.

TAKING CHRIST AS OUR PERSON BECAUSE OF LOVE

We should not think that taking Christ as our person is the same as enthroning Him as our King or submitting to Him as our Head. Often when we say, “O Lord, You are the Head and the Lord,” He is not very happy because we are still not focused on His desire. However, if out of love we would reject our person and take Him as our person, we would not only follow the Lord but inquire of Him. For

example, we would say, "Lord, are You going to the store? If You are not going, I will not go." If we go to the store because He is going, we should still inquire of Him before buying anything. Such a practice is not related to fearing the Lord but to loving Him and desiring to take Him as our person.

THE CHURCH BEING PREPARED AND READY TO RECEIVE CHRIST IN HIS SECOND COMING

If we reach this stage, we will know the love of Christ that surpasses all knowledge, and we will apprehend the breadth, the length, the height, and the depth of our immeasurable Lord. Further, we will be renewed in the spirit of our mind, having put off the old man and having put on the new man. The new man is the church; we will put on the church practically and live the church life practically. To put off the old man is to put off our former manner of living in human society, and to put on the new man is to put on the church and live the church life (Eph. 4:22, 24).

This is the goal that the Lord desires to reach today. May He have mercy on us and lead us toward this goal. I believe that in the near future, the Lord will bring the churches in every place into a condition in which many lovers of Christ will experience not only His power, life, and grace but also His person. Thus, we will let Him make His home in our hearts. The Spirit of the Lord in our spirit will spread to our mind and become the spirit of the mind (v. 23). In this renewed spirit of the mind we will put off our former manner of living and put on the life of the new man, the church. When this occurs, the bride will be ready to receive the Bridegroom. (*Taking Christ as Our Person for the Church Life*, pp. 38-41)

TAKING CHRIST AS OUR PERSON BEING THE SWEETEST EXPERIENCE

We must realize that the Spirit is not merely a power or an attribute; neither is He merely holiness and life. Rather, He lives in us as a person. I hope that we all can apprehend this matter in our spirit. This is the deepest, finest, and sweetest experience of the Lord. To experience the person of the Lord is the deepest experience and also the most complete, tender, and sweet experience of Him.

Galatians 2:20 says, "I am crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but it is Christ who lives in me." The phrase *no longer I* does not mean that our temper or preferences no longer exist; rather, it means that our person no longer lives. The phrase *Christ who lives in me* does not refer to the life of Christ, the power of Christ, the holiness of Christ, or the love of Christ; rather, it refers to the person of Christ. Christ Himself lives in us. Eventually, Paul says, "To me, to live is Christ" (Phil. 1:21). This is the experience of Christ as our person. (*Taking Christ as Our Person for the Church Life*, pp. 63-64, 66)

TAKING CHRIST AS OUR PERSON IN ORDER TO HAVE THE CHURCH LIFE

In the beginning of our Christian life we will experience the Lord's power, but as we go on, He will train us to experience Him as our person. As we enter into these experiences, the church as the new man will be produced. The church today is not merely the Body as an organ to express the Lord's power. The church today is

the new man, and the person of this new man is Christ Himself. We all must take Him as our person. In His person we will have the church life.

I hope that the Lord will show us this light and lead us into experiences of taking Him as our person. We should not only know the church as the Body, but we should also take a further step and see the church as the new man and the Lord as the person of the new man. When we reach this point, we will be rooted and grounded in the Lord's love and able to apprehend with all the saints the breadth, the length, the height, and the depth of Christ (Eph. 3:17-18). At this time we will also know the sweetness of His love, which surpasses all knowledge, and be filled unto the fullness of God (v. 19). Thus, we put off the old man and put on the new man daily (4:22-24). This new man is the church life.

I believe that the Lord's Spirit will speak a clearer word to us and cause us to have clearer light. We will see what it means to be in the church life and to have the living of the new man with Christ as our person. Only when our self is denied and rejected will Christ be lived out in us: "It is no longer I who live, but it is Christ who lives in me" (Gal. 2:20), and "To me, to live is Christ" (Phil. 1:21). This is the new man. This is the living of the new man. This is the church. (*Taking Christ as Our Person for the Church Life*, pp. 75-76)

LIVING THE LIFE OF A GOD-MAN ACCORDING TO THE HIGH PEAK OF THE DIVINE REVELATION

Since we have seen such a high peak of the divine revelation, we need to put into practice what we have seen. Our practice will have a success, and that success will be a new revival—the highest revival, and probably the last revival before the Lord's coming back. As I said in the previous chapter, we need a model. I do not mean that only some individuals should become a model. I mean that we need a corporate model, a Body, a people who live the life of a God-man. From today our practice should be to live the life of a God-man by realizing the power of the resurrection of Christ to take His cross as He did, to be crucified, to be conformed to His death, every day to live another One's life (Phil. 3:10; 1:21; Gal. 2:20). Our life, our self, our flesh, our natural man, and our everything were already brought to the cross by Him. Now we are living Him, so we should remain in His crucifixion to be conformed to the mold of His death every moment in every part of our life. That will cause us to spontaneously live Him as the resurrection (John 11:25). This is the living of a God-man.

This should be and this must be our church practice from today onward. If not, we are practicing something in vain. Our practice is not merely to have a church life in which everything is according to the Bible, a church life in which we baptize people by immersion, forsake the denominations, practice head covering, and have the Lord's table, absolutely according to the Bible. Some have come into the recovery because of these practices. They appreciate our family life, the church meetings, and the way we train our young people. However, these things should not be the goal of our practice. The goal of our practice should be to live the life of a God-man. This is the goal we should reach.

Our practice is not to live the life of any kind of natural man, good or bad. Our practice is to live the life of a God-man. A God-man is a man who is regenerated and transformed to be one with God, taking God as his life, his person, and his everything. Eventually, this one becomes God in His life and His nature, but not in His Godhead. This is a God-man. In the recovery today we should practice to live the life of such a God-man. This life is a life of crucifixion by and in and with resurrection. It is a life in which I have been crucified with Christ, and it is no longer I who live but He who lives in me (Gal. 2:20). Yet when He lives in me, He lives with me, with the result that I live with Him (John 14:19). He lives with me, and I live with Him. We two live together in the way of mingling, a mingling of God and man.

The highest family life, marriage life, and social life come out of such a life. This life is the life of the church and the life of the Body of Christ. Such a life is the reality of the Body of Christ. Such a life, like that of Jesus Christ in His thirty-three and a half years on the earth, saves us from all negative things, from small things and big things. In our marriage life it saves us from separation and divorce. In the church it saves us from opinion, division, despising, criticizing, and murmuring. In this life there is no criticism, no despising, no partiality, no division, no dissension, no opinion. In such a life we live the life of a God-man. With Him everything is new, everything is heavenly, and everything is divine, divinity mingled with humanity.

Wherever there is division, there is spiritual fornication, idolatry, self-glorification, and self-exaltation. Without self-exaltation, there could be no division. Living the life of a God-man saves us from all these negative things. To live such a life is to live Christ (Phil. 1:21), the very model of the God-man life.

Dear saints, this is my burden. We all need to live such a life—the older ones and the young ones, the brothers and the sisters, the elders and the common saints. If we do, we are faithful to what we have heard. Then the Lord will have not a model only by individuals but a model by a group of us. This is the model that the Lord needs to show to today's Christianity, a model of what His church should be.

If we live such a life, surely we will go out to contact people for the preaching of the gospel. A vital group is a group of this kind of people. The vital groups should not be practiced as a formality; they should be groups of people who live such a life. Our living the life of a God-man will save people, edify others, and build up the local churches even to the building up of the Body of Christ.

If we practice what we have heard, spontaneously a model will be built up. This model will be the greatest revival in the history of the church. I believe that this revival will bring the Lord back.

In conclusion, I would encourage you to try faithfully to practice living a God-man's life by contacting Him through calling on His name, pray-reading His living word, praying unceasingly, not quenching the Spirit, and not despising prophesying. May the Lord bless us with Himself as the life-giving Spirit that we may touch Him in the mingled spirit by these life practices. (*Living a Life according to the High Peak of God's Revelation*, pp. 39-42)