

**THE ONE NEW MAN
FULFILLING GOD'S PURPOSE IN CREATING MAN**

(Thursday—First Morning Session)

Message One

God's Eternal Purpose and the One New Man

Scripture Reading: Gen. 1:26-28; Eph. 2:15-16; 4:24; 6:10-13; Col. 3:10

I. The eternal purpose—the purpose of the ages—is the eternal plan that God made in eternity past—Eph. 3:11; 1:9, 11; Rom. 8:28:

- A. The purpose of God in the universe is to produce a group of people who will be exactly the same as He is; this is the unique subject of the Bible—John 1:12-13; 1 John 3:2:
 - 1. In life, nature, image, appearance, radiance, glory, and outward expression, they will be the same as God—Rev. 4:2-3; 21:10-11, 18.
 - 2. God's purpose is accomplished by the divine life dispensed into His chosen and redeemed people; as God's life is wrought into His people, a metabolic reaction takes place within them that causes them to be transformed and become the same as God—John 3:15; 1 John 5:11-12; 2 Cor. 3:18; Rom. 8:29.
- B. *Man* is a great word in the Bible—Gen. 1:26; Psa. 8:4-6:
 - 1. God's intention is with man, God's thought is focused on man, and God's heart is set upon man.
 - 2. It is man who fulfills God's plan, it is man who expresses God, it is man who defeats God's enemy, and it is man who brings the kingdom of God into the human race.
 - 3. Man is the means of God's manifestation, man is the means of God's move, and man is the means of God's administration—Ezek. 1:26, 5, 10.
- C. The eternal purpose of God is to have a corporate man to express Him and represent Him; this was God's purpose in creating man—Gen. 1:26-28; 5:1-2; Eph. 3:11; 1:9, 11.

II. "Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness"—Gen. 1:26:

- A. In the Bible there is a mysterious thought concerning the relationship between God and man—v. 26; Ezek. 1:26; 1 John 3:2b; Rev. 4:3a; 21:11b:
 - 1. God's desire is to become the same as man is and to make man the same as He is—1 John 3:2b.
 - 2. God's intention is to work Himself in Christ into us, making Himself the same as we are and making us the same as He is—Eph. 3:17a.
- B. *Let Us make man* reveals that a council was held among the three of the God-head regarding the creation of man—Gen. 1:26a:
 - 1. The decision to create man was made in eternity past, indicating that the creation of man was for the eternal purpose of the Triune God—Eph. 3:9-11.
 - 2. God's intention in creating man was to carry out His divine economy for the dispensing of Himself into man—1 Tim. 1:4; Rom. 8:11.
- C. God created man in His own image, according to His likeness—Gen. 1:26a:

1. God's image, referring to God's inner being, is the expression of the inward essence of God's attributes, the most prominent of which are love (1 John 4:8), light (1:5), holiness (Rev. 4:8), and righteousness (Jer. 23:6).
 2. God's likeness, referring to God's form (Phil. 2:6), is the expression of the essence and nature of God's person.
 3. God created man to be a duplication of Himself so that man may have the capacity to contain God and express Him—2 Cor. 4:6-7; 3:18.
- D. God created man in His image and according to His likeness because His intention is to come into man and to be one with man—Eph. 3:17a.
- E. God created man in His own image so that through His economy man may receive His life and nature and thereby become His expression—1 Tim. 1:4; John 3:16; 2 Pet. 1:4; 2 Cor. 3:18:
1. Because we were created according to God's kind, our human virtues have the capacity to contain the divine attributes—10:1; 11:10.
 2. For God to create man in His image means that God created man with the intention that man would become a duplicate of God, the reproduction of God, for His corporate expression; this reproduction makes God happy because it looks like Him, speaks like Him, and lives like Him—John 12:24; Rom. 8:29; Heb. 2:10; 1 John 3:1-2.

III. "Let them have dominion...Fill the earth and subdue it, and have dominion"—Gen. 1:26, 28:

- A. God's intention in giving man dominion is to subdue God's enemy, Satan, who rebelled against God—vv. 26, 28:
1. The creeping things that creep upon the earth typify Satan, the serpent, and his angels, as well as the demons, who follow Satan—v. 26; 3:1, 14; Rev. 12:4, 7, 9; Matt. 25:41; cf. Luke 10:19.
 2. *Subdue* in Genesis 1:28 implies that a war is raging on earth between God and His enemy, Satan; whoever gains the earth will have the victory.
 3. God has a problem, and this problem is Satan, the archangel who rebelled against God and became His enemy in the universe and especially on the earth—Isa. 14:12-14; Ezek. 28:12-18:
 - a. In order to subdue His enemy and thus solve His problem, God gave man authority to rule over all things created by God—Gen. 1:26.
 - b. Man especially must rule over the earth and even subdue the earth because the earth has been usurped by God's rebellious enemy—v. 28.
 4. God needs man to exercise His authority over all the creeping things, and God needs man to subdue and conquer the rebellious earth so that God may recover the earth for His kingdom—Matt. 6:9-10.
- B. God's intention in giving man dominion is to recover the earth—Gen. 1:28:
1. God created man with the intention of recovering the earth for Himself—v. 26.
 2. Man was created by God to have dominion over the earth, to subdue it, to conquer it, and thereby recover the earth for God—vv. 26, 28.
 3. God wants to regain the earth; the earth has become a crucial place, a place that Satan wants to hold and a place that God wants to regain.

- C. God's intention in giving man dominion is for him to exercise God's authority over the earth in order that the kingdom of God may come to the earth, the will of God may be done on the earth, and the glory of God may be manifested on the earth—Matt. 6:10, 13b.

IV. The church as the one new man is the corporate man in God's intention, and this new man will fulfill the twofold purpose of bearing God's image to express Him and of fighting against God's enemy for God's kingdom—Eph. 2:15; 4:24; 6:10-13; Col. 3:10:

- A. The Bible reveals that the one new man is not an individual but a corporate, universal man—Eph. 2:15; 4:24; Col. 3:10-11:
 - 1. The one new man is a corporate God-man:
 - a. The first God-man, the firstborn Son of God, is the Head of this corporate God-man—the new man—Rom. 8:29; Eph. 4:15.
 - b. The many God-men, the many sons of God, are the Body of this corporate God-man—the new man—vv. 16, 24.
 - 2. We, the believers in Christ, are all one with Christ to be the new man; we all are parts of the one new man—2:15-16; 4:24:
 - a. There are many believers and many local churches, but there is only one new man in the universe—Col. 3:10; 4:15-16.
 - b. All the believers are components of this one corporate and universal new man.
- B. The one new man is a warrior fighting against God's enemy—Eph. 6:10-13:
 - 1. The warrior is not a status of the church but an aspect of the church as the new man.
 - 2. The church as the corporate new man is the warrior, and the believers together make up this new man.
 - 3. We must fight the spiritual warfare not individually but in the Body, in the one new man.

Excerpts from the Ministry:

THE POSITIVE INTENTION OF GOD'S ECONOMY

In eternity past the Triune God held a divine council. In that divine conference the Triune God made a counsel, and this counsel became His economy. The positive intention of God's economy comprises three items.

**To Have Man in His Image and according to His Likeness
for Man to Be One with Him
That He May Express Himself in Humanity**

The first item of God's positive intention in His economy is to have man in His image and according to His likeness for man to be one with Him that He may express Himself in humanity (Gen. 1:26a). As a man on this earth, Jesus was made, or created, in God's image and according to God's likeness. Christ was not only born but also created. When He entered into a human womb, Christ joined Himself with the created man, Adam. Hence, Christ was created in God's image and according to God's likeness. As human beings, we all were begotten of our parents. But we were not only begotten; we were also created. We were created when Adam was created. Our birth caused us merely to participate in that creation. In the

same way, Christ was created in God's image and according to God's likeness to be one with man and one with God.

Man was made in God's image and according to His likeness so that God could express Himself in humanity. God expressed Himself in the humanity of Jesus while He was on the earth for thirty-three and a half years. John 1:18 says, "No one has ever seen God; the only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, He has declared Him." When He wept, Jesus expressed God. When He was angry with the Pharisees, He expressed God. He did everything to express God in His humanity.

Although God was seen in the humanity of the one man Jesus, this was not sufficient. The man Jesus had to be duplicated, mass-produced. In Christ's incarnation God entered into only one man, but in Christ's becoming the life-giving Spirit, God entered into millions of people. On the day of Pentecost three thousand were produced at one time (Acts 2:41). All these believers were made small "Christs"; that is, they were the mass production of Christ.

To Give Man His Dominion over the Earth That Man May Represent Him in His Administration

The second item of God's positive intention in His economy was to give man His dominion over the earth and over all the creatures on the earth, in the water, and in the heavens that man may represent Him in His administration (Gen. 1:26b, 28b). Man should not only express God but also represent God in His administration. This touches the matter of God's government. The four Gospels reveal that Jesus is not only God's expression but also God's representative. The little man Jesus rebuked the wind and silenced the sea (Mark 4:39). His disciples said to one another, "Who then is this, that even the wind and the sea obey Him?" (v. 41). He was a small Nazarene, but the wind and the sea obeyed Him. This was because He had God's dominion; as a man, He represented God. The Lord Jesus represented God, and we also must learn to represent God. (*The Collected Works of Witness Lee, 1991-1992*, vol. 1, "The Central Line of the Divine Revelation," pp. 407-409)

THE FOUR LIVING CREATURES BEARING THE APPEARANCE OF A MAN

Man was created in God's image in order to be God's expression. God is the center of the universe, but He needs an expression, and this expression is through man. Without man, God has no expression. The millions of angels cannot be the expression of God. God needs a corporate man to express Him. You should never despise the fact that you are a man.

In the Bible there are actually only four men: the first man, the second man, the new man, and the man-child. We were the first man; Christ is called the second man (1 Cor. 15:47); we have become the new man by regeneration; and now there is the prospect that we may become the man-child. This ministry is not only for the new man but is also for the man-child.

We may talk about the church as the expression of Christ, but we may not realize what the expression of Christ is. The Christ whom the church must express is the man upon the throne. If we would express Christ, we need to realize Christ today is still a man. We do not express merely God; we express God in a man. The church is the expression of Christ. This means that the church is an expression not merely of God but also of a man.

Ezekiel 1:26 shows us that the Lord today is a man on the throne. God needs a man, and eventually He became a man. We as the living creatures express Him as a man. He is the man on the throne, and we also bear the appearance of a man. It is man who fulfills God's plan, it is man who expresses God, it is man who defeats the enemy, and it is man who brings the kingdom of God into the human race. God needs a man.

The religious teachings in Christianity encourage us either to be like an angel or to be like God. However, the divine revelation unveils that God's desire is to have a man. We need to remember that the subtle one tempted the first man by telling him that if he ate of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, he would be like God (Gen. 3:5). From that day the concept of being like God has been in our blood. Every fallen human being has the concept of wanting to be like God. Certain devilish teachings encourage people to be something other than man. But in His redemption and salvation God has no intention of making anything other than man. God's redemption and God's salvation are to bring us back to the beginning and to recover us to being a proper man. We are the living creatures and we have God's life within us, yet we bear the appearance of a man. We should not try to be like an angel. Instead, in whatever we do, in whatever we say, and in whatever we express, we should be a man. This is what God needs today.

The vision in Ezekiel 1 reveals three crucial matters concerning the four living creatures' bearing the appearance of a man. First, God's glory is manifested upon them. The manifestation of God's glory depends upon their having the appearance of a man. Where they are, there God's glory is. God's glory is not separate from them, and apart from them God's glory cannot be manifested. Second, these living creatures are the means of God's move. God's move depends on them. When they move, God will move, for His move is with them. Third, the four living creatures, who bear the appearance of a man, are the means of God's administration. Ezekiel 1 reveals that God is sitting on the throne. God's throne dominates everything on earth and everything recorded in this book. This throne, therefore, is the center of God's administration. However, the center of God's administration depends on the four living creatures having the appearance of a man. Because of this, there is the administration of God's throne. If we put these three things together, we will see that man is the means of God's manifestation, that man is the means of God's move, and that man is the means of God's administration. In God's eyes and in God's hands, man has such an important position.

We all need to realize that God's desire is to gain man. God uses the wind, the cloud, the fire, and the electrum to enliven us in order to gain man as the means of His manifestation, move, and administration. Since man is so important to God, it is crucial for us to be a man and to bear the appearance of a man. We need to be a man for God's manifestation, for God's move, and for God's administration. (*Life-study of Ezekiel*, pp. 48-50)

THE NEW MAN

Ephesians 2:15 says that Christ through the cross abolished "in His flesh the law of the commandments in ordinances, that He might create the two in Himself into one new man." Then in Ephesians 4:22-24 we are told to put off the old man and to put on the new man. This new man is the Body of Christ. To put on the new man means to live a life by the Body. Before our salvation we were living in the old man, in the old society, but now we are members of Christ, living in His Body. We should put off the old man with the old social life, and we should put on the new man, the church. In this new man there is nothing natural, nothing Jewish, nothing Greek, nothing of social rank; everyone is full of Christ, so Christ is everyone, and Christ is in everyone (Col. 3:10-11). There is nothing but Christ in the new man. Our life is Christ, our living is Christ, our intention is Christ, our ambition is Christ, our will is Christ, our love is Christ, and everything else about us is Christ. He saturates our entire being.

This new man, according to Ephesians 4:17-32, lives a life by grace and reality. These are the two main factors in the living of such a new man to fulfill God's purpose. God needs

a new man on this earth to fulfill His purpose, to carry out His intention. (*The Collected Works of Witness Lee, 1983, vol. 3, "The Basic Revelation in the Holy Scriptures," p. 431*)

THE NEW MAN

The book of Ephesians reveals that the church is the Body of Christ (1:22-23), the kingdom of God, the household of God (2:19), and the temple, the dwelling place of God (vv. 21-22). In 2:15 and 4:24 we see that the church is the new man. Ephesians 2:15 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." Ephesians 4:24 says, "Put on the new man, which was created according to God in righteousness and holiness of the reality." Furthermore, Colossians 3:10 says, "Have put on the new man, which is being renewed unto full knowledge according to the image of Him who created him." The Greek word for *church*, *ekklesia*, means those called out for a gathering; hence, an assembly. This is the initial aspect of the church. From this aspect we need to go on to the aspects of the house of God and the kingdom of God. These are higher than the initial aspect but not as high as the aspect of the church as the Body of Christ. Yet the new man is still higher than the Body of Christ. Thus, the church is not just an assembly of believers, a kingdom of heavenly citizens, a household of God's children, or even a Body for Christ. In an even higher aspect, the church is the new man to accomplish God's eternal purpose. The emphasis on the church being the Body of Christ is on life, whereas the emphasis on the church being the new man is on the person. As the Body of Christ, the church needs Christ as its life. As the new man, the church needs Christ as its person. The body without life is not a body but a corpse. However, when the body makes a move, it is decided not by life but by the person. Hence, in the new man we need to take Christ as our person. The new man as a corporate person should live a life as Jesus lived on earth, that is, a life of truth, expressing God and causing God to be realized as reality by man.

God's creation of man in Genesis 1 is a picture of the new man in God's new creation. This means that the old creation is a figure, a type, of the new creation. In God's old creation the central character is man. It is the same in God's new creation. Therefore, in both the old creation and the new creation man is the center.

God created man in His own image (v. 26) and then gave man His dominion. Image is for expression. God wants man to be His expression. Dominion, however, is a matter not of expression but of representation. God wants man to represent Him in His authority for His dominion. In the old creation man was created to have God's image to express Him and also to have His dominion to represent Him.

The image refers to God's positive intention, and dominion to God's negative intention. God's positive intention is that man would express Him, whereas God's negative intention is that man would deal with God's enemy, Satan, the devil. In the universe God has a problem, the problem of dealing with His enemy. Since God's enemy, the devil, is a creature, God will not deal with him directly Himself; instead, He will deal with him by man, a creature of His creation. God deals with His enemy through man. Hence, in God's creation of man there were two intentions. The positive intention is that man would bear God's image for His expression; the negative intention is that man would have God's dominion to represent Him to deal with His enemy.

In the old creation the dominion given to man was limited to the earth. This means that in the old creation the dealing with God's enemy was restricted to the earth. However, in God's new creation the dominion has been enlarged to the entire universe.

Eventually, the church as the new man is the man in God's intention. God wanted a man,

and in the old creation He created a figure, a type, not the real man. The real man is the man Christ created on the cross through His all-inclusive death. This man is called the new man.

The term *the new man* reminds us of the old man. The old man did not fulfill God's dual purpose. However, the new man in God's new creation does fulfill the twofold purpose of expressing God and dealing with God's enemy. (*The Conclusion of the New Testament*, pp. 2301-2303)