

**Outline of
the Messages for the Full-time Training
in the Fall Term of 2023**

**GENERAL SUBJECT:
THE CRUCIAL POINTS OF THE TRUTH IN PAUL'S EPISTLES—
FIRST CORINTHIANS**

Message Two

**The Enjoyment of the All-inclusive Christ Solving All the Problems in the Church
through the Work of the Cross to Make Us Spiritual Men for God's Building**

Scripture Reading: 1 Cor. 1:18, 22-24; 2:2, 14-15; 3:1, 3; 6:17; 14:37, 32; Heb. 9:3-4

- I. First Corinthians reveals that the enjoyment of the all-inclusive Christ solves all the problems in the church through the work of the cross; Christ crucified—weak, despised, and rejected—was a stumbling block to the miracle-seeking religious Jews and foolishness to the wisdom-seeking philosophical Greeks, yet this Christ was just the One they needed to solve all their problems—2:2; 1:18, 22-24:**
- A. The genuine enjoyment of Christ includes the death of Christ in the compound Spirit with its killing element, which is applied to all the negative persons, things, and matters related to us in our daily life, church life, and work, so that we may live a crucified life by the power of Christ's resurrection life—Exo. 30:22-25; Phil. 1:19; 3:10; *Hymns*, #481, #631.
 - B. Song of Songs shows us that the Lord's loving seekers need to enjoy His mountain-leaping and hill-skipping presence as the power of His resurrection, which enables them to take the cross and deny the self to be conformed to His death; when we enjoy the resurrected Christ, He ushers us into Himself as the crucified Christ to make us conquerors over all the problems in the satanic chaos in the old creation and to cause us to triumph in the divine economy for the new creation—2:8-14; Phil. 3:10; 2 Cor. 5:17; Gal. 6:15; *Hymns*, #477.
 - C. Revelation 2:7 indicates that eating the tree of life, that is, enjoying Christ as our life supply, should be the primary matter in the church life; the content of the church life depends on the enjoyment of Christ; all our problems are caused by a shortage of the enjoyment of Christ:
 - 1. Revelation 2:7 speaks of the tree of life, and the Greek word for *tree* here is the same word for *tree* in 1 Peter 2:24, which says that in Christ's death on the cross, He "bore up our sins in His body on the tree [the cross]."
 - 2. Thus, the tree of life for us to eat and enjoy is the crucified (implied in the tree being the cross—v. 24) and resurrected (implied in the life of God—John 11:25) Christ; when we are genuinely enjoying Christ, we are experiencing the killing of the cross in the manifestation of the resurrection life; this daily killing of our self with all our problems is for the release of the divine life in resurrection (2 Cor. 4:10-12).
 - D. A picture of the enjoyment of Christ solving all the problems in the church through the work of the cross is seen in the Old Testament when the children of Israel went three days in the wilderness and found no water; then they came to Marah, meaning "bitterness," because the waters of Marah were bitter and were not good for drinking—Exo. 15:22-26:
 - 1. Three days signifies resurrection (Matt. 16:21; Acts 10:40; 1 Cor. 15:4); this indicates that it was in resurrection that the people of God were separated from Egypt.
 - 2. The third day may be considered as the day of resurrection because the Lord Jesus was raised on the third day (v. 4) and because, as the life-giving Spirit in resurrection, He is

the reality of the third day (v. 45b; Hosea 6:2); thus, we may say that the tree that Moses cast into the bitter waters signifies the resurrected Christ, because it was cast into the waters of Marah after the children of Israel had traveled three days in the wilderness.

3. This tree also signifies the cross of Christ, the crucified Christ (1 Pet. 2:24; Isa. 53:5); thus, we may say that the tree that Moses cast into the bitter waters was the crucified and resurrected Christ as the tree of life.
4. At Marah, the place of bitterness, Moses “cried out to Jehovah, and Jehovah showed him a tree” (Exo. 15:25); just as Moses saw a vision of a tree and cast this tree into the bitter waters, we need to see a vision of the crucified and resurrected Christ so that we can enjoy Him and apply Him to the bitterness in our being; then the bitter waters will become the sweet waters of His refreshing presence of rest and full satisfaction—Acts 3:19-20a; Psa. 23:2b; cf. 119:103; Ezek. 3:3; Isa. 61:3; Psa. 16:11; 30:11-12.
5. As we experience the cross of Christ and live a crucified life, Christ’s resurrection life becomes our healing power, and the Lord becomes our Healer—Exo. 15:26.
6. Christ’s suffering of death healed our death that we might live in His resurrection; the experience and enjoyment of Christ’s death in the realm of resurrection (Phil. 3:10) will cause any bitterness in our being to become sweet (cf. 2 Cor. 1:8-9, 12 and footnote 2).
7. “Oh! it is so sweet to die with Christ, / To the world, and self, and sin; / Oh! it is so sweet to live with Christ, / As He lives and reigns within” (*Hymns*, #482, chorus).

II. The goal of 1 Corinthians was to motivate the Corinthian believers who were soulish, fleshy, and fleshly to aspire to the growth in life that they might become spiritual men for God’s building; 1 Corinthians reveals that a believer may be one of three kinds of men—2:15; 3:1, 3; 14:37, 32:

- A. A believer may be a spiritual man, living in his spirit under the anointing of the Holy Spirit—Rom. 8:4, 6; Gal. 5:25; 1 Cor. 15:45b; 6:17; cf. Rev. 2:5, 16, 21; 3:3, 19:
 1. A spiritual man is one who does not behave according to the flesh or act according to the soulish life but lives according to the spirit, that is, his spirit mingled with the Spirit of God; such a man is ruled and controlled by his spirit—Phil. 2:1; 1 Cor. 2:15.
 2. A spiritual man denies his soul and does not live by his soul but allows his spirit, that is, his regenerated spirit, which is occupied and energized by the Spirit of God, to dominate his entire being; by the exercise of his spirit he knows the things of man and is ushered into the Spirit of God to know the things of God—vv. 11-12; cf. Rom. 8:16; 1 Cor. 6:17.
 3. A spiritual man is dominated, governed, directed, moved, and led by his mingled spirit—5:3-5a; 6:17; 2 Cor. 2:13-14; 1 Tim. 4:7-8; 2 Tim. 1:6-7; cf. Mal. 2:15-16.
- B. A believer may be a soulish man, living in his soul under the direction of the soul, the natural life—1 Cor. 2:14; cf. Heb. 4:12:
 1. A soulish man is a natural man, one who allows his soul (the mind, the emotion, and the will) to dominate his entire being and who lives by his soul, ignoring his spirit, not using his spirit, and even behaving as if he did not have a spirit—Jude 10, 19-21, 24-25.
 2. Such a man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, and he is not able to know them; to a natural man the things of the Spirit of God are foolishness—1 Cor. 1:22-24.
- C. A believer may be a fleshy and fleshly man, being of the flesh and living in the flesh under the influence of the nature of the flesh—3:1, 3:
 1. *Fleshy* denotes being made of flesh; *fleshly* denotes being influenced by the nature of the flesh and partaking of the character of the flesh.
 2. The jealousy and strife among the Corinthian believers show that they walked according to the flesh of the fallen man and not according to the human spirit regenerated by God—vv. 3-4; 1:11-12; Gal. 5:19-21.
- D. The Lord desires that all His believers take His grace to be the first kind of man—a spiritual man (6:18; Rev. 4:1-2); as we have been called by God into the fellowship of Christ (1 Cor. 1:9),

who is now the life-giving Spirit (15:45b), and as we are one spirit with Him (6:17), we can experience and enjoy Him only when we live in our spirit under the leading of the Holy Spirit (Rom. 1:9; 7:6; 8:4, 14).

III. The very Christ who is sitting on the throne in heaven (v. 34) is also now in us (v. 10), that is, in our spirit (2 Tim. 4:22), where the habitation of God is (Eph. 2:22); in the Holy of Holies in the Old Testament was the Ark of the Covenant, typifying Christ, “in which were the golden pot that had the manna and Aaron’s rod that budded and the tablets of the covenant” (Heb. 9:3-4):

- A. The hidden manna is the portion of Christ that we enjoy in the presence of God when there is no distance between us and Him; when there is no distance between us and the Lord, we enjoy Christ in the most intimate and hidden way; this is the enjoyment of the hidden manna, the hidden portion of Christ—Exo. 16:31-36; Rev. 2:17:
1. If we want to enjoy the hidden manna, there must be no distance between us and God; all the distance between us and the Lord must be eliminated.
 2. When we are ministering to the Lord and enjoying Him as the hidden manna, we have direct fellowship with Him and know His heart and His intention; it is in the presence of the Lord that we can be charged with Him, with His intention, and with all He wants us to do—Ezek. 44:15-18.
 3. When we are ministering to the Lord, we will have God’s commitment because we are in His presence, realizing that there is no distance between us and God—cf. Acts 13:1-3.
- B. The budding rod signifies that Christ, the resurrected One, should be our life, our living, and the resurrection life within us and that this life should bud, blossom, and bear fruit to maturity—Num. 17:8:
1. After the children of Israel rebelled, as recorded in Numbers 16, God commanded the twelve leaders to take twelve rods according to the twelve tribes of Israel and put them in the Tent of the Testimony before the Ark; then He said, “The rod of the man whom I choose shall bud”—17:5.
 2. All twelve rods were leafless, rootless, dry, and dead; whichever one budded was the one chosen by God; here we see that resurrection is the basis of God’s selection and that the basis of service is something apart from our natural life; thus, the budding rod signifies our experience of Christ in His resurrection as our acceptance by God for authority in the God-given ministry—vv. 9-10:
 - a. What we can do belongs to the natural realm, and what is impossible for us to do belongs to the realm of resurrection; a man must come to the end of himself before he will be convinced of his utter uselessness—Matt. 19:26; Mark 10:27; Luke 18:27.
 - b. If a man has never realized his own inability, he can never experience God’s ability; resurrection means that we cannot make it and that God is the One who has done everything—cf. 2 Cor. 1:8-9; 4:7.
- C. The tablets of the covenant, which are the tablets of the law, signify the law of the divine life, which is the spontaneous power, automatic function, innate ability, and divine capacity of the divine life—Jer. 31:33; 32:39; Heb. 8:10; cf. Rom. 8:10, 6, 11; 10:12-13:
1. According to this capacity, we can know God, live God, and be constituted with God in His life and nature so that we may become His increase, His enlargement, to be His fullness for His eternal expression—Eph. 1:22-23; 3:19-21.
 2. Furthermore, the capacity of the inner law of life constitutes us to be the members of the Body of Christ with all kinds of functions—4:11, 16.
 3. While the divine life grows in us, the law of life functions to shape us, to conform us, to the image of Christ as the firstborn Son of God; through the function of the law of life, we all will become the mature sons of God, and God will have His universal expression—Rom. 8:2, 29; Isa. 43:7; Rev. 21:10-11.