

THE VISION, THE PERSON, THE LIVING, AND THE RESPONSIBILITY OF A SERVING ONE

(Friday, Evening Session)

Message Three

The Person of a Serving One

(1)

A Pattern of Taking Christ as Our Person

Scripture Reading: 1 Tim. 1:16; Col. 3:4, 10-11; Gal. 1:15a, 16a; 2:20a; 3:27; 4:19; Eph. 3:17a; Phil. 1:8; 2:5; 2 Cor. 2:10b; Rom. 8:4; Eph. 5:25-27; 2 Cor. 12:15; 11:28

I. For the church as the one new man, we all need to take Christ as our person—Eph. 2:15; 3:17a:

- A. In the one new man there is only one person—Christ—v. 17a; 4:24.
- B. Christ is in all of us as one person; therefore, we all have only one person—Gal. 2:20; Eph. 3:17a.
- C. The new man is not about members (Rom. 12:4-5) but about the person; therefore, we all need to ask, “Who is my person—I or the Lord Jesus?”
- D. What God cares for is whether we take Christ as our person and our life and live Him—1 John 5:11-12; Col. 3:4; Phil. 1:21a.
- E. We should not only eat Christ’s riches in order to take them in and assimilate them into our being; we should also allow Christ to be our person—John 6:57; Eph. 3:8, 17a.
- F. In the new man all of us are simply one man; the requirement that everyone be only one man is extremely high—Col. 3:10-11.

II. Paul is a pattern of taking Christ as our person for the church as the one new man—1 Tim. 1:16; Col. 3:4, 10-11:

- 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. “For 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.

- D. “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.
- 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 so 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 take Christ as our person by denying our natural mind and taking His mind.
 2. If we intend to take Christ as our person, we must be willing to deny our mind and to have our mind replaced by the mind of Christ.
- 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 was a person who was broken and even terminated in his natural life, softened and flexible in his will, affectionate yet restricted in his emotion, considerate and sober in his mind, and pure and genuine in his spirit toward the believers for their benefit.
- I. “That the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us, who do not walk according to the flesh but according to the spirit”—Rom. 8:4:
1. In practicality, to take Christ as our person is to have our being wholly according to the mingled spirit.
 2. In our daily life we should not have our being according to teaching, feeling, concepts, or circumstances but according to the mingled spirit, taking Christ as our person for the one new man.
- J. As one who took Christ as his person, Paul is a pattern of one who loved the church, even as Christ does—Eph. 5:25-27; 2 Cor. 12:15; 11:28:
1. The church was precious to Paul because he realized that the desire of the Lord’s heart is to gain the church—Eph. 1:5, 9; Matt. 13:44-46; 16:18; Phil. 2:13.

2. Paul knew the value of the church as a precious treasure to God, a treasure which He obtained through His own blood—Acts 20:28.
3. Second Corinthians shows us that Paul's heart was fully for the church and on the church:
 - a. Paul was willing to spend and be spent for the church—12:14-15.
 - b. Paul loved the church no matter how the church treated him—v. 15b.
 - c. Paul loved all the churches in all the cities, having a genuine care and anxious concern for them all—11:28.
 - d. Paul ministered life to the church by dying—4:10-12.
4. We need to experience Christ as the church-loving Christ and become one with Him in loving the church and caring for the church—Eph. 5:25-27.