

**Outline of  
the Messages for the Full-time Training  
in the Spring Term of 2011**

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**GENERAL SUBJECT:  
EXPERIENCING, ENJOYING, AND EXPRESSING CHRIST**

Message Twenty-Four

**In 2 Corinthians**

**(2)**

**The Image of God and the Treasure**

Scripture Reading: 2 Cor. 4:1-7

**I. We may experience and enjoy Christ as the image of God—2 Cor. 4:4:**

- A. Christ being the image of God means that He is the expression of what God is—v. 4; Heb. 1:3:
  - 1. The invisible God has a visible image, and this image is Christ—Col. 1:15.
  - 2. Although God is invisible, He is expressed by a living person—Jesus Christ, the Son of God—John 1:18.
  - 3. In 2 Corinthians 4:4 *God, image, Christ, glory, gospel, and illumination* are all in apposition, referring to the same wonderful person.
- B. The gospel is the gospel of the glory of Christ, which illuminates, radiates, and shines in our hearts—vv. 4, 6:
  - 1. God's shining in our hearts results in the illumination of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ, that is, in the enlightenment that causes us to know the glory of God in the gospel of Christ—v. 4.
  - 2. The illumination of the knowledge of the glory of God is in the face of Jesus Christ; this indicates that the gospel of the glory of Christ is a lovely person on whose face we can see the glory of God—vv. 4, 6; Matt. 17:2.
  - 3. The glory of God manifested in the face of Jesus Christ is the God of glory expressed through Jesus Christ, who is the effulgence of the glory of God; to know Him is to know the God of glory—Acts 7:2; Heb. 1:3.
  - 4. Christ is the image of God, and as such, Christ is God; therefore, what has been illuminated into our being is a living person, the Triune God embodied in Christ, who is the image, the expression, of God—2 Cor. 4:4, 6.
- C. God's shining in our hearts is in the face of Jesus Christ—v. 6:
  - 1. In order to experience God's shining, we need to have direct and personal contact with the Lord—2:10.
  - 2. God may shine upon us, but if we want Him to shine *in* us, we need to have direct and intimate contact with Him—Psa. 27:4.
  - 3. Only when we have direct, personal, and intimate contact with the Lord do we have the inner shining—2 Cor. 3:18; 4:6.
  - 4. By calling on the name of the Lord, we are brought into face-to-face contact with Him and experience God's shining in our hearts—Rom. 10:12.

- D. God shines in our hearts that we may shine on others so that they may have the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ, that is, the knowledge of Christ, who expresses and declares God—Phil. 2:15; John 1:18:
  - 1. The gospel of the glory of Christ first shines into us, and then it shines out from within us—Matt. 5:16.
  - 2. In our preaching of the gospel, there should be an illumination; we need to shine forth the gospel of the glory of Christ from within us—Phil. 2:15.
  - 3. In proclaiming the gospel of the glory of Christ, we should not preach ourselves but Christ Jesus as Lord, who is the content of the gospel—2 Cor. 4:5.

## **II. We may experience and enjoy Christ as the treasure in earthen vessels—v. 7:**

- A. Through the illumination of the gospel of the glory of Christ, the Christ of glory as the excellent treasure is received by the believers; now the shining reality of Christ, the embodiment and expression of the Triune God, is the treasure within us—vv. 6-7:
  - 1. God's shining, which is God's dispensing, in our hearts brings into us a treasure, the all-inclusive Christ, who is the embodiment of the Triune God as the life-giving Spirit to be our life and everything—vv. 4, 6-7; Col. 2:9; 3:4, 11; 1 Cor. 15:45b.
  - 2. This wonderful, precious, and marvelous treasure, the indwelling Christ, is the divine source of the supply for the Christian life—2 Cor. 13:5; 4:7; Phil. 4:13.
  - 3. This treasure is the glorious Christ, the embodiment and expression of God, becoming our life and everything—2 Cor. 4:6-7; Col. 3:4, 11.
- B. This treasure—God in Christ as the image of God shining into us—is in earthen vessels—2 Cor. 4:7:
  - 1. We who contain this treasure are earthen vessels, worthless and fragile; a priceless treasure is contained in earthen vessels.
  - 2. This has made the worthless vessels ministers of the new covenant with a priceless ministry—3:6, 8-9; 4:1:
    - a. This ministry, described in 2:12—3:11, is the unique ministry common to all the apostles of Christ.
    - b. Although the apostles are many, they have only one ministry—the ministry of the new covenant for the accomplishing of God's New Testament economy—Acts 1:17, 25a; 20:24; 2 Cor. 3:8-9; 4:1.
    - c. All the apostles' works are to carry out this unique ministry, the ministering of Christ to others for the building up of the Body of Christ.
- C. Christ as the treasure within us is the source of the power energizing us and enabling us to manifest the truth; if we would live for the manifestation of the truth, we must renounce the hidden things of shame, not walk in craftiness, and not adulterate the word of God—vv. 2-3, 7.
- D. Those who receive the gospel of glory through our shining will have Christ as the precious treasure dispensed into them; then, like us, they will be earthen vessels containing this priceless treasure—vv. 6-7.