

Message Five

The God-man Living

Scripture Reading: Lev. 1:3, 9; 6:8-13; John 21:15-17;
1 John 3:14; 5:1; 2:6; 4:17; Gal. 6:2-3; Rom. 8:2

I. The desire of God's heart is that "the reality...in Jesus" (Eph. 4:21), the actual condition of the God-man living of Jesus as recorded in the four Gospels, would be duplicated in the many members of Christ's Body by the Spirit of reality to become the reality of the Body of Christ, the highest peak in God's economy (vv. 20-24):

- A. The four Gospels show the pattern of the life that God desires, the mold of the life that can satisfy God and fulfill His purpose; Jesus lived a life in which He did everything in God, with God, and for God; God was in His living, and He was one with God; this is what is meant by *the reality is in Jesus*; to learn Christ as the reality is in Jesus is to be molded into the pattern of Christ, to be conformed to the image of Christ—Rom. 8:28-29; Eph. 4:20-21.
- B. We are being perfected by the Lord to be God-men, living the divine life by denying our natural life according to the model of Christ as the first God-man—Matt. 11:29a; 17:5b; 1 Pet. 2:21:
 - 1. In His life on earth He set up a pattern, as revealed in the four Gospels; then He was crucified and resurrected to become the life-giving Spirit so that He might enter into us to be our life; we learn from Him according to His example, not by our natural life but by Him as our life in resurrection—1 Cor. 15:45b; Col. 3:4.
 - 2. Our Christian life is a life in Christ and also a life of Christ in us; we are in Christ as the mold, and He is in us as our life; in this way we learn Christ as the reality is in Jesus; this reality is the reality of the Body of Christ—1 Cor. 1:30; 2 Cor. 5:17; 12:2a; Col. 1:27; Gal. 2:20; Rom. 8:10.
- C. As we love the Lord, contact Him, and pray to Him, we automatically live Him according to the mold, the form, the pattern, described in the Gospels; in this way we are shaped, conformed, to the image of this mold—this is what it means to learn Christ—Matt. 11:29; Rom. 8:29.
- D. When we live in the mingled spirit, we are learning Christ according to the reality in Jesus by the Spirit of reality; we learn from Him as our model so that His biography becomes our history; the living of the Body of Christ as the new man should be exactly the same as the living of Jesus revealed in the Gospels—Gal. 6:17-18; Rom. 1:1, 9; Eph. 4:20-24; Phil. 2:5; Matt. 11:29; 1 Pet. 2:21.
- E. The purpose of God in sending the Lord Jesus to be a man was for Him to live a God-man life by the divine life; when we eat Him, we live because of Him to become a universal great man who is exactly the same as He is—a man living a God-man life by the divine life—Lam. 3:22-24, 55-56; Rev. 2:4, 7; John 6:57, 63; Jer. 15:16; Eph. 6:17-18; Psa. 119:15.

II. The only life that is pleasing to God is the life that is a repetition of the life Christ lived on the earth; this is a life that experiences Christ in His experiences as the burnt offering—Lev. 1:9; John 8:29; 2 Cor. 5:9:

- A. The burnt offering typifies Christ in His living a life that is absolutely for God and for God's satisfaction; the burnt offering also typifies Christ in His being the life that enables God's people to have such a living—Lev. 1:3; Num. 28:2-3; John 5:30; 6:38; 8:29; Heb. 10:5-10.

- B. The word translated “burnt offering” denotes something that is ascending; this ascending refers to Christ (Lev. 1:3, 10, 14); the only thing that can ascend to God from earth is the life lived by Christ, for He is the unique person to live a life that is absolutely for God (John 6:38).
- C. The burnt offering was “a satisfying fragrance to Jehovah” (Lev. 1:9); the Hebrew words translated “satisfying fragrance” literally mean “savor of rest or satisfaction”; a satisfying fragrance is a savor that brings satisfaction, peace, and rest; such a satisfying fragrance is an enjoyment to God.
- D. By laying our hands on Christ as our burnt offering through the proper prayer, we are joined to Him, and He and we become one; as Christ lives in us, He repeats in us the life He lived on earth, the life of the burnt offering—v. 4; 1 Cor. 6:17; Gal. 2:20.
- E. In such a union, such an identification, all our weaknesses, defects, and faults are taken on by Him—2 Cor. 5:21; Gal. 2:20a.
- F. We must allow the Lord to burn us so that we may be a continual burnt offering to burn others and be reduced to ashes to become the New Jerusalem for God’s expression—Psa. 20:3; Lev. 1:16; 6:8-13; 1 Cor. 3:12a; Rev. 3:12; 21:2, 10-11, 18-21:
 - 1. The ashes signify Christ reduced to nothing; since we are one with the Christ who has been reduced to ashes, we also are reduced to ashes, that is, reduced to nothing, to zero—Mark 9:12; Isa. 53:3; 1 Cor. 1:28; 2 Cor. 12:11.
 - 2. The more we are identified with Christ in His death, the more we will realize that we have become a heap of ashes; when we become ashes, we are no longer a natural person; instead, we are a person who has been crucified, terminated, burned—Gal. 2:20a.
- G. Putting the ashes at the east side of the altar, the side of the sunrise, is an allusion to resurrection—Lev. 1:16; John 11:25; Phil. 3:10-11; 2 Cor. 1:9:
 - 1. With Christ as the burnt offering, the ashes are not the end—they are the beginning; the ashes mean that Christ has been put to death, but the east signifies resurrection—Mark 9:31.
 - 2. The more we are reduced to ashes in Christ, the more we will be put to the east, and on the east we will have the assurance that the sun will rise and that we will experience the sunrise of resurrection—Phil. 3:10-11.
- H. Eventually, the ashes will become the New Jerusalem—Rev. 3:12; 21:2, 10-11:
 - 1. Christ’s death brings us to an end, reduces us to ashes, and in resurrection the ashes become precious materials for God’s building—1 Cor. 3:9b, 12a.
 - 2. When we are reduced to ashes, we are brought into the transformation of the Triune God to become the precious materials for the building of the New Jerusalem—Rom. 12:1-2; 2 Cor. 3:18; Rev. 21:18-21.

III. In carrying out God’s New Testament ministry, the Lord Jesus, as the reality of the burnt offering, did not do anything out of Himself (John 5:19), He did not do His own work (4:34; 17:4), He did not speak His own word (14:10, 24), He did everything not by His own will (5:30), and He did not seek His own glory (7:18); He was never disappointed because He was satisfied only with God (Isa. 42:4; 50:4-5; 53:2a; cf. John 4:13-14; 6:15; Mark 9:7-8):

- A. The Lord’s life was His work, His move, and His ministry; His work was His living, and His move was His being; with Him there was no difference between His life, His work, His move, and His ministry; the Lord Jesus lived His ministry—cf. Luke 22:26-27; John 10:10b; 1 Cor. 15:45b; 1 John 5:16a; 2 Cor. 3:6; Phil. 1:25.

- B. The Lord Jesus was a man of prayer, being one with God, living in the presence of God without ceasing, trusting in God and not in Himself under any kind of suffering and persecution, and being One in whom Satan, the ruler of the world, had nothing (no ground, no hope, no chance, no possibility in anything)—John 10:30; 8:29; 14:30b; 16:32-33; 1 Pet. 2:23:
 - 1. He was a man in the flesh praying to the mysterious God in the divine and mystical realm; He often went to the mountain or withdrew to a private place to pray—Matt. 14:23; Mark 1:35; Luke 5:16; 6:12; 9:28.
 - 2. He was never alone, for the Father was with Him; every moment He saw His Father's face—John 5:19; 16:32; Psa. 16:7-8.
- C. When Christ as the God-Savior wanted to save an immoral woman of Samaria, He had to travel from Judea to Galilee through Samaria, He detoured from the main way of Samaria to the city of Sychar, and He waited at the well of Jacob, near Sychar, for His object to come that He might cherish her by asking her to give Him something to drink so that He might nourish her with the water of life, which is the flowing Triune God Himself—John 4:3-14.
- D. When none of the accusing Pharisees could condemn the adulterous woman, Christ as the God-Savior, in His humanity, said to her, “Neither do I condemn you,” to cherish her that He, as the great I Am, might nourish her with the freedom from sin and enable her to “sin no more”—8:3-11, 24, 34-36.

IV. When we abide in the love that is God Himself, love has been “perfected with us, that we may have boldness in the day of the judgment because even as He is, so also are we in this world” (1 John 4:17)—Christ as the reality of the burnt offering lived in this world a life of God as love, and He is now our life that we may live the same life of love in this world and be the same as He is (3:14; 5:1; 2:6):

- A. The law of the Spirit of life in our spirit is the law of Christ as the law of love (Rom. 8:2; Gal. 6:2-3); the law of love must be substantiated by the law of the Spirit of life so that we may be able to bear one another's burdens; but if we are filled with pride, we will be unable to bear others' burdens because we deceive ourselves by thinking that we are something when we are nothing (v. 3).
- B. When the law of love is activated within us, we automatically and spontaneously will be shepherds who have the loving and forgiving heart of our Father God and the shepherding and seeking spirit of our Savior Christ—John 21:15-17; Luke 15:3-7.
- C. When the law of love is activated within us, our labor in the Lord is a labor of love (1 Cor. 15:58; 1 Thes. 1:3) in which we “support the weak” (Acts 20:35) and “sustain the weak” (1 Thes. 5:14); *the weak* refers to those who are weak either in their spirit or soul or body, or are weak in faith (Rom. 14:1; 15:1).
- D. After His resurrection the Lord shepherded Peter and commissioned him to feed His lambs and shepherd His sheep; this is to incorporate the apostolic ministry with Christ's heavenly ministry to take care of God's flock, the church, which issues in the building up of the Body of Christ to consummate in the New Jerusalem for the accomplishment of the eternal economy of God—John 21:15-17.