

**Outline of
the Messages for the Full-time Training
in the Spring Term of 2025**

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

Message Eleven

**Learning Christ as the Reality Is in Jesus
and
Putting On the New Man**

Scripture Reading: Eph. 4:17-24; Col. 3:10-11

I. The matter of learning Christ as the reality is in Jesus is difficult to comprehend, and we need to consider it very carefully:

- A. Verses 17 through 19 in Ephesians 4 are a dark background for what Paul says in verse 20: "But you did not so learn Christ."
- B. Christ is not only life to us but also an example—John 13:15; 1 Pet. 2:21:
 - 1. We learn from Him (Matt. 11:29) according to His example, not by our natural life but by Him as our life in resurrection.
 - 2. During the thirty-three and a half years of His life on earth, He set up a pattern, a mold, a model; this is a matter of great significance.
 - 3. When God put us into Christ, He put us into the mold—Eph. 4:21, 24.
 - 4. God intends to form us into the mold of Christ:
 - a. Romans 8:29 indicates that we are to be conformed to the image of Christ, the Firstborn among many brothers.
 - b. To be conformed is to be molded.
 - c. The Firstborn is the pattern, and the many brothers of the Firstborn are those who are to be conformed to this pattern.
 - 5. To learn Christ is simply to be molded into the pattern of Christ, that is, to be "conformed" to the image of Christ—v. 29.
- C. *The reality is in Jesus* refers to the actual condition of the life of Jesus as recorded in the four Gospels—Eph. 4:21:
 - 1. In the godless walk of the nations, the fallen people, there is vanity.
 - 2. In the godly life of Jesus there is truth, reality—John 8:32.
 - 3. Jesus lived a life in which He did everything in God, with God, and for God.
 - 4. God was in His living, and He was one with God; this is what is meant by *the reality is in Jesus*.
 - 5. We, the believers, who are regenerated with Christ as our life and are taught in Him, learn from Him as the reality is in Jesus—1:14, 17; 14:6, 17; 15:26; 16:13.

II. "That you be renewed in the spirit of your mind"—Eph. 4:23:

- A. According to Ephesians 4:23, a verse that is vital and crucial for us, the key to putting off the old man and putting on the new man is in being renewed in the spirit of our mind.
- B. A regenerated spirit is a renewed spirit; this renewed spirit must be strengthened to invade, subdue, and occupy every part of our soul—3:16-17.

- C. Christ as the life-giving Spirit is now in our spirit, and these two spirits mingle together to form the spirit of the mind—2 Tim. 4:22; 1 Cor. 6:17:
 - 1. When the life-giving Spirit spreads into our mind, this mingled spirit becomes the spirit of our mind.
 - 2. It is by this mingled spirit that our mind is renewed.
- D. To be renewed in the spirit of our mind is inward and intrinsic—Rom. 12:2.
- E. The more we are renewed in the spirit of our mind, the more the new man with the divine essence will spread from our spirit to our soul—Eph. 4:23:
 - 1. This spreading within us is according to Christ, who is the image of God, the expression of God.
 - 2. The more the renewing takes place in our soul, the more we will have the image of Christ, and the more we will be able to express God.
- F. The only possibility of God's purpose being fulfilled in this age is that we would all be willing to be renewed in the spirit of our mind—v. 23.

III. “Put on the new man, which was created according to God in righteousness and holiness of the reality”—v. 24:

- A. Verses 22 and 24 show us what we have been taught: that we put off the old man and put on the new man.
- B. Our putting off of the old man and putting on of the new man is a manifestation of our having learned Christ.
- C. It was in baptism that we put off the old man and put on the new man—Rom. 6:4b.
- D. The new man is of Christ—Eph. 4:24:
 - 1. It is His Body, created in Him on the cross—2:15-16.
 - 2. It is not individual but corporate.
 - 3. In this corporate new man Christ is all and in all—He is all the people and in all the people—Col. 3:10-11.
- E. The old man was created outwardly according to the image of God but without God's life and nature (Gen. 1:26-27), whereas the new man was created inwardly according to God Himself and with God's life and nature (Col. 3:10).
- F. As the Body of Christ, the church needs Christ as its life, and as the new man, the church needs Christ as its person—John 14:6.
- G. This new corporate person should live a life like that which Jesus lived on the earth, that is, a life of reality that expresses God and causes God to be realized as the reality by man.
- H. Righteousness is to be right with God and with man according to God's righteous way, while holiness is godliness and devoutness before God.
- I. In Ephesians 4:24 the article before *reality* is emphatic:
 - 1. As the deceit in verse 22, related to the old man, is the personification of Satan, so the reality here, related to the new man, is the personification of God.
 - 2. The deceit is the devil, and the reality is God.
 - 3. This reality was exhibited in the life of Jesus, as mentioned in verse 21.
 - 4. In the life of Jesus, righteousness and holiness of the reality were continuously manifested.
 - 5. It was in the righteousness and holiness of this reality, which is God realized and expressed, that the new man was created.