

THE
WONDERFUL
BEING
OF CHRIST

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LIVING STREAM MINISTRY

THE WONDERFUL BEING OF CHRIST

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CONTENTS

1. Christ Being Both God and Man
2. Christ Being the Redeemer and the Savior
3. Christ Being Life and Resurrection
4. Christ Being the Life-giving Spirit
5. Christ Being Everything to the Church as the New Man

PREFACE

This book is a translation of messages given in Chinese by Brother Witness Lee in San Jose, California on July 22-24, 1983.

CHAPTER ONE

CHRIST BEING BOTH GOD AND MAN

Scripture Reading: John 1:1, 3; 20:28; Rom. 9:5; Titus 2:13; John 1:14; 19:5; Acts 7:56; 1 Tim. 2:5; John 1:51

CHRIST BEING WONDERFUL AND RICH

Christ is truly a wonderful One. Isaiah 9:6 says that His name is called Wonderful Counselor. What He is, is all-inclusive; it is difficult to explore and impossible to comprehend with our limited mind all that Christ is. One summer in Taipei I studied, together with the saints, the subject of what Christ is. We tried to find out from the sixty-six books of the Bible how many items there are concerning what the Lord Jesus is. It was easy to find nearly three hundred items. These items include His being God and man, the Redeemer and the Savior, life and resurrection, the Body and the new man, the Priest and the Prophet, the King and the Counselor, power and wisdom, righteousness and sanctification, and so on. In that period of time we did not begin to exhaust our study, because what He is, which is wonderful and rich, is simply beyond counting; three hundred items do not make up the complete list.

In this book we will use five chapters to fellowship concerning the wonderful being of Christ. First, He is God and man; second, He is the Redeemer and the Savior; third, He is life and resurrection; fourth, He is the life-giving Spirit; and fifth, He is everything to the church, the new man. Christ is truly rich. He is both God and man; He is the Redeemer and the Savior; He is life and resurrection; He is the life-giving Spirit; and He is everything to the church, the new man. Christ is the Head of the church, the life and content of the church, and even more, the foundation and testimony of the church. Such an all-inclusive, wonderful, and rich Christ can meet our every need with what He is. Whether male or female, young or old, honored or despised, everyone needs Jesus. He can satisfy our thirst deep within and meet all our needs.

CHRIST BEING BOTH GOD AND MAN

The statement “Christ is both God and man” is plain in words but profound in implications. We may understand that Christ is God. According to the human concept, however, since Christ is God, how can He also be man? This is not easy to understand. For two thousand years in Christian theology there has been a branch of study called Christology, which specializes in the study of the Person of Christ and the discussion of what He is. Throughout the centuries there has been a great deal of debate concerning His being both God and man. However, the Bible explicitly says that Christ is both God and man. All of His wonderful being is focused on this very point.

CHRIST BEING THE LORD WHO CREATED THE HEAVENS, THE EARTH, AND ALL THINGS

In the history of religious mankind there have been many terms related to God, such as *polytheism*, *monotheism*, and the belief of one god by choice, that is, by selecting one god among the many gods as the object of worship. This tells us that within man there is the need for God. Whether what he has found is right or wrong, every man wants God. We all know that the God whom we worship is the Lord who created the heavens, the earth, and the universe. The heavens, the earth, and all things did not come into being through evolution; they were created by God. Why did God create the heavens, the earth, and all things? The primary purpose was for His expression. God Himself cannot be fathomed, His eternal power cannot be comprehended, and all His divine characteristics cannot be determined. However, we see in Romans 1:20 that His eternal power and divine characteristics can be perceived through the things that He made, so that men would be without excuse.

All those who study medicine and physics acknowledge that the more they study and explore, the more they have to bow their heads, saying that there is indeed a Creator, a sovereign Master, in the universe. If you observe the movements of the stars and planets and the laws of creation, you cannot but confess that there is indeed an almighty One who has designed all these. The different scientific inventions throughout the ages are simply discoveries of the laws or principles set by this almighty One in the universe. Today we all know that the distance between the sun and the earth is just right; it is neither too far nor too near. If the earth were a little closer to the sun, the living things on earth would be scorched; if the earth were a little farther away, they

would be frozen to death. Furthermore, there are innumerable planets and stars revolving in their respective orbits without colliding with one another. Who has designed them? Who regulates them? Undoubtedly, this is God's work.

Five hundred years ago, prior to Columbus's voyage, all people, whether in the East or in the West, considered the earth to be a flat square. This was because human beings could not imagine in their minds that the earth is round and that it is constantly revolving. However, later on, the facts proved that the earth is round and that it also rotates continuously. Actually, the Bible had already revealed this point. Isaiah 40:22 says, "It is He who sits above the circle of the earth." *Earth* here is the same Hebrew word as *earth* in Genesis 1:1. Isaiah used the word *earth* instead of *globe* because at that time the word *globe* did not exist. Job 26:7 also says, "He hangs the earth upon nothing." Today we all know that the earth is truly hanging in space. All these prove that the universe, the heavens, and the earth were created by God.

HAVING INFINITE POWER AND GLORIOUS CHARACTERISTICS

The universe is held together by the power of God. The vastness of the universe is astonishing, and its infiniteness is immeasurable. The earth is only a small body in the solar system. There are innumerable stars that constitute a galaxy and incalculable galaxies that form the complete system of the universe. Hence, the universe is truly vast and boundless. Nevertheless, Christ, who is the effulgence of God's glory and the impress of God's substance, upholds all things by the word of His power (Heb. 1:3). This shows that the Lord who created the heavens, the earth, and the universe is infinite in His authority and power.

As to God's divine characteristics, they are even more mysterious and difficult to comprehend. According to the Greek, the word rendered *divine characteristics* in Romans 1:20 refers to the characteristics of God's nature. The universe expresses not only the eternal and infinite power of God but also some characteristics of God's nature. When you look up at the heavens, you see that the universe is bright, and this tells you that brightness is a characteristic of the Creator.

Moreover, the earth is full of life. Genesis 1 tells us that God's creation was focused on life. First, He created the inanimate things, and then He created the animate things, from the lower form of life to the higher form of life and eventually to the highest form of life. The lower form of life is the plant life, a life without consciousness; a higher form of life is the animal life, a life with consciousness; and the highest form of life is the human life, a life with the highest consciousness and perception. This shows that life is a characteristic of our Creator.

Not only so, the universe reveals love, though indistinctly. When God created man, He put love and kindness in man. Such a universe, which is bright, full of life, beautiful, and orderly, and which also contains love, indicates clearly that our Creator possesses not only eternal power but also glorious characteristics.

REVEALED THROUGH THE BIBLE

In order to express Himself, God first created the universe. Then, to reveal Himself more clearly, He inspired men throughout the centuries to write a book that is the Book of books—the Bible. The Bible was not invented by man but revealed by God. Its revelation of God, which is very thorough and detailed, far surpasses that which is declared through the created universe. On the one hand, if we had only the Bible without the heavens, the earth, and the universe created by God, we could not see the power of God, nor could we see His characteristics such as His brightness, beauty, and kindness. On the other hand, if we had only the creation without the Bible, what we could know or see of God would be superficial; we could comprehend only in a limited way all the things concerning God's being and deeds. We thank and praise Him, however, that He has given us this Bible, which reveals Himself. Two thousand years ago there were only the thirty-nine books of the Old Testament, from Genesis to Malachi, which depict God's being and deeds in a very detailed manner. Later, the twenty-seven books of the New Testament were written, which reveal in an even clearer way the wonderful being of Christ as God's embodiment.

CHRIST BEING THE GOD-MAN

Even though God created the universe to express Himself and used the revelation in the Bible to depict Himself, this was not sufficient. He Himself

needed to come to be a man. When He became flesh and came into the human race, He made known His very person. Not only did He express His power and manifest His characteristics through the universe that He had created, nor did He only reveal all of His being and deeds through the Bible, but also He Himself came as a man, the Lord Jesus, to live on earth and be manifested among men.

In the six thousand years of human history, there have been many ancient sages, philosophers, and great persons in the East and in the West, but no one ever had the boldness to claim that he was God. Yet two thousand years ago, Jesus the Nazarene, who was born in the small country of Israel and raised in a humble family, declared that He was God! Was He lying? Was He insane? No, neither is true. He was sounder than anyone else. The words He spoke were logical and full of wisdom; moreover, every word He uttered was the truth and not a lie.

The God in whom we believe is not just one among many gods nor one chosen from among all the gods; rather, He is the only true God. This only true God did three great things. First, He created the universe; second, He gave the revelation, the Bible; and third, He became a man, Jesus Christ. Not only do we have the heavens and the earth, nor do we only have the Bible, but we also have Jesus Christ, the incarnated God, who dwells in us to be our life and everything. The sovereign Lord who created the universe is pleased to dwell in the created man. What a wonderful fact this is!

The Jews and the Muslims also believe in the only true God, but they do not know that Jesus Christ is the very God who created the universe, the very God in whom they believe. They can say only that God is in heaven; consequently, they worship a God who is far away and objective. However, the God whom we worship is not like that. He was conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary; moreover, He was born in a manger and grew up in a poor home in Nazareth. At the age of thirty He went out to preach, telling people many times that He was God. At that time many of those people were not clear that He was the very God, and even His disciples knew Him only in a superficial way. Therefore, after His resurrection, when He came into the midst of His disciples and appeared to them, they saw Him but did not understand that He was God. One of the disciples, Thomas, was not in the room at that time. The other disciples said to him, "We have seen the Lord!" But Thomas said, "Unless I see in His hands the mark of the nails and put my

finger into the mark of the nails and put my hand into His side, I will by no means believe” (John 20:25). After eight days the Lord Jesus appeared to the disciples again while they were gathered in the house, and Thomas was with them. Then the Lord said to Thomas, “Bring your finger here and see My hands, and bring your hand and put it into My side; and do not be unbelieving, but believing” (v. 27). Thomas could not help but bow down and worship, saying, “My Lord and my God!” (v. 28).

Two thousand years ago God Himself came to earth. On the one hand, He became a genuine man so that He could die for us as our Redeemer to redeem us from our sins. On the other hand, as the true God, He was the life and the resurrection who could not be held by death. He died, and then He walked calmly out of death. Through His resurrection from death this God-man guaranteed, on the one hand, that His redemption is eternally efficacious, and on the other hand, He became the life-giving Spirit to release the divine life.

This life-giving Spirit is the Spirit of Jesus Christ. Today when a man receives Jesus Christ, this Spirit enters into him. This is God entering into man to be mingled with man and to be his life. This is the gospel that we announce, and this is the God whom we preach. He created the universe and gave the revelation of the Bible. Moreover, He was incarnated to be a man and was crucified to accomplish redemption for us, and then He was resurrected from the dead to become the life-giving Spirit. This life-giving Spirit is our Redeemer and our Savior; He is our God, our Creator. He is the Lord Jesus Christ who dwells in us now to be our life and everything.

The eternal God created the universe and thereby expressed Himself, He gave the revelation of the Bible and thereby explained Himself, and He became a man personally and thereby manifested Himself in a living way. Then He died on the cross, shedding His blood for the redemption of our sins. Eventually, He was resurrected from the dead to become the life-giving Spirit. If any man is willing to receive Him as the Savior by repenting in his heart, confessing that he is a sinner, and accepting the redemption accomplished on the cross, this life-giving Spirit, who is the eternal God, will enter into him and be his life and everything.

This does not mean that we believe in three different persons: one being the Spirit, another one being the Savior, and still another one being God. Our God is the Savior, the life-giving Spirit. Whenever we exercise our spirit, we have

fellowship with Him. We do not need to seek outwardly; He is in us as the One who is our life and life supply in a real and living way.

The God whom we preach has become the life-giving Spirit through incarnation, death, and resurrection. Today He is both God and man. When He came to be a man and lived on earth, He did not forsake His divinity. At the time that He was here on earth, He was both man and God; He was the One who was God yet man. Therefore, some Bible expositors call Him the “God-man.” Hence, the Lord Jesus in whom we believe is not only God but also man. The Spirit who has entered into us possesses not only divinity but also humanity. Before we were saved, not only were we void of divinity; even our humanity was fallen. However, from the time we were saved, not only do we possess divinity, but we also have received the highest humanity for us to live a transcendent life. We do not merely adhere to outward regulations; rather, we have an element added to us, and that element is the excellent humanity of the Lord Jesus Christ. Our Savior, Jesus Christ, who has become the life-giving Spirit to indwell us, possesses not only divinity but also humanity. Because of His divinity we can live out all the glory of divinity, and because of His humanity we can live out all the virtues of humanity. Therefore, the glory of God and the virtues of man flow out spontaneously from one who is truly saved and who lives by the Spirit within him.

Our Lord is both God and man. Of all the biographies of the world, there is none like that of the Lord Jesus recorded in the four Gospels of the New Testament. When we read these Gospels, not only do we marvel at His divinity, but even more we are moved and attracted by His human virtues. His behavior, His attitude, and the way He treated others were too wonderful; His humanity is unsurpassed. We praise Him! Such a God-man is pleased to indwell us. He passed through incarnation, death, and resurrection to become the life-giving Spirit. Now He is waiting for us to call on Him and believe into Him. Once we call on His name and receive Him as our Savior, He enters into us, and thereby we have an organic union with Him. When we open ourselves to Him, love Him, and desire to be joined with Him as one, we are filled and possessed by Him every day. In this way what we live out are the glory of divinity and the virtues of humanity. What a glorious, wonderful, and sweet life this is! Here we have victory, sanctification, and the growth of life.

CHAPTER TWO

CHRIST BEING THE REDEEMER AND THE SAVIOR

Scripture Reading: Matt. 20:28; 1 Tim. 2:6; 1 Pet. 1:18-19; Rev. 1:5; 1 Pet. 2:24; John 1:29; 4:42; Titus 2:13; Rom. 5:10; Phil. 1:19

Prayer: O Lord, we worship You from deep within, and we offer to You our thanks and praise. We praise You that You are God and also man. As man You have become our Redeemer, and as the Spirit You have become our Savior. Thank You for gathering us before You. O Lord, we pray that You would remove the veils of heaven and give us a clear sky. Bring us all into the spirit that we may know You by the spirit within us, not by the letter without. Today You are the Spirit, the life-giving Spirit, and You have given us a regenerated spirit. These two spirits, Your Spirit and our spirit, fellowship with one another and are mingled as one spirit. It is in this spirit that we are gathered to worship You and enjoy You by dining with You.

Lord, we pray that You would give us a sober mind, an open spirit, and, even more, a hungry and thirsty heart so that we may really sense that even though we already have You, we still need more of You. O Lord, every one of us needs You, and we need You at all times and in all things. We pray that You would touch all our hearts and gain more ground in us. We want to be possessed, filled, saturated, and wholly gained by You.

O Lord, shame Your enemy. You have already destroyed him on the cross. We are crushing him under our feet in Your church. Here he has no ground, but You have gained all the glory. Our spirit worships You, our heart exalts You, and our mouth sings praise to You. Amen.

REDEMPTION AND SALVATION BEING DIFFERENT

As those who have received Jesus, we are different from others because we are those who bear the mark of Jesus, those who have been marked out by Jesus. Furthermore, we have all been attracted by His wonderful being and have become “Jesus addicts.” He is truly wonderful, and His wonderful being has drawn many millions of people to Himself. This is why we use *The Wonderful Being of Christ* as the title of this book.

We have already seen that Christ is both God and man. Now we want to go on further to see that this wonderful Christ is both the Redeemer and the Savior. Many Christians are not clear about the difference between redemption and salvation. Hence, they often mix up the aspect of Christ's being the Redeemer and the aspect of Christ's being the Savior, and they refer to Him simply as the Savior. Even though this is not wrong, the Bible is not that simple. According to the revelation of the Bible, Christ is both the Redeemer and the Savior. Moreover, the difference between these two aspects is truly big. I hope that in this chapter I can clarify this matter so that we can see clearly that our Lord is, on the one hand, the Redeemer and, on the other hand, the Savior.

REDEMPTION BEING NECESSARY

God made man in His image and according to His likeness. He created man in this way for the glorious purpose that the created man may express Him and glorify Him. To attain this goal, God must work Himself into man as his life and everything. This is God's procedure. Man must have God's life in order to express God Himself in His image. Regrettably, however, before God had the opportunity to carry out His procedure, Satan went before Him to seduce the first ancestors of the human race, Adam and Eve, to eat the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Consequently, the life of Satan entered into man to become sin within man and thus damage him. In Romans 7 Paul tells us that there is something in man's flesh called sin. He says, "For I do not do the good which I will; but the evil which I do not will, this I practice. But if what I do not will, this I do, it is no longer I that work it out but sin that dwells in me" (vv. 19-20). The word *dwells* implies living and acting. Sin not only dwells but also lives and acts in our flesh to deceive, kill, and capture us so that we become sinners dominated by sin and commit sins and do evil things involuntarily.

God created man with a glorious purpose, but because man was defiled and damaged, he became a fallen sinner. According to the righteous law of God, such a man has a problem concerning his position before God. Man's position is that of a sinner with a record of sins before God. Man cannot make amends for this by doing good works through cultivating his morality. Furthermore, God's righteous law says that he who sins must die because the wages of sin is death (6:23). This is the sinner's position and record, and this will be his fate.

According to our position as a sinner and our record of sins and according to the righteous requirement of God's law, we need a Redeemer. We have sinned and have a record of sins; thus, we fall short of God's glory and deserve to die and perish. Hence, we need a Redeemer to clear the record of our sins, to satisfy the requirement of God's law, and to redeem us.

GOD BECOMING A MAN AND SHEDDING HIS BLOOD THROUGH DEATH TO BE OUR REDEEMER

According to the requirement of God's righteous law, man should perish. In order to redeem man God Himself became a man to be our Redeemer. He stood in the position of a sinner and died on the cross as our Substitute to suffer God's righteous judgment and be punished on our behalf by suffering the pain of death.

John 1:1 says, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." This Word is the Lord Jesus. Verse 14 says, "And the Word became flesh and tabernacled among us...full of grace and reality." Verse 29 says, "Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!" From these three verses we can see that the Lord Jesus was God, yet He became a man to shed human blood for us; He was the Lamb of God to take away our sin. If He had not become a man, He could not shed human blood, nor could He have created flesh to die for us. He needed to have a real body, not an abstract one but a created one, so that He could shed the blood of a created man for us. In this way He could die for the created man, and the human blood that He shed could make redemption for man's sins.

In the Old Testament age, when the children of Israel slaughtered bulls and goats to offer as sacrifices, the blood that was shed was only a sign and could not take away sins (Heb. 10:4). This was because bulls and goats are not human beings and therefore could not die for men. Likewise, the blood of bulls and goats could not make propitiation for man's sins; only the human blood can do this. The Lord Jesus was God, yet He became a created man with a created body and had the blood of a created man. Therefore, He could die on the cross for us and shed human blood to make redemption for our sins.

Matthew 20:28 says that the Son of Man came "to give His life as a ransom for many." Man has sinned and is under God's condemnation. According to the requirement of God's law, the world is under the condemnation of God's

righteousness and therefore needs a Substitute. The Lord Jesus became the Son of Man by putting on the body of flesh and blood and gave His life as a ransom on the cross for many.

Those who do not believe that the Lord Jesus was a created man are the antichrists referred to in 1 John 4:3. These antichrists were the Docetists, who denied that the Lord Jesus was God who became flesh to be a real man. They considered the body of the Lord Jesus to be not a real body of flesh and blood but a mere phantasm. This is a great heresy. We must confess that our Lord Jesus is God and the Creator, yet He became a creature with the body and the blood of a created man. Therefore, He could indeed be nailed on the cross and pierced in His side to flow out the genuine human blood, even the blood of a sinless man, to redeem us from sins and to clear our record of sins before God.

Based on the death of the Lord Jesus on the cross and the precious blood that He shed, God can declare forgiveness. As our Redeemer, the Lord Jesus was judged on our behalf according to God's righteousness and fully paid the debt of our sins. This is why His blood is a declaration, announcing that God has forgiven all the sinners. If anyone calls upon the name of the Lord Jesus, based on the Lord's name and the Lord's blood, God will forgive him. This forgiveness is the issue of redemption.

The Lord Jesus was crucified and suffered on the cross for six hours, from 9:00 A.M. to 3:00 P.M. In the first three hours He was persecuted and humiliated by men for doing God's will; in the last three hours after the noon hour, He was judged and punished by God to accomplish our redemption. It was during this time that God counted Him as our Substitute to suffer God's punishment for our sins. Therefore, darkness fell over all the land, and the sun was darkened because our sin, our sins, and all negative things were placed upon Him and judged by God. It was in this time that He was also forsaken by God. Therefore, He cried out with a loud voice, "My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?" (Matt. 27:46). The Lord Jesus had said that God never left Him but was with Him all the time. Why then did God forsake Him at that time? Isaiah 53:6 says, "Jehovah has caused the iniquity of us all / To fall on Him." Moreover, 2 Corinthians 5:21 says, "Him who did not know sin He made sin on our behalf." He not only bore the sins of the world but was also made sin on behalf of the world. For us, He became a sinner in the eyes of God. Therefore, God judged and forsook Him on the cross. From God's

point of view, He was the Substitute for all the sinners. He suffered for us the judgment that we deserved. In the last three hours on the cross the Lord Jesus bore the sins of the whole human race and suffered God's righteous judgment. Finally, the great work of redemption was accomplished. The problem of the record of sins was solved, the question of the law was cleared, and all the barriers between God and man were removed. Therefore, He prayed with a loud voice, "Father, into Your hands I commit My spirit" (Luke 23:46). After He accomplished His redemptive work, He entered into rest.

RESURRECTING AND BECOMING THE LIFE-GIVING SPIRIT TO BE OUR SAVIOR

After three days in the grave, the Lord Jesus resurrected very early on the first day of the week. He overcame the power of death and came out of the grave. Through such a resurrection He became the life-giving Spirit to enter into us to be our Savior. He was the Redeemer until the time of His death. He made redemption for our sins through His death and accomplished the redemptive work for our redemption. However, after the fall man did not just have a problem in position, a problem in legal procedure, or a problem of having a record of sins before God; man also had a problem within him in that now Satan's life had entered into him.

Even though a person has been redeemed and saved by believing in the Lord, he has not yet been fully saved. He still needs to be saved daily from his sinful nature. The Lord Jesus' precious blood is for clearing our record of sins and redeeming us. To be sure, because of His death and the blood shed by Him we have been redeemed, and we will never perish. However, sin still dwells in our flesh. Within us we have a great deal of unclean and unrighteous thoughts, and in our outward actions we constantly have trespasses and defilement. Thus, we still need to be washed by the Lord's precious blood and, at the same time, we also need to be saved by the Lord as the Spirit of life.

First John 1:2 and 3 say that the eternal life has been reported to us and that we may enjoy fellowship with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ. However, this fellowship can be interrupted because of our sinning. If we say that after we have believed in the Lord, sin is no longer in us and the root of sin has been eradicated, this is a great error. We should know that after we have believed in the Lord, our sinful nature is still in our flesh and has not been eradicated. It will not be until the time of our rapture, at the redemption

of our body, that we can say that our whole being has been fully saved. However, today this sinful nature is still within us; if we say that we do not have sin, we are deceiving ourselves, and the truth is not in us.

MAN'S DUAL NEED

Before God, man not only has the problem of the record of sins and the problem of position, but man also has the problem of the sinful nature. To illustrate, before a mother leaves the house, she may repeatedly warn her child, saying, "After I leave, do not drink from that bottle, because it contains poison; you will be poisoned if you drink it." Even though the mother repeatedly urges the child in this way, he still may take the bottle and drink from it. In doing this, he sins against his mother, so he may come to the mother to confess his sin. The mother can say, "I forgive you. Don't do that again." However, even though the case is dealt with, the poison remains inside the child.

It is not sufficient for a man only to have the outward redemption of sins; he still has the problem of the sinful nature within him; he still has the sinning life and nature. Hence, he needs to be saved in life. This is not a matter of being redeemed by the precious blood but a matter of being saved in life. Thus, man has a twofold need. On the one hand, there is the outward problem related to position, the law, and the record; for this, man needs redemption by the precious blood of Christ. On the other hand, there is the inward problem related to the old life and the sinful nature; for this, man needs to have another life, a transcendent life, to come into him to save him so that he may be delivered from the fallen life that he had from the beginning.

Since man has this dual need, after the Lord Jesus accomplished redemption by His death, He resurrected from the dead to become the life-giving Spirit as the Savior. Romans 5:10 says, "We, being enemies, were reconciled to God through the death of His Son." This means that when we had a record of sins, we were reconciled to God through the redemptive death of the Lord Jesus on the cross, the death in which He shed His blood for us. Thus, the record of our sins was cleared, and we were redeemed. This is the redemptive aspect. Then Paul goes on to say, "Much more we will be saved in His life, having been reconciled." This is the saving aspect.

GOD'S FULL SALVATION

Christ's death is a matter of redemption, whereas Christ's life is a matter of salvation. In order to save us in His life Christ must be the Spirit so that He can enter into us to be our life and everything. Therefore, Romans 8:2 speaks of "the Spirit of life." This Spirit is the living water in John 4 and the rivers of living water that flow out of the innermost being of those who believe into the Lord, referred to in John 7:38. The Bible tells us that this word which the Lord Jesus spoke was concerning the Spirit, whom those who believed into Him were about to receive, but at that time the Spirit was not yet, because the Lord Jesus had not yet been glorified (v. 39). After He entered into glory in His resurrection (Luke 24:26), He became the Spirit.

The Spirit is Christ who became the life-giving Spirit to come into us as our resurrection life to save us from the sinful nature within us. Paul says in Romans 8:2, "The law of the Spirit of life has freed me in Christ Jesus from the law of sin and of death." This is salvation, which is Christ as our Savior. With the Redeemer there is redemption through the precious blood; with the Savior there is salvation by the Spirit of life. This Spirit of life has entered into us with the highest law to free us from the law of sin and of death. We can use the law of gravity as an illustration. Even though the law of gravity is very strong, there is a stronger law that can cause an airplane to overcome gravity.

Within us there is a transcendent law, the law of the Spirit of life. Philippians 1:19 refers to "the Spirit of Jesus Christ," who is the Spirit of life. Here it does not say "the Spirit of God" or "the Holy Spirit"; rather, it says "the Spirit of Jesus Christ," referring to the Spirit of the incarnated and resurrected One, the life-giving Spirit. Philippians 1:19 says that we are being saved through the bountiful supply of this Spirit. This is Christ as our Savior saving us through the bountiful supply of the Spirit.

Therefore, there are two aspects here. The crucifixion of the Lord Jesus on the cross was for redemption through His blood. His resurrection was for salvation by the life-giving Spirit. Among the four Gospels, only the Gospel of John refers to the fact that when the Lord Jesus died for us on the cross, both blood and water came out of Him. This is because the Gospel of John is concerned not only with redemption but also with life. Blood signifies redemption, whereas water signifies the Spirit of life. We should see both the redemptive side and the saving side. We have redemption through the

precious blood and salvation by the Spirit of life. In brief, we have the blood and the Spirit. The blood is for redemption, and the Spirit is for salvation.

Stanza 1 of *Hymns*, #1058 says, “Rock of Ages, cleft for me, / Let me hide myself in Thee; / Let the water and the blood, / From Thy riven side which flowed, / Be of sin the double cure, / Save me from its guilt and power.” We have a double problem. On the one hand, we have a record of sins before God. On the other hand, we have the nature of sin within us. Only the blood and water can be the double cure for our sin. On the one hand, the redemptive blood redeems us that we may escape the eternal punishment for sins. On the other hand, the water of life saves us that we may be delivered from the power of sin. Sin not only causes man to suffer eternal punishment, but it also has the power, which is the law of sin, to dominate man from within. In our natural life we have no way to overcome the law of sin and of death, but the law of the Spirit of life can free us in Christ from the law of sin and of death. Only the precious blood can solve the problems concerning our condemned position and our record of sins. Only the Spirit of life can solve our problem concerning the law of sin and of death. God’s full salvation consists not only of the redemption through the precious blood but also of the salvation by the Spirit of life.

TO BE REDEEMED BEING ONCE FOR ALL, WHEREAS TO BE SAVED BEING DAILY AND LIFELONG

In God’s full salvation there is the redemption and there is also the saving. Redemption is the effect of the precious blood, whereas saving is the power of the Spirit. In God’s full salvation there are the redemption and the saving, and there are also the blood and the Spirit. To be redeemed is a matter that is once for all. Once we have been redeemed, we have been redeemed forever, and God will never condemn us because of our sins. However, to be saved is a daily and lifelong matter. We need to be saved every day. We are people who have been bought back and redeemed by God with a high price, but we still need to be saved every day in all things, both great and small. We have received redemption, which is by the blood, once for all; however, we need to experience salvation, which is by the Spirit, day by day for our whole life.

This wonderful Christ is our Redeemer; He died on the cross and shed His blood to accomplish redemption for us. Now in His resurrection He has become the life-giving Spirit to enter into us to become our daily salvation by

the inner regulation and supply. We treasure His redemption, which has cleared the record of our sins before God once for all. We treasure even more that as the Spirit of life, He lives in us daily to be our salvation in life. Whenever and wherever we turn to Him and draw on the bountiful supply of Him as the Spirit, He enables us to overcome the power of sin and of death so that we can live before God in freedom and have a holy and overcoming life.

CHAPTER THREE

CHRIST BEING LIFE AND RESURRECTION

Scripture Reading: John 1:4; 10:10; 11:25; Acts 2:24; Rev. 1:18; Col. 3:4;
Gal. 2:20; Phil. 1:20; Rom. 8:2; 5:17; Phil. 3:10

We have already seen that Christ is both God and man and that He is both the Redeemer and the Savior. Christ is both God and man to be our Redeemer and our Savior. For Christ to be our Savior, He must be our life and resurrection. Therefore, we now come to the third chapter—Christ being life and resurrection. We should not only hear the truth but also see the light. Light is revelation, not doctrine.

THE OUTWARD REDEMPTION

Christ is not only our Redeemer but also our Savior. If we know these two aspects of what Christ is, when we speak of Christ being our Savior or our saving Lord, we will not have a superficial and narrow understanding. His saving includes redemption and salvation. Redemption is an outward saving through the efficacy of the Lord's precious blood; salvation is an inward saving by the operation of the Lord as the Spirit of life. According to God's righteous law, a fallen man is a condemned criminal who is doomed to death and perdition. He is destined to go first to Hades and then to the lake of fire for eternal punishment. Such a criminal needs a substitute who can pay the ransom for him and satisfy God's righteous requirement.

The Lord Jesus was God who became flesh, putting on a body of flesh and blood to become a man. He died for us with a genuine body, and He shed real human blood for us on the cross. The blood He shed was genuine human blood that can redeem sinners. This blood fully paid the ransom for us. Therefore, according to the procedure of His righteous law, God could proclaim forgiveness. In this way we were redeemed, and God forgave us. This is an outward matter.

The outward redemption first includes the redemption for sins; second, the forgiveness of sins; third, the washing away of sins; fourth, justification; and fifth, reconciliation. This is God's complete redemption. Christ died and shed

His blood to fully pay the ransom for us and make redemption for our sins. Based on Christ's redemption, God could declare that there is forgiveness of sins; thus, our sins were forgiven. Then following the forgiveness of sins is the washing away of sins. Forgiveness is to do away with the punishment for sins, whereas washing is to obliterate the traces of sins. We have received redemption for our sins, and our sins have been washed away; therefore, we have no problem before God. Thus, God has justified us, and we have been reconciled to God with a complete change toward Him. This is God's full redemptive work.

THE INWARD SALVATION

However, as fallen human beings, we not only have an outward position that is condemned before God, but we also have a sinful nature within. The salvation of the Lord Jesus is complete; it deals not only with our outward problem but also with our inward problem. This is because a fallen man is not only a criminal with a record of sins before God but also a sinner with the sinful nature within him. Since the nature of Satan has entered into us, we need to be saved from our sinful nature. However, God carries out His salvation not outwardly by exercising His mighty arm but inwardly by coming into us.

The inward salvation first includes regeneration; second, sanctification; third, transformation; fourth, conformation; and fifth, glorification. The outward redemption is by the efficacy of the blood, whereas the inward salvation is through the operation of the Spirit. Once we believe in the Lord, we receive outward redemption. As long as we believe with our heart and confess with our mouth the name of the Lord, we receive redemption for sins, forgiveness of sins, washing away of sins, justification, and reconciliation. Immediately we obtain God's complete redemption, which is outward. However, to obtain God's full salvation inwardly is both a daily and lifelong matter.

From the time of our regeneration when Christ came into us to be our life, He has been sanctifying us within every day. Just as tea leaves "teaify" water into tea-water, so Christ is "Christifying" us every day to make us Christ-men. This is the work of sanctification. As Christ sanctifies us within continually, we are being transformed, and at the same time we are being conformed to His likeness. Eventually, we will be glorified. This is the procedure of the

growth in life. Today Christ is sanctifying, transforming, and conforming us continually until we see Him in our glorification.

THE TYPE OF THE PASSOVER

God's full salvation includes the aspect of redemption through the precious blood and the aspect of salvation by the Spirit of life. The type of the passover in the Old Testament best expresses this matter. Before God both the Israelites and the Egyptians were condemned criminals. On the night of the passover, all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, of both men and beasts, were to be stricken by death. However, Jehovah charged the whole assembly of Israel to kill one lamb for each house and to put its blood on the doorposts and on the lintel of the houses in which they ate the lamb. When the destroying angel saw the blood on the door, he passed over that house so that all the firstborn in that house were not smitten. This was the redeeming aspect. After they had applied the blood to the house, they ate the lamb inside the house. Then the flesh of the lamb that they had eaten became the strength for them to go out of Egypt. This was the saving aspect.

In John 6 we are told that the Passover, the feast of the Jews, was near. Based upon the type of the passover in the Old Testament, the Lord Jesus told the people that He was edible. He referred to His blood, which, like the blood of the passover lamb, was shed for us. He also referred to His flesh, which, like the flesh of the passover lamb, can be eaten by us. Then He went on to say that He is the bread of life which came down out of heaven and that anyone who eats of this bread shall by no means hunger. Furthermore, He said that as the living Father had sent Him and He lived because of the Father, so he who eats Him, he also shall live because of Him (v. 57).

THE COVERING BY THE BLOOD AND THE STRENGTHENING BY THE FLESH

The passover is a symbolic picture illustrating how the Israelites put the blood on the doorposts and on the lintel and ate the flesh of the lamb peacefully in the house that had been applied with blood, that is, in the protected place. As they ate, their loins were girded, they had their staffs in their hands, and they were prepared to go out of Egypt at midnight. The lamb that they had eaten became the strength for their journey. Suppose they applied the blood without eating the flesh of the lamb. They then would not

have had the strength to go out of Egypt at midnight. The blood did not strengthen them; rather, it was their safeguard, their covering, so that God's judgment would pass over them. This was the redemption by the blood. The flesh of the lamb, however, which was the lamb itself, was eaten by them to become their life supply. By the blood of the lamb they escaped God's judgment and were redeemed. This was the outward aspect. By the flesh of the lamb they had the life power within for them to be saved. This was the inward aspect.

When we speak about eating, drinking, and enjoying the Lord, the dissenting ones hold us in disdain and oppose us, saying that it is too barbarous for us to eat the Lord Jesus. Little do they know that long ago in the Gospel of John the Lord Jesus already said that He is eatable. His desire is that we take Him in as the bread of life. How else can we receive Him into us as our life except by eating Him? All those who receive and enjoy Christ by eating Him will definitely be full of the life supply and power within. If we daily eat, drink, and enjoy Christ, we will have the vitality in our daily life to overcome sin, the devil, the world, and our natural self.

CHRIST BECOMING THE LIFE-GIVING SPIRIT TO CARRY OUT SALVATION IN HIS BELIEVERS

The Lord Jesus was God who became a man and was put to death on the cross to bear our sins and suffer God's righteous judgment. On the cross He said, "It is finished!" (19:30). This was a declaration that the great work of redemption had been accomplished. As to the work of salvation in life, however, He needed to become the Spirit of life in resurrection. The incarnated Lord, the last Adam, passed through death and resurrection to become the life-giving Spirit so that He could come into His believers to carry out salvation. He shed His blood on the cross to deal with our outward sinful position before God, but He still needed to become the Spirit, even the life-giving Spirit, so that He could come into us to be our life and everything in order to save us daily from our fallen nature and the power of sin within.

Our God first became a man to bear our sins on the cross and solve all our problems before God. Thus, He reconciled us to God and afforded us a lawful position before God to contact Him. Moreover, because of this lawful position, He can come into His believers to be their life. However, for Him to come into His believers, He must become the Spirit. The Greek word for *spirit* can also

be translated “breath” or “wind.” In John 3, when the Lord Jesus spoke to Nicodemus concerning regeneration, He said, “That which is born of the Spirit is spirit” (v. 6); then He went on to say, “The wind blows where it wills” (v. 8). Here, the Greek word for *spirit* is the same as that for *wind*. This tells us that by becoming the life-giving Spirit, the Lord Jesus can enter into us as the wind and the breath. As those who have been redeemed by God, we have a standing before God under the law to let Him come into us. God also has a lawful standing to come into us to be our life.

THE WORD AS THE SPIRIT BEING RECEIVED BY CALLING UPON THE NAME OF THE LORD

The Lord Jesus said, “The words which I have spoken to you are spirit and are life” (6:63). The words are spirit. Christ became the life-giving Spirit, who is the word spoken of in Romans 10:8. There it says, “The word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart.” This is very real. The word is just like air, which is in our mouth and inside us. When we breathe, air comes into us. We can call, “O Lord Jesus! O Lord Jesus!” This is like taking a deep breath in the open air, and it is truly refreshing. Then Romans 10:12 shows us that the Lord is rich to all who call upon Him. Verse 13 says, “Whoever calls upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.” The Greek word for *calls upon* mainly denotes crying out. Whoever calls upon the name of the Lord by crying out shall be saved.

Today our Lord is wonderful in that He has become the life-giving Spirit. This Spirit is life-giving; He gives life to man. Therefore, Romans 8:2 refers to this Spirit as the Spirit of life. Of all the wonderful items of what the Lord is, the most wonderful one is that He is the life-giving Spirit who has come into us to be our life and to carry out salvation in us.

Concerning the Lord Jesus’ coming into us as our life, someone may ask, “Since we human beings are so small, how can we contain this great Savior? Besides, the Bible says that the Lord Jesus is sitting at the right hand of God in the heavens. How can you say that He is in us?” In 1968 when I was preaching in a city in Indiana, an American woman asked me this question on the spot. At that time I was speaking on Romans 8. I told her that Romans 8:34 says that the Lord Jesus today is sitting at the right hand of God, yet verse 10 of the same chapter says that Christ is in us. In the same chapter of the Bible, one verse says that the Lord is at the right hand of God in the

heavens, whereas another verse says that the Lord is in us. I know that it is not easy for Christians to accept such a word today because most of them have been influenced by traditional teachings. Therefore, I used an illustration, saying, “Don’t we have lights in this meeting place? This tells us that there is electricity here. However, electricity comes from the power plant. Therefore, the electricity is here and in the power plant at the same time.” The electricity is one. Its source is in the power plant, while its application is in this meeting place. We may say that when the electricity is applied to this meeting place, it “dwells” in this meeting place, and we may call it the “indwelling electricity.” This indwelling electricity is closely related to the meeting place. Our Lord has become the life-giving Spirit as the spiritual electricity today. On the one hand, He is the “power plant” in heaven, and on the other hand, He is the “indwelling electricity” in us.

Christ is at the right hand of God in the heavens, and He is also in us. This is just like the electricity being both in the power plant and in the meeting place causing the lights to shine. The lights can shine and illumine because they have been “electrified.” Our salvation is not merely a matter of saying that we have believed; rather, we must also be “electrified” in our spirit. Only this can be counted as the genuine believing in the Lord and being saved.

The Lord Jesus has already accomplished God’s redeeming work. Doctrinally speaking, once we believe, we are saved. However, this is merely to be redeemed. The Bible says, “With the heart there is believing unto righteousness” (Rom. 10:10a). *Unto righteousness* here refers to redemption. We must still call upon the name of the Lord with our mouth and be electrified in our spirit. The Bible goes on to say, “With the mouth there is confession unto salvation” (v. 10b). *Unto salvation* here refers to our being saved. With the heart there is believing unto righteousness; this is a matter of being redeemed. With the mouth there is confession unto salvation; this is a matter of being saved. Even though some have believed into the Lord in their heart, they do not dare to confess before men that they are believers. Have such people really been saved? We cannot say no, but they have merely obtained righteousness; they have not yet received the salvation in life. Believing in the heart is for justification, whereas confessing with the mouth and calling upon the name of the Lord are for salvation. Justification and salvation are indeed distinct and different.

CHRIST LIVING IN HIS BELIEVERS AS LIFE

This Christ who is both God and man has become not only our Redeemer but also our Savior. He has become the life-giving Spirit to come into us as the indwelling Christ. This indwelling Christ is our life and our resurrection.

Many Christians do not understand what life is, nor do they know what resurrection is, nor can they tell the difference between life and resurrection. The Bible tells us that life is God Himself. God is life. The Lord Jesus said, "I have come that they may have life and may have it abundantly" (John 10:10). For people to have life is for them to have God. John 1:1 through 4 says, "In the beginning was the Word...the Word was God...All things came into being through Him...In Him was life." Therefore, life is God Himself living in His believers.

John 3:16 says, "God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that everyone who believes into Him would not perish, but would have eternal life." Many Christians often talk about having everlasting life. This term is very misleading. According to their understanding, to have everlasting life is to never die but to enjoy blessings forever. There is a great discrepancy between this understanding and the meaning of this term in its original language. In reality, eternal life is God Himself. That God causes everyone who believes into Him to have eternal life means that God enters into His believers to be their life.

Before a person believes in the Lord, he does not have God in him as life. However, after he believes in the Lord, even without hearing any message concerning God living in him or having anyone tell him about this, he realizes from his experience that at the time he confessed, repented, called upon the Lord Jesus, and received Him with his heart as his Savior, the Lord Jesus came into him and began to live in him. Each one of us who is regenerated has such an experience. To be sure, when we repented, confessed, believed in the Lord Jesus, and called upon His name, we received the life-giving Spirit, who is God Himself living in us.

Christ is this life-giving Spirit. He has entered into us to be our life. He is the Word who was in the beginning, the God who became man, and the last Adam. He passed through death and resurrection and has become the life-giving Spirit as the consummation of this process. Hence, in this

life-giving Spirit there are the Word, God, man, death, and resurrection. This is truly rich and wonderful. This is the Christ who is our life and the God whom we worship.

CHRIST BEING MANIFESTED IN HIS BELIEVERS' LIFE AS RESURRECTION

This Christ who is life passed through death and overcame it to be manifested as resurrection. Today the life within us is Christ as the life-giving Spirit. Christ went into Hades, passed through death, overcame death, and came out of death triumphantly. Hence, He is resurrection. Christ is in us not only to be our life but also to lead us so that we may pass through death, overcome death, and boast against death. What is death? What is resurrection? Let me use our experiences to explain this. In the daily family life sometimes the wife gives the husband a long face. That long face is a valley of death. Sometimes the husband throws a pair of chopsticks at the wife. That throwing of chopsticks is a wider valley of death. All these are deaths. However, the life within us, which is Christ as the Spirit, can bring us out of these deaths by our calling on the name of the Lord. Then, like Paul, we can say that although we suffer affliction and are excessively burdened, beyond our power, so that we despair even of living, the God who raises the dead is able to deliver us out of so great a death (2 Cor. 1:8-10). This is to experience Christ as resurrection.

Resurrection means that no event or circumstance can cause us, who have the life of Christ, to be pressed down. On the contrary, any circumstance or event is a good opportunity for us to express Christ. This is Christ as our resurrection manifested in our daily life.

Paul says in Philippians 1:20, "According to my earnest expectation and hope that in nothing I will be put to shame, but with all boldness, as always, even now Christ will be magnified in my body, whether through life or through death." Paul knew Christ and experienced Him as resurrection; therefore, he had the assurance to say that all the woes or blessings, death or life, which befell him were simply for Christ to be magnified, as always, in his body. This was the testimony of resurrection. Paul treasured Christ's resurrection power, so in 3:10 he says, "To know Him and the power of His resurrection." While we are living among people on earth, many problems, sufferings, persecutions, and slanders often befall us. However, we can

transcend all these and not be bound, imprisoned, or pressed down by them.
This is resurrection.

Oh, what a life! Oh, what a peace!
The Christ who's all within me lives.
With Him I have been crucified;
This glorious fact to me He gives.
Now it's no longer I that live,
But Christ the Lord within me lives.

Oh, what a thought! Oh, what a boast!
Christ shall in me be magnified.
In nothing shall I be ashamed,
For He in all shall be applied.
In woe or blessing, death or life,
Through me shall Christ be testified.

(Hymns, #499)

This is a hymn that we sing from the depths of our being after we have experienced Christ as life and resurrection.

CHAPTER FOUR

CHRIST BEING THE LIFE-GIVING SPIRIT

Scripture Reading: 1 Cor. 15:45b; 2 Cor. 3:17-18; Rom. 8:9-10; Phil. 1:19b;
2 Tim. 4:22; Gal. 5:25; Rom. 8:4; John 7:38-39

THE LIFE-GIVING SPIRIT ENTERING INTO MAN TO BE HIS LIFE AND REALITY

The Bible reveals to us first that God is both the eternal God and the God who created the universe and all the things therein. Second, it shows us that this God who created everything became flesh; He was a perfect man. Third, this One who is both God and man became our Redeemer and Savior. He became a man by virtue of His birth, and He became the Redeemer by virtue of His death. Nevertheless, He did not stop in death. Because He is the eternal God, death could not hold Him. Therefore, He rose from death. By such a resurrection He became our Savior.

This Savior is life and resurrection. His salvation is not objective and is not from the outside; rather, it is subjective and is from within us. As the life-giving Spirit, He has entered into us and is living in us as our life. This life in us can lead us to break through death and resist all the adverse situations. Whether in death or in suffering, whether in catastrophes or in persecutions, in any difficult situation, and in all hardships, He as the resurrection life can get us through all of them.

This wonderful One, who is both God and man and who is the Redeemer and the Savior, is the life-giving Spirit today. What we have received is not a dead religion but a living Lord, a living God, and a living Spirit. The Bible does not give us some doctrines in letter; rather, it reveals this life-giving Spirit who has become our life and reality. We are not here following dead rituals and regulations. Rather, we are here enjoying God and letting God enjoy us.

THE REAL WORSHIP BEING EATING, DRINKING, AND ENJOYING GOD

The Bible tells us that when the people of God gather together, they are coming to a feast. We are feasting with God, and the riches of this feast are Christ. Christ is God's enjoyment and our enjoyment. We enjoy Christ with God, and we also share Him with others. The more we eat, drink, and enjoy Him, the more worship He obtains. We know that to eat or drink is to receive food that is outside of our body into our body. What pleases our Lord the most is for us to receive Him into us, even to such an extent that He not only is our food but also becomes our element. Thus, He becomes our life and life supply.

THE TYPE OF THE OLD TESTAMENT

In the Old Testament, God wanted His people to keep the feasts; He did not teach them to bow down, kneel down, or "kowitz" before Him. On the contrary, in Exodus, Leviticus, and Deuteronomy God repeatedly taught and indicated to His people that whenever they were to come before Him to keep the feasts, the main thing was to bring the offerings, which are all types of Christ. This means that God wants His people to bring Christ before Him. After they brought the offerings, they had to learn how to present them. Because we are sinful, we need to present the sin offering. Because we have trespasses and offenses, we need to present the trespass offering. Because we should live absolutely to God, we need to present the burnt offering. Because we desire to enjoy a fullness with God, we need to present the meal offering. After presenting all these offerings, we all have peace, so we present the peace offering. In this way we all sit down before God to eat and drink and enjoy Him. We satisfy God, and God also satisfies us. This is the worship that God wants. The worship that God desires is that we eat, drink, and enjoy Christ.

After God created Adam, He did not give him any commandments. Instead, God brought Adam before the tree of life and wanted him to eat of the tree of life and not to eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. After God created man, what concerned Him the most was the matter of eating. Regrettably, man ate of the tree that was forbidden by God. Thus, man was poisoned and thereby lost the right to eat of the tree of life.

God's people became fallen and later went down to Egypt, but God came to them to carry out His salvation. God's way of salvation was by the sacrifice of the lamb. At this time it was not enough merely to eat, because now man had sinned. In the beginning, when there was the tree of life, there was no need

for the shedding of blood, because there was not yet the problem of sin. However, later, at the time of the passover, not only was there the need to eat of the flesh of the lamb, but it was also necessary to first shed the blood of the lamb. This was because man's sins had to be washed away first, and then man could eat the flesh of the lamb under the covering of the blood.

After the exodus from Egypt, the Israelites lived forty years in the wilderness. It seems that every day they did nothing but eat the manna that descended from heaven, drink the living water that flowed out of the rock, and carry the Ark in their journey through the wilderness. After they entered into the land of Canaan, there was again the matter of eating. They started to sow seed in the land of Canaan, and three times a year they kept the feasts by bringing the riches of the harvest before God to eat, drink, and enjoy together.

THE REALITY OF THE NEW TESTAMENT

Then in the New Testament, in the Gospels the Lord Jesus said that He is the bread of life, the manna that came down out of heaven, for us to eat. When the time of His departure came, He established the Lord's supper. He broke the bread and gave it to the disciples, telling them that this was His body which was being given for them and that they should take it and eat. Then He took up the cup, saying that that was His blood which was being poured out for them and that they should take and drink of it. He charged them to do this in remembrance of Him (Luke 22:19-20).

In the Epistles it is still a matter of eating, and yet again in Revelation the Lord said, "To him who overcomes, to him I will give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the Paradise of God...To him who overcomes, to him I will give of the hidden manna" (2:7, 17). In the last two chapters of Revelation there is the greatest blessing: Those who have washed their robes have the right to come to eat of the tree of life (22:14). Furthermore, there is a call for those who are thirsty to come and take the water of life freely (v. 17). Finally, the New Jerusalem comes down out of heaven, and out of the throne in its midst the living water of life flows for people to drink, and on both sides of the living water the tree of life grows for people to eat (21:2; 22:1-2). Therefore, we can say that the whole Bible is a story of eating and drinking. This is what the Bible has revealed to us.

THE LORD BEING THE SPIRIT

John 1:1 says, “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.” Verse 14 goes on to say, “The Word became flesh.” This means that the Word became a man, who was “the last Adam.” The Word was God, and God became a man of flesh, who was called the last Adam. Eventually, the last Adam became a life-giving Spirit (1 Cor. 15:45b). Thus, we can see that the life-giving Spirit is the transfiguration of the Word who was God and who became flesh as the last Adam. This life-giving Spirit is God, and the last Adam is the Lord Jesus.

The Lord Jesus is the Word who became flesh, and in the eyes of God He is the last Adam. Our ancestor Adam, as the first Adam, was the beginning of mankind; the last Adam is the ending. Mankind began with the first Adam, and it ended with the last Adam—Christ. In the eyes of God, Jesus is the last one of the human race. When Jesus died on the cross, He brought the entire human race to the cross and ended it there. Through His all-inclusive death the entire human race, even the entire old creation, has been crucified. He died, was buried, and was resurrected on the third day. Thus, this last Adam became the Spirit who gives life.

We know that the statement *The last Adam became a life-giving Spirit* is in 1 Corinthians 15, which is a chapter dealing specifically with the matter of resurrection. Concerning resurrection, Paul tells us that the Lord Jesus was like a seed that fell into the ground and died and then grew out of the ground (vv. 36-38, 42-45). This is resurrection. After His resurrection He was changed in form. This is just like a seed. When it is planted, it is a small, brownish, round object, yet when it grows, first it is a green sprout, then it grows branches and leaves, and finally it blossoms and bears fruit. All this typifies resurrection.

After Christ died on the cross and was buried, as a seed whose shell was broken, He released the divine life that was within Him, and He was changed into another form—the Spirit, the life-giving Spirit. This Spirit is the Holy Spirit and the Spirit of God. In other words, the Word who was from the beginning, the God who became flesh and who was called the last Adam, passed through death and resurrection to become the Spirit. This is the pure truth of the Bible.

This life-giving Spirit is our God, who passed through incarnation and thirty-three and a half years of human living. He tasted all the hardships of

human life. Furthermore, He Himself went into death, took a tour of Hades, and walked out of it. Then He was changed in form to become the life-giving Spirit.

THE LORD BEING THE HOLY BREATH BREATHED INTO THE BELIEVERS

John 1 says that in the beginning was the Word, the Word was with God, the Word became flesh, and He was the Lamb of God on earth to be our Redeemer. Subsequently, He was resurrected, and in the evening of the day of His resurrection He came into the midst of the disciples. The way He came was extraordinary. At that time, although the doors were shut, the resurrected Lord came into the room where the disciples were, without having knocked on the door or having anyone open the door for Him. How did He get in? This is an unknown mystery. He stood in their midst and said to the disciples, “Peace be to you.” He also breathed into them and said to them, “Receive the Holy Spirit” (20:21-22). From that time onward this Holy Breath, which was the Holy Spirit, entered into the disciples to be with them, never to leave them. When they were meeting in the house, He was there; when they went fishing in the Sea of Tiberias, He was also there because He was right within them.

Today the God in whom we believe, whom we worship and enjoy, is such a God. Not only did He create the heavens and the earth, and not only did He give the revelation of the Bible, but also one day He Himself came to be a man. He passed through human living and died on the cross to accomplish redemption for our sins. Moreover, He was buried and then was resurrected to become the life-giving Spirit. As such a Spirit, He came to abide in us who believe into Him. This is the truth revealed to us through the pure word of the Bible.

In this life-giving Spirit are the element of God, the element of man, the element of human living, the element of the all-inclusive death, and the element of resurrection. The effectiveness of death is in this Spirit, and the power of resurrection is also in this Spirit. Thus, this Spirit has now become the all-inclusive Spirit. This is like a multi-purpose medicine that contains various ingredients. Today this Spirit is the all-inclusive life-giving Spirit.

This is our God, and this is also our Savior and Redeemer. In Him there are divinity, humanity, and the experience of human life. In Him there are also

the redeeming death, the death that terminated the old creation and all its things, and the resurrection power. All these are in the life-giving Spirit. When we walk by the Spirit, this resurrection power operates in us.

THE SPIRIT OF THE LORD TRANSFORMING US FROM WITHIN

Second Corinthians 3:17 says, “The Lord is the Spirit; and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom.” On the one hand, it says that the Lord is the Spirit; on the other hand, it speaks of the Spirit of the Lord. The Spirit of the Lord is the Lord Himself. This is like what is said in John 1:1: “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.” On the one hand, the Word was God, indicating that the Word and God are one. On the other hand, the Word was with God, as if to say that They are two. Actually, the Word and God are still one. Therefore, the verse goes on to say that the Word was God.

Second Corinthians 3:18 says that when we all take away the veils of old doctrines and have an unveiled face without any covering, we behold and reflect like a mirror the glory of the Lord. It is then that we are transformed into the same image from glory to glory, even as from the “Lord Spirit.” The Lord is the Spirit, and the Spirit is the Lord. Therefore, He is the Lord Spirit. This is similar to saying, “Father God.” *Father* is in apposition to *God*. It means that the Father is God, and God is the Father. This One who is in us is the Lord Spirit, and He is transforming us day by day.

Romans 8:9-11 shows us that since the Spirit of God dwells in us, we are not in the flesh but in the spirit. Whenever we have the Spirit of Christ, we are of Christ. Furthermore, because we have Christ in us, although our body is dead because of sin, our spirit is life because of righteousness.

Philippians 1:19 shows us that the Spirit of Jesus Christ, who is the life-giving Spirit, has the bountiful supply. Divinity, humanity, the experience of human living, the effectiveness of death, and the power of resurrection are all in this Spirit.

Second Timothy 4:22 says, “The Lord be with your spirit.” The Lord is with us not in an outward way; He is with us in our spirit. This is like what John 15:4 says: “Abide in Me and I in you.” How wonderful! The Lord is in us, and

we are also in Him. Many Christians neglect this fact, thinking that the Lord is following them, is overseeing them, and is by their side, or that He is observing them from above. However, the Lord is dwelling in us, that is, in our spirit.

LIVING AND WALKING BY THE SPIRIT

A major part of our spirit is the function of the conscience. Sometimes what our mind thinks, what our emotion desires, and what our will resolves cannot obtain the approval of our conscience. Not to mention the saved ones, even those who are unsaved have the function of the conscience. People often say, “I speak with my conscience”; this means that they do not speak according to their mind, emotion, or will. This is what the unsaved ones say, and it is more so with those who are saved. As saved ones, we have our spirit regenerated and our conscience enlightened; therefore, we, even more, should live and walk according to the function of the conscience, which is in reality the function of the spirit, because the chief part of the spirit is the conscience.

Galatians 5:25 says, “If we live by the Spirit, let us also walk by the Spirit.” Our every move and action and everything we say or do should be by the Spirit, not by our mind, emotion, and will. We have to listen to the voice of the Spirit; He is the indwelling Lord within us. Because He speaks the truth to us, He often disagrees with us.

Not only so, if we walk by the Spirit, out of our innermost being shall flow rivers of living water (John 7:38). This is our salvation. We can obtain the salvation of the life-giving Spirit every day. This life-giving Spirit is our living Savior, our life, and our resurrection.

Christ is both God and man; He is the Redeemer and the Savior, and He is life and resurrection. The totality of all these is in this life-giving Spirit. Today this life-giving Spirit has divinity, humanity, the effectiveness of death for our redemption, and the power of resurrection for our salvation. Every day this Spirit is saving us from the self, the natural constitution, the old creation, and the flesh. He is saving us from our passions, our lusts, and various kinds of sins. He is also saving us from the world, Satan, and the power of darkness. Of all these things, the most important is that He is saving us from our self, our natural constitution, the old creation, our old disposition, our old temperament, and our old preferences. We need the Lord’s grace every day,

and we need to walk by the Spirit every day. If we walk by the Spirit in all things, all the problems will be readily solved. Then, for us to live will be Christ, life, and resurrection.

CHAPTER FIVE

CHRIST BEING EVERYTHING TO THE CHURCH AS THE NEW MAN

Scripture Reading: Col. 1:18; 3:4, 9-11; 1 Cor. 12:13; Eph. 4:12b-13

THE WONDERFUL BEING OF CHRIST FOR THE PRODUCING OF THE CHURCH

In this chapter we will consider the last point: Christ is everything to the church as the new man. This is the mystery of mysteries. The wonderful being of Christ is for the producing of His Body, which is the church.

Christ is God who became a man and was crucified on the cross to die and shed His blood for us to be our Redeemer. Then He was resurrected to become the life-giving Spirit to be our Savior. When He enters into us, we are regenerated with the life of God to become the children of God. Furthermore, every child of God has become a member of the Body of Christ. These members added together are the Body of Christ. The Body of Christ is not an organization but an organism, a new man, because it has the life of Christ. This is just like the human body, which is an organism. The human body has many members. All the members are parts of the body, an organism, and they all have the same life. Since this life flows through all the members of the body, every member is a part of the body. As a whole, the body is an organism.

If we were not regenerated and did not have the life of God, we could never become the members of the organic Body of Christ. How can we be regenerated and have the life of God? It is through God's becoming flesh, dying on the cross to shed His blood for the redemption of our sins, and entering into resurrection to become the life-giving Spirit to enter into us. In this way we can be regenerated to have the life of God and the life-giving Spirit. This life-giving Spirit is Christ, and this Christ is both our Redeemer and our Savior. We, who are many, have Christ as life within and thus become the Body of Christ. First Corinthians 12:12 says, "Even as the body is one and has many members, yet all the members of the body, being many, are one

body, so also is the Christ.” This tells us that today Christ is not only the Head of the Body but also the Body itself. Christ as the Head is the individual Christ; Christ as the Body is the corporate Christ.

THE PRODUCING OF THE CHURCH, THE BODY OF CHRIST

Christ, who was God in eternity, in time came to the earth to become a man, the last Adam. He lived the human life on earth and tasted its different experiences. Then He was crucified on the cross and died by shedding His blood for us to accomplish the work of redemption and become our Redeemer. Furthermore, He resurrected to become the life-giving Spirit to be received by those who had been chosen and predestinated by God in Christ before the foundation of the world. When one believes in the Lord in his heart and calls upon the Lord's name with his mouth, thereby receiving the Lord as his Savior, the Lord as the life-giving Spirit enters into him to be his life. Then this one is regenerated to be a child of God and a member of the Body of Christ. All the members added together, all those who have Christ as their life, become one Body, which is the church. This is the main subject of the New Testament.

PROCESSED TO BE LIFE TO THE CHURCH

In order to produce the church, God in Christ passed through a long process. This process includes incarnation, human living, crucifixion, burial, resurrection, and becoming the life-giving Spirit. This life-giving Spirit is the processed Triune God. He passed through such a process in order to be life to the church. We do not speak here of the God in eternity who had not passed through any of the processes. The processed Triune God passed through incarnation, thirty-three and a half years of human living, and crucifixion. He went into death and experienced Hades, coming out with a great victory, and then He resurrected to become the life-giving Spirit. Therefore, today He is no longer the God who has not been processed; rather, He is the processed Triune God. This is not my invention but the biblical revelation. If we desire to have the subjective knowledge and experience of what Christ is, we must see this revelation. Otherwise, we will have nothing much to do with the wonderful being of Christ, and consequently, the church will easily become degraded to be an organization in society.

Our God is the eternal, infinite God in eternity, yet He entered into the womb of a created virgin for His conception. When the Holy Spirit entered into Mary's womb, that was the eternal, infinite God entering into Mary's womb for her to conceive a child. The element of God is the source of this conception. God entered into the womb of the virgin Mary, a small, created being, and stayed there for as long as nine months and then was born in a manger. Therefore, Isaiah 9:6 says, "A child is born to us, / ...His name will be called / ...Mighty God." This tells us clearly that the child who was born in a manger was the mighty God. This is a prophecy spoken by Isaiah before 700 B.C. Isaiah 7:14 says, "Behold, the virgin will conceive and will bear a son, and she will call his name Immanuel." Then chapter 9 tells us that the child who was born was the mighty God. What a mystery! The Lord Jesus' being born through the conception of the Holy Spirit in Mary's womb was the process of God's incarnation.

Not only so, the Lord Jesus was born into a carpenter's family to be a carpenter for thirty years. When He reached the age of thirty, He went out to preach, perform miracles, and declare God the Father for three and a half years. When His neighbors saw Him, they asked, "Is not this the carpenter's son?" (Matt. 13:55). Within those thirty-three and a half years He tasted everything of the human life. This was the process of His human living.

Later, He delivered Himself to the place of death. He was arrested, judged, crucified, and buried in a dark tomb. He entered into death, passed through death, overcame death, and came out of death. After He had abolished death, He transcended death and resurrected. Eventually, He became the life-giving Spirit, the pneumatic Christ. This was the last Adam becoming the life-giving Spirit. This process was the consummation of the processes that Christ passed through.

This God who created the universe and all things and whom we worship, after passing through such a long series of processes, accomplished the work of redemption and became the life-giving Spirit. He is now waiting to enter into those who would believe in Him to be their life and everything so that they, as a group of people with His life, may become the church, which is the Body of Christ, to be the expression of God's fullness.

The life-giving Spirit is also the all-inclusive Spirit. Like the air He is readily available, and He is moving everywhere. This Spirit is the seven Spirits in

Revelation 5:6 who are sent forth into all the earth. The Spirit's being sent forth into all the earth means that the Spirit is moving throughout the whole earth, waiting for people to believe into the Lord by repenting and calling upon His name so that He may enter into them to be their life. When one calls upon the name of the Lord Jesus, immediately he receives the Lord Jesus, who is the all-inclusive life-giving Spirit, as his life. The name of the Lord Jesus denotes Himself, and He Himself is the life-giving Spirit.

When the Lord Jesus was on the earth, He chose a group of disciples. After He became the life-giving Spirit in His resurrection and entered into His disciples, they began to preach the gospel and to write the New Testament books. Therefore, to this day both the gospel and the Bible are in circulation. When the disciples preached the gospel, many repented, called upon the name of the Lord, and thus were regenerated. The life-giving Spirit entered into them to be their life and life supply. Furthermore, they went on to be saved every day in the Spirit of life. In this way tens of thousands of people have received the gospel and have thus been regenerated and saved. Moreover, they have received the life-giving Spirit as life in them, and they have all been placed on the same line, which is the line of life.

THE FELLOWSHIP IN THE FLOW OF LIFE

All who have been regenerated are placed on the line of the Spirit, the line of life. Here there is the mutual sharing of life, and this line extends and spreads to become a net. The net of the line of life is the fellowship of life. We can use electricity as an illustration. There are many electric lamps in a meeting place, yet the electricity in the lamps and the electricity in the power plant are one. When the electric current is flowing, the lamps shine. The flowing of the electric current is the fellowship of the electricity. A meeting place is full of electric lights. The lamps and the power plant are full of electric current and transmission. Therefore, there is a great deal of the fellowship of electricity between the lamps in a meeting place and the power plant. Likewise, in the net of the line of life there is much fellowship of life. First John 1 says that the apostles reported the eternal life to the believers so that the believers might enter into the fellowship of the apostles; it also says that the fellowship of the apostles was with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ. This fellowship is the flow of life, which is like the electric current both in the electric lamps and in the power plant. Therefore, this fellowship is in reality the church as the one Body.

However, if a person is only regenerated, but his soul is not transformed or renewed, and his body is full of fleshly lusts, then according to the outward soul and body, there is no church, even though according to the spirit and the life within, the church is there. This is because the church is the mutual flow of the life within the saints. If we live in our soul and body instead of living in the flow of life in our spirit, the flow of the fellowship of life will be cut off. Once the flow of life is cut off, there is no fellowship and therefore no church. On the contrary, if we all live in the spirit, having fellowship with one another and with God in spirit, then the church is here. Today, however, the real situation is not like this. If we live in the spirit, there is the fellowship of life. If we come out of the spirit and live in the soul, even complaining about one another or criticizing one another, there is no fellowship of life. Then in practicality there is no church. In other words, if we live in the spirit, there is the church; if we live in the soul, there is no church.

THE SOUL NEEDING TO BE TRANSFORMED

Therefore, we all have to ask the Lord for mercy and grace for our soul to be transformed. Our soul, whether good or bad, right or wrong, needs to be transformed. Every one of us needs to be transformed in our soul. We should not argue in our soul. Paul says in Philippians 2:14, “Do all things without murmurings and reasonings.” Murmurings and reasonings are manifestations of arguing in our soul. In the church we should not debate or argue; in the church there is only the life-giving Spirit. You have to realize that even if all your reasons are right, the spirit in you is gone, and you have no life to supply others; there is no building but a full tearing down instead. We have to see that the activities of the soul are exceedingly dreadful. We must be watchful to always be filled with the Spirit and to deny ourselves. Those brothers and sisters who like to reason need to call upon the name of the Lord all the time, pray-read the Word, and be filled with the Spirit in their spirit.

By birth we love reasoning. Once a person begins to reason, he falls into his soul. Then he is full of criticisms and judgments. When he considers the elders, they are not good; when he considers this brother and that sister, neither the brother nor the sister is good. Nobody is good; only he is good. Eventually, he may be disappointed, saying, “Forget about it; I will not go to the church anymore.” However, if he does not come to the church meetings, his days will be full of sufferings. It will be impossible for him not to come, because the line of life within him is still pulling him. He may say, “Forget

about it” because of the outward situation, yet within him there is a disagreement. There is an urging within him to come back to the church. You can see from this that we should not live in the soul; rather, we must live in the spirit. Whenever you see a brother whom you do not like, you have to call, “O Lord Jesus!” Whenever you see a sister whom you do not like, you have to call, “O Lord! In the beginning was the Word. O Lord! The Word was with God, and the Word became flesh.” If you practice doing this, it will be effective. If you are willing to practice this every day, your spirit will be filled with the Holy Spirit, your soul will be transformed, and your mind will be renewed.

THE SPIRIT BEING THE ANSWER TO ALL OUR PROBLEMS

We truly need to live our spiritual life by following the sense of the Spirit of life within, because the answers to all our problems are in this Spirit. When we turn to our spirit and stay on this line of life, not only will we not criticize, but rather we will pray for the elders and the other brothers and sisters, and we will remember those members who are in need. In this way we will have the practicality of the church life, and the reality of the church will be among us. How can we be like this? It is by the line—the life-giving Spirit—who is pulling us from within. Some left the church and were lost, wandering outside, yet after a while, they came back. It was the line of life that drew them back.

Whenever I hear that a certain church has some problems, I thank and praise the Lord, saying, “Now the opportunity has come. I pray that You would cause the brothers there to be transformed through these problems.” Let them debate, murmur, and reason. I know they will reason to the extent that they become empty within, and then they will turn. When they have enough of their reasonings, they will repent. Thus, they will turn to their spirit. When they have no more opinions and reasonings and turn from their soul to their spirit, the reality of the church will be manifested. This is because at that time everyone’s soul will be falling, and everyone’s spirit will be rising. When the brothers and sisters come to the meetings, they all live in their spirit, joyfully shouting Hallelujah. As a result, they do not remember anything; rather, they have forgotten everything. They all live in the spirit, walk according to the spirit, serve in coordination in the spirit, and express Christ in the spirit. Thus, what Christ is becomes their all. This is the church. For this reason, throughout the ages the church has never been defeated by any circumstance. This is because the church is joined to heaven and to God. We

have Christ's redemptive work on the cross and the saving effect of Christ's resurrection and ascension upon us; we also have the line of life pulling us from within to prevent us from being scattered. Our only responsibility today is to call upon the name of the Lord all the time, pray-read the Word, and be filled with the Spirit of life in our spirit for our daily transformation and renewing.

First Corinthians 12:13 says, "In one Spirit we were all baptized into one Body, whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free, and were all given to drink one Spirit." To be baptized is to be immersed in water; to drink is to let the water come into us. We have all been baptized in the Spirit, but now we also need to drink the one Spirit. When we drink this one Spirit, we will be transformed. The meetings of the church, calling on the name of the Lord, pray-reading the Word, and the mutual fellowship among the saints for receiving the life supply—all these help us to be transformed. If we call on the name of the Lord every day, pray-read the Word, and drink of the one Spirit, we will be filled with the Holy Spirit within. Thus, we will experience the unlimited supply of the power of the Spirit, and we will be strong and living in spirit. Then Christ will possess our entire being, make His home in our heart, and transform our whole being. In this way we all will be members of one another in spirit and become one Body in oneness. This Body is Christ.

CHRIST BEING EVERYTHING IN THE NEW MAN

Christ is the Head of the new man, and Christ is also the Body of the new man. The entire new man is Christ (Col. 3:10-11). Therefore, Christ is everything in the new man. Christ came into us first as the Head and then as life. Eventually, a transformed and renewed new man is produced. Originally, we were not new but old. However, through the continuous transforming of the Spirit, we are being transformed into the same image of the Lord to be His glorious Body. We are still in the process of being transformed today. When the Lord comes back, we will all be transformed into the Lord's glorious image, and we will be exactly the same as He is. What we are today is only a miniature, but in that day we will be the full manifestation of the Body of Christ.

Our Christ is both God and man, He is the Redeemer and the Savior, He is life and resurrection, He is the life-giving Spirit, He is the Head of the church and the life to the church, and He is everything to the church as the new man.

In the new man there is only Christ; He is all the members and in all the members. In the new man there are no differences among nationalities, such as Americans, Chinese, Japanese, Filipinos, and Koreans; nor are there distinctions among people of different continents, such as those of the Americas, of Asia, of Europe, of Australia, and of Africa. There is only Christ, who is all the members and in all the members. He is the life in each member, and He is also each member. He is all and of all, and He is all and in all. This is the wonderful being of Christ. May we see this vision. This is what God wants, and this is the goal that He will attain to—one Body, one universal new man.