THE CENTRALITY AND UNIVERSALITY OF CHRIST

WITNESS LEE



LIVING STREAM MINISTRY

THE CENTRALITY AND UNIVERSALITY OF CHRIST

by Witness Lee

ISBN: 978-0-87083-750-0

CONTENTS

1. Christ Is All and in All
2. The Subjective Christ
3. Contacting the Lord by Praying in the Spirit
4. Entering the Holy of Holies

PREFACE

This small book is composed of messages given by Brother Witness Lee on March 27 through 29, 1964, in Los Angeles, California.

CHAPTER ONE

CHRIST IS ALL AND IN ALL

In this short book, we want to fellowship about the centrality and universality of Christ—Christ as the center and Christ as everything. Christ is the center, and Christ is the circumference. The whole universe—including the old and new creations, including everything in the heavens and on the earth, in the present and in the future—is like a great wheel (cf. Ezek. 1:15). Christ is the hub, the center; Christ is the rim, the circumference; and Christ is the spokes of this wheel. Christ is everything.

The centrality and universality of Christ is an all-inclusive subject. Of course, we will not go into the details, but we will see this matter in a very subjective way. We will spend one chapter for the objective aspect of this subject and three chapters for the subjective aspect. In this chapter we would like to read a number of important verses from the Scriptures that reveal that Christ is everything.

Colossians 1:15a says that Christ, the Son of God, is "the image of the invisible God." This tells us the position that Christ occupies in the Godhead. In the Godhead Christ is the image of the invisible God. Verse 15b says that He is "the Firstborn of all creation." This tells us His position in the old creation. In the old creation He is the first; He is the beginning; He takes the preeminence, the first place, in God's creation.

Verse 16 says, "Because in Him all things were created, in the heavens and on the earth, the visible and the invisible, whether thrones or lordships or rulers or authorities; all things have been created through Him and unto Him." Christ is not only the first One of all creation, but He is everything in the creation. All things were created in Him, in the power of His person, through Him as the active instrument, and unto Him for His possession.

Verse 17 says, "And He is before all things, and all things cohere in Him." To cohere in Him means to subsist together in Him. All things are united and compacted together in Christ because Christ is the center and Christ is the circumference. Christ is the hub and Christ is the rim. If you take the rim and hub away from a wheel, the entire wheel will collapse. Christ is the center and

the circumference of the universe. The scientists do not know this. But the best scientists tell us that there is a wonderful power holding the universe together. This wonderful power is Christ Himself as the center and the circumference. Christ is the very One in whom the whole universe, including all things, is compacted and subsists together.

Verse 18 says, “And He is the Head of the Body, the church; He is the beginning, the Firstborn from the dead, that He Himself might have the first place in all things.” Verse 17 tells us the position of Christ in creation. Verse 18 tells us the position of Christ in the new creation, in the Body, in the church. It says that He is the Head of the Body, the church. In the old creation, in the universe, He is the first. In the new creation, in the church, He is also the first. He is the Head and the Firstborn from the dead that He might have the preeminence, the first place, in all things. He must be the first.

Verse 19 says, “For in Him all the fullness was pleased to dwell.” The fullness here refers to the fullness of the Godhead. Colossians 2:9 says, “In Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily.” This fullness was pleased to dwell in Christ.

Now let us read Colossians 2:2-3: “That their hearts may be comforted, they being knit together in love and unto all the riches of the full assurance of understanding, unto the full knowledge of the mystery of God, Christ, in whom all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge are hidden.” In Christ, who is the mystery of God, are hidden all the treasures of spiritual wisdom and divine knowledge.

Verses 8 through 10 say, “Beware that no one carries you off as spoil through his philosophy and empty deceit, according to the tradition of men, according to the elements of the world, and not according to Christ; for in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily, and you have been made full in Him, who is the Head of all rule and authority.” For someone to carry you off as spoil is to take you away as his prey. To be made full in Him is to be filled up with all the divine riches. The Living Bible, a paraphrased edition, says in verse 10, “You have everything when you have Christ.” If we have Christ, we have everything.

Verse 19 says, “Holding the Head, out from whom all the Body, being richly supplied and knit together by means of the joints and sinews, grows with the

growth of God." The nourishment, the supply, comes from the joints, and the knitting together comes from the sinews. In the Body there are the supplying joints and the uniting sinews. But all of this comes from the Head through the members of the Body. The supply and the knitting together issue in the growth of the Body, which depends on the growth of God, the increase of God's element, in the Body.

Colossians 3:4 speaks of "Christ our life." Then 1:27 says, "To whom God willed to make known what are the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory." Christ is our life within us today, and Christ is our hope within us for the future. He is everything. Colossians 3:11b says, "Christ is all and in all." I do not think that anyone can fully comprehend this phrase. But we all need to announce, to declare, and to proclaim that Christ is all and in all.

Now I would like us to read one more verse—Ephesians 1:10: "Unto the economy of the fullness of the times, to head up all things in Christ, the things in the heavens and the things on the earth, in Him." The Greek word for *economy* means "household government or administration," and derivatively, "administrative dispensation, arrangement, plan, or economy." The economy that God, according to His desire, planned and purposed in Himself is to head up all things in Christ at the fullness of the times.

I would like to ask, "Is our body upholding our head, or is our head upholding our body?" When I was young, I had the thought that the body upholds the head. But one day I realized that it is the head which upholds the body. If our head were cut off, our body would collapse. This proves that the head upholds the body. This is an illustration to show us that Christ as the Head upholds His Body. God has been working through all the generations and is working today that Christ might head up all things, the things in the heavens and the things on the earth. Christ is the Head. Eventually, He will head up the whole universe. This shows us again that Christ is everything.

Verses 22 and 23 say, "He subjected all things under His feet and gave Him to be Head over all things to the church, which is His Body, the fullness of the One who fills all in all." Christ has been made by God the Head over all things, not only for the church but *to* the church. The church is the Body, the fullness, of Christ, the One who fills all in all.

Now let us read Ephesians 4:13-16: “Until we all arrive at the oneness of the faith and of the full knowledge of the Son of God, at a full-grown man, at the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ, that we may be no longer little children tossed by waves and carried about by every wind of teaching in the sleight of men, in craftiness with a view to a system of error, but holding to truth in love, we may grow up into Him in all things, who is the Head, Christ, out from whom all the Body, being joined together and being knit together through every joint of the rich supply and through the operation in the measure of each one part, causes the growth of the Body unto the building up of itself in love.”

Verse 14 speaks of every wind of teaching, not every wind of heresy. Even a teaching can be a wind to blow us away, to carry us away, from Christ and the church. We can be carried away by the winds of teaching because we are childish. We are children who have not yet grown up. Thus, it is easy for us to be deceived, to be carried away by something that looks good and that sounds nice. We are carried away not by some heresy but by some teaching. Instead of being carried away, we need to hold to truth in love. The truth is the reality, Christ Himself. When we hold Christ as the reality in love, we grow up into Christ, who is the Head, in all things. Then out from the Head all the Body causes the growth of the Body by the supplying joints and the operating parts.

If we consider before the Lord the above verses from Ephesians 4, we will have a clear vision that God’s intention is to work Christ into us, to make Christ everything to us, and to cause us to grow in Christ. God does not want us just to learn some teaching. We should not pay our attention to anything other than to holding Christ as the reality, the center, the circumference, and everything. We hold Christ as the reality that we may grow up into Him in everything. Not just in one aspect but in all aspects, in all things, we have to grow up into Christ. Christ is everything.

Now we need to read 1 Corinthians 1:22-24: “Indeed Jews require signs and Greeks seek wisdom, but we preach Christ crucified, to Jews a stumbling block, and to Gentiles foolishness, but to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God.” The Jews were looking for signs, for miracles. Religion needs signs, and the Jews continually required them. The Greeks sought wisdom. Wisdom pertains to philosophy and was constantly sought by the Greeks. Paul did not minister these things. Instead, he preached Christ crucified. Here we have a contrast, not between

Christ and sin and worldliness. We have a contrast between Christ and signs and wisdom. Even miracles, signs, and wisdom can be something in contrast with Christ. Paul preached Christ crucified to the Jews, and this became a stumbling block to them because they were seeking something other than Christ. They were seeking signs, miracles. The Greeks were seeking philosophical wisdom, not Christ. Thus, Paul preached the crucified Christ as the power of God and the wisdom of God.

In 1 Corinthians 2:2 Paul said, "I did not determine to know anything among you except Jesus Christ, and this One crucified." Paul decided and even determined not to know anything but Christ. He said this emphatically, definitely, and clearly in a book that deals with signs, miracles, and gifts.

These passages that we have read from the Scriptures bring us under the divine light and make everything transparent for us to see that in God's intention Christ is everything. He is the center and the circumference.

Now let us consider five items concerning Christ as everything in God's intention.

CHRIST IN THE GODHEAD

The first item that we want to consider is Christ in the Godhead. Even in the Godhead, Christ is the center. In the Godhead, there are three persons—the Father, the Son, and the Spirit. The Father is the source; the Spirit is the communion, the fellowship, the transmission; and the Son, Christ, is the center. All that the Father has planned and purposed is in the Son, for the Son, and through the Son, and all that the Spirit is doing is also for the Son. The Spirit comes to witness for the Son, to glorify the Son, and to make the Son real to us (John 16:13-15). Thus, we see that even in the Godhead, Christ is the center.

Furthermore, all the fullness of the Godhead is pleased to dwell in Christ bodily (Col. 1:19; 2:9). If we do not have the Son, we do not have the Father. If we have the Son, we have the Father also, because the Father is in the Son (John 10:38; 14:10-11) and the Son is the very embodiment of the Father (Col. 2:9). Christ is the image of God (1:15; 2 Cor. 4:4b) and the impress of God's substance, the expression of what God is (Heb. 1:3a). Apart from Christ we

cannot meet God or have God. Christ is God (John 1:1; 20:28-29; Rom. 9:5). Hence, Christ is the center of the Godhead.

CHRIST IN GOD'S PLAN

The second thing that we want to consider is Christ in God's plan. We have seen clearly from Ephesians that in God's economy Christ is the very center. In God's plan Christ is the Head to head up all things (1:10). The whole universe is for Christ. Whatever God has planned, whatever God has done, and whatever God is doing are to make Christ the Head, the center, and everything. This is God's eternal purpose. The phrase *to head up all things in Christ* (v. 10) indicates the divine economy. Hence, in God's plan, in God's economy, Christ is the Head and the center. Christ is everything.

CHRIST IN GOD'S CREATION

The next item that we want to consider is Christ in God's creation, that is, the old creation. In God's creation Christ is the first, the One who has preeminence among all creatures. In the old creation all things were created in Christ, through Christ, and unto Christ (Col. 1:15b-16). Furthermore, all things cohere, subsist together, and are compacted as one in Christ (v. 17b). We can see the beauty of the universe and the oneness of all things in this universe. If the moon went out of its orbit even to a small degree, there would be a terrible result on this earth. However, today everything in the universe is going on in a good order. This is due to the power of Christ. Christ is the power by which and in which all things cohere. Christ is the center of God's creation, and He has the first place in all creation.

CHRIST IN THE NEW CREATION

The fourth item is concerning Christ in the new creation, that is, the church. Whereas the old creation was created by God in Christ, through Christ, and unto Christ, the new creation is something of the old creation that has died and resurrected into life to have a fresh start in newness. Christ is the Firstborn from the dead (v. 18); He is the first in resurrection. As such, He has the first place in the church as God's new creation (2 Cor. 5:17; Gal. 6:15). Christ is not only the Firstborn of the new creation but also the Head of the church, the Body. Moreover, He is the constituent of the Body. He is all the members of the Body and in all the members (Col. 3:11). Even the Body itself

is Christ (1 Cor. 12:12). Everything of the Body, the church, in a positive way and in the proper condition, must be Christ Himself. Christ is the Head, Christ is the life, and Christ is the constituent of the church. Hence, in the new creation, the church, Christ is everything.

CHRIST IN THE CHRISTIAN LIFE

Now we come to the last item concerning Christ as everything in God's intention—Christ in the Christian life, or Christ in the Christians. In the Christians, or in the Christian life, we should not have anything other than Christ. Christ must be everything in our Christian life.

One day in 1933 the Lord opened my eyes to see that Christ is everything to us. Many times the saints came to me to praise someone by saying that he was humble or lovely. But after 1933 whenever I heard this kind of praise about a person, I always had a question within me. What do you mean by being humble? What do you mean by being lovely? Do you mean that here is a part of the old Adam that is so humble? Or here is a man in Adam who is so lovely? The real humility and loveliness of a Christian must be Christ Himself. Our love toward others must be Christ. Our patience, our humility, our wisdom, our knowledge, and our insight must be Christ.

However, we were not originally born in Christ, of Christ, or with Christ. What we had originally was absolutely out of Adam. But now we have been born of Christ. Yet still something of the old nature remains with us. We have Christ and the old Adam as well. We can even be humble and nice by the old Adamic life. In China I saw some people who were taught, educated, by the teachings of Confucius. They were really nice and lovely, but there was nothing of Christ. Our humility and loveliness must not be something of the old life but something of Christ. The Christian life must be a life which is Christ Himself expressed through us.

Brothers and sisters, I think that I have given you a picture of the centrality and universality of Christ in a very brief way. In the Godhead Christ is the center. In God's eternal purpose Christ is the Head, the center, and everything. In God's creation Christ is everything, and everything is for Christ. In God's new creation, that is, in the church, the Body of Christ, Christ is everything. And in the Christian life, that is, in us Christians, Christ must be everything. This is very clear.

Now let us look at the situation of Christianity today. There is very little of Christ in today's Christianity. Instead, Christianity is full of three categories of things. First, today's Christianity is full of forms and regulations, and it is organized as a religion. Second, today's Christianity is full of doctrines, knowledge, teachings, and theology. Once I met a person who spoke with me about justification by faith. But I found out that he himself had not been justified, though he was so much for justification by faith. This is because he had the doctrine of justification by faith, but he did not have the living person of Christ. If you have Christ, you are justified. If you do not have Christ, you are not justified. Someone may have a doctor's degree in divinity and yet not be saved. He is full of doctrines but void of Christ.

Sometimes people have asked me, "Brother Lee, do you believe in absolute grace?" I said, "I believe in the very Christ who is grace itself. What do you believe? You believe in the doctrine of grace, but do you have grace? Who is grace? Who is the all-inclusive grace? Who is the absolute grace?" Brothers and sisters, we must see that grace is a living person, not a doctrine. Grace is Christ Himself (John 1:17). You can teach grace and even fight for the doctrine of grace, yet you do not have grace if you do not have the living person of Christ. You may not have the word *grace* in your vocabulary or dictionary, but if you have the reality of Christ, you have the reality of grace. It is not a matter of doctrine but a matter of the living Christ to be realized by you.

Third, today's Christianity is full of gifts, full of the seeking for healings and speaking in tongues. But where is Christ? How much Christ is there? Christianity is full of forms, full of teachings, and full of gifts, but it has very little of Christ. Christ nearly has no place, no ground, even in the formal church, the doctrinal church, the fundamental church. Also, in the Pentecostal church there is not much room for Christ Himself. This is the condition of today's Christianity.

We surely should mourn over such a situation (Matt. 5:4). The United States is a Christian country, but it has very little of Christ. I am not trying to teach you and give you something new. I am here to tell you that you need Christ. What you need is not forms, doctrines, gifts, healings, and speaking in tongues but Christ the living One, the Son of the living God. You have to know Him and experience Him. You have to be filled with Him, to be saturated with Him, and to be mingled, blended, with Him.

In the New Testament we have the Epistle to the Hebrews, which deals with religion. Those Hebrew Christians had the best religion, the Jewish religion, yet they greatly neglected Christ. They forgot about Christ. They were distracted and even separated from Christ. They were led away from the right track, which is Christ Himself. They paid attention to something other than Christ, something that was used by God to bring people, to conduct people, to Christ. But their religion became a substitute for Christ, something that took the place of Christ. Even though it was good at one time, it eventually replaced Christ.

Galatians shows us that the law became a substitute for Christ. The Galatians were trying to do good, to improve themselves, and to adjust themselves in order to have good behavior. This kind of thing crept in among the Christians to usurp the place of Christ. Some Christians are good and try to do good. But this is a deceiving by the enemy. We are not for good conduct; we are persons who are one hundred percent for Christ. We were made vessels not to contain good conduct but to contain Christ. We are Christ-containers.

First Corinthians shows us the contrast between Christ and the gifts. I have said many times that 1 Corinthians shows us that it is quite possible for someone to have many gifts yet still be a babe, an infant, in Christ.

The Corinthian believers had all the outward, miraculous gifts, yet they were childish. That is why the apostle was forced to say, “When I came to you...I did not determine to know anything among you except Jesus Christ, and this One crucified” (2:1-2). The Jews are seeking signs, miracles, and supernatural things, and the Greeks are seeking wisdom and knowledge, but we, the saved ones of God, preach only Christ Himself. Besides Christ, we know nothing. Christ is the real power for signs and the real wisdom for knowledge. Today the enemy is still very subtle. If the enemy were to bring in something sinful, all the lovers of Christ, the seeking ones, would reject it. But the enemy is subtle to bring in something good. It is something really good, but it is not Christ Himself.

In the beginning of the New Testament, in Acts, there are the gifts, signs, and miracles. But when we come to the last Epistles, such as 2 Corinthians, the Epistles to Timothy, the Epistle to Titus, and 1, 2, and 3 John, we do not have signs, miracles, or gifts. In Revelation the gifts and miraculous things are

not mentioned. All these books deal much with the matters of knowing Christ and of being worked on by God, by the Holy Spirit, through the cross so that Christ may be wrought into us, that we may be mingled, blended, filled, and saturated with Christ.

We have to come back to God's Word, where we do not see any stress on doctrines, forms, gifts, healings, or speaking in tongues. The focus and stress in God's Word are Christ the living One. The enemy is subtle. This is why the apostle tells us that while they were preaching Christ, on the one hand, negatively, they warned and admonished people, and on the other hand, positively, they taught people (Col. 1:28). Why was there the need of warning? Because some subtle things were brought in by the enemy.

In Colossians 2:8 Paul says, "Beware that no one carries you off as spoil through his philosophy and empty deceit." Philosophy is something good, not something sinful or worldly. It is not something in black and dark clothing but something in a white and bright garment that can carry us away from Christ. It is something nice and good but something deceiving, sidetracking, and distracting. It separates us and carries us away from the right track, which is Christ Himself. Whenever we pay our attention to anything other than Christ, we have been sidetracked already. If we focus on something other than Christ, regardless of how good it is, we have been sidetracked; we are no longer on the right track.

Brothers and sisters, here is the battle. We are not fighting with men; we are fighting against the enemy, the cunning one, who has been damaging the Body of Christ for all the past generations, sometimes by bad things and sometimes by good things. Hebrews, Galatians, Colossians, and 1 Corinthians do not deal with bad things but with good things. The book of Hebrews deals with religion, Galatians deals with doing good according to the law, Colossians deals with the best human invention, philosophy, and 1 Corinthians deals with gifts. But all these things are substituting for Christ, replacing Christ, and usurping the ground of Christ in the believers. This is a battle. We need to pick up the burden to pray for this. The enemy is fighting to frustrate, to damage, to mix up, to confuse, and to complicate the pure building up of the church.

I look to the Lord that our eyes may be opened to see these things in a thorough way until they become transparent to us. We need to see that Christ is the center, Christ is the circumference, and Christ is everything.

CHAPTER TWO

THE SUBJECTIVE CHRIST

In the previous chapter we saw from the Word that in the Godhead, in God's plan, in the universe, in the church, and in the Christian life Christ is everything. Christ is the center and the circumference. Christ is the life today and tomorrow. He is everything to us.

THE ENEMY'S WAY TO FRUSTRATE PEOPLE FROM KNOWING CHRIST IN A DEEPER WAY

We also saw that throughout the history of the church the enemy, Satan, has been doing his best to frustrate people from knowing Christ in such an all-inclusive way. In his subtlety he often utilizes something good and sometimes even something that has been ordained and given by God so that he can frustrate God's people from knowing Christ as the center and circumference. For instance, Judaism with its worship in the Old Testament time was something ordained by God. God ordained the Old Testament service and worship for the purpose of bringing people to Christ. God set up many types in the Old Testament time, such as the tabernacle, the sacrifices, the priests, the kings, and the prophets, for the purpose of bringing people to Christ. The types are the means, the instrument, used by God to bring people to Christ. However, Satan, the enemy, came in to utilize even these God-ordained things to frustrate people from knowing Christ.

Galatians 3:23-24 says, "Before faith came we were guarded under law, being shut up unto the faith which was to be revealed. So then the law has become our child-conductor unto Christ that we might be justified out of faith." Faith here refers to the faith we have in Christ, the faith by which we receive Christ as everything. The apostle told us that before this faith came, we were guarded, kept in custody, under law. The law was given by God and used by God to keep His people in custody. Before faith came, God's people were guarded under law, being shut up unto the faith. The function of the law was to shut up God's people unto the faith which was to be revealed. The law has become our child-conductor. In ancient times people used a slave to take

care of their children. When the children were very young, they could not take care of themselves to go to school. The parents asked the slave to escort, to conduct, the children to the schoolmaster. The law was used by God as a slave-guard, as a child-conductor, to escort God's children to the Master—Christ. This was the purpose of God in giving us the law. The law is not the master or the schoolmaster but the child-conductor who guards us and brings us unto the Master—Christ—that we might be justified out of faith. This shows us that God uses many things, such as Judaism, gifts, the law, and even the gospel, to bring people to Christ.

But the enemy is very subtle. The very law given by God to bring people to Christ is utilized by Satan to frustrate people from Christ. This was the reason that the book to the Galatians was written. The law was given by God to bring people to Christ, but Satan came in to utilize the law to hold people, to prevent people from going to Christ, and to frustrate people from knowing Christ as everything. Instead of being a means, an instrument, to bring people to Christ, the law has become a hindrance and a separator, separating people from Christ.

Now let us consider the matter of gifts. All the New Testament gifts are instruments and means used by God to bring people to Christ and to lead people to know Christ, to express Christ, to experience Christ, and to realize Christ. Yet through the generations many gifts have been utilized by the enemy to frustrate people, to hold people, and to prevent people from knowing Christ in a deeper way. As a brother who has been serving the Lord for a long time, I can testify to you faithfully that I have seen a number of people with gifts—the gifts of healing, speaking in tongues, and even ministering. But I regret to say that it is hard to talk with many gifted persons about Christ in a deeper way. When you talk to some Christians about speaking in tongues or healing, they are very excited. But when you tell them that Christ is dwelling in their spirit, that they have to fellowship with this Christ, and that they have to be dealt with by this Christ, they are not interested. They have no ear and no heart for these things.

I do not oppose any kind of gift, but I am fighting because these gifts have been greatly utilized by the enemy to frustrate people from knowing Christ in a deeper way. There was a group of Christians in China called the True Jesus Church. Whenever they came together, they had to kneel down and shake their chairs to exercise their gifts. That was their way. I am not saying whether

this is right or wrong. But the subtlety of the enemy is that he utilized this matter to hinder these people from going on to know Christ in a deeper way. They could not sit quietly with a sober mind and an open spirit to listen to someone speaking to them about Christ as the inner life. They were held by their gifts and could not advance in the knowledge of Christ.

I have seen a great number of people who were stirred up to speak in tongues. But once they had the speaking in tongues, they were held by it. It is somewhat easy to help a new believer and even an unbeliever to know Christ, but it is rather hard to help a person who speaks in tongues to know Christ in a deeper way. Here again we see the subtlety of the enemy. The gifts that are used by God to bring people to Christ have been utilized by Satan to hold people and prevent them from going on with Christ. Thus, even the gifts can become something against God's purpose. First Corinthians was written simply because the Corinthian believers were held by the gifts and would not go on to know Christ in a deeper way. Whenever they came together, they just exercised to speak in tongues. This is why the apostle told them not to exercise that much in speaking in tongues. He said, "In the church I would rather speak five words with my mind, that I might instruct others also, than ten thousand words in a tongue" (14:19). This is the clear word of God and we cannot fight against it. It is in the opening of this book to the Corinthians that the apostle declares, "I did not determine to know anything...except Jesus Christ, and this One crucified" (2:2).

If we receive Christ and experience Him by the cross, the Holy Spirit who indwells us will restrict us from exercising so much in the gifts. Many Christians today are under the deceiving of the subtle one. They are deceived not by sinful things but by good things given by God. These good things frustrate people by mixing up the Old Testament principles with the New Testament principles, mixing up the soul with the spirit, and mixing up the carnal things with the spiritual things. We need the cross. If we are willing to go to the cross and let the cross be applied in our heart, we will know where we are.

Brothers and sisters, I would ask you to stand together in the spirit to pray and fight the battle. Throughout the generations the enemy has always been doing things in a subtle way. He is doing one thing, yet he pretends he is doing something else. We have to stand together in the spirit to pray. The weapons of our warfare are not fleshly but spiritual (2 Cor. 10:4). We have to

pray in the spirit to fight the battle for Christ. Only Christ is the safeguard. Do not trust anything else. All things must be tested by Christ.

OUR NEED TO KNOW CHRIST SUBJECTIVELY

In this chapter I want to go on further and fellowship about the subjective Christ. The all-inclusive Christ is more subjective than objective to us. This is something missed, lost, and neglected by today's Christianity. Apparently Christianity is a religion of Christ. Many people there are the believers, the followers, of Christ, and they more or less confess the name of Christ. However, in today's Christianity Christ is mostly a Christ in name. He is mostly One who is objective, One who is far away from the Christians. Very few Christians today know that Christ is more subjective to us than objective.

All the things that are outside of us are objective. All the things that are within us are subjective to us. With all the truths in the Scriptures there are two aspects: the objective aspect and the subjective aspect.

For instance, there are objective justification and subjective justification. Sanctification also has its objective and subjective sides. At the time we received Christ, objectively speaking, we were justified and even sanctified. We have Christ as our righteousness and holiness, objectively speaking. Subjectively speaking, however, we may be quite poor in these things. We may be neither righteous nor holy subjectively. Objectively, we are justified and righteous in Christ, and we are also sanctified and made holy. But subjectively, in ourselves we are poor. Objectively, all the Christians are one hundred percent rich in Christ. Everything in Christ is ours. But subjectively, we Christians may be quite poor in Christ, possessing nothing.

With Christ Himself there are also these two sides. On the one hand, the New Testament tells us many times that Christ has ascended to the heavens and is now at the right hand of God (Mark 16:19; Luke 24:51; Acts 1:11; 7:55-56; Rom. 8:34; Eph. 1:20). This is the objective Christ. But on the other hand, there are many more passages in the New Testament telling us that Christ is in us. Romans 8:10a says, "Christ is in you"; 2 Corinthians 13:5 says, "Jesus Christ is in you"; and Colossians 1:27 tells us that Christ in us is our hope of glory. Christ also dwells in us (John 15:4-5; Gal. 2:20), and He is making His home in our hearts (Eph. 3:17). Thus, we see that, on one side, Christ is in the heavens, and on the other side, Christ is in us. Are these two

Christs? No. Is Christ divided into two parts, one part in the heavens and another part in us? No.

When I was young, I tried in vain to figure out how Christ could be in the heavens and in me as well. But one day the Lord pointed out to me the illustration of electricity. We all know the current of electricity is at the same time in this room and in the power plant far away. If it is only in the power plant and not in this room, it has nothing to do with us. If it is merely objective and not subjective, we cannot enjoy it. Likewise, if Christ is merely in the heavens and not in you and me, if Christ is just the objective Christ and not the subjective Christ, then Christ has nothing to do with us.

Let us use an apple as an illustration. While the apple is in my hand, it is objective to you and has nothing to do with you. You can appreciate it, but it has nothing to do with you because you do not have it. The objective apple has to become subjective to you. You have to take it and eat it, and then it can get into your stomach. In this way you have made the objective apple a subjective one. Then you have the nourishment, the life, and all the riches of the apple. I hope you can see the picture.

Today is Christ merely objective to you, or is He the subjective Christ to you? I have no doubt that Christ is in the heavens, and I can give you the Scripture verses that tell us this. But the New Testament also tells us many times that Christ is in us and we are in Him. The book of Ephesians mentions repeatedly that Christ is in us and we are in Christ. I regret to say, however, that in today's Christianity there is a lot of talk about Christ in the heavens but very little talk about Christ in us. No matter how great the quantity is of good oranges in Southern California, they will not do you any good unless they get into your stomach. Only the oranges that you have taken into your stomach are yours. Similarly, no matter how good Christ is in the heavenlies, if He is not in you, He has nothing to do with you. He must be subjective to you. You must have a subjective Christ.

Some people may say that we need to be balanced. But we need to consider whether we need to be balanced objectively or subjectively. There is too much of the objective Christ in Christianity today, but there is very little of the subjective Christ in you. You have to be balanced on the subjective side, not on the objective side. Christ is already in the heavens. Now there is a great need for you to receive Him into you. You have to be balanced in this way.

You do not have enough Christ within you. You may have the gifts, but I wish to ask you, "How much Christ do you have today? How much Christ do you have in your daily life and in your home?" We must see that it is not good enough just to have an objective Christ.

Of course, the objective side is the base. If we did not have any oranges in Southern California, we could not have an orange in us. There is no doubt that we need the objective side. But today there are millions of oranges in America, but how many oranges have we eaten? We need to make the objective produce of America something subjective within us. I am not satisfied just to be here in America surrounded by the objective produce. I want to put more and more American produce into my stomach. If you just preach Christ in the heavens, it is not good enough. The objective Christ in the heavens has nothing to do with you. You must have Him come into you. The more you know Christ in a subjective way, the more you will be satisfied with Him as the objective One.

Now let us read some verses from the Scriptures to see the subjective Christ. John 1:14 says, "The Word became flesh and tabernacled among us." Verse 1 says that the Word was in the beginning, in eternity. Now the Word came in the flesh and is closer to us. He is not just in eternity but also in time; He is not just in divinity but also in humanity. He tabernacled among us. Notice the preposition used here is *among*. He tabernacled among us, but He was not yet in us. When Christ was in the flesh, the most He could do was to be among us; He could not be in us.

John 14:16 says, "I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Comforter, that He may be with you forever." Here it is not clear whether He is among us or in us. It just says that He may be "with" us, which may mean that He is either among us or in us. Verse 17 says, "Even the Spirit of reality, whom the world cannot receive, because it does not behold Him or know Him; but you know Him, because He abides with you and shall be in you." *In you*—this is a strong word. Then verse 18 says, "I will not leave you as orphans; I am coming to you." This does not refer to His second coming. If it did, that would mean that the Lord has left us as orphans for nearly two thousand years. But the Lord did not do that. Verse 19 says, "Yet a little while and the world beholds Me no longer, but you behold Me; because I live, you also shall live." How long is "yet a little while"? It was just three days. After He died, He came back right away in His resurrection. He went away at the most

for seventy-two hours; then He came back as the Spirit. Yet a little while and the world beholds Him no longer, but the disciples behold Him; because He lives by His resurrection, they also shall live by being raised up with Him. Verse 20 says, “In that day you will know that I am in My Father, and you in Me, and I in you.” This is very subjective.

The Gospel of John speaks of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. After you read through the entire book from chapter 1 through chapter 21, where did this Christ go? You may say that Christ went to heaven after His resurrection. However, according to the Gospel of John, Christ is still here. In Mark and Luke we are told that Christ went to the heavens after He was resurrected. But the Gospel of John, the Gospel of Christ being life to us, does not say that the very Christ who is life in us has gone to the heavens. So where is He? Praise the Lord that today He is not only among us but also—and even more—He is in us. He is the subjective Christ in us. If He is not subjective, if He is merely a Savior in the heavens and He is not in us, how can He be life to us? He can never be life to us unless He is in us. We must know and realize Him as One who is more subjective than objective to us.

John 15:4-5 says, “Abide in Me and I in you...I am the vine; you are the branches. He who abides in Me and I in him...” These verses clearly show that Christ is subjective to us. Let us also read Romans 8:9-10: “You are not in the flesh, but in the spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you. Yet if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he is not of Him. But if Christ is in you...” “Christ is in you”— this is the key phrase in the book of Romans.

Now we come to the book of Galatians. In 1:15-16 Paul says, “It pleased God...to reveal His Son in me.” Then in 2:20 he says, “It is no longer I who live, but it is Christ who lives in me.” So we see that Christ is revealed in us and then lives in us. Furthermore, in 4:19 Paul says, “My children, with whom I travail again in birth until Christ is formed in you.” To have Christ formed in us is to have Christ mingled with our whole being. In every part of our being—in our mind, in our emotion, in our will, in our conscience, and in our spirit—Christ is mingled with us. This means Christ is formed in us. It is not only Christ revealed in us and living in us but also Christ being formed in us. To have Christ formed in us is to have Christ fully grown in us. Christ has to saturate us and permeate us until He is altogether blended with us. Then He is formed in us. How subjective He is to us!

Colossians 1:27 says, “To whom God willed to make known what are the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.” This mystery of God is not just the Christ in the heavens but even more the Christ in us as our hope of glory. Furthermore, Colossians 3:4 tells us that Christ is our life. Christ is our life today and He is our hope in the future. He is everything to us. However, the most important thing is that He is in us.

In addition to the verses mentioned above, we have Ephesians 3:17: “That Christ may make His home in your hearts...” The Greek word for *make home* is the verb form of the noun *home*. Christ not only dwells in us but also makes His home in us. To dwell, to remain, in a certain place is one thing, and to make home, to settle down, in that place is another thing. I have been a guest in the saints’ homes many times in the past years in the Lord’s work, but I have never once settled down in any of the saints’ homes. I cannot do this, because that is not my home. I do not have the liberty and the right to settle down in their home. However, Christ not only is in us, lives in us, dwells in us, and is being formed in us, but He also wants to make His home in us, to settle down in us. Many Christians are longing to go to heaven as their home, but Christ is longing to come to them as His home. You may want to go there, but He wants to come here. You are going in the wrong direction. You want to go, but He wants to come. You want to have heaven, but He wants to have you.

We all have Christ within us, but do we have Him living in us and being formed in us? Even more, do we have Him making His home, settling down, in us? This is very subjective. Only such a subjective Christ can be everything to us. If He is only objective, He might be able to be our Savior, our Deliverer, and our Help, but He cannot be the life and the subjective inner strength to us. But praise the Lord that He is now within us, so He is everything to us. This is just like saying that the electricity in this room is everything to this room. If we need heat, it gives us heat. If we need cooling, it gives us cooling. If we need light, it gives us light. If we need power, it gives us power. There is one electricity, yet it is all-inclusive. However, it must be in the room. If it is only in the power plant and not in the room, it has nothing to do with us.

Let us learn how to realize Christ as the subjective One. He is the center and He is everything, yet He must be subjective to us. No matter how much He is, how good He is, and how all-inclusive He is, if He is not subjective, He is nothing to us. The objective Christ who is far away from us has nothing to do

with us. But, praise Him, today He is in us. I can testify that every day I am dealing with this subjective Christ.

Christ must be subjective more than objective to us. Then there is the availability for us to experience Him and enjoy Him. Today He is not only with us and close to us, but He is also within us. I would say that He is so "handy" within us. We have to experience Him as such a handy and subjective Christ.

CHAPTER THREE

CONTACTING THE LORD BY PRAYING IN THE SPIRIT

In this chapter I have the burden to fellowship about how to contact the all-inclusive and subjective Christ.

In the preceding chapters we have seen clearly not only what Christ is in Himself but also what Christ is to us. He is the center, He is the Head, He is the life, and He is the hope. He is so subjective to us. He is more subjective than objective to us. We have to know and experience Him as the subjective Christ. All our experiences of Christ are based on our real knowledge of Christ as the subjective One. Our urgent need today is to know Him in a subjective way. If we desire to have a genuine church life, we must realize that all the life matters depend on our real experience of the subjective Christ.

We have such a Christ who is central, universal, all-inclusive, and subjective, but what is the proper way for us to contact such a Christ? This is something clearly revealed in the Scriptures, and it is also clear to many experienced Christians. However, Christians in general are not clear about this matter. Many Christians today do not know how to contact Christ in a practical and living way.

CHRIST BEING THE LIFE-GIVING SPIRIT

First of all, we have to know that if we are going to contact Christ, the living Christ, the subjective Christ, we have to realize what He is. I do not say *who* He is, but *what* He is. What He is, is different from who He is. Here we have a podium. This podium is something of wood; it is a wooden podium. What is Christ? We need to realize what He is, and then we will know how to contact Him.

Let us read 1 Corinthians 15:45: "So also it is written, 'The first man, Adam, became a living soul'; the last Adam became a life-giving Spirit." This verse speaks of two Adams, the first Adam and the last Adam. The first Adam became a living soul, and the last Adam, Christ, became a life-giving Spirit. The Greek word for *life-giving* is the verb form of the noun *life*. Christ is the

Spirit who gives life, or the life-giving Spirit. This is very important. I was in Christianity for many years under some good teachers. I was taught that Christ is God, the Lord, the Head, the Master, and many things, but I was never taught that Christ is the Spirit. I was taught that in the Godhead there is the Holy Spirit, but I was never taught that Christ is the Spirit, the life-giving Spirit.

We have other verses to confirm the fact that Christ is the Spirit. Second Corinthians 3:17 says, "The Lord is the Spirit." According to the context of this verse, *the Lord* here refers to Christ the Lord (2:12, 14-15, 17; 3:3-4, 14, 16; 4:5). This then is a strong word in the Bible, telling us emphatically that Christ is the Spirit.

Then Romans 8:9 says, "You are not in the flesh, but in the spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you. Yet if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he is not of Him." First, it says, "The Spirit of God dwells in you," and then it says, "If anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ." First it mentions "the Spirit of God," and then it changes to "the Spirit of Christ." This proves that the Spirit of Christ is the Spirit of God. We should not consider them as two Spirits. Then verse 10 says, "But if Christ is in you." First it is "the Spirit of God"; then it is "the Spirit of Christ"; and then it is "Christ" Himself. Are these three or are these one? Of course, if we read the context of this passage, we will realize that these three are one. The Spirit of God is the Spirit of Christ, and the Spirit of Christ is Christ Himself. So by these verses we can clearly know that Christ today is the Spirit, the life-giving Spirit. Then we have to read John 6:63: "It is the Spirit who gives life." Who is this Spirit? In 1 Corinthians 15:45 we get the answer—"the last Adam became a life-giving Spirit."

When I was a young Christian, I always had the wrong concept that Christ and the Holy Spirit were separate persons. We have to realize that Christ Himself is the life-giving Spirit. If you have the Spirit, you have Christ because the Spirit is Christ Himself. The Spirit is the reality of Christ. Outside of the Holy Spirit, you cannot find Christ or meet Christ. Outside of the Holy Spirit, there is no Christ. Christ is the Spirit. If we want to contact Christ, we must know that He is the Spirit.

CHRIST AS THE SPIRIT DWELLING IN OUR SPIRIT

Now we have to find out where the Spirit is today. Some Christians may consider that they know a lot. They know the Scriptures and the doctrines concerning the Trinity, predestination, justification by faith, sanctification by faith, etc. But what they have is mere objective knowledge. They do not have much of the true, living, practical, useful, and subjective knowledge. Many Christians know that Christ is the bread of life, the living bread, but nearly no one can tell you how to take Christ as the bread of life. If you have only the knowledge of Christ as the living bread yet no way to experience it, what good is it to you? You may know that Christ is the life, but do you have the proper, real, practical, and living way to experience Him as life? Many times, what we know is just something in our mentality according to the letter, but we do not know the real thing in the spirit in a living way. Most of the time we know the Scriptures just according to the traditional teachings of theology, but we do not have the personal, living, individual, and practical experience of the Scriptures.

Now we come back to the question, "Where is Christ the Spirit today?" The answer is that Christ, who is the Spirit, is in our spirit. We say this based on Romans 8:16: "The Spirit Himself witnesses with our spirit." This means that the Holy Spirit surely is within our spirit. He cannot witness with our spirit unless He is in our spirit. Furthermore, 1 Corinthians 6:17 says, "He who is joined to the Lord is one spirit." We are one spirit with the Lord. If we did not have a spirit, we could never be one spirit with the Lord. But praise the Lord, we have a spirit, a human spirit created by God. It is in this spirit that we are one with the Lord because the Lord Himself is also the Spirit. The two spirits are mingled as one. Now I believe we are clear that, first, Christ today is the Spirit, the life-giving Spirit, and second, this wonderful Spirit is now in our spirit. Thus, He is subjective to us, even to the extent that He becomes one with us.

We should have the true realization that we and Christ are one. This should not be merely a doctrine but a reality, a fact, in our experience. We cannot fight a battle with anything objective. We must have something real, living, and strong. This is the living Christ, the living One, who is the Spirit and who lives in our spirit. We have to realize Him in such a way.

THE NEED TO EXERCISE OUR SPIRIT TO CONTACT THE LORD

After I was saved as a young man, immediately I began to love the Bible. Whenever I came to study the Bible, I exercised my mind and desperately tried to grasp, apprehend, and comprehend all the teachings from the Scriptures. But the more I read and studied, the farther I was from Christ and the emptier I became. I was full in my mentality, but I was empty in my spirit. At that time my studying of the Word had nothing to do with Christ in a subjective way. But today by His mercy I can fellowship with you that when I consider the Bible even just a little bit, my spirit contacts the living One. Whenever I contact the Word, at the same time my spirit has some real contact with the living One. I cannot separate His Word from Himself. If we are not in the spirit but just in our mind, then the Word in black and white is separated from the living One—Christ. So we have to know that Christ, the living One, as the Spirit is in our spirit. This is a reality and a fact.

When you are contacting the written Word, you must have the sense in your spirit that you are contacting the living Word. The living Word is the very essence, the very substance, of the written Word. You cannot separate the written Word from the living Word. It is possible to contact the living Word only in our spirit, not in our mind. Brothers and sisters, we have to learn to realize, to experience, Christ in our spirit in such a real, substantial way. If we are in the spirit, in our human spirit, in our own spirit, we will realize Christ as the Spirit. He is speaking to us, revealing something to us, quickening us, and imparting Himself to us. He as the living Spirit lives within us, waiting all the time for a chance to impart Himself into us, impress Himself in us, and reveal Himself more and more to us.

We need to know how to exercise our spirit because our spirit is the switch. We have electricity installed in this hall for many purposes. But we have to know where the switch is and how to handle the switch. If we know neither where the switch is nor how to handle it, the electricity will not do us any good even though it has been fully installed in this hall. Praise the Lord that we have the wonderful Spirit, who is Christ Himself, installed in our spirit, and we have found out that our spirit is the switch.

EXERCISING OUR SPIRIT BY PRAYER

Now we need to consider how we can exercise our spirit to turn on the spiritual switch. We can exercise our spirit by prayer. When a person walks, he exercises his two feet. Before a child learns to walk, he has to crawl. I know

many Christians who do not know how to pray by exercising their spirit. They pray by considering something in their mind. They know how to pray by their mind but not by their spirit. Do you pray by your mind and even by your emotion? Or do you pray by your spirit? You need to consider the way that you pray. As a rule, a prayer must be by the spirit. This is the right organ for us to use when we pray. We know we have many organs that function to do certain things. The ears are for us to hear, the eyes are for us to see, and the tongue is for us to taste. In our physical body, the hands are for us to touch, and the feet are for us to walk. If we are going to think, to consider, we must do it by our mind. But we have to realize that prayer is something different from all these things. We pray by our spirit; we pray by the exercise of our spirit.

There are some verses in the Scriptures that show us we need to pray by the spirit and in the spirit. Romans 8:26 says, "In like manner the Spirit also joins in to help us in our weakness, for we do not know for what we should pray as is fitting, but the Spirit Himself intercedes for us with groanings which cannot be uttered." Ephesians 6:18 says, "By means of all prayer and petition, praying at every time in spirit and watching unto this in all perseverance and petition concerning all the saints." Jude 20 says, "Praying in the Holy Spirit." We have these verses confirming that prayer must be carried out in the spirit. To walk or run is to exercise the feet, to see is to exercise the eyes, and to hear is to exercise the ears. In the same way, to pray is to exercise the spirit.

The problem is that many times when we pray, we do not exercise our spirit. Rather, we exercise our mind. Sometimes we become quite emotional when we are happy. Maybe we have received some money, or we have obtained a good job. We are very emotional, and we pray to the Lord. I am afraid that that kind of prayer is not a prayer in the spirit but a prayer in the emotion. Sometimes when you are depressed, suppressed, or even oppressed, you shut up your mouth and cannot pray for a prolonged period of time. This simply means that you are not strong in your spirit. Sometimes when we come together, some brothers compose a good and nice prayer with the best terms, phrases, and terminology, but that is a prayer by the mind. That kind of prayer cannot touch people's spirit.

When a person prays in the spirit, his prayer will touch your spirit. So we have to learn to exercise our spirit to pray. To exercise means that we have to learn, to practice. I know many Christians who love the Lord but do not know

how to pray to contact the Lord in a living way. Sometimes they just pray in a simple way by exercising their mentality to utter some words with their mouth. That kind of prayer is dead and dry because they do not pray in their spirit. When we exercise our spirit to pray, our prayer will be living and refreshing. Our prayer will water others' spirit.

Some of us may say that we do not know how to pray. But praise the Lord, there is a way for us who do not know how to pray. The way is to groan. Many prayers with clear words are not genuine prayers. When we pray with many clear words, this proves that our prayer is of the mind. When genuine prayers come out, many times they come out in a stammering voice, a groaning voice. Romans 8:26 speaks of "groanings which cannot be uttered." I would give you a suggestion. If you do not have the clear word to express, do not think, do not consider, do not exercise your mind. Forget about your mind. Simply exercise your spirit, and if you do not know what to say, just groan. If you would groan for a while, you will be watered and refreshed by the Lord. You will not be so dry. After you have groaned for a while, you will have a lot of things to speak. However, if you go to the Lord with your mind in the same way that you go to the laboratory, the more you pray, the drier you will become. Learn to forget about your mind. You are too much in your mind. Learn to exercise your spirit.

Now I believe we are clear that Christ is the Spirit, and this Spirit, who is Christ Himself, is in our spirit. The best way, and in fact the only proper way, for us to contact such a Christ is to exercise our spirit to pray. We need to learn to pray by exercising our spirit. I know that whenever we go to the Lord, we go with many problems in our mind. We are bothered by the problems, troubles, difficulties, tests, trials, sorrows, pains, and others' unfair dealings with us. The most bothering matter is the unfair dealings. A certain brother has dealt with me in an unfair way that I cannot forget for eternity. It is very hard for me to pray with him because his unfair dealing impressed me deeply and affected me to such an extent that I can never forget it. It bothers me all the time. This is why I say that when you go to the Lord, you have to cut off the thoughts in your mind. Forget about everything. Forget about all your troubles, sorrows, pains, testings, trials, etc. Just go to the Lord in the spirit and by the spirit. When you pray, do not try to remember so many things. Some people try to consider too many things when they go to the Lord to pray. Some people asked me, "Brother Lee, if you speak in this way, then what

about our prayer list?" If you go to the Lord in a living way, you will know what to do with your prayer list.

Now we know that we need to contact the Lord by exercising our spirit. And in order to exercise our spirit, we need to forget about many things. If we are occupied with many things, that will only help us to exercise our mind and hinder us from exercising our spirit. From now on, whenever we go to the Lord, let us forget everything in our mind, in our memory.

A husband may ask, "My children are sick, and my wife is not well; should I not remember these things before the Lord? Should I forget about these things?" Or a wife may say, "My husband is out of a job; should I not pray for this?" I would tell you that if you could forget about these things, you will be very much blessed. Your wife and your children will be quickly healed, and your husband will get a better job. You are too much concerned in your mentality, in your understanding, and in your realization. You are too much occupied by other things, not by Christ. Let us learn to realize that today Christ as the Spirit is in our spirit. The only way, the proper way, for us to contact Him is to pray to Him by exercising our spirit. When you pray in this way, eventually you will realize that it is not only you praying by yourself but also Him praying within you. You will realize that while you pray, He prays. He prays with you, and He prays in you. He becomes your prayer.

Andrew Murray once said that the best prayer is the Christ within praying to the Christ above. This means that the Christ within, that is, the indwelling Christ, prays to the ascended Christ. The same meaning is expressed in the last two lines of stanzas 8 and 9 of *Hymns*, #762 by A. B. Simpson. Stanza 8 says, "Teach us! Pray in us, till our prayer shall be / Christ in us praying to the Christ above!" Stanza 9 says, "Teach us! Pray in us, till our prayer shall be / God in us answering to the God above!" The real prayer is something in the spirit. While you are praying in your spirit, Christ as the Spirit indwelling you prays with you. He prays in your prayer, and you are praying in His prayer. You are mingled with Him.

The more you pray in this way, the more you will enjoy Christ. You will absorb something of Christ. Also, your prayer will be answered. However, your prayer's being answered is the secondary thing. The primary thing is that while you are praying in this way, you enjoy Christ and absorb Christ. The more you pray in the spirit, the more you contact Christ as the Spirit. Then

you will realize Him as the life, the food, and the supply within. By praying you enjoy Him, absorb Him, and can apply Him to all the happenings in your daily life. This is the proper way for you to contact Christ.

When you are so much mingled with Him and one with Him, it will be difficult for people to tell whether you are praying or Christ is praying. Even you yourself will not be able to tell clearly which part is your prayer and which part is Christ's, because you are so much mingled with Him. This is the genuine prayer, and this is the New Testament principle of life. The principle of life in the New Testament is that the Triune God—God the Father, in God the Son, and through God the Spirit—mingles Himself with us in our spirit.

But in order for this to take place, we must give Him the ground within us. This means that we have to pray by exercising our spirit. The more we exercise our spirit, the more we give Him the ground. Then He will occupy us, saturate us, and mingle Himself with us to make Himself us and to make us Himself. Then we are one with Him in the spirit in a very practical way. It is by this that we can be overcoming. We can overcome many difficulties and sins that are contrary to Christ. It is only when we are in Christ, living by Christ and being blended with Christ, that His victory is ours. When we are in Christ, we enjoy Him as everything—as life, as power, as the light shining within us to guide us all the time. All these things are subjective within. This is exactly what we need today.

If we are one with Christ and blended together with Christ, it is easy for us to receive healing when we need it. But we do not pay attention to the healing but to the Healer. We do not pay attention to the gift but to the Giver. Of course, when we have the Healer and the Giver, we have the healing and the gift. We do not pay attention to the power, to the might, but we are satisfied and happy with the mighty One. It is not some thing but a living person whom we possess. It is not something of Christ but Christ Himself (see *Hymns,* #513 by A. B. Simpson). This is the reality of the Christian life. This is also the reality of the church life. This is what God is seeking and what Christ is looking for. We have to realize that He is such a One living within us so that we may experience Him in such a living and experiential way. May God be merciful to us.

CHAPTER FOUR

ENTERING THE HOLY OF HOLIES

We have seen the centrality and universality of Christ—Christ as the central One and the universal One. Furthermore, we have seen that He is the all-inclusive and subjective Christ to us. On the one hand, we stress the all-inclusiveness of Christ—He is the center, the circumference, and everything. On the other hand, we want to see that this very central, universal, all-inclusive Christ is so subjective to us. If He is not subjective to us, He has nothing to do with us, and we cannot experience Him as life and everything to us.

We all may realize that with a subject as big as the centrality and universality of Christ, there are many things to see. However, we are not dealing with doctrinal matters here; we are dealing with the experiential matters. Therefore, we will just concentrate on the main point concerning Christ being subjective to us.

CHRIST IN US

We pointed out before that the New Testament speaks a number of times about Christ's ascension, but it also says many, many times in various ways that Christ is in us, Christ is dwelling in us, and Christ is making His home in us. On the one hand, the Scriptures reveal to us that Christ has ascended to the heavens and is now at the right hand of God (Mark 16:19; Luke 24:51; Acts 1:11; 7:55-56; Rom. 8:34; Eph. 1:20). But on the other hand, they tell us more clearly that this very ascended Christ is now in us (Rom. 8:10a; 2 Cor. 13:5b). "Christ in you, the hope of glory" (Col. 1:27c). "It pleased God...to reveal His Son in me" (Gal. 1:15a, 16a). "It is no longer I who live, but it is Christ who lives in me" (2:20a). "Christ is formed in you" (4:19b). There are phrases, clauses, sentences, verses, paragraphs, chapters, and books in the New Testament which speak about Christ in such a subjective way.

WHERE CHRIST IS TODAY

However, there is something more crucial than this. This crucial thing is that we have to know where Christ is today. We know He is in the heavens

and also in us. But in which part of our being is He? In the preceding chapter we showed clearly that this very Christ today is the Spirit. First Corinthians 15:45b tells us that Christ as the last Adam became a life-giving Spirit. We have also seen that this wonderful life-giving Spirit, who is Christ Himself, is now in our spirit. This is the human spirit created by God purposely for us to contact Him, contain Him, and even digest Him and express Him. Christ today as the divine Spirit, the life-giving Spirit, is in our human spirit. This is why 1 Corinthians 6:17 says, "He who is joined to the Lord is one spirit."

Furthermore, Romans 8:16 says, "The Spirit Himself witnesses with our spirit that we are children of God." Two spirits witness together, so these two spirits are mingled together as one spirit. This is why in many passages in the New Testament it is difficult to discern whether *the spirit* refers to the Holy Spirit or to our human spirit. This is especially true in Romans 8. But we know that it is a mingling of two spirits. It is wonderful that these two spirits, the divine Spirit and the human spirit, can be joined and mingled as one (1 Cor. 6:17).

We know that we are identified with Christ and one with Christ. However, we have to realize that this oneness is possible only in the spirit, not in the body nor in the mind nor in the soulish life. We are one with the Lord in the spirit. The Lord is the Spirit, we have a spirit, and these two spirits are mingled as one. The divine Spirit is life to the human spirit, and the human spirit is the container, the vessel, to contain and express the divine Spirit. I have no human word to express what is on my heart and in my spirit about this matter. It is something too great and wonderful.

Brothers and sisters, I would ask you to read again the sixty-six books of the Bible, look into the universe, and consider what the central point in the divine thought is. The central point in the divine thought is that this wonderful divine Spirit wants to come into this little human spirit. This is the key, the secret, of the whole universe, and this is the very center of the sixty-six books of the Bible. These sixty-six books tell us a great number of things, but the very center of all the things mentioned in these books is this wonderful oneness. Christ, as the substance of the Divine Trinity, as the Spirit, comes into our spirit to dwell in it and to be one with us. There is nothing that can be more subjective than this.

Now let us turn to 2 Timothy 4:22: “The Lord be with your spirit.” At the end of the two Timothys you have such a “hidden” verse. I say “hidden” because it was hidden to me for over thirty years. I had read the New Testament again and again, and I knew many things in 1 and 2 Timothy, but I did not notice this verse, which says, “The Lord be with your spirit.” It is regrettable that many Christians today do not even know that they have a spirit. You have the heavenly King in your “home,” yet you do not know in which “room” He is. Many Christians simply do not know what the human spirit is and where the human spirit is. However, 2 Timothy 4:22 tells us that the Lord is with our spirit.

You all know where your ears, eyes, nose, lips, tongue, stomach, hands, and feet are. You also know that you have a mind and a heart. But do you know that besides all these you have a spirit within you? First Thessalonians 5:23 says that you have a spirit, a soul, and a body. The spirit is a part distinct from the soul and the body. I have the burden to stir up your heart to pay attention to the fact that you have a part in you that is the spirit. You have a room in your building, yet you do not know where that room is. You have to find the room and open the door, and you will see the heavenly King in it. In your building there is such a wonderful room, a secret chamber, where He is.

We have a spirit. Otherwise, this Bible is a lie. We all believe that the Bible is the Word of God. In this Word we are told clearly that the Lord is with us in our spirit. Even though very few Christians today know that they have a spirit and very few know how to exercise their spirit, the Bible clearly says that the Lord, the living One, the all-inclusive One, the central One, the universal One, is today subjectively in our spirit. Whether we know it or not, this matter is clearly revealed in the Word.

THE TREASURE IN EARTHEN VESSELS

Now let us read 2 Corinthians 4:7: “We have this treasure in earthen vessels that the excellency of the power may be of God and not out of us.” In order to help us realize this verse in a full way, we need to read some verses in the previous context, that is, in chapter 3. Let us read 2 Corinthians 3:6: “Who has also made us sufficient as ministers of a new covenant, ministers not of the letter but of the Spirit; for the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life.” Who is this Spirit who gives life? We saw in 1 Corinthians 15:45b that the life-giving Spirit is Christ Himself.

Now we come to 2 Corinthians 3:17: “The Lord is the Spirit; and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom.” The Spirit mentioned in this verse is the Spirit who gives life mentioned in verse 6, in the earlier part of the same chapter. The Spirit who gives life is Christ Himself. The Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom. Where is the Spirit of the Lord? He is in our spirit.

Verse 18 continues, “But we all with unveiled face, beholding and reflecting like a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being 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. It is this Spirit who gives us life, who frees us, and who transforms us. In these three verses we have three things: life-giving, freeing, and transforming. All these things are related to the wonderful Spirit, who is Christ Himself. Christ is the Spirit who gives life, who frees us, and who transforms us.

Christ as the Spirit has given us life, and now He is waiting for a chance to free us and transform us. How can He do this work? Can He do this by being far, far away from us in heaven? He can do this work only by being in us. By dwelling in us, He works to liberate and transform us. He is liberating us from many bondages and transforming us from the natural life into the image of the Lord.

Second Corinthians 4:7 tells us that “we have this treasure in earthen vessels.” Christ as the wonderful Spirit, the life-giving Spirit, the freeing Spirit, and the transforming Spirit is the treasure in the earthen vessels. We are the earthen vessels, vessels made of clay, the earth. Just as there is a small receiving part in a transistor radio to receive sounds, so also within us we have a receiving organ to receive Christ. The stomach is the receiving organ for us to receive food. Within a human being there is also a human spirit that serves as the very receiving organ for us to receive Christ as the treasure into us. This treasure is *in* the earthen vessels, not outside, upon, or above them. This is very subjective. “We have this treasure in earthen vessels that the excellency of the power may be of God and not out of us.” This means that we have to express God, to manifest God, from within.

THREE THINGS WITH THREE PARTS IN THE BOOK OF HEBREWS

Hebrews 4:9 says, “So then there remains a Sabbath rest for the people of God.” This Sabbath rest is Christ as our rest, typified by the good land of Canaan. Then verse 11 says, “Let us therefore be diligent to enter into that rest lest anyone fall after the same example of disobedience.” There is a rest waiting for us, and we have to be diligent, to labor, to strive, to enter into it lest anyone fall after the same example of disobedience, the example of the disobedient Israel. Indeed, most of them fell in the wilderness and did not enter into the rest—the good land.

Right after verse 11, we have verse 12. Verse 12 begins with *for,* indicating a continuation of what was previously said. “For the word of God is living and operative and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing even to the dividing of soul and spirit and of joints and marrow, and able to discern the thoughts and intentions of the heart.” We need to carefully consider this verse. Why is the dividing of soul and spirit mentioned here? Why is discernment mentioned here? Why are they not mentioned in other places or other books? If we are going to understand a verse, we have to take care of the context. The previous verses tell us that a rest remains for us to enter into and that we have to be diligent, to labor, to strive, to enter into that rest. Then this verse tells us that we have to divide the soul from the spirit, to discern the soul from the spirit. Why? We need to look into the whole book of Hebrews to find the answer.

The Type of the Tabernacle with Three Parts

The book of Hebrews mentions three things with three parts. The first thing is the tabernacle or temple with three parts: the Holy of Holies, the Holy Place, and the outer court. The Ark of God is neither in the outer court nor in the Holy Place but in the Holy of Holies. The Ark of God is the testimony of God, which is Christ Himself. Christ is the testimony and witness of God (Rev. 1:5; 3:14). Christ is neither in the outer court nor in the Holy Place but in the Holy of Holies. The book of Hebrews charges us and encourages us to enter into the Holy of Holies (10:22).

We have to look at the picture of the type. In ancient times when the people of Israel came to worship God, most of them came into the outer court to deal with the altar of burnt offering and the laver. A small number of priests entered into the Holy Place, where the table of the bread of the Presence, the lampstand, and the incense altar were. Therefore, to be in the Holy Place is

much better than to be in the outer court. In the outer court you have only the altar for offering your sacrifices and the laver for washing yourself, but when you get into the Holy Place you have the bread of the Presence, the light, and the incense to please God. That is much better, but it is still not the best. The outer court is good, the Holy Place is better, but the Holy of Holies is the best. In the Holy of Holies was the Ark, which typifies Christ Himself. Only the high priest had the right to enter into the Holy of Holies. But today we all are priests (1 Pet. 2:9; Rev. 1:6; 5:10), and we are charged and encouraged to enter into the Holy of Holies.

Since we are Christians, no doubt we have experienced the altar of burnt offering, typifying the cross, and the laver, typifying the cleansing power of the Holy Spirit, in the outer court. Some of us may have already entered into the Holy Place. We are enjoying Christ here as the bread, the life supply; as the lampstand, the light of life; and as the incense, the acceptance by God in Christ's resurrection. Now we have more experience of Christ. However, this is not the best. We are encouraged to enter into the holiest of all, the Holy of Holies, to enjoy Christ Himself. We need to press on to enjoy not only Christ as life, as light, and as the acceptance to God but also Christ Himself as the Ark in the Holy of Holies.

The Example of the History of Israel in Three Stages

Next, the book of Hebrews also tells us about the type of the good land of Canaan. Here we have to consider the history of the children of Israel, which was of three stages, or three periods, which transpired in three places—in Egypt, in the wilderness, and in the good land of Canaan. If we consider carefully before the Lord, we will realize that Egypt corresponds to the outer court. In that outer court the children of Israel enjoyed Christ as the sin offering and the Passover Lamb by offering Him on the altar. Then they entered into the wilderness, which was better than Egypt. In the wilderness they had freedom and enjoyed the heavenly manna, the living water, and even the tabernacle. The wilderness simply corresponds to the Holy Place. When they were in the wilderness, this means that they were in the Holy Place, not in the outer court nor in the Holy of Holies. They were not in Egypt, but neither were they in the good land of Canaan. They were in a place in between. The wilderness is better than Egypt but inferior to the good land of Canaan.

So here we have three places corresponding to the three sections of the tabernacle. Egypt corresponds to the outer court; the wilderness, to the Holy Place; and the good land of Canaan, to the Holy of Holies. While this book encourages us to enter into the Holy of Holies, it also tells us that we have to enter into the rest of the good land. Thus, we have the Holy of Holies and the good land of Canaan.

Man Being of Three Parts

Finally, Hebrews 4:12 indicates that we are tripartite beings, beings of three parts: the body, the soul, and the spirit. The body corresponds to the outer court and to Egypt. The soul corresponds to the Holy Place and to the wilderness. All the soulish Christians are wandering in the wilderness of their soul. No doubt, they are seeking the Lord, but they take a roundabout way. All the time they are going round and round in the wilderness, in the Holy Place, in the soul. They love the Lord, seek the Lord, and enjoy the Lord as the manna from heaven, yet they are in their soul and do not have the rest. As long as you are wandering, going round and round in your soul, you will not have the rest.

You may be better than the Christians who are in Egypt. They enjoy Christ merely as their Redeemer, the Passover Lamb, yet they are still in Egypt, in the world. They are still very much in the flesh, in the body. You are better than that. You gave up Egypt, crossed the Red Sea, and experienced an aspect of Christ's death. Furthermore, you love the Lord, seek the Lord, and are going on for the Lord. Yes, you are marching on, but you are marching round and round. All the time you are in your soulish life, in your soul. You have not entered into the spirit, which corresponds to the Holy of Holies and to the good land of Canaan. When you enter into the spirit, you are in the Holy of Holies where the Ark is, that is, where Christ is. When you enter into the spirit, you are also in the good land, which is Christ Himself. Since the divine Spirit is in the human spirit, when you touch the human spirit, you touch the divine Spirit, who is Christ Himself.

Therefore, we have these three things with three parts: the tabernacle having three parts, the history of Israel having three parts, and our being having three parts. All these parts correspond to one another.

Now as Christians, we need to check and see where we are today. Are we in the outer court, in the Holy Place, or in the Holy of Holies? Are we in Egypt, in the wilderness, or in the good land? Are we in the flesh, in the soul, or in the spirit, where Christ is, and which is the Holy of Holies to Christ? First, you may say you are in Egypt, in the outer court, or in the fleshly body. Second, you may say you are in the wilderness, in the Holy Place, or in the soul. Third, you may say you are in the good land of Canaan, in the Holy of Holies, or in the spirit. Are you in the first part, second part, or third part? Some may say that they are in the second part. To be in the second part is to be neutral, lukewarm. If you are neutral, or lukewarm, you are neither cold nor hot, and the Lord will spew you out (Rev. 3:15-16). We need to advance. Look at the history of the children of Israel. They displeased the Lord simply by wandering in the wilderness.

We need to see that the goal set before us by the Lord is the Holy of Holies, that is, the spirit. The spirit is the innermost part of a human being. It is where Christ is today. It is the Holy of Holies to Him. Also, to be in our spirit is to be in the good land. In our spirit is Christ's Spirit, so this good land is Christ Himself. Hebrews 10:19 says that we have the boldness for entering the Holy of Holies. We are told, encouraged, and charged to have the boldness to enter into the Holy of Holies.

Some Christian teachers say that the Holy of Holies is in heaven. On the one hand, I admit that the Holy of Holies today is in heaven, where the Lord Jesus is (9:12, 24). However, if the Holy of Holies were only in heaven, how could we enter into it while we are on earth today? On the one hand, the Holy of Holies is in heaven, but on the other hand, it is in our human spirit. The very Christ who is in heaven is now also in our spirit (2 Tim. 4:22). As the heavenly ladder (Gen. 28:12; John 1:51), He joins our spirit to heaven and brings heaven into our spirit. Hence, heaven today is in our spirit. Our regenerated spirit, our recovered spirit, our cleansed spirit, is the Holy of Holies today. Thus, it is easy for us to enter into the Holy of Holies. Wherever we are, there the Holy of Holies is, because it is the innermost part of our being. Hence, whenever we turn to our spirit, we enter into the Holy of Holies.

The problem is that many of us do not know where our spirit is. Once I was living in a house for many months, yet I was not aware that there was a secret room in the house. Likewise, many of us have been Christians for years, yet

we have not discovered that there is a secret chamber within us that is the Holy of Holies, where Christ is today. That secret chamber is our human spirit, where Christ, the living One, the life-giving Spirit, the freeing Spirit, the transforming Spirit, the wonderful Spirit, dwells. We have to realize this.

LEARNING TO EXERCISE OUR SPIRIT TO CONTACT CHRIST

Now that we have discovered the Holy of Holies in our spirit, we have to learn how to enter into it. We have to learn how to get into the spirit, into the Holy of Holies, into the place of rest. This is why in the preceding chapter I stressed the exercise of the spirit through prayer. My intention was not to speak about prayer. My intention was to help you learn to exercise your spirit. If you are going to contact Christ, you have to exercise your spirit. Every contact with Christ is a real prayer in the spirit. You have to learn all the time, day and night, to exercise your spirit to contact Christ. Real prayer is your talking in your spirit with Christ who is living within you.

I have been asked numerous times by people, “Brother Lee, will you tell me how many times a day you pray?” This is really hard to say. Can you count how many times a day you breathe? If you can count your breathing, I am afraid you are not a healthy person. You cannot count the breathing of a healthy person. He is breathing all the time. When I am ministering to the saints, I am praying within. I cannot minister without contacting Christ. Sometimes some sisters came to me and said, “Brother Lee, it is so easy for me to lose my temper. What is the best way for me to control my temper?” I told them not to try to control their temper. Whenever you are going to lose your temper, you had better contact Christ. Then you will gain Christ more.

We should learn to pray always (1 Thes. 5:17), not by the mind but by the spirit. Always have a living talk with Him, the living One who is in your spirit. He is wonderful, all-inclusive, central, and universal. Yet He is so small to you because He is confined within you and even imprisoned within you. He has been put into jail by you and has become so small within you. We have to learn to experience Christ as the central, universal, all-inclusive, subjective, and wonderful One. His bountifulness is inexhaustible.

Do you need comfort? When you contact Him a little bit, you have the comfort. Do you need encouragement? Just contact Him by your spirit, not by

your mind. Sometimes there is no need for you to utter clear words, but you can just say, "O Lord, O Lord." You just groan a little bit in this way, and you will be encouraged. Do you need power? Just contact Him, and you will have the power. He is the mighty One as the power. Do you need gifts? Just contact Him. He is the Giver. You should treasure Him, the Giver, more than His gifts. Do you need healing? Take Him as the Healer, and you will have the healing. Do you need wisdom? Do you need guidance? Just contact Him; then you will have the wisdom and receive the guidance. This is easy. Wherever you can breathe, there you can contact Him. He is so close to you, so available to you, and so handy to you. He is even closer to you than the air because the air is outside of you, but He is within you. Learn to contact Him all the time.

Learn to be always present with the Lord. Never be absent from Him. Whenever troubles, trials, difficulties, burdens, and sorrows come, you have to contact Him immediately. Just a little contact, just a little touch, and you will have the power, the energy, and the strength. He is the universality; He is everything. If you need love, He is love. If you need patience, He is patience. If you need humility, He is humility. Just learn to contact Him in your spirit. This is very simple, but you need to keep practicing it.

DENYING THE SELF TO CONTACT CHRIST

However, there is one more thing I wish to point out to you, that is, the work of the cross. Yes, Christ is wonderful, but if you are going to enjoy Him, you have to deny yourself. You have to renounce yourself. This is a problem. On the one hand, we know that we are hateful in God's eyes, but on the other hand, in our eyes we are really lovable. I believe that in our consideration no other person in the whole world is as good, as nice, as humble, and as patient as we are. We love ourselves and consider ourselves to be better than others. No one considers himself inferior to others. Thus, even though we have become Christians, whatever we do, we will do it by ourselves. When we are humble, we are simply humble by ourselves. When we come to the meetings, we show ourselves to be humble, even though we are not humble at home. That is something by ourselves. How much we need to deny the self so that we may enjoy Christ!

Now let us see the way to deny the self. Whenever we are going to love others, we have to contact Christ. We have to tell Him, "Lord, this I, this ego,

has to be put on the cross. No longer I, but Christ. Lord, I do not want to love by myself but to love by You. May You love through me." We have to learn to apply the cross to ourselves. There are a lot of teachings and writings about the cross, but there is very little application of the cross to one's self. We have to learn to apply the cross of Christ to ourselves daily in a practical way. When I am going to contact a brother, I have to learn to contact my Lord first by telling Him, "Lord, I am so afraid that I am going to contact my brother by myself. Lord, help me to crucify this ego. Help me to apply Your death, Your killing, Your putting to death, to this ugly self, this ugly ego. I would not and I dare not love others and contact others by myself. Even the best thing I am going to do by myself is so sinful. I am afraid of it; I am trembling. Lord, I want to learn to live by You, to love others by You, and to be humble, patient, good, and kind by You. I want to be everything, do everything, speak everything, and express everything by You."

We need to learn the lesson of applying the cross to our soulish life. Our ego, our self, should be buried under the waters of the Jordan, just like the twelve stones were buried in the Jordan when the children of Israel crossed over it (Josh. 4:9). It is no longer we who live, but Christ who lives in us (Gal. 2:20). Just as the old children of Israel died and were buried in the Jordan, so our ego, our natural life, died and was buried through Christ's death on the cross. Now we can enter into the good land of Canaan. If our ego still exists, that means we are still in the wilderness, the land east of the Jordan.

Brothers and sisters, let us learn how to apply the killing death of Christ to ourselves. In all things—in the ministry, in the eldership, in the church administration, in the service of the deacons and deaconesses—we have to learn how to deny the self. If we do this, the good land will be ours, and the riches, the produce of the good land, will be a bountiful surplus. We will have an abundant supply of Christ to bring to His children and the church.

Therefore, two things are important. The first thing is to realize that our spirit today is the Holy of Holies. We have to exercise the spirit and learn how to enter the Holy of Holies all the time. The second thing is to see that we have the ego, the old life, the natural life, the soul, the wilderness. We also have the flesh typified by Amalek in the Old Testament, who opposed God's people (Exo. 17:8-16). Our flesh and our natural life are always hindering and frustrating us, so we have to apply the cross. We need first the spirit and then the cross. We have to apply the cross to our ego, to our natural life, to our

soulish life; then we will be in the good land and in the Holy of Holies. Between the Holy Place and the Holy of Holies there is the veil, which is the flesh, the natural man. This has to be rent. Then we are in the Holy of Holies. When we cross the Jordan River and our self is buried there, we will enter into rest and enjoy the resurrected life in the good land of Canaan. We will enjoy the riches of Christ and God's presence in the Holy of Holies.

REMAINING IN THE NEW TESTAMENT PRINCIPLE

The New Testament principle is that something from within the spirit flows out to reach others. It is not something from outside of us. That is the Old Testament principle. In the Old Testament, the Spirit of Jehovah, the Spirit of the Lord, always came upon certain persons, and they would speak something for the Lord, saying, "Thus says the Lord." "Thus says the Lord" is not the principle of the New Testament but of the Old. Today the enemy, Satan, is trying his best to bring the New Testament believers back to the Old Testament. The Old Testament principle of prophesying is "Thus says the Lord" (Isa. 10:24; 50:1; Jer. 2:2; Ezek. 2:4). But you cannot find this kind of speaking in the New Testament. Of all the Epistles written by the apostles, not one has this tone.

In 1 Corinthians 7:10 Paul says, "To the married I charge, not I but the Lord." This is the New Testament principle of incarnation. The Lord does not speak from the heavens above us, but He speaks within us. Whatever we say, He says with us, through us, by us, and in us. Whatever we do, He does it through us and by us. This is the New Testament principle.

The Catholic Church has brought Christianity back to Judaism by mixing a lot of Old Testament forms with the things of the New Testament. Some Christians are trying their best to bring the New Testament believers back to the Old Testament principle, not in forms but in certain teachings and movements. That is wrong. We must remain in the New Testament principle.

The Lord has come down and entered into us to be one with us. All the Epistles were written in the tone of their writers. "I (Paul) tell you. I (Peter) tell you. I (John) say this. It is not I but Christ. The Lord speaks in me." In the Old Testament the Lord was an objective Lord, doing things in miraculous ways outside His people. But today in the New Testament the Lord is the

subjective One. He does not pay attention so much to the outward manifestation, but He pays His full attention to the inward working.

Paul had a thorn in the flesh (2 Cor. 12:7), which I believe was a kind of physical suffering in his body. He went to the Lord three times, asking the Lord to remove it (v. 8). But the Lord said to him, “My grace is sufficient for you” (v. 9a). The Lord would not remove the thorn outwardly, but He would be the sufficient grace to Paul inwardly. Paul had to learn to experience the Lord Himself as the inward grace, not the Lord’s performing of an outward miracle. This is the New Testament principle.

The subtle enemy, Satan, is trying his best to bring the New Testament believers back to the Old Testament time. Do we want to still be wandering in the wilderness? Of course not. May the Lord be merciful to us. Let us come into the rest in the Holy of Holies, into the good land, into the spirit, and learn to know the Christ who is with us in our spirit. “My grace is sufficient,” but where is the Lord’s grace? Galatians 6:18 says, “The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit, brothers. Amen.” We have to realize that grace is not something outward in miracles, in signs, and in physical or material things. The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ is with and in our spirit. We have to experience His grace in our spirit inwardly, not in something else outwardly. I believe that the apostle Paul is the best example of all the believers. We have to follow him. We have to be the New Testament believers, not the Old Testament people.