

KNOWING, EXPERIENCING, AND LIVING THE ALL-INCLUSIVE CHRIST FOR THE GENUINE CHURCH LIFE

(Friday—Evening Session)

Message Three Taking Christ as Our Person for the Church as the One New Man

JL Hymns: 1179, 1220

Scripture Reading: Gal. 2:20; 4:19; Eph. 3:17a; 4:24; Col. 3:4, 10-11

Gal 2:20	I am crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but it is Christ who lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live in faith, the faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me.
Gal 4:19	My children, with whom I travail again in birth until Christ is formed in you,
Eph 3:17a	That Christ may make His home in your hearts through faith, ...
Eph 4:24	And put on the new man, which was created according to God in righteousness and holiness of the reality.
Col 3:4	When Christ our life is manifested, then you also will be manifested with Him in glory.
Col 3:10	And have put on the new man, which is being renewed unto full knowledge according to the image of Him who created him,
Col 3:11	Where there cannot be Greek and Jew, circumcision and uncircumcision, barbarian, Scythian, slave, free man, but Christ is all and in all.

I. We need to take Christ as our person; this is the highest and richest experience of Christ—Gal. 2:20; Eph. 3:17a:

- Gal 2:20 I am crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but it is Christ who lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live in faith, the faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me.
- Eph 3:17a That Christ may make His home in your hearts through faith, ...
- A. God's intention in His economy is to work Himself into us not only as our life but also as our person—Gal. 4:19.
- Gal 4:19 My children, with whom I travail again in birth until Christ is formed in you,
- B. The Gospel of John reveals that in His human living, the Lord Jesus took the Father as His person and lived by the Father as His person—5:19, 30; 14:10; 6:57:
- John 5:19 Then Jesus answered and said to them, Truly, truly, I say to you, The Son can do nothing from Himself except what He sees the Father doing, for whatever that One does, these things the Son also does in like manner.
- John 5:30 I can do nothing from Myself; as I hear, I judge, and My judgment is just, because I do not seek My own will but the will of Him who sent Me.
- John 14:10 Do you not believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in Me? The words that I say to you I do not speak from Myself, but the Father who abides in Me does His works.
- John 6:57 As the living Father has sent Me and I live because of the Father, so he who eats Me, he also shall live because of Me.
1. Although the Lord as the Son of God was almighty, He declared that He could do nothing from Himself, because instead of living by Himself, He lived by the Father as His person—5:19, 30.
- John 5:19 Then Jesus answered and said to them, Truly, truly, I say to you, The Son can do nothing from Himself except what He sees the Father doing, for whatever that One does, these things the Son also does in like manner.
- John 5:30 I can do nothing from Myself; as I hear, I judge, and My judgment is just, because I do not seek My own will but the will of Him who sent Me.

2. Just as the Lord lived because of the Father by taking the Father as His person, so also we should live because of the Lord by taking Him as our person—6:57.
 John 6:57 As the living Father has sent Me and I live because of the Father, so he who eats Me, he also shall live because of Me.
- C. Our regenerated spirit is the inner man with the indwelling Christ as its person—3:6; Eph. 3:17a:
- John 3:6 That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.
 Eph 3:17a That Christ may make His home in your hearts through faith, ...
1. If we would take Christ as our person, we must see that our regenerated spirit is no longer merely an organ for us to contact God but is our person—v. 17a.
 Eph 3:17a That Christ may make His home in your hearts through faith, ...
 2. In our inner man we have Christ not only as our life but also as our person—1 John 5:11-12; Col. 3:4; Eph. 3:17a.
 1 John 5:11 And this is the testimony, that God gave to us eternal life and this life is in His Son.
 1 John 5:12 He who has the Son has the life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have the life.
 Col 3:4 When Christ our life is manifested, then you also will be manifested with Him in glory.
 Eph 3:17a That Christ may make His home in your hearts through faith, ...
 3. Our inner man consists of our renewed soul as its organ and our regenerated spirit indwelt by Christ, the person, as its life and person—Rom. 12:2; 8:10; Eph. 4:23; 2 Cor. 4:16.
 Rom 12:2 And do not be fashioned according to this age, but be transformed by the renewing of the mind that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and well pleasing and perfect.
 Rom 8:10 But if Christ is in you, though the body is dead because of sin, the spirit is life because of righteousness.
 Eph 4:23 And that you be renewed in the spirit of your mind
 2 Cor 4:16 Therefore we do not lose heart; but though our outer man is decaying, yet our inner man is being renewed day by day.
 4. We should live in our spirit as the inner man by taking Christ as our person—Rom. 8:4; 1 Cor. 6:17; Gal. 2:20; Eph. 3:17a.
 Rom 8:4 That the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us, who do not walk according to the flesh but according to the spirit.
 1 Cor 6:17 But he who is joined to the Lord is one spirit.
 Gal 2:20 I am crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but it is Christ who lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live in faith, the faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me.
 Eph 3:17a That Christ may make His home in your hearts through faith, ...
- D. We need to deny our former person, our soul, and take Christ in our spirit as our new person—Gal. 2:20:
- Gal 2:20 I am crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but it is Christ who lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live in faith, the faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me.
1. According to Galatians 2:20, as regenerated believers we have both the “I,” our former person who has been crucified, and Christ Himself, our new person.
 Gal 2:20 I am crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but it is Christ who lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live in faith, the faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me.
 2. Our former person has been crucified with Christ, and Christ is living in us as our new person; consequently, it will be no longer we who live but Christ who lives in us—Rom. 6:6; Gal. 2:20.
 Rom 6:6 Knowing this, that our old man has been crucified with Him in order that the body of sin might be annulled, that we should no longer serve sin as slaves;

- Gal 2:20 I am crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but it is Christ who lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live in faith, the faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me.
3. To take Christ as our person is not to force ourselves to submit to Him but to live according to His preferences because of our love for Him—1 John 4:19.
1 John 4:19 We love because He first loved us.
- E. What is first is not taking Christ as our life but taking Christ as our person:
1. If we take Christ as our person, we will surely take Him as our life—5:11-12; Col. 3:4.
1 John 5:11 And this is the testimony, that God gave to us eternal life and this life is in His Son.
1 John 5:12 He who has the Son has the life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have the life.
Col 3:4 When Christ our life is manifested, then you also will be manifested with Him in glory.
2. If we take Christ as our person, we will be able to grow and mature—2:19; Eph. 3:17a; 4:13, 15.
Col 2:19 And not 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.
Eph 3:17a That Christ may make His home in your hearts through faith, ...
Eph 4:13 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,
Eph 4:15 But holding to truth in love, we may grow up into Him in all things, who is the Head, Christ,
- F. Christ desires to make His home in our hearts—3:17a:
Eph 3:17a That Christ may make His home in your hearts through faith, ...
1. We take Christ as our person by allowing Him to make His home in our heart—v. 17a.
Eph 3:17a That Christ may make His home in your hearts through faith, ...
2. When Christ makes His home in our heart, we will take Him as our person in an adequate way; His mind will become our mind, His emotion will become our emotion, and His will will become our will—1 Cor. 2:16; Phil. 2:5.
1 Cor 2:16 For who has known the mind of the Lord and will instruct Him? But we have the mind of Christ.
Phil 2:5 Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus,
- G. The apostle Paul is a pattern to us of taking Christ as our person—1 Tim. 1:16; Gal. 1:16a; 2:20; 4:19; Eph. 3:17a; Phil. 1:8; 2:5; 2 Cor. 2:10.
1 Tim 1:16 But because of this I was shown mercy, that in me, the foremost, Jesus Christ might display all His long-suffering for a pattern to those who are to believe on Him unto eternal life.
Gal 1:16a To reveal His Son in me that I might announce Him as the gospel among the Gentiles, ...
Gal 2:20 I am crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but it is Christ who lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live in faith, the faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me.
Gal 4:19 My children, with whom I travail again in birth until Christ is formed in you,
Eph 3:17a That Christ may make His home in your hearts through faith, ...
Phil 1:8 For God is my witness how I long after you all in the inward parts of Christ Jesus.
Phil 2:5 Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus,
2 Cor 2:10 But whom you forgive anything, I also forgive; for also what I have forgiven, if I have forgiven anything, it is for your sake in the person of Christ;

II. We need to take Christ as our person for the church as the one new man— Eph. 3:17a; 4:24; Col. 3:4, 10-11:

- Eph 3:17a That Christ may make His home in your hearts through faith, ...
Eph 4:24 And put on the new man, which was created according to God in righteousness and holiness of the reality.
Col 3:4 When Christ our life is manifested, then you also will be manifested with Him in glory.

- Col 3:10 And have put on the new man, which is being renewed unto full knowledge according to the image of Him who created him,
- Col 3:11 Where there cannot be Greek and Jew, circumcision and uncircumcision, barbarian, Scythian, slave, free man, but Christ is all and in all.
- A. The church, the Body of Christ, is the one new man to accomplish God's eternal purpose—Eph. 1:9, 11; 3:9; Rom. 8:29; 2 Tim. 1:9; Eph. 2:15-16; 4:22-24.
- Eph 1:9 Making known to us the mystery of His will according to His good pleasure, which He purposed in Himself,
- Eph 1:11 In whom also we were designated as an inheritance, having been predestinated according to the purpose of the One who works all things according to the counsel of His will,
- Eph 3:9 And to enlighten all that they may see what the economy of the mystery is, which throughout the ages has been hidden in God, who created all things,
- Rom 8:29 Because those whom He foreknew, He also predestinated to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the Firstborn among many brothers;
- 2 Tim 1:9 Who has saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works but according to His own purpose and grace, which was given to us in Christ Jesus before the times of the ages
- Eph 2:15 Abolishing in His flesh the law of the commandments in ordinances, that He might create the two in Himself into one new man, so making peace,
- Eph 2:16 And might reconcile both in one Body to God through the cross, having slain the enmity by it.
- Eph 4:22 That you put off, as regards your former manner of life, the old man, which is being corrupted according to the lusts of the deceit,
- Eph 4:23 And that you be renewed in the spirit of your mind
- Eph 4:24 And put on the new man, which was created according to God in righteousness and holiness of the reality.
- B. The emphasis on the church being the Body of Christ is on life, whereas the emphasis on the church being the one new man is on the person.
- C. The Bible reveals that the one new man is a corporate, universal man—Eph. 2:15; 4:24; Col. 3:10-11:
- Eph 2:15 Abolishing in His flesh the law of the commandments in ordinances, that He might create the two in Himself into one new man, so making peace,
- Eph 4:24 And put on the new man, which was created according to God in righteousness and holiness of the reality.
- Col 3:10 And have put on the new man, which is being renewed unto full knowledge according to the image of Him who created him,
- Col 3:11 Where there cannot be Greek and Jew, circumcision and uncircumcision, barbarian, Scythian, slave, free man, but Christ is all and in all.
1. We, the believers in Christ, are all one with Christ to be the new man; thus, we all are parts, components, of the corporate one new man—Eph. 4:24.
Eph 4:24 And put on the new man, which was created according to God in righteousness and holiness of the reality.
 2. The one new man is a corporate God-man, the aggregate of all the God-men; when we put all the God-men together, we have the one new man—Col. 3:10-11.
Col 3:10 And have put on the new man, which is being renewed unto full knowledge according to the image of Him who created him,
Col 3:11 Where there cannot be Greek and Jew, circumcision and uncircumcision, barbarian, Scythian, slave, free man, but Christ is all and in all.
- D. Christ is both the life of the Body and the person of the new man—v. 4; Eph. 3:17a:
- Col 3:4 When Christ our life is manifested, then you also will be manifested with Him in glory.
- Eph 3:17a That Christ may make His home in your hearts through faith, ...
1. In the one new man the natural man has no place; we all have no place in the new man, for here Christ is all and in all—Col. 3:10-11.
Col 3:10 And have put on the new man, which is being renewed unto full knowledge according to the image of Him who created him,

- Col 3:11 Where there cannot be Greek and Jew, circumcision and uncircumcision, barbarian, Scythian, slave, free man, but Christ is all and in all.
2. Christ is in all of us, so we all have only one person—1:27; Eph. 3:17a.
Col 1:27 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,
Eph 3:17a That Christ may make His home in your hearts through faith, ...
3. What God cares for is whether or not we take Christ as our person— John 6:57b; Phil. 1:21a; Col. 3:4; Eph. 3:17a.
John 6:57b ... so he who eats Me, he also shall live because of Me.
Phil 1:21a For to me, to live is Christ ...
Col 3:4 When Christ our life is manifested, then you also will be manifested with Him in glory.
Eph 3:17a That Christ may make His home in your hearts through faith, ...
- E. For the new man we all need to take Christ as our person—2:15; 3:17a:
Eph 2:15 Abolishing in His flesh the law of the commandments in ordinances, that He might create the two in Himself into one new man, so making peace,
Eph 3:17a That Christ may make His home in your hearts through faith, ...
1. In the one new man, there is only one person—Christ—v. 17a; 4:24.
Eph 3:17a That Christ may make His home in your hearts through faith, ...
Eph 4:24 And put on the new man, which was created according to God in righteousness and holiness of the reality.
2. The new man is not about members (Rom. 12:4-5) but about the person; therefore, we all need to ask, “Who is my person—is it I or the Lord Jesus?”
Rom 12:4 For just as in one body we have many members, and all the members do not have the same function,
Rom 12:5 So we who are many are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another.
- F. For the practical existence of the one new man, the total person of the old man must be put away, and we must live by our new person, Christ—Rom. 6:6; Gal. 2:20; Eph. 4:22, 24; 3:17a:
Rom 6:6 Knowing this, that our old man has been crucified with Him in order that the body of sin might be annulled, that we should no longer serve sin as slaves;
Gal 2:20 I am crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but it is Christ who lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live in faith, the faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me.
Eph 4:22 That you put off, as regards your former manner of life, the old man, which is being corrupted according to the lusts of the deceit,
Eph 4:24 And put on the new man, which was created according to God in righteousness and holiness of the reality.
Eph 3:17a That Christ may make His home in your hearts through faith, ...
1. Realizing that our former person has been crucified, we should no longer live in that person, by that person, and with that person—Rom. 6:6.
Rom 6:6 Knowing this, that our old man has been crucified with Him in order that the body of sin might be annulled, that we should no longer serve sin as slaves;
2. Our standard for being a Christian should not be right or wrong, good or bad, but a person; the crucial matter is not *what* we are doing but *who* is doing it.
- G. When we live our daily life by taking Christ as our person, especially in making decisions, our living will be the living of the new man— John 4:34; 5:30; 6:38; 17:4; Rom. 15:32; James 4:13-15:
John 4:34 Jesus said to them, My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me and to finish His work.
John 5:30 I can do nothing from Myself; as I hear, I judge, and My judgment is just, because I do not seek My own will but the will of Him who sent Me.
John 6:38 For I have come down from heaven not to do My own will but the will of Him who sent Me.
John 17:4 I have glorified You on earth, finishing the work which You have given Me to do.

- Rom 15:32 So that coming to you in joy through the will of God, I may refresh myself and rest with you.
- James 4:13 Come now, you who say, Today or tomorrow we will go into this or that city and spend a year there and do business and make a profit;
- James 4:14 Whereas you do not know the matter of tomorrow, what your life will be; for you are a vapor, which appears for a little while and then disappears.
- James 4:15 Instead you ought to say, If the Lord wills, we will both live and do this or that.
1. In the new man we take Christ as our person to make plans and to decide how we should live—Rom. 15:32.
Rom 15:32 So that coming to you in joy through the will of God, I may refresh myself and rest with you.
 2. If we take Christ as our person, we will not decide anything in our life by ourselves, for we all are a part of the one new man—Philem. 14.
Philem 14 But without your mind I did not want to do anything, that your goodness would not be as of necessity, but voluntary.
- H. If we are unveiled and enlightened, we will see that today in the Lord's recovery we need to rise up together to take Christ as our person for the one new man—Eph. 3:17a; 4:24, 11-13:
- Eph 3:17a That Christ may make His home in your hearts through faith, ...
- Eph 4:24 And put on the new man, which was created according to God in righteousness and holiness of the reality.
- Eph 4:11 And He Himself gave some as apostles and some as prophets and some as evangelists and some as shepherds and teachers,
- Eph 4:12 For the perfecting of the saints unto the work of the ministry, unto the building up of the Body of Christ,
- Eph 4:13 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,
1. The saints in every locality need to be perfected so that they may enter into a situation where they take Christ as their person for the one new man— vv. 11-13.
Eph 4:11 And He Himself gave some as apostles and some as prophets and some as evangelists and some as shepherds and teachers,
Eph 4:12 For the perfecting of the saints unto the work of the ministry, unto the building up of the Body of Christ,
Eph 4:13 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,
 2. If all the saints in the Lord's recovery take Christ as their person, then spontaneously, we all will be the one new man—3:17a; 4:24.
Eph 3:17a That Christ may make His home in your hearts through faith, ...
Eph 4:24 And put on the new man, which was created according to God in righteousness and holiness of the reality.
 3. When the one new man is perfected, that will be the time for the Lord's coming, and the perfected new man will be the bride—Rev. 19:7.
Rev 19:7 Let us rejoice and exult, and let us give the glory to Him, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and His wife has made herself ready.

Excerpts from the Ministry:

TAKING CHRIST AS OUR PERSON FOR THE PROPER CHURCH LIFE

Scripture Reading: Eph. 1:22-23; 3:17-18; Col. 3:10-11

THE CHURCH BEING THE BODY OF CHRIST AND THE NEW MAN

Ephesians 1:22-23 says that the church is the Body of Christ, His fullness, and 2:15-16 reveals that the church is the new man. Many Christians know that the church is the Body of Christ, but few realize that the church is also the new man. In verse 15 Paul says that Christ created "the two," the Jews

and the Gentiles, “in Himself into one new man.” Since the new man was created of two peoples, the Jews and the Gentiles, the new man is not individual but corporate. Furthermore, after speaking of “one new man” in verse 15, Paul goes on to speak of “one Body” in verse 16. Thus, the new man is the Body of Christ.

However, we need to see the distinction between the Body of Christ and the new man. A body is a matter of life, whereas a man involves both a life and a person. A tree has life, but it does not have a person. In contrast, a man has not only a life but also a person. Likewise, the Body of Christ needs Christ as its life, and the new man needs Christ as its person. We need to see that the church is not only the Body but also the new man; therefore, the church needs Christ not only as its life but also as its person.

OUR REGENERATED SPIRIT BECOMING OUR PERSON

In the book of Ephesians, the apostle Paul offered two great prayers. These two prayers are related to each other. In his first prayer, recorded in 1:17-23, he prayed that the Father would grant us a spirit of wisdom and revelation, which is our regenerated human spirit, the proper organ for substantiating God and spiritual things. The church is not physical but spiritual. Hence, in order for us to see the church, we should exercise our spirit. Just as we must use the proper organs to see, hear, and smell, so also we must use the right organ—our spirit—in order to substantiate the church.

When we turn to our spirit, we meet with Christ. As we fellowship with Christ in our spirit, we realize, experience, and enjoy the power that God caused to operate in Christ—the power that raised Christ from the dead, seated Him at the right hand of God, subjected all things under His feet, and gave Him to be Head over all things to the church (vv. 19-22). As a result, we are liberated from many negative things, and the issue of this liberation is the reality of the church.

If we are spiritually dead and do not experience the power that God caused to operate in Christ, we will be unable to have the reality of the church as the Body of Christ. But if we experience and enjoy the power of God that releases us from all that binds us, we will realize the church as the Body of Christ, for the Body comes out of the experience and enjoyment of the power of God. However, realizing the church as the Body is only the beginning of the church life. In order for us to be grounded in the church life, we need to see that the church is not only the Body of Christ but also the new man. For this reason, in his first prayer in Ephesians, Paul prayed that we would have a spirit of wisdom and revelation (v. 17), and in his second prayer he prayed that we would be strengthened into our inner man (3:16). In his first prayer our spirit is revealed as an organ; in his second prayer our spirit is revealed as a person, our inner man.

First Thessalonians 5:23 says, “May your spirit and soul and body be preserved.” This verse reveals that man is of three parts: spirit, soul, and body. Our being, that is, our self or our person, is in the soul. In Matthew 16:26 the Lord Jesus said, “What shall a man be profited if he gains the whole world, but forfeits his soul-life?” The Greek word translated “soul-life” in this verse is *psuche*, which is translated “life” in other portions of the New Testament (Luke 12:22-23; John 12:25). Because our being, or person, is in our soul, a human being is a soul. Our soul is our self, our being, and our person. In the Bible, people are often referred to as souls. For example, Acts 7:14 says, “Joseph sent word and called for Jacob his father and all his family, seventy-five souls in all.” Genesis 2:7 says, “Man became a living soul.” This proves that our person, our being, is in our soul.

Man in his created state has two organs: a body and a spirit. Our body is not our being, our person; it is only an organ. When a human being dies, his person leaves his body. Although his body remains, his person is gone. Hence, the body is an organ, not a person. Like the body, the spirit also is an organ. Whereas the body is an outward organ to contact the physical world, the spirit is an inward organ to contact God and the spiritual realm. Man in his created state has a body as his outward organ, a spirit as his inward organ, and a soul as his person.

However, we the believers differ from man in his created state. Through God’s salvation we have

been regenerated, re-created, and remade by God. When we first opened our being to the Lord and called upon His name, He entered into our spirit, and once He enters into someone's spirit, He will abide forever in his spirit to be his life. Now that we have the Lord as our life in our spirit, our spirit is no longer merely an organ but has become a person, a man. For this reason, the Bible speaks of our outer man and our inner man (2 Cor. 4:16; 1 Pet. 3:4). The outer man is the soul, and the inner man is the regenerated spirit, which has God's life as its life. Before our regeneration, our spirit was only an organ because it did not have the life of God. But through regeneration, Christ as life entered into our spirit, and our spirit became our inner man, our person. On the one hand, our spirit is an organ to contact God in the spiritual realm; on the other hand, our spirit is our inner man.

There are two men within us, the outer man and the inner man. Before we were saved, we only had an outer man, but now after being saved, we have another man living in us—the inner man. There are many struggles between these two men in our daily life. This is because the outer man desires to do things that the inner man opposes. For example, while the outer man in us may desire to engage in a particular kind of worldly entertainment, the inner man forbids us from doing it. After being saved, we have two men living in us. We should no longer live by our soul, the outer man, but by our spirit, the inner man.

TAKING CHRIST AS OUR PERSON

We need to deny our soul, our former person, and take Christ in our spirit as our new person. In Galatians 2:20 Paul says, "I am crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but it is Christ who lives in me." According to this verse, as regenerated believers, we have both the "I," our former person who has been crucified (Rom. 6:6), and Christ Himself, our new person. Our former person has been crucified with Christ, and Christ is living in us as our new person. It is no longer "I," the old person, but Christ, the new person. Hence, we need to take Christ not only as our life but also as our person. As we have pointed out, our regenerated spirit is our inner man, and Christ is the person of this inner man. Our former person, our self, is in our soul, but our new person, Christ, is in our spirit. Therefore, we need to deny our self, the old person, and take Christ as our new person.

To take Christ as our person is not to force ourselves to submit to Him but to live according to His preference because of our love for Him. For example, a sister may want to wear a certain dress, yet upon realizing that Christ wants her to wear another dress, she wears that dress in order to please Him. In doing so, she is denying her old person and taking Christ as her new person because she loves Him.

The Gospel of John reveals that in His human living, the Lord Jesus took the Father as His person. In 5:19 the Lord said, "The Son can do nothing from Himself except what He sees the Father doing, for whatever that One does, these things the Son also does in like manner," and in verse 30 He said, "I can do nothing from Myself; as I hear, I judge." The Father was the Lord's person, and He lived by the Father as His person. Although the Lord as the Son of God was almighty, He declared that He could do nothing from Himself, because instead of living by Himself, He lived by the Father as His person. In 14:10 the Lord said, "The words that I say to you I do not speak from Myself, but the Father who abides in Me does His works." The Lord spoke every word by taking the Father as His person. In 6:57 the Lord said, "As the living Father has sent Me and I live because of the Father, so he who eats Me, he also shall live because of Me." Just as the Lord lived because of the Father by taking the Father as His person, so also we should live because of the Lord by taking Him as our person.

CHRIST MAKING HIS HOME IN OUR HEART

According to Ephesians 1, we need to experience the power that God caused to operate in Christ, and according to Ephesians 3, we need to take Christ as our person. The latter is revealed in verse 17, which says, "That Christ may make His home in your hearts." Just as a person desires a home, Christ desires to make His home in our hearts. The Christ who desires to make His home in our hearts is a person. For Christ to make His home in our hearts is for Him to settle down in us. For example, you

may be invited to a brother's house, but you are unable to make your home there, because you are there as a guest. Unless that brother empties his house and hands over its ownership to you, you do not have the liberty or the right to fully settle down there. In the same principle, Christ is in us, but He may not be able to make His home in us because He is merely a guest in our heart, not the host; our heart may be our home, not His home.

The New Testament reveals that Christ is in our spirit (Gal. 6:18; Phil. 4:23; Philem. 25). Specifically, 2 Timothy 4:22 says, "The Lord be with your spirit." Yet Ephesians 3 says that Christ desires to make His home in our heart. Our heart is composed of the conscience, the leading part of our spirit, and all the parts of our soul—our mind, emotion, and will. Although Christ is in our spirit, He may not have spread into all the parts of our heart, because we have not given Him the full liberty to spread into our mind, emotion, and will. As a result, we imprison Christ in our spirit. When we set our mind on the things of the flesh (Rom. 8:5), the Lord wants to redirect our thoughts. We, however, may tell Him to stay in our spirit and not to come into our mind to bother us. For example, we may go shopping according to our natural mind, not caring for Christ. If Christ tells us not to buy certain items, we may limit Him to our spirit and not allow Him to enter into our mind. If we do not allow Christ to touch our mind, emotion, and will, although He is in our spirit, He will not be able to make His home in our heart.

BEING STRENGTHENED INTO OUR INNER MAN

In order to let Christ settle down in us, we need to be strengthened into our inner man, our regenerated spirit. In the hearts of many believers, Christ has made His home only to a small extent because those believers are strong in their mind, emotion, and will but weak in their spirit. For example, a believer may be so strong in his will that if he makes a certain decision, he will not allow Christ to change that decision. He may also be very weak in his spirit; therefore, Christ is unable to spread within him and is confined to his spirit. In order for us to be strengthened into our inner man, we need to call on the name of the Lord, confess our sins, and ask Him to forgive us of our failures and cleanse us with His precious blood (1 John 1:7, 9). The more we call on the name of the Lord, the more we will be filled with Him and the more we will be strengthened into our inner man (Rom. 10:12-13). When we are strengthened into our inner man, the Lord will spread from our spirit into every part of our heart, saturating our mind, filling our emotion, and occupying our will with Himself. As a result, He will take over our entire inner being and fully settle down in us and thus make His home in our heart.

When Christ makes His home in our heart, we will take Him as our person in an adequate way. His mind will become our mind, His emotion will become our emotion, and His will will become our will. Christ Himself will become our mind, emotion, and will; He will become everything to us and will be our person in reality. Then our living will be the issue of Christ working within us. Consequently, it will no longer be we who live but Christ who lives in us (Gal. 2:20).

LIVING BY CHRIST FOR THE PROPER CHURCH LIFE

A great many Christians fail to practice the proper church life not only because they are defeated by negative things but also because they fail to take Christ as their person. We may try to live for Christ, but we may not live by Him as our person. No matter how much we profess to love Christ or live for Him, unless we take Him as our person, we cannot have the proper church life.

Colossians 3:10 and 11 say that in the new man "there cannot be Greek and Jew, circumcision and uncircumcision, barbarian, Scythian, slave, free man, but Christ is all and in all." In the church as the one new man, there cannot be any natural person, for in the new man there is only one person—Christ. If we all live by our self, when we come together, there will be many natural persons. However, if we all deny our soul, our former person—no matter what our race or nationality may be—and take Christ as our person instead, we will have the reality of the church as the new man. In a local church

there may be many people, but there should be no natural persons; there should be only one person—Christ. This is because the church is the new man, where Christ is the unique person. Christ is not only the Head of the Body but also the person of the new man. In the new man there cannot be American, Chinese, British, or French, but Christ is all and in all. Only by taking Christ as our life and person can we have the proper church life.

As the believers take Christ as their person, Christ will make His home in their hearts and settle down in them, and they will be grounded in the church (Eph. 3:17). As a result, they will have the proper church life; that is, they will live in the reality of the church, and the church will be their living. Unless Christ settles down in them, they cannot be grounded in the church.

In Ephesians 1 we see our entering into the church, and in Ephesians 3 we see our being grounded in the church. When we experience the power that God caused to operate in Christ, we enter into the church. However, at that stage our experience of the church may not be stable. In other words, we may come into the church life but also leave the church life. However, if we take Christ as our person, thereby allowing Christ to make His home in our heart, we will be grounded in the church, and the church will become our living. Consequently, we will have the proper church life. At that point we will experience the reality of Ephesians 3:21, which says, “To Him be the glory in the church.” God will be glorified when we experience the power that God caused to operate in Christ, enjoy Christ as our life, and take Him as our person. This is the real church life.

To be delivered from negative things, we need to experience the power that God caused to operate in Christ. In order that He may make His home in our heart, we need to take Christ as our person. The reality of the church life is in Christ, the unique person of the new man. As we live in the reality of the church life, Christ will settle down in our heart, and we will be grounded in the church. Then God will be glorified in the church. (*The Collected Works of Witness Lee, 1971, vol. 1, pp. 273-279*)