

HWMR: EXPERIENCING, ENJOYING, AND EXPRESSING CHRIST (2) (Week 19)

Scripture Reading: Gal. 1:15-16; 2:20; 3:29; 4:5, 19; Eph. 3:17a; 2 Cor. 3:18; Rom. 8:29; 12:2a

The One Who Is Formed in the Believers

- Gal 1:15 But when it pleased God, who set me apart from my mother's womb and called me through His grace,
- Gal 1:16 To reveal His Son in me that I might announce Him as the gospel among the Gentiles, immediately I did not confer with flesh and blood,
- 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 3:29 And if you are of Christ, then you are Abraham's seed, heirs according to promise.
- Gal 4:5 That He might redeem those under law that we might receive the sonship.
- 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, ...
- 2 Cor 3:18 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.
- 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;
- Rom 12:2a And do not be fashioned according to this age, but be transformed by the renewing of the mind...

Day 1

Galatians 1:15-16 - But when it pleased God, who set me apart from my mother's womb and called me through His grace, To reveal His Son in me that I might announce Him as the gospel among the Gentiles, immediately I did not confer with flesh and blood,

I. The New Testament reveals that Christ is **deeply related to our inner being and desires to have a **subjective relationship** with us—Gal. 1:15-16; 2:20:**

- A. God **revealed** His Son to Paul and to us—1:15-16:
1. The word *reveal* in Galatians 1:16 is crucial and of utmost importance.
 2. To reveal is to **make known** (divulge) or to **show plainly** (display) something that has been kept secret.
 3. In the New Testament *revealed* is used in a profound manner **related to our spirit**—Rom. 1:17; 8:18; 1 Cor. 2:10; 1 Pet. 1:5; 5:1.
 4. God's revealing of His Son to us is **in us**; it is not outward but **inward**, not by outward vision but an **inward seeing**.
 5. God's heart's desire is to **reveal** His Son in us so that we may **know** Him, **receive** Him as our life (John 17:3; 3:16), and **become sons of God** (1:12; Gal. 4:5-6).

Christ, a living person, is the focus of Paul's gospel. Hence, the book of Galatians is emphatically Christ-centered. Christ was **crucified** to redeem us out of the curse of the law and rescue us out of the present evil religious course of the world. Christ was **resurrected** from the dead that He might live in us. We were **baptized** into Christ, being identified with Him, and we have put on Christ, clothing ourselves with Him; thus, we are in Christ and have become of Him. Christ has been **revealed** in us, He is now **living** in us, and He will be **formed** in us. To Christ the law has conducted us, and in Christ we are all sons of God. In Christ we inherit God's promised blessing and enjoy the all-inclusive Spirit. **In Christ we all are one.** We should not be deprived of all profit from Christ and thus be separated, severed, from Him. We need Christ to supply us with grace in our spirit that we may live Him. God's desire is that His chosen people receive His Son into them; this is the gospel. (*Conclusion of the New Testament, Chapter 324*)

Day 2

Galatians 2:19-20 - For I through law have died to law that I might live to God. 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 of the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me.

How can we die to law in order to live to God? Galatians 2:19 indicates that we have already died to law. According to your experience, have you actually died to law, or is this simply a matter of doctrine to you? Furthermore, how can we live to God? If we would answer these questions, we must know the truth, the reality, of the gospel. If we are not actually **organically united with Christ** but are in ourselves, then we are neither dead to law nor are we living to God. Apart from the organic union with Christ, we cannot live to God. On the contrary, we shall be alive to many things other than God.

The concept of organic union is implied in Romans 7. In this chapter Paul uses the illustration of married life. **Marriage is a union of life.** In this union the wife is one with the husband, and the husband is one with the wife. In Romans 7:4 Paul speaks of our being married to Christ: "*So that, my brothers, you also have been made dead to the law through the body of Christ, that you might marry another, even Him Who has been raised from among the dead.*" According to this verse, **we have been married to the resurrected Christ.** Between Him as the Bridegroom and us as the Bride, there is a wonderful union. We are one with Him in person, name, life, and existence. This shows that our Christian life is a life of **organic oneness with Christ.**

In principle, in preaching the gospel we should be like the top salesmen, who are able to present something precious in a way that others will appreciate it. We need the proper salesmanship. The Lord Jesus is infinitely precious, but **our presentation of Him is not always adequate.** Since we do not know how to present the loveliness of the Lord Jesus in a proper way, it is **difficult** for those who listen to our gospel preaching to have faith in Him. But if we **present Him adequately**, others will be infused with His preciousness, and they will spontaneously **appreciate** Him. This appreciation will become their faith which will operate in them to unite them with the Lord Jesus organically. Here in this organic union we are dead to the law and alive to God. (*Life-Study of Galatians, Message 9*)

Day 3

- Romans 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;
- John 15:5** - I am the vine; you are the branches. He who abides in Me and I in him, he bears much fruit; for apart from Me you can do nothing.

- B. In Galatians 2:20 we see the most basic truth of God's economy—no longer I but **Christ living in me**:
1. When Christ was crucified according to God's economy, **we were included in Him**; this is an accomplished fact—Rom. 6:6; Gal. 2:20; 6:14.
 2. We have died to the law and live to God through the **organic union** with Christ—John 15:4-5; 1 Cor. 6:17; Rom. 12:4-5; 1 Thes. 1:1.
 3. The "I" in Galatians 2:20 refers not only to Paul but to **each one of us**, and Paul's testimony is also our testimony:
 - a. "I am crucified **with Christ**"—v. 20a.
 - b. "It is no longer I who live, but it is **Christ who lives in me**"—v. 20b.
 - c. "The life which I now live in the flesh I **live in faith**, the faith of the **Son of God**"—v. 20c.
 - d. "The Son of God, who **loved me and gave Himself up for me**"—v. 20d.
 - e. "What from Thee can separate me? / Thou wilt love me to the end! / Oh! Thy love is so prevailing, / E'en Thyself with me to blend! / We two one will be forever; / I am Thine and Thou art mine! / This will be my testimony: / In Thy love we'll ever twine!"—*Hymns*, #152, stanza 4.

In 3:1 Paul says, "*O foolish Galatians, who has bewitched you, before whose eyes Jesus Christ was openly portrayed crucified?*" The crucifixion of Christ indicates that all the requirements of the law have been **fulfilled by the death of Christ**, and that Christ through His death has released His life that it may be imparted into us in His resurrection to free us from bondage under the law. This was fully portrayed before the eyes of the Galatians in the word of the gospel. How could they neglect this and be bewitched, drifting back to the law? How foolish!

Before the eyes of the Galatians, Christ had openly been portrayed crucified. Paul wondered how the Galatian believers could forget such a portrait. Those who go back to the law have nothing to do with such a crucified Christ. If God wants us to keep the law and if we are able to keep it, then there was no need for Christ to be crucified. For this reason, Paul declares in 2:21, "*If righteousness is through law, then Christ has died for nothing.*" Galatians 3:1 is the direct continuation of 2:21. Christ certainly was not crucified without cause. On the contrary, He was crucified for a very great cause. In fact, the cross is the center of God's operation in His economy, just as Christ Himself is the center of God's economy. In the carrying out of God's economy, the cross is the center. Without Christ, God's economy has no center, and without the cross of Christ the operation of God's economy is without a center. Thus, the carrying out of God's economy wholly depends on the **cross of Christ**. The cross is the center of God's operation in the universe to carry out His economy.

This is the reason that in such a short book Paul many times refers to the cross. He constantly brings us back to the cross. In 2:21 Paul points out that **Christ was not crucified for nothing**. Then in 3:1 he goes on to remind the Galatians that the crucifixion of Christ was openly portrayed before their eyes. When Paul came to Galatia, he **preached a crucified Christ**. In order to be righteous, we need such a Christ. If we could have righteousness through keeping the law, then we would not need a crucified Christ. If this had been the case, there would have been no reason for Christ to die. (*Life Study of Galatians, Message 12*)

Day 4

Galatians 4:19 - My children, with whom I travail again in birth until Christ is formed in you,

Philippians 2:5 - Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus,

II. Christ was crucified (Gal. 3:1) to redeem us out of the curse of the law (v. 13) and rescue us out of the evil religious course of the world (1:4), and He was resurrected from the dead so that He might live in us (2:20) and be formed in us at our maturity (4:19).

III. In Galatians 4:19 Christ is presented as the One who is formed in the believers:

- A. Christ, a living person, is the focus of Paul's gospel—1:16; Rom. 1:1, 3-4.
- B. Paul's preaching was to bring forth Christ, the Son of the living God, in the believers—Gal. 1:15-16; 2:20; 4:19.
- C. Christ is now living in us, and He will be formed in us—v. 19.
- D. Paul was travailing so that Christ might be formed in the believers for their full sonship—vv. 5, 19.

IV. According to Paul's usage in the New Testament, the word *form* refers to the outward expression of the inner being (Phil. 2:6); what we are is expressed in our form, that is, the outward expression of our inner being.

V. To have Christ formed in us is to have Christ fully grown in us—Gal. 4:19; Eph. 4:13-16:

- A. First, Christ was born into us at the time we repented and believed into Him, then He lives in us in our Christian life (Gal. 2:20), and finally, He will be formed in us at our maturity.

Day 5

2 Corinthians 3:18 - 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.

Romans 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;

- B. To have Christ formed in us is to allow Him to permeate our whole being and saturate our inward parts—4:19; Eph. 3:17a; Col. 3:4, 10-11:
 - 1. When Christ occupies our inner being in this way, He is formed in us—Psa. 51:6.
 - 2. We need to allow Christ to saturate every part of our inner being; He must occupy us and saturate our mind, emotion, and will—Phil. 2:5; Eph. 3:17a.
 - 3. To have Christ possess our entire being is to have Him formed in us—Gal. 4:19.
- C. For Christ to make His home in our hearts, He needs to be able to settle down within us, and this requires that we allow Christ to make His home in all the parts of our inner being; this is to have Christ formed in us—Eph. 3:17a.

- D. To have Christ formed in us is to **allow** the all-inclusive Spirit to **occupy every part of our inner being**—Gal. 4:19; 3:2-3, 14:
 - 1. Christ should **not only** spread into our mind, emotion, and will; He should **actually** become our mind, emotion, and will—Phil. 2:5; 1 Cor. 2:16.
 - 2. Everything other than Christ must diminish, and **Christ must become everything** to us in our experience; this is to have Christ formed in us.
- E. To have Christ formed in us is to have Christ **mingled with our whole being**—6:17:
 - 1. In every part of our being, Christ should be mingled with us—Eph. 4:23.
 - 2. Christ must permeate us and saturate us until He is **completely blended** with us; then He will be formed in us—3:17a; Gal. 4:19.
- F. Paul's word about Christ being formed in the believers implies that we are **being constituted with Christ**—Col. 1:27; 3:4, 10-11:
 - 1. Christ is living in us, He is being formed in us, and He is becoming our constitution; Christ is now living in us so that we may be **constituted with Him organically**—Gal. 2:20; Col. 3:4, 10-11.
 - 2. Eventually, our **whole being** will be **constituted with the element of Christ**, for He will constitute every part of our soul so that we may have His form, His image, in **every part of our being**—2 Cor. 3:18; Rom. 8:29.
- G. The word *formed* in Galatians 4:19 corresponds to the word **image** in 2 Corinthians 3:18:
 - 1. Christ with His element is **working within us organically** so that we may have His form and express His image—Rom. 8:29.
 - 2. Christ's being formed in us depends on our being **transformed** into His image—2 Cor. 3:18.
 - 3. Our being transformed into His image and His being formed in us cause us to be **conformed to His image**; our being conformed to His image is the issue of His being formed in us—Gal. 4:19; Rom. 8:29.

Galatians 4:19 says, "*My children, with whom I travail again in birth until Christ is formed in you.*" Once a person is **saved**, he has Christ within him. However, at this point Christ has **not yet been formed** in him because he has **too little** of the element of Christ. Although we are saved, up to now we still may not have much of Christ in us. Some people may have been saved ten or twenty years ago. They are **full of doctrines**—they know about Adam, Eve, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. When you ask them about Genesis, they say that it is about God's creation. When you ask them about Revelation, they tell you that it is about the seven seals, the seven trumpets, and the seven bowls. They probably know more than you do. **However**, they **do not** have much of the **element of Christ within them**. Such ones are merely saved; Christ has not yet been formed in them.

Some of us have been in the church for more than twenty years. We have heard many doctrines, we are zealous, and we also love the Lord, but Christ's element **has not increased** much in us inwardly. We have very little of Christ's element both in our judgment and in our conversation. Why is this the case? It is because we only have a **small amount of Christ in us**, and Christ **has not grown** in us or been formed within us. This is why Paul said that he travailed again in birth until Christ was formed in the believers.

If we know this and see this, we will prostrate ourselves before God and say, “O God, have mercy on me. Even until today I do not have much Christ in me. There is very little sense of Christ in my living, in my inclinations, in my daily walk, and in my attitude. There is very little of the element of Christ in all these aspects. Christ has not yet been formed in me, and I have just a small amount of Christ.” Then what **other things** do we have in us, seeing that we have only a small amount of Christ? We have our **self**, the **world**, our **preference**, our **sins**, our **goodness**, our **meekness**, and our **temper**. In short, within us there are both good things and bad things. **Many things apart from Christ** occupy us, leaving no room for Christ.

Therefore, Paul told the Galatians, “My children, with whom I travail again in birth until Christ is formed in you.” The problem with the Galatians was not that they loved the world or lusted after sins. Their problem was that **they turned their attention to things other than Christ**. They paid attention to doing good deeds by themselves. Since they relied too much on themselves, they left very little room for Christ. This does not mean that it is wrong to perform good deeds but that when you rely on yourself, Christ has no place or opportunity to gain your time and space so that He can gain ground in you. As a result, He has still not been formed in you. (*The Crucified Christ*, Chapter 2)

Day 6

Romans 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.*

Galatians 3:26 - *For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus.*

- H. To have Christ formed in us is to have the three parts of our soul—our mind, emotion, and will—**renewed**—12:2a; Eph. 4:23:
 - 1. In order for our mind, emotion, and will to be renewed, Christ must **saturate** our mind, emotion, and will and replace the self and the world in our soul with Himself—Rom. 12:2a.
 - 2. If we are renewed in this way, every part of our inner being will **bear the image of Christ**—2 Cor. 3:18; Rom. 8:29.

VI. Christ needs to be formed in us so that we may be **sons of full age** and **heirs to inherit God’s promised blessing** and so that we may **mature in the divine sonship**—Gal. 3:14, 26, 29; 4:5-6:

- A. Galatians 3:26 says, “You are all **sons of God** through faith in Christ Jesus”; the expression *sons of God* refers to sons of full age.
- B. Under the **old testament**, God’s chosen people were considered **infants**; now under the **new testament**, they are considered **sons of full age**, who will inherit the promised blessing—the all-inclusive Spirit of Christ.
- C. Christ must **mature in us** in order for us to be heirs for the full enjoyment of the Triune God as our inheritance; the Holy Spirit is the pledge of our inheritance— Eph. 1:13b-14; 1 Pet. 1:4.
- D. We need to **pray** that the Lord will bring us into the **experience and enjoyment of Christ**, who has been born into us, is now living in us, and will be formed in us at our maturity in order that we may be sons of full age and heirs of God’s promised blessing and that we may mature in the divine sonship—Gal. 3:29; 4:6, 19.

[God's eternal purpose is to work **Himself into us** that He may be thoroughly mingled with us and expressed through us. When God is born into us, He begins this mingling process. But this is only the start! There must be the **growth**. If we have the birth, but not the growth, we could never enjoy the birthright. God is born into our spirit, which is the very center of our being. Then His desire is to spread from our spirit to transform all the parts of the soul, and eventually to transfigure our physical body. By this process our whole being will be **saturated** and **permeated** with the essence of God Himself.] This is the growth in life.

[After receiving the birth of God's life and the growth of this life, the Lord will grant us the enjoyment of the **birthright**.] The birthright is the special portion of the firstborn. According to the Bible, the birthright includes the double portion of the land, the kingship, and the priesthood. [Hebrews 12:15-17 warns us to be careful because there is the possibility of **losing the birthright**. We may have it, but we may also lose it. Having been born of God, there is the possibility of **enjoying the birthright if we are matured**, but there is also the possibility of losing the birthright. There will be many Christians who will lose the birthright because they **do not have the proper growth**. They have the birth of life, so they are the children of God, but they still need the growth of life, the maturity in life, for them to be the heirs of God] in order to enjoy the birthright. By having the birth, growing in life, and enjoying the birthright, we will be able to express God, not only individually, but also corporately as the built up church.

You have been born of God. Would you like to participate in the **full sonship**? I am sure that you would, since the full sonship is the most enjoyable thing any human being can attain to and experience. All of your friends are seeking enjoyment of some kind; some good and some evil. You too are seeking enjoyment. Imagine, that one day God will fill your spirit and soul and body, and that you will be a priest to God and a king to the inhabitants of the earth eternally. If you seek enjoyment, nothing is more enjoyable than this. This is our birthright. This is our rightful portion, given to us when we were born anew of God in our human spirit. **The way to experience the full sonship is by the growth of the divine life in us**. Even this process of growth is an enjoyment to us. All of humanity, including you and your friends, experience some sort of suffering every day. All of these sufferings are temporal, and are working for us daily to cause us to grow in life. Therefore, in 1 Thes. 5:16-18, Paul charges to "*Always rejoice; Unceasingly pray; In everything give thanks.*" We thank Him for all our situations, because through prayer we can rejoice always in our spirit to grow in life. We not only do this individually, but also with one another corporately. By His mercy with our diligence, we will receive the full sonship on the day of the Lord. (*Lesson Book, Level 5: The Church—The Vision and Building Up of the Church, Chapter 2*)