

HWMR: EXPERIENCING, ENJOYING, AND EXPRESSING CHRIST (2) (Week 22)

Scripture Reading: Gen. 1:26; Eph. 2:10, 14-16; 4:22-24

The Creator of the One New Man as the Masterpiece of God

- Gen 1:26 And God said, Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of heaven and over the cattle and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth.
- Eph 2:14 For He Himself is our peace, He who has made both one and has broken down the middle wall of partition, the enmity,
- 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

Day 1

- Genesis 1:26 - And God said, Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of heaven and over the cattle and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth.*
- Ephesians 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,*

I. God's intention in His creation of man was to have a **corporate man to express Him and to represent Him—Gen. 1:26; Eph. 2:15:**

- A. God created man in **His own image** for **His expression** and gave man **His dominion** so that man would **represent Him** to deal with His enemy—Gen. 1:26.
- B. The **church as the new man** in the new creation **bears God's image for God's expression** and fights against God's enemy for God's kingdom—Col. 3:10-11; Eph. 2:15; 4:24; 6:10-11.
- C. What was divided and scattered in the old man is **recovered in the new man**—Gen. 11:5-9; Acts 2:5-12; Col. 3:10-11.

Christ broke down the middle wall of partition between the Jews and the Gentiles by abolishing the law of the commandments in ordinances. When He was **crucified** on the cross, **all the ordinances were nailed there**. The law spoken of in 2:15 is not the law of the moral commandments, but the law of the ritual commandments, such as the ordinances of circumcision, keeping the Sabbath, and eating certain foods.

Ordinances are the forms or ways of living and worship. Every people has its own way of living. We need to be careful **not to make our way of living or worship an ordinance**. At the same time, we should not regard what others do as ordinances. If we all practice this, there will be no problems.

The differences among the peoples began at Babel. In God's economy in the church life we must overcome Babel. Our very language can become an ordinance. When we stay for a long period of time in another country or even live there, we should, if possible, learn the language of the people there and not insist on our native tongue.

As the redeemed and recovered ones, those who have been transferred into Christ and into the church life, we must learn to hate the differences that divide the peoples. The worldly people regard cultural differences as a mark of prestige. But in Christ we have all lost this prestige. Now our only prestige is Christ and the genuine oneness. We should not have a prestige unique to our locality or meeting hall. We all need to exercise ourselves to go along with others. As long as a certain practice does not involve idolatry or immorality, there is nothing wrong with it. Do not hold on to your prestige. If we are willing to let go of our cultural pride, it will be possible for the Lord to have the proper church life.

The breaking down of the middle wall of partition is for the new man, the commonwealth of God, the household of God, and the building of God's dwelling place. If we keep our differences, it will be impossible to have the church life in these four aspects. Christianity is filled with the divisive differences among the various peoples. For this reason, it is impossible for Christians outside the recovery to have the church life. For the sake of the church life, all the differences must be under our feet. (*Life Study of Ephesians, Message 23*)

Day 2

Ephesians 2:15-16 - 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, and might reconcile both in one Body to God through the cross, having slain the enmity by it.

II. The new man as the poem, the masterpiece, of God was created **through Christ's death and in His resurrection**—Eph. 2:10, 15-16:

A. We need to pay careful attention to two phrases in verse 15: *in His flesh* and *in Himself*:

1. "In His flesh" Christ **terminated all the negative things** in the universe: Satan, the devil, the enemy of God (Heb. 2:14); sin (Rom. 8:3; John 1:29); the flesh of fallen man (Gal. 5:24); the world, the cosmos, the evil system of Satan (John 12:31); the old creation represented by the old man (Rom. 6:6); and the separating ordinances of the law (Eph. 2:15).
2. "In Himself" as the sphere, element, and essence, Christ created the Jews and the Gentiles into **one new man**:
 - a. Christ is not only the Creator of the one new man, the church, but also the **sphere** in which and the element and essence with **which the new man was created**.
 - b. **Christ** is the very **element** and **essence** of the one new man, making God's divine nature one entity with humanity—cf. Col. 3:10-11.

When Christ died on the cross, not only did He deal with sins, the old man, Satan, and the world; He also dealt with the ordinances. On the cross **Christ abolished in His flesh the law of the commandments in ordinances**. Therefore, by His death on the cross, Christ dealt with five categories of things: sins, the old man, Satan, the world, and the ordinances. It seems that very few Christians today talk about Christ's dealing with the ordinances, and I doubt that any books have been written on this subject. Most Christians think that all our problems concern sins, the old man, Satan, and the world. Many think that we are all right as long as these four things are dealt with. But not all the problems are solved, and we cannot be all right until the ordinances have been dealt with. The ordinances, the different ways of living and worshipping, had to be abolished by Christ on the cross so that He could create in Himself the one new man.

We have heard repeatedly that on the cross Christ accomplished redemption, destroyed the Devil, judged the world, and crucified the self. But perhaps you have never heard that **Christ's death** on the cross was also for the **creation of the one new man**. In order to create the one new man, it was necessary for Christ to abolish the ordinances. By abolishing in His flesh the separating ordinances and by creating the Jewish and Gentile believers into one new man, Christ has made peace among all believers. The Jews and Gentiles were separated to the uttermost by the ordinances. But both peoples were created in Christ with the divine essence into one new entity, which is a corporate man, the church. Because no other Christians speak about the abolishing of the ordinances and the creating of the new man, we are very burdened to give a word concerning these things. (*Life Study of Ephesians, Chapter 23*)

Day 3

- Ephesians 2:10* - For we are His masterpiece, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand in order that we would walk in them.
- Ephesians 3:10* - In order that now to the rulers and the authorities in the heavenlies the multifarious wisdom of God might be made known through the church,
- 1 Corinthians 1:30* - But of Him you are in Christ Jesus, who became wisdom to us from God: both righteousness and sanctification and redemption,

- B. In the creating of the new man, first our natural man was **crucified by Christ**, and then through the crossing out of the old man, **Christ imparted** the divine element into us, causing us to become the masterpiece of God's work, an absolutely new item in the universe, a new invention of God—Rom. 6:6; 2 Cor. 5:17:
1. The Greek word for *masterpiece* is *poiema*, meaning “something that has been **written** or **composed** as a poem.”
 2. Not only a poetic writing may be considered a poem, but also any work of art that expresses the maker's wisdom and design.
 3. **We, the church, the masterpiece** of God's work, are a poem expressing God's infinite wisdom and divine design; the church is God's wise exhibition of all that Christ is—Eph. 3:10-11.
 4. Christ **became wisdom to us** from God as three vital things in God's salvation—1 Cor. 1:30:
 - a. He is our **righteousness** (for our past), by which we have been justified by God, that we might be reborn in our spirit to receive the divine life—Rom. 5:18; 8:10.

- b. He is our **sanctification** (for our present), by which we are being sanctified in our soul (transformed in our mind, emotion, and will) with His divine life—6:19, 22.
 - c. He is our **redemption** (for our future), that is, the redemption of our body, by which we will be transfigured in our body with His divine life to have His glorious likeness—8:23; Phil. 3:21.
5. It is **of God** that we participate in such a complete and perfect salvation, which makes our entire being—spirit, soul, and body—organically one with Christ to make Him everything to us and to make us the wise exhibition of all that Christ is.

As the Creator of the new man, Christ has reconciled the Jews and the Gentiles in one Body to God in one Spirit. Verse 16 says that Christ “might reconcile both in one Body to God through the cross.” Both in this verse refers to the Jews and the Gentiles. Not only the uncircumcised Gentiles but also the circumcised Jews needed to be reconciled to God through the redemption of Christ, accomplished on His cross.

Verse 16 indicates that the Jews and the Gentiles have been reconciled in one Body. This **one Body**, the church, is the **one new man** mentioned in the previous verse. It was in this one Body that both the Jews and the Gentiles were reconciled to God through the cross. We, the believers, whether Jews or Gentiles, were reconciled not only for the Body of Christ but also in the Body of Christ. What a revelation here! We were reconciled to God; we were saved in the Body of Christ.

We usually regard reconciliation as an individual matter; we do not often think of corporate reconciliation. However, the proper and genuine reconciliation is **in the Body**. The Body is the instrument, the means, by which we were reconciled to God.

According to verse 16 of chapter 2, we were reconciled in one Body to God. Originally, we were without God and we had lost God, but through the **cross**, with the blood of Christ, we have been **brought back** to God in the one Body. As long as we are **in the Body**, we are **one with God**, but if we are outside the Body, we are separated from Him.

In verse 18 Paul goes on to say, “For through Him we both have access in one Spirit unto the Father.” Both the Jewish and the Gentile believers have access to the Father through Christ, who abolished the law of the commandments in ordinances, broke down the middle wall of partition, slew the enmity to reconcile the Gentiles to the Jews, and shed His blood to redeem the Jews and the Gentiles to God. This access is constituted of Christ’s cross and His blood. On the one hand, the cross of Christ **slew the enmity** caused by the ordinances, which were instituted because of the flesh, and on the other hand, **it redeemed us with the blood of Christ**, which was shed upon it. It was through the cross that both the Jews and the Gentiles were reconciled in one Body to God.

As Ephesians 2:18 indicates, our access unto the Father is in one Spirit. First, both the Jewish and the Gentile believers were reconciled in one Body to God. That was a positional matter. Then they both have access in one Spirit unto the Father. This is experiential. In order to enjoy experientially what we possess positionally, **we need to be in the Spirit**. If we have the cross without the Spirit, we have the fact without the experience. Hence, the Spirit is crucial.

Positionally, we were **reconciled** to God; **experientially**, we have **access** unto the Father. To be reconciled to God is to be saved; to have access unto the Father is to enjoy God, who, as the source of life, regenerated us to be His sons. Here the trinity of the Godhead is implied. Through God the Son, who is the Accomplisher, the means, and in God the Spirit, who is the Executor, the application, we have access unto God the Father, who is the Originator, the source of our enjoyment. (*Conclusion of the New Testament, Message 336*)

Day 4

Ephesians 2:14 - For He Himself is our peace, He who has made both one and has broken down the middle wall of partition, the enmity,

Colossians 2:14 - Wiping out the handwriting in ordinances, which was against us, which was contrary to us; and He has taken it out of the way, nailing it to the cross.

III. On the cross Christ created the new man in Himself by abolishing in His flesh the law of the commandments in ordinances, the middle wall of partition—Eph. 2:14b-15a:

- A. The law spoken of in verse 15 is not the law of the moral commandments but the **law of the ritual commandments**, such as the ordinances of circumcision, keeping the Sabbath, and eating certain foods.
- B. **Ordinances** are the forms or ways of living and worship, which **create enmity and division**:
 - 1. **On the cross Christ abolished all** the regulations regarding living and worship, regulations that have divided the nations—v. 15; Col. 2:14.
 - 2. From the time of Babel, mankind has been divided by ordinances concerning the ways of living and worship; in God's economy in the church life, we must **overcome** Babel—Gen. 11:1-9:
 - a. Christ should be our **only source**; we should not allow anything of our background, culture, or nationality to be our source—cf. Col. 3:10-11.
 - b. The worldly people regard cultural differences as a source of prestige, but in Christ we have put off this prestige; now **our only prestige is Christ** and the genuine oneness.
 - c. If we are **willing** to let go of our cultural pride, it will be possible for the Lord to have the proper church life—Eph. 4:22-24.

Day 5

Colossians 3:15 - And let the peace of Christ arbitrate in your hearts, to which also you were called in one Body; and be thankful.

Ephesians 4:3 - Being diligent to keep the oneness of the Spirit in the uniting bond of peace:

IV. For and in the one new man, we need to allow the **peace of Christ to arbitrate** in our hearts—2:14a, 15b; Col. 3:12-15; 2:14-18; Rom. 5:1; Matt. 18:21-35:

- A. The Greek term for *arbitrate* can also be rendered “umpire, preside, or be enthroned as a ruler and decider of everything”; the arbitrating peace of Christ in our hearts **dissolves our complaint against anyone**—Col. 3:13-15.
- B. Often we are conscious of three parties within us: a positive party, a negative party, and a neutral party; hence, there is the need for inward arbitration to settle the dispute within us:
 - 1. Whenever we sense that different parties within our being are arguing or quarreling, we need to give place to the presiding peace of Christ and allow this peace, which is the **oneness of the new man**, to rule within us and have the final word.
 - 2. We need to **set aside** our opinion, our concept, and listen to the word of the indwelling Referee.

- C. If we allow the peace of Christ to arbitrate in our hearts, this peace will settle all the disputes among us; we will have **peace with God vertically** and with the **saints horizontally**:
1. Through the **arbitration** of the peace of Christ, our problems are **solved**, and the friction between the saints **disappears**; then the church life is **preserved in sweetness**, and the new man is **maintained** in a practical way.
 2. The arbitrating of the peace of Christ is Christ working within us to **exercise His rule** over us, to speak the last word, and to make the final decision—cf. Isa. 9:6-7.
 3. If we **stay under the ruling of the enthroned peace of Christ**, we will not offend others or damage them; rather, by the Lord's grace and with His peace, we will minister life to others.
 4. This peace should **bind all the believers together** and become the uniting bond—Eph. 4:3.

By being limited to God's chosen place, we are kept from abusing God's grace, and we are subdued with respect to our desires, temperament, and disposition. We all have our particular natural disposition, temperament, and characteristics. But no matter what our peculiarities may be, **we all must be subdued**. If we remain in our natural life and in our natural disposition with its particular characteristics, it will be impossible for us to have the kind of worship God is seeking. We all must be subdued by coming to the unique place, to the unique ground. This means that we all need to be **subdued by the church**. If we are not willing to be subdued, we shall fight with the elders, with the other brothers and sisters, and even with our husband or wife. Even concerning spiritual things, the things of God, we shall have disagreements with others. We may prefer matters to be a certain way, but someone else may prefer another way. How we all must be subdued by taking the way of the church!

In the Life-study of Colossians we pointed out that the peace of Christ must arbitrate in our hearts. However, apart from the church life, it is difficult to experience the arbitrating peace of Christ. Yes, the peace of Christ does arbitrate within our hearts, but it does so in the context of the church life. In a very real sense, it is the **church that is the arbitrator**. The way of the church is the way of being subdued. Because we are subdued by the ground of the church, we are **preserved in oneness**. The unique place of God's choice keeps us from abusing God's grace and it also subdues us. Furthermore, this unique way gives us the real enjoyment of Christ. When we have the genuine enjoyment of Christ, we are one. We are one in the enjoyment of Christ, that is, in the eating of the rich produce of the good land. But as we have pointed out, we can present our offerings of this produce only in the place of God's choice. Like the psalmist, we must bring our offerings to the house of God. (*The Genuine Ground of Oneness*, Chapter 5)

Day 6

Colossians 3:10-11 - And have put on the new man, which is being renewed unto full knowledge according to the image of Him who created him, where there cannot be Greek and Jew, circumcision and uncircumcision, barbarian, Scythian, slave, free man, but Christ is all and in all.

V. In the one new man Christ is all the members and is in all the members—Col. 3:10-11:

- A. The **Christ** who dwells in us is the **constituent of the one new man**—1:27; 3:11:
1. Because Christ is all the members of the new man, there is no possibility, **no room**, for **any natural person** (for any race, nationality, culture, or social status) in the new man—vv. 10-11.
 2. No matter what kind of person we may be, as far as the one new man is concerned, **we all are nobodies**.

3. In the **one new man** there is only one person—the **all-inclusive Christ**—2:17; 3:4, 11.
- B. For the new man we all need to **take Christ as our person**—Eph. 2:15; 3:17a:
 1. As the **Body of Christ**, the church needs **Christ as its life**; as the **one new man**, the church needs **Christ as its person**.
 2. Christ is in all of us as one person; therefore, we all have **only one person**—Gal. 2:20; Eph. 3:17a.
 3. 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**—Rom. 6:6; Gal. 2:20; Eph. 4:22-24; 3:17a:
 - a. We need to live a life in the new man by **taking Christ as our person**, with Him as the One making all the decisions in us.
 - b. Once we see that we are a part of the one new man, we will **not** be able to decide things merely **by ourselves**.
 - c. We need to see that we are a corporate Body and a corporate new man and that both our living (person) and our moving (life) are **corporate**—1 Cor. 12:12; Rom. 12:4-5.
 4. We need to consider *one new man* in Ephesians 2:15 together with *one mouth* in Romans 15:6 and *speak the same thing* in 1 Corinthians 1:10:
 - a. In the past there were too many mouths because there were **too many persons**.
 - b. *With one accord* and *with one mouth* (Rom. 15:6) mean that even though we are many and all are speaking, **we all “speak the same thing”** (1 Cor. 1:10).
 - c. Although we are many and come from many places, we all have one mouth, and we all speak the same thing; this is because **we all are the one new man having only one person**—Eph. 2:15; 4:22-24; 3:17a; Rom. 15:6; 1 Cor. 1:10.

Colossians 3:10 and 11 have never been so clear as they are today. These verses say, “And having put on the new man...where there cannot be Greek and Jew, circumcision and uncircumcision, barbarian, Scythian, slave, freeman, but Christ is all and in all.” **You do not have any place in the new man, and neither do I.** We do not have any place to hate anyone. We do not have any place even to love anyone. You may charge me to love others, but in the new man I have no place. You may charge me to be so kind to others and so nice and gentle. But I have seen that the church is the new man, and in this new man I have no place. In this new man Christ is all.

In this new man you have no place. In other words, in this new man the Jew has no place, and neither does the Greek. The American has no place, and neither does the British. The Japanese has no place, and neither does the Chinese. In this new man the natural man has no place. The hating ones have no place. Neither do the loving ones have any place. We all have no place in this man. The quick one has no place. The slow one also has no place. Circumcision refers to the religious ones and uncircumcision to the unreligious ones. The religious ones and the unreligious ones all have no place in this new man. The civilized or the barbarian have no place. The slaves and the freemen have no place because Christ in this new man is all the persons. Christ becomes you and Christ becomes me. **Christ becomes every one of us. Christ is all the persons and Christ is in all the persons.** In this new man it is not a matter of being humble, kind, gentle, or loving. It is altogether a matter of a person living in us. In this new man it is not a matter of morality, ethics, or goodness. In this new man there is only one person.

The church in its uttermost aspect is a **new man to accomplish God’s eternal purpose**. God needs a man, a corporate man. I do look to the Lord that we all may be brought into the highest vision, that we would see that the church is not only the gathering, the assembly of God’s called ones, not only the folks of God’s household, and not only the Body of Christ, but also the new man, created according to the image of God—Christ. The new man is created according to Christ, having Christ as his person. This new man can accomplish what God intends to fulfill on this earth. (*The One New Man, Chapter 1*)