

HWMR - KNOWING AND EXPERIENCING THE ALL-INCLUSIVE, EXTENSIVE CHRIST, Week 4

Knowing and Experiencing the All-inclusive, Extensive Christ as the Reality of All Positive Things

Scripture Reading: Col. 2:16-18a; John 14:6a, 17; 1 John 5:6; John 16:13

Colossians 2:16	Let no one therefore judge you in eating and in drinking or in respect of a feast or of a new moon or of the Sabbath,
Colossians 2:17	Which are a shadow of the things to come, but the body is of Christ .
Colossians 2:18	Let no one defraud you by judging you unworthy of your prize, in self-chosen lowliness and the worship of the angels, dwelling on the things which he has seen, vainly puffed up by his mind set on the flesh,
John 14:6	Jesus said to him, I am the way and the reality and the life ; no one comes to the Father except through Me.
John 14:17	If you had known Me, you would have known My Father also; and henceforth you know Him and have seen Him.
John 16:13	But when He, the Spirit of reality, comes, He will guide you into all the reality; for He will not speak from Himself, but what He hears He will speak; and He will declare to you the things that are coming.
1 John 5:6	This is He who came through water and blood, Jesus Christ; not in the water only, but in the water and in the blood; and the Spirit is He who testifies, because the Spirit is the reality.

As the Reality of All Things

Verses 16 and 17 of Colossians 2 say, *“Let no one therefore judge you in eating and in drinking or in respect of a feast or of a new moon or of the Sabbath, which are a shadow of the things to come, but the body is of Christ.”* These two verses indicate that the reality of all that we need is Christ. We need food, drink, and the feasts. A new moon indicates a new start, and the Sabbath is for rest. However, all these are simply a shadow; they are not the real things. **Christ Himself is the reality of all these things.**

When a person stands in the light, he casts a shadow, but **the shadow is not the real person. The real person is the body of that shadow.** All things in the entire universe are only a shadow; **Christ Himself is the reality.** The clothes that we wear are not the real clothes; they are shadows. **Christ is our real clothing.** If we do not have Christ to clothe us, we are still naked before God. The light we see is not the real light. **Christ is the reality of the light.** Even if we have the best light, without Christ we are still in darkness. The sun is not the real sun; it is a type. **The reality of the sun is Christ,** the Sun of righteousness (Mal. 4:2). Even the house in which we dwell is not our real dwelling place. **Our real dwelling place is Christ.** Everything we need is a shadow; **the reality of all things is Christ.** To be sure, Christ is not the reality of the negative things in the universe, such as sin, the world, self, Satan, and the evil spirits. Rather, all the positive things in the universe are shadows of Christ.

All the trees are shadows of Christ. In the Scriptures many trees are types of Christ, such as the tree of life (Gen. 2:9), the apple tree (S. S. 2:3), the cedar tree (5:15), and the fir tree (Hosea 14:8). The most significant tree is the vine tree mentioned in John 15. Christ is also the Root of David (Rev. 5:5) and the branch of Jesse (Isa. 11:1). A tree gives us fruit and shade. If we take the time to study how trees are used to illustrate Christ, we will see that Christ is everything.

Many items of clothing also typify Christ. The garments of the high priest with their many details are a type of Christ. The many items of food also typify Christ. All the items on Solomon's feasting table and the items in his storage typify Christ (1 Kings 4:22-23). We should read the Scriptures in the way of seeing all the types and shadows of Christ.

Colossians shows us that God has made **Christ to be everything.** He is God Himself, and He is man. He is the Creator, and He is a creature. He accomplished redemption, and He is the Firstborn from the dead. He is the Head of the church, and He is even the Body. Christ is everything! In order to see this, we need Colossians. If we remove this book from the Bible, no one could understand Christ in such a profound way. If there were no Colossians, and I told you that Christ is everything, even the reality of the trees in the Bible, you may think I am foolish. If some would try to discover all the items mentioned in the Scriptures about Christ, they may not be able to finish the list in their lifetime. We praise the Lord for this book that shows Christ is everything.

(A General Sketch of the New Testament in the Light of Christ and the Church - Part 2: Romans through Philemon, chapter 19, section 3)

Day 1 & Day 2

I. “Let no one therefore judge you in eating and in drinking or in respect of a feast or of a new moon or of the Sabbath, which are a shadow of the things to come, **but the body is of Christ**. Let no one defraud you by judging you unworthy of your prize”—Col. 2:16-18a:

- A. As with a man’s physical body, the body in 2:17 is the substance, and like the shadow of a man’s body, the rituals in the law are the shadow of Christ, who is the **substance and reality of the gospel**; Colossians unveils such an all-inclusive Christ as the focus of God’s economy—1:17a, 18a; 3:11.
- B. **Daily, weekly, monthly, and yearly**, **Christ is the reality of every positive thing**, implying the universal extensiveness of the all-inclusive Christ:
 - 1. **Daily**, **Christ is our food and drink for our satisfaction and strengthening**—1 Cor. 10:3-4.
 - 2. **Weekly**, **Christ is our Sabbath for our completion and rest in Him**—Matt. 11:28-29.
 - 3. **Monthly**, **Christ is our new moon as a new beginning with light in dark-ness**—John 1:5; 8:12.
 - 4. **Yearly**, **Christ is our feast for our joy and enjoyment**—1 Cor. 5:8.
- C. The all-inclusive, extensive Christ, who is full of attractiveness and rich in magnetism, is the essence of the Bible—Luke 24:44; John 5:39-40; Matt. 1:1; cf. Rev. 22:21.
- D. According to the context, “the prize” in Colossians 2:18 is the enjoyment of Christ as the body of the shadows; to be defrauded of our prize is to be defrauded of the subjective enjoyment of Christ—cf. Gen. 15:1; Phil. 3:8.
- E. **Our need is for the subjective Christ to become our enjoyment to complete the divine revelation within us**; if we are short in the experience and enjoyment of Christ, we are also short concerning God’s revelation—Col. 1:25-28.
- F. **Whatever we do day by day should remind us of Christ as the reality of that thing**; if we follow the practice of taking Christ as the reality of all the material things in our daily life, our daily walk will be revolutionized and transformed, and we will be full of Christ—2 Cor. 4:16; Phil. 1:19-21a.

Day 3

G. We need to enjoy Christ day by day as the **reality of all our necessities**:

- 1. Christ is our **breath**—John 20:22.
- 2. Christ is our **drink**—4:10, 14; 7:37-39a.
- 3. Christ is our **food**—6:35, 57.
- 4. Christ is our **light**—1:4; 8:12.
- 5. Christ is our **clothing**—Gal. 3:27.
- 6. Christ is our **dwelling place**—John 15:5, 7a.

Day 4

II. The all-inclusive, extensive Christ is the **reality of all the positive things in the universe**—cf. Rom. 1:20; Eph. 3:18; *Hymns*, #496:

- A. Because the universe with the billions of things and persons in it was created for the purpose of **describing Christ**, He, in revealing Himself to His disciples, could easily find in any environment something or someone to serve as an **illustration of Himself**—Col. 1:15-17; John 1:51; 10:9-11; 12:24; Matt. 12:41-42.
- B. The Old Testament uses six major categories of things as types to describe Christ—**human beings, animals, plants, minerals, offerings, and foods**:
 - 1. **Human beings** typify Christ, such as Adam (Rom. 5:14), Melchizedek (Heb. 7:1), Isaac (Matt. 1:1), Jonah (12:41), and Solomon (v. 42).
 - 2. **Animals** typify Christ, such as a lamb (John 1:29), a lion, an ox, an eagle (Ezek. 1:10), and a gazelle (S. S. 2:9).
 - 3. **Plants** typify Christ (who is the tree of life—Gen. 2:9), such as the vine tree (John 15:1), the apple tree (S. S. 2:3), the fig tree, the pomegranate tree, and the olive tree (Deut. 8:8); the different parts of a tree are also types of Christ, such as the root, the stump, the sprout, the shoot, the branch, and the fruit (Isa. 11:1, 10; 4:2; Luke 1:42; Rev. 5:5).
 - 4. **Minerals** typify Christ, such as gold, silver, copper, and iron (Deut. 8:9, 13), and different kinds of stone: the living stone (1 Pet. 2:4), the rock (1 Cor. 10:4), the cornerstone (Matt. 21:42), the topstone (Zech. 4:7), the foundation stone, and precious stones (1 Cor. 3:11-12).
 - 5. **Offerings** typify Christ, such as the sin offering, trespass offering, burnt offering, meal offering, peace offering, wave offering, heave offering, and drink offering—Lev. 1—7; Exo. 29:26-28; Num. 28:7-10; cf. John 4:24.
 - 6. **Foods** typify Christ, such as bread, wheat, barley, grapes, figs, pomegranates, olives, milk, and honey—6:35; Deut. 8:8-9; 26:9.
- C. In the **New Testament**, Christ is the **Spirit of reality** who makes the untraceable riches of all that **He is real to us, guiding us into Himself as the divine reality**—John 14:6a; 1 John 5:6; John 14:17; 16:13.
- D. The elements of the reality of all the types are **in the Spirit**, and the **Spirit transfuses and dispenses all these riches into us** through the **Lord’s words**—Phil. 1:19; John 6:63; Col. 3:16; Eph. 6:17-18; Rev. 2:7.

Day 5

III. The very Christ who is the reality of all positive things is the One who is the **Head of the Body**; thus, **to hold the Head is simply to enjoy Christ as the reality of all positive things**—Col. 2:19:

- A. Since the Christ we enjoy as our everything is the Head of the Body, the more we enjoy Him, the more we become **Body-conscious**:
 1. This indicates that the enjoyment of Christ is not an individualistic matter but a **Body matter**—cf. Eph. 3:8; 4:15-16.
 2. The more we enjoy Christ, the more we **love the other members of the Body**—Col. 1:4, 8.
- B. Because Christ's headship is in resurrection (v. 18), the enjoyment of Christ spontaneously **brings us into resurrection** and saves us from our natural being.

Day 6

- C. The enjoyment of Christ brings us into the heavenlies in ascension; we can be experientially in the heavens **only** by **enjoying Christ, the Head, as the life-giving Spirit in our spirit**—3:1-2; 2 Cor. 3:17; 2 Tim. 4:22; Rom. 8:10, 34.
- D. As we enjoy Christ and **hold Him as the Head**, we **absorb** the riches of the all-inclusive, extensive Christ; these riches become in us the **increase of God** by which the Body grows for its building up—Col. 2:19, 6-7; Eph. 4:16.

ABSORBING THE RICHES OF CHRIST FOR THE GROWTH OF THE BODY

As we enjoy Christ and hold Him as the **Head**, we absorb His riches. According to 2:19, something proceeds out from the Head which causes the Body to grow with the growth of God. When we enjoy Christ in the heavens and in our spirit, we hold the Head and absorb His riches. Then out from the Head something will proceed to produce the growth of God in us. This means that more of the element of God is **added into our being and thereby into the Body**. This causes the Body to grow with the growth, the increase, of God.

As we hold the Head, we absorb the riches of the extensive, all-inclusive Christ. These riches are the **elements of God**, the very elements that proceed out from the Head and become in us the increase of God by which the Body grows. Eventually, the **Body will be the one new man in which Christ is all and in all**. Because Christ is the **unique constituent** of the new man, He is every member of the new man and in every member.

To hold Christ as the Head is to **enjoy Him continually**, to be in the heavens, and to remain in our spirit. Through holding Christ as the Head, we become conscious of the Body. Experiencing the Body life, we absorb the riches out from the Head. These riches are the very elements of God which become in the members of the Body the increase of God by which the whole Body grows. Therefore, the **growth of the Body** is the **product** of **enjoying** Christ, **holding** Him as the Head, and **absorbing** His riches.

(Life-Study of Colossians, chapter 56, section 3)