

HWMR - KNOWING AND EXPERIENCING THE ALL-INCLUSIVE, EXTENSIVE CHRIST, Week 5

Knowing and Experiencing the All-inclusive, Extensive Christ as the Mystery of God

Scripture Reading: Col. 2:2-3, 9-10; John 1:1, 14, 16; Eph. 3:8, 17

- Colossians 2:2 That their hearts may be comforted, they being knit together in love and unto all the riches of the full assurance of understanding, unto the full **knowledge of the mystery of God, Christ,**
- Colossians 2:3 **In whom** all the treasures of **wisdom** and **knowledge** are hidden.
- Colossians 2:9 For in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily,
- Colossians 2:10 And you have been made full in Him, who is the Head of all rule and authority.
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- John 1:1 In the beginning was the **Word**, and the **Word was with God**, and the **Word was God**.
- John 1:14 And the Word **became flesh and tabernacled** among us (and we beheld His glory, glory as of the only Begotten from the Father), full of grace and reality.
- John 1:16 **For of His fullness we have all received, and grace upon grace.**
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- Ephesians 3:8 To me, less than the least of all saints, was this **grace** given to announce to the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ as the gospel
- Ephesians 3:17 That Christ may make His home in your hearts through faith, that you, being rooted and grounded in love,

GOD EXPLAINED AND EXPRESSED

The Bible says that **Christ is the mystery of God** (Col. 2:2). If we want to know God, we must know Christ. God is true and living, but He is mysterious. **Christ explains Him**. This He does not only by His words but mostly by His very person. "No one has ever seen God; the only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, He has declared Him" (John 1:18). Man cannot see God, but there is One who declares Him. He is God's expression.

In Hebrews 1:3 He is called the effulgence of God's glory and the impress of His substance. Electricity cannot be seen, but when the lights shine, we can see its glory. God is like the invisible electricity; **Christ is His shining forth, the effulgence of His glory**. God has an eternal essence, which is not material but spiritual. It is because the **Lord Jesus expresses this essence**, God's very substance, that He is the mystery of God. All the fullness of the Godhead dwells in Him (Col. 2:9). **Where He is, there God is, for He Himself is God.**

The first chapter of the Gospel of John goes into this matter also. The Word was in the beginning, the Word was with God, and the Word was God (v. 1). How could the Word be God? How could the Word become flesh (v. 14)? In our mentality the Word is one thing, God is something else, and the flesh is another thing. John tells us that these three are one. "Great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh" (1 Tim. 3:16, KJV). When the Word became flesh, God was manifested in the flesh. This is the Lord Jesus, the mystery of God.

We all need to be brought "**unto the full knowledge of the mystery of God, Christ**" (Col. 2:2). Have you seen God? Your answer should be, "**I have seen Christ!**" God is in Christ, and Christ is God. Apart from Christ, you cannot find God. To have Christ is to have God. To belong to God is to belong to Christ. With God there is a mystery, but **with Christ the mystery is revealed**.

God has been revealed. We can contact Him. We can fellowship with Him. We can walk with Him. We are even **one spirit with Him**, because we are one spirit with the Lord (1 Cor. 6:17). We have God because we have Christ, who is the mystery of God.

(Life Messages, vol. 2, chapter 65, section 1)

Day 1

I. The all-inclusive, extensive Christ is the **mystery of God**—Col. 2:2:

- A. God Himself is a **mystery**, and **Christ is the mystery of this mystery**.
- B. *The mystery of God* indicates something incomprehensible and inexplicable.
- C. As the mystery of God, the all-inclusive, extensive Christ is the **definition**, **explanation**, and **expression** of God—the **Word of God**—John 1:1, 14.
- D. As the mystery of God, Christ is the **history** of God; the whole “**story**” of God is in Christ and is Christ—Col. 2:2:
 - 1. Although God is infinite and eternal, without beginning or ending, He also has a history, a story—Rom. 16:26; Psa. 90:2.
 - 2. **The all-inclusive, extensive Christ**—the mystery of God, the mysterious story of God—**is the history of God**.
 - 3. **God’s history** refers to the **process** through which He passed in Christ so that He may enter into us, and we may be brought into Him; this process includes incarnation, human living, crucifixion, resurrection, ascension, glorification, and enthronement—John 1:12-14, 29; 3:14; 12:24; 14:20.

Day 2

- E. In the all-inclusive, extensive Christ as the mystery of God, all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge are hidden—Col. 2:3:
 - 1. **Wisdom** is related to our **spirit**, and **knowledge** is related to our **mind**—Eph. 1:8, 17.
 - 2. God is the unique **source** of wisdom and knowledge—Rom. 16:27; 11:33.
 - 3. This is the spiritual wisdom and knowledge of the divine economy concerning Christ and the church—Eph. 1:10; 3:9; 5:32.
 - 4. Wisdom and knowledge also refer to all the “stories” of God.
 - 5. All the wisdom and knowledge pertaining to God’s stories are **hidden in Christ**, who is the mystery of God—Col. 2:2-3.

Day 3 & Day 4

II. As the mystery of God, Christ is the **embodiment of the fullness of the Godhead**—v. 9:

- A. *All the fullness of the Godhead* refers to the **entire Godhead, the complete God**—v.9:
 - 1. The word *Godhead* refers to deity and **strongly** indicates the **deity of Christ**.
 - 2. Since the Godhead **comprises** the Father, the Son, and the Spirit, the **fullness** of the Godhead must be the fullness of the Father, the Son, and the Spirit—Matt. 28:19; 2 Cor. 13:14.
 - 3. For Christ to be the embodiment of the fullness of the Godhead means that the fullness of the **Triune God dwells in Christ in a bodily form**—Col. 2:9:
 - a. This implies the physical body that Christ put on in His humanity, and it indicates that **all the fullness of the Godhead dwells in Christ as the One who has a human body**—John 1:14; Rom. 8:3; Heb. 2:14.
 - b. **Before His incarnation** the fullness of the Godhead dwelt in Christ **as the eternal Word**, but it did not dwell in Him bodily—John 1:1.
 - c. After He became incarnate, clothed with a human body, the fullness of the Godhead began to dwell in Him in a bodily way, and in His glorified body (Phil. 3:21) now and forever it dwells.
- B. *Fullness* in Colossians 2:9 refers not to the riches of God but to the **expression** of the riches of God:
 - 1. The riches are the quantity of an object, whereas the **fullness** is the **flowing out**, the **overflow**, of the object to become the expression of the object.
 - 2. What dwells in Christ is not only the riches of the Godhead but also the **expression of the riches of what God is**:
 - a. God’s fullness is the overflow of His riches, and this **overflow is God’s expression**.
 - b. The fullness of the Godhead is the expression of the Godhead, the expression of what God is—v. 9.
 - 3. The Godhead is expressed both in the old creation, the universe, and in the new creation, the church—1:15, 18.
- C. When the Son of God was **incarnated** as a man, with Him was the fullness of God, and of this fullness **we have all received**—John 1:14, 16:
 - 1. In John 1:16 *grace* does not refer to the riches of grace but to the **fullness of grace**; the riches of grace are in God, but the fullness of grace is in Christ Jesus—Col. 2:9.
 - 2. **The grace we receive is the fullness of grace**; beginning from the time we are saved, we may receive grace upon grace.
 - 3. The phrase *grace upon grace* in John 1:16 can be compared to the rolling waves of the sea that come in wave upon wave without ceasing.

Day 5 & Day 6

III. As believers in Christ, **we are made full in Christ**, in whom all the fullness of the Godhead dwells bodily—Col. 2:9-10:

- A. The Greek word translated “**full**” in verse 10 implies **completion, perfection**.
- B. Because all the **fullness of the Godhead dwells in Christ** and because we have been **put** in Him, we have been **made full in Him, filled up** with the divine riches—1 Cor. 1:30; Eph. 3:8:
 - 1. All those who **believe** in Christ have been **put into Christ**; therefore, we are **identified** with Him and are **one** with Him—Gal. 3:27; 2 Cor. 5:17.

2. We the believers have been put into the all-inclusive, extensive Christ, identified with Him, and joined to Him as our Husband; hence, we are one with Him—Col. 1:28; Rom. 7:2-4; 1 Cor. 6:17.
 3. Because we are one with Christ, we **partake of all** that He has **accomplished, obtained, and attained**; we **inherit** all that Christ has **experienced and passed through, receiving** all that He is and has.
 4. All that He has passed through is now **our history**, and all that He has obtained and attained is our inheritance.
 5. The result is that all that He is and all that He has belong to us, and all that He has experienced has become our history—Col. 2:11-13; 3:1.
- C. We need to have a full realization of what we have in Christ and to exercise faith to partake of all that is ours in Christ—Eph. 3:17.
- D. Because this fullness is **all-inclusive**, it accomplishes everything for us, it fully **satisfies** and **supplies** us, and it **makes us full**, perfect, and complete—Col. 2:9.
- E. We have the **all-inclusive, inexhaustible** fullness that dwells in Christ bodily, and **in Him we are made full**—Eph. 3:8; Col. 2:9-10.

Christ as the Embodiment of All the Fullness of the Godhead

In 2:9 Paul says, “*For in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily.*” This means that **Christ is the embodiment of the fullness of the Godhead**, that the fullness of the Triune God dwells in Christ in a bodily form. The fact that the fullness of the Godhead dwells in Christ bodily means that it dwells in Him in a way that is both real and practical.

Made Full in Christ

Because all the fullness of the Godhead is in Christ and because we have been placed in Him (1 Cor. 1:30), **we have been made full in Him**. The New Testament reveals clearly that all those who **believe** in Christ have been **put into Christ**. Therefore, we are **identified** with Him and **one** with Him. The result is that all He is and all He has belongs to us, and all that He has experienced is our history. We inherit all that Christ has experienced and passed through. Furthermore, because we are one with Him, we partake of all that He has accomplished, obtained, and attained.

Marriage is an illustration of this. Suppose a poor woman marries a very rich man. Because she is joined to her husband and identified with him, she partakes of all that he is and has. Likewise, we are members of the all-inclusive Christ. We have been put into Him, identified with Him, truly “**married**” to Him. Hence, we are one with Him. **All that He has passed through is now our history, and all that He has obtained and attained is our inheritance.** We are in such a Christ, and He is in us. We have been placed into Him, we are one with Him, and we receive all that He is and has.

Although some Christians have a doctrinal knowledge of this, a mere mental understanding of our union with Christ is not adequate. **We need to exercise faith in order to partake of all that is ours in Christ.** We should not consider ourselves poor, just as a poor woman who has married a rich man should no longer think of herself as poor. Even though she may feel poor, she must practice applying the fact that the riches of her husband belong to her. In like manner, because we are one with Christ, we should not regard ourselves as in poverty. To the contrary, we need to have a full realization of what we have in Christ.

In their prayers, some Christians like to declare how poor, pitiful, and low they are. This kind of prayer is without faith or assurance. We need to believe with full assurance that we are one with the rich, all-inclusive Christ, with the One who is the embodiment of all the fullness of the Triune God. If we realize this with full assurance, we shall never consider ourselves poor.

Do not believe your feelings about yourself, but look away to Christ. Exercise your faith to realize what He is, what He has passed through, what He has obtained and attained, and where He is today. Since He is in the third heaven and we are one with Him, we are in the third heaven also. In Christ we are not only millionaires—we are billionaires. We have been placed into the Christ who is unsearchably rich.

In this Christ we are made perfect, complete. In Him we do not lack anything. Do not talk about how much you lack. Because you are in Christ, you lack nothing. In Him is the **fullness**, the **perfection**, the **completion**. Actually, He Himself is the fullness, perfection, and completion. Because we are in Him, we are complete and perfect; we lack nothing. We are those who possess the riches of Christ.

In Ephesians 3:8 Paul speaks of the unsearchable riches of Christ. We are more than billionaires because the riches we have are greater than can be counted. We simply have no idea what vast riches we possess in Christ. Often we have prayed, “*Lord, I am poor and pitiful.*” But not many have prayed in this way: “*Lord, I thank You that I am rich, complete, and full. Lord Jesus, because I am in You, I am richer than the wealthiest billionaire. I am short of nothing.*” I hope that after reading this message, you will begin to pray in this way. Tell the Lord, the angels, and even the demons that you are richer than any earthly billionaire because you are in the Christ whose riches are unsearchable.

(Life-Study of Colossians, chapter 22, section 1)