

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

Knowing and Experiencing the All-inclusive, Extensive Christ as Our Life and as the Constituent of the New Man

Scripture Reading: Col. 3:1-4, 15-17

- Colossians 3:1 If therefore you were raised together with Christ, **seek the things which are above**, where Christ is, sitting at the right hand of God.
- Colossians 3:2 **Set your mind on the things which are above**, not on the things which are on the earth.
- Colossians 3:3 For you died, and your life is hidden **with Christ in God**.
- Colossians 3:4 When **Christ our life is manifested**, then you also will be manifested with Him in glory.
- 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.
- Colossians 3:16 Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another with psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to God.
- Colossians 3:17 And whatever you do in word or in deed, do all things in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him.

Day 1

I. We need to know and experience the all-inclusive, extensive Christ **as our life:**

- A. In order to **experience Christ as our life**, we need to see that we have **one position, one life, one living, one destiny**, and **one glory** with Christ—Col. 3:1-4; cf. 1 Cor. 6:17:
1. Our **position** is that **we are in Christ**; because we are in Him, we are where He is—sitting at the right hand of God—Col. 3:1; John 14:20; 17:24; Eph. 2:6:
 - a. The Son's position is in the Father (John 10:38; 14:10); we are in the Son (1 Cor. 1:30a), so **we are in the Father** (John 14:20; 1 Thes. 1:1; 2 Thes. 1:1).
 - b. It is **when we are in the spirit** that we are in Christ, in the Father, and in heaven practically and experientially (cf. John 14:20):
 - (1) There is a **transmission** taking place from Christ in heaven to us on earth by means of the **all-inclusive Spirit in our spirit**—Eph. 1:19, 22-23; 2:22.
 - (2) The very Christ who is sitting on the throne in heaven (Rom. 8:34) is also now in us (v. 10), that is, **in our spirit** (2 Tim. 4:22), where the **habitation** of God is (Eph. 2:22).
 - (3) Since today our spirit is the place of God's habitation, it is now the gate of heaven, where Christ is the **ladder** that **joins us to heaven** and brings heaven to us—v. 22; Gen. 28:12-17; John 1:51.
 - (4) Whenever we turn to our spirit, we enter through the gate of heaven and touch the throne of grace in heaven through Christ as the heavenly ladder; **our spirit is the receiving end of the divine transmission**, whereas the **throne of God** is the **transmitting end**—Heb. 4:16.

Day 2

2. The life of God is the life of Christ, and the **life of Christ has become our life**—Col. 3:4; John 5:26:
 - a. For Christ to be our life means that He is subjective to us to the uttermost—1:4; 14:6a; 10:10b; 1 Cor. 15:45b; Rom. 8:10, 6, 11.
 - b. It is **impossible** to separate a person from the life of that person, for a **person's life is the person himself**; thus, to say that Christ is our life means that **Christ has become us and that we have one life and living with Him**—John 14:6a; Phil. 1:21a.
 - c. With Christ as the believers' life there are three characteristics, which distinguish it from the natural life:
 - (1) This life is a **crucified life**—Gal. 2:20.
 - (2) This life is a **resurrected life**—John 11:25.
 - (3) This life is a life **hidden in God**—Col. 3:3-4; Matt. 6:1-6, 16-18.

Day 3

3. To **seek the things which are above and set our mind** on them is to **join ourselves to the Lord in His heavenly ministry**, His divine enterprise; this is to live Christ, to have a living that is one with Christ's living—Col. 3:1-2:
 - a. In His heavenly ministry, Christ today is living as the **High Priest** to **intercede** for the churches—Heb. 8:1; 4:14; 7:25; 4:16; Col. 4:2.
 - b. In His heavenly ministry, Christ today is living as the **heavenly Minister** to **supply** the saints with the riches of Christ—Heb. 8:1-2; Eph. 3:8.
 - c. In His heavenly ministry, Christ today is living as the **universal Administrator of God's government** for the **accomplishment** of God's purpose—Rev. 4:1-2, 5; 5:6; Eph. 1:10-11:
 - (1) From the throne in the heavens, the divine transmission brings the things above **into the local churches**—vv. 19, 22-23.
 - (2) In Revelation 4 and 5 we have a vision of our "central government," and in Revelation 1 through 3 we have a vision of the local churches as the "embassies"; through the seven Spirits what is in the heavenly "headquarters" is transmitted into the churches as the "embassies."
 - (3) What takes place in the local churches should be **under the direction of the throne of God in heaven**; in order for the recovery to be the **Lord's** recovery, it must be **under His direction**—Col. 1:18; 2:19; Rev. 4:2-3.

Day 4

4. Our destiny is **glory**; **Christ is leading us into glory** for us to be **manifested** with Him in glory—Heb. 2:10; Col.3:4.
- B. Our life is **the Christ who dwells within us**, and this life is **hidden with Christ in God**; the Christ hidden in God is typified by the manna hidden in the golden pot—vv. 3-4; Exo. 16:32-34; Rev.2:17:
1. Christ as the hidden manna is in God the Father as the golden pot; the Father is in Christ as the Ark with His two natures, divinity and humanity; and Christ as the indwelling Spirit lives in our regenerated spirit to be the reality of the Holy of Holies— cf. John 14:16-20; 2 Tim.4:22.
 2. When we **eat** Christ as the hidden manna, we are **incorporated into Him** for the mutual abode of God and man—John 15:5, 7; 8:31; 6:57, 63; 14:23.
- C. That Christ is our life is a strong indication that we are to **take Him as life and live by Him**, that we are to **live Him in our daily life**—Col. 3:4a:
1. Christ must be our life in a **practical and experiential way**; day by day we need to be saved in His life—v. 4; 1 Cor. 15:45b; Rom. 5:10.
 2. The **new man** is the **spontaneous** issue of our taking Christ as our life and living Him—Col. 3:3-4, 10-11.

Day 5

II. We need to know and experience the all-inclusive, extensive Christ as the **constituent of the new man**:

- A. In the new man there is room **only** for Christ; **He is all the members of the new man and in all the members**; He is everything in the new man—vv. 10-11.
- B. In the **new man** Christ is the **centrality and universality**; He is the **constituent** of the new man, and He is **all and in all** in the new man.
- C. If we would live Christ as the constituent of the new man, we need to be **ruled by the peace of Christ** (vv. 12-15) and **inhabited by the word of Christ** (vv. 16-17):
1. We need to allow the peace of Christ to **arbitrate** in our hearts—vv. 12-15; Eph. 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 dissolves our complaint against anyone**—Col. 3:13.
 - 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 shall 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 shall not offend others or damage them; rather, by the Lord’s grace and with His peace, **we shall minister life to others**.
 - (4) This **peace** should **bind all the believers together** and become their uniting bond—Eph. 4:3.

Christ Being All and in All

In the new man “**Christ is all and in all**.” In the new man there is room only for Christ. He is all the members of the new man and in all the members. **He is everything in the new man**. Actually, He is the new man, His Body (1 Cor. 12:13). In the new man Christ is the centrality and universality.

The word all in verse 11 refers to all the members who make up the new man. Christ is all these members, and He is in all the members. For this reason, in the church there is no room for us. **There is no room for any nationality**. As those who are part of the new man, we should not regard ourselves as Chinese, Americans, Germans, or any other nationality. Do not even say that you are so-and-so. **Since Christ is all and in all in the new man and you are part of the new man, then you are part of Christ. Each member, each part, of the new man is Christ.**

In saying that there cannot be any natural person in the new man, verse 11 is very strong. What a great mistake it is to translate the Greek here as the new self! It is foolish to say that in the new self there is no Greek and Jew, no circumcision and uncircumcision. According to the context, the new man in 3:10 certainly does not denote the new self, for the new man is made up of believers from many different cultural backgrounds. This is not true of the so-called new self. No doubt, **the new man here is a corporate man, the church, Christ’s Body**. Although many different kinds of people make up the church, all are part of Christ. They are no longer the natural person. Christ is everyone in the new man, and He is in everyone in the new man. What a tremendous vision it is to see that Christ is all and in all!

It is crucial for us to see two things: that we need to be **renewed unto full knowledge** according to the all-inclusive Christ, who is the image of God; and that **in the church as the new man Christ is everyone and in everyone**. In the church, the new man, there is nothing but Christ.

(Life-Study of Colossians, chapter 28, section 4)

Day 6

2. If we would live Christ as the **constituent of the new man**, we need to **let the word of Christ dwell in us richly**—Col. 3:16-17:
 - a. When the **peace of Christ** arbitrates in us and keeps us in a situation full of oneness and harmony, we become the **place of God's speaking, His oracle**—vv. 15-16; Rev. 2:1, 7:
 - (1) **God's speaking requires oneness**; division causes God's speaking to diminish, even to cease altogether—Lev. 1:1.
 - (2) Since oneness is a **necessary** condition for God's speaking, we need to **let the peace of Christ arbitrate in our hearts**—Col. 3:15.
 - (3) For the word of Christ to **dwell** in us richly means that it has **adequate** room in us to **permeate and saturate** our whole being; it is crucial for us to let the word of Christ **enter** into us, **dwell** in us, **prevail** in us, and **replace** our concepts, opinions, and philosophies—Psa. 119:130; cf. Rev. 21:23; 22:5.
 - b. We need to **allow** the word of the Lord to have the first place in us so that we may **experience** the functions of the word of God operating within us and ministering the riches of Christ into our being—Col. 3:16:
 - (1) The **word of God enlightens** (Psa. 119:105, 130), **nourishes** (Matt. 4:4; 1 Tim. 4:6), and **waters** us to quench our thirst (Isa. 55:1, 8-11).
 - (2) The **word of God strengthens** (1 John 2:14b; Prov. 4:20-22), **washes** (Eph. 5:26), and **builds us up** (Acts 20:32).
 - (3) The **word of God completes, perfects** (2 Tim. 3:15-17), and **edifies** us by **sanctifying** us (John 17:17).
 - c. By **allowing the word of God to inhabit us**, we can become a **proper human being**, a God-man filled with Christ as the reality of the attributes of God—Col. 3:16-25; Phil. 4:5-8.
3. If we allow the **peace of Christ** to arbitrate in us and if we are filled with the **word of Christ**, we shall have the new man in a practical way; **all the saints in all the churches throughout the Lord's recovery will be living Christ in the one new man**.

THE PEACE OF CHRIST AND THE WORD OF CHRIST

In 3:15 and 16 Paul charges us to let the **peace of Christ** arbitrate in our hearts and to let the **word of Christ** dwell in us richly. If we allow the peace of Christ to arbitrate in our hearts, **this peace will settle all the disputes among us**. The saints in Colosse were troubled by different isms, philosophies, and practices. Just as a referee is needed to settle disputes in a game or contest, so the Colossians needed a referee, an arbitrator, to calm down all the differing opinions. It is significant that only in the book of Colossians, a book that deals with culture and its isms and practices, does Paul speak of the inward arbitration of the peace of Christ. This arbitrator calms down all the opinions which have their source in our culture.

When the peace of Christ calms our opinions, the word of Christ, which is to dwell in us richly, replaces them. Instead of our opinions, we then have the **word of Christ**. The New Testament reveals clearly that the word of Christ is the Spirit. Furthermore, Christ today is the life-giving Spirit. Our Christian life is altogether a matter of Christ as the living Spirit. We do not need isms, philosophies, practices, or observances. **We need the experience of Christ as the life-giving Spirit**. The brothers need not try to love their wives, nor the sisters to submit to their husbands. Rather, we all should contact Christ and let Him be our love and submission. **Christ today as the life-giving Spirit is in our spirit**. We need to say, "Lord Jesus, I thank You that You are here. You are in me all the time to be whatever I need." If we would practice this, we need a clear vision that Christ is everything to us. Such a vision will slay our philosophy, asceticism, opinions, and isms. It will even terminate the influence of culture on our experience of Christ. Then, instead of being cultured people, we shall be people occupied with, possessed by, and saturated with Christ.

There is no doubt that our hearts need to be **comforted** and **knit together** in love unto all the riches of the full assurance of understanding. But the goal of this comforting of our hearts is that we would have the full knowledge of Christ as the mystery of God. We should not allow the concern with the heart to keep us from the realization that we need Christ, the mystery of God, to be everything to us. Moment by moment, we need to take Him as our life and live by Him.

We have pointed out again and again that after Paul tells us that **Christ is our life and the constituent of the new man**, he charges us to let **the peace of Christ arbitrate in us and to let the word of Christ inhabit us**. To have a full understanding of what it means for the peace of Christ to arbitrate in our hearts, we need to know the background against which the book of Colossians was written. At Babel the cultural divisions of mankind came into being. The opinions from our culture are expressed mainly in religious observances and in philosophical ordinances, represented respectively by the Jews and the Greeks. The cultural opinions have divided mankind into many different nations. However, God's eternal purpose is to have a corporate people to be the Body of Christ for His expression. But if mankind remains divided by cultural opinions, how can God's purpose be carried out? It would be impossible. But according to Ephesians 2:15, Christ's death on the cross has abolished all the cultural ordinances and differences and terminated them. Christ's purpose in doing this was to create in Himself one new man and thereby make peace. Hence, the peace made by Christ was produced through the crucifixion of cultural opinions. When the Jews and the Gentiles were created into one new man, peace was made. This very peace, the peace of Christ, is what Paul refers to in Colossians 3:15.

(Life-Study of Colossians, chapter 33, section 2)