

Incarnation, Inclusion and Intensification (1)

Outline

- I. To know Christ (Phil. 3:10), to particularly know that:
 - A. He is both God and man.
 - B. He possesses both divinity and humanity.
 - C. In His humanity He accomplished His judicial redemption through His death.
 - D. In His divinity He is carrying out His organic salvation in His resurrection.
- II. To experience and enjoy Christ (to gain Christ—v. 8) in His full ministry in His three divine and mystical stages:
 - A. In the first stage, the stage of His incarnation, from His human birth to His death:
 - 1. To bring the infinite God into the finite man.
 - 2. To unite and mingle the Triune God with the tripartite man.
 - 3. To express in His humanity the bountiful God in His rich attributes through His aromatic virtues:
 - a. Christ expressed the bountiful God in His human living.
 - b. Mainly expressing God in His rich attributes, that is, in the unsearchable riches of what God is.
 - c. Through Christ's aromatic virtues by which He attracted and captivated people:
 - 1. 1) Not by living His human life in the flesh.
 - 2. 2) But by living His divine life in resurrection.
 - 4. To accomplish His all-inclusive judicial redemption:
 - a. Terminating all things of the old creation.
 - b. Redeeming all the things created by God and fallen in sin—Heb. 2:9; Col. 1:20.
 - c. Creating (conceiving) the new man with His divine element—Eph. 2:15.
 - d. Releasing His divine life from the shell of His humanity—John 12:24.
 - e. Laying a foundation for His organic salvation and setting up the procedure to attain His ministry in the stage of His inclusion.

Week 1 - Day 1

Morning Nourishment

Phil 3:10

To know Him and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death,

Phil 3:8

But moreover I also count all things to be loss on account of the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, on account of whom I have suffered the loss of all things and count them as refuse that I may gain Christ

2 Cor 4:5

For we do not preach ourselves but Christ Jesus as Lord, and ourselves as your slaves for Jesus' sake.

Prayer: Lord, thank You for putting us in Your recovery to be the slaves of Your children... For Your sake we are willing to be Your household slaves to serve You and take care of Your children.... It seems that we heard many things before but did not take them in. O Lord, we pray that You would give us a glorious beginning; glorify Yourself, glorify the Father, and glorify the Spirit...

The central burden of these messages can be expressed in the following statements:

- (1) The full ministry of Christ is carried out in three stages for the fulfillment of God's eternal economy.**
- (2) In the first stage of incarnation to bring God into man, to express God in humanity, and to accomplish His judicial redemption.**
- (3) In the second stage of inclusion to be begotten as God's firstborn Son, to become the life-giving Spirit, and to regenerate the believers for His Body.**
- (4) In the third stage of intensification to intensify His organic salvation, to produce the overcomers, and to consummate the New Jerusalem.**

NOT ASSUMING A STATUS BUT SERVING AS SLAVES

According to God's love and grace, we are all His children and are of the same species as He. In this sense we cannot say that we have no status. Our status is that we are God's species and God's children. According to His economy, out of His created and redeemed human race on the earth, God wants to gain the church, which is the Body of Christ, and, eventually, to have the New Jerusalem for the accomplishment of His eternal economy. In the process there is a great deal of work and service, so there is the need to have co-workers and elders.

In the Gospels we can see clearly that Peter, James, and John were the first ones to follow the Lord. They were by the Lord's side following Him for three and a half years. At the end the Lord brought them with Him to Jerusalem. He was going there to die for the accomplishment of God's economy, **yet His followers were arguing on the way about which of them was the greatest** (Mark 9:34; Luke 22:24)... They heard the word that the Lord was going to die, and they were also about to enter Jerusalem. Yet they were by the Lord's side arguing about who was the greatest among them.

Then the Lord Jesus called the disciples to Him and said, "Whoever wants to become great among you shall be your servant, and whoever wants to be first among you shall be your slave" (vv. 26b-27). *Slave* here does not refer to a hired servant but to **a purchased slave**. According to Roman law, slaves **had no human rights**.

As co-workers and elders, **we are such slaves**. Paul says, "*We do not preach ourselves but Christ Jesus as Lord, and ourselves as your slaves for Jesus' sake*" (2 Cor. 4:5). This means that the believers were not to regard Paul, Peter, and others too highly simply because they were apostles and evangelists. Actually, they were the believers' slaves. Today we also should not regard ourselves as co-workers and elders; rather, we should **consider ourselves as slaves of all people to serve all people**.

My greatest burden is this: I hope that the Lord will give you mercy through my fellowship in love so that you all will be convinced and realize that to be a co-worker or an elder is to **be a slave**. Concerning this matter, the Lord Jesus set up a good example for us. He was the Lord and the Teacher, yet He emptied Himself and girded His loins to wash His disciples' feet, serving them **as a slave** (John 13:3-5). The Lord also commanded us to **do as He did** (vv. 12-17)...

For this reason, first, we want to fellowship concerning how to be a co-worker and an elder. We must know that to be the children of God **does not require learning**. After our regeneration, spontaneously we became God's children, and for this we thank and praise the Lord. However, no one is a co-worker as soon as he is saved, and no one is an elder as soon as he is regenerated. To be a co-worker and an elder **requires learning**. (*How to be a Co-worker and an Elder, chapter 1*)

Week 1 - Day 2

Morning Nourishment

Phil 3:10

To know Him and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death,

Heb 9:22

And almost all things are purified by blood according to the law, and without shedding of blood there is no forgiveness.

Rom 5:10

For if we, being enemies, were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more we will be saved in His life, having been reconciled,

TO KNOW CHRIST

To be a co-worker or an elder, first, **we must know Christ**. In Philippians 3:10 Paul speaks about knowing Christ and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death. To know Christ is not a simple matter. I want to fellowship with you concerning how to **know Christ mainly in four items**. The co-workers and elders must know these items. Not only must you know them, but also you must know them thoroughly and be able to speak them to others. To know Christ is not to know Him in a common way but to know Him in a particular way. The riches of what Christ is, are unsearchable (Eph. 3:8), but among them, there are the **four following items that we need to know in particular**.

First, we must know particularly that **Christ is both God and man**. We should not think that we already know this. We need to be reminded again and again that Christ is both God and man. He was God and He became man, so He is both God and man. Thus, He is a God-man. **Second**, we need to know that since Christ is a God-man, **He possesses both divinity and humanity**. Some may say, “We also know this already.” Maybe we know, but we do not know how to speak it. Concerning the divinity and humanity of Christ, we must have a thorough knowledge. **Third**, we have to know that **in His humanity Christ accomplished His judicial redemption through His death**. To know Christ we have to discern clearly that His being in His humanity is one thing and His being in His divinity is another thing. Concerning the redemption of Christ, the general saying is that Christ was a man with blood and flesh, so He could die for us in His flesh. The deeper way, however, is to say that Christ accomplished redemption in His humanity. We should not remain only in the general saying; this is an indication that our knowledge concerning Christ is not deep enough. We must penetrate the deepest part of the divine truth to see the intrinsic significance of Christ in His humanity. In His humanity Christ accomplished redemption through His death. Christ had to die in order to fulfill God’s judicial requirement (Heb. 9:22). Therefore, **Christ’s redemption is a judicial redemption**, and it was accomplished in His humanity through His death according to God’s judicial requirement, that is, according to the requirement of God’s righteous law. **Fourth**, we also need to know that **in His divinity Christ is carrying out His organic salvation in His resurrection**. We need to see further that Christ’s redemption is different from His salvation. Romans 5:10a says that we “*were reconciled to God through the death of His Son*”; this refers to His redemption. Romans 5:10b says, “*Much more we will be saved in His life*”; this refers to His salvation. The organic salvation is being carried out in resurrection by Christ in His divinity. This is new light and the new language given to us by God. In His divinity and in His resurrection, He is carrying out His organic salvation in the believers. The judicial redemption has been accomplished, but the organic salvation is being carried out.

To be a co-worker or an elder, we also need to experience and enjoy Christ (to gain Christ—Phil. 3:8) in His full ministry in His three divine and mystical stages. How can we be a co-worker and an elder? First, we need to **know Christ**; second, we need to **experience and enjoy Christ**, that is, to gain Christ, in His full ministry... To experience and enjoy Christ is **to gain Christ**... To “have” is not sufficient; we need to “gain.” To gain Christ requires paying a price. To gain Christ is to experience, enjoy, and take possession of all His unsearchable riches by paying a price. This is not so simple...It is not easy to win a game, and it is also not easy to win the victory in a war. These require us to pursue by forgetting the things which are behind and stretching forward to the things which are before. Likewise, we need to gain Christ by experiencing and enjoying Him in His full ministry. (*How to be a Co-worker and an Elder, chapter 1*)

Morning Nourishment

Col 2:9

For in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily,

Matt 4:19-20

And He said to them, Come after Me, and I will make you fishers of men. And immediately leaving the nets, they followed Him.

Incarnation – from His Birth to His Death; To Bring the Infinite God into the Finite Man

In His full ministry in the first stage, the stage of His incarnation, Christ brought the infinite God into the finite man. Some may think that this point is very simple. However, perhaps the most you can say is that Christ in His incarnation brought “God into man”; you cannot say that He brought “the infinite God into the finite man.” **This is our new language today.** God is infinite, and we human beings are finite. In His full ministry in the stage of His incarnation, Christ brought the infinite God into the finite man. One is infinite, and the other is finite—how could the two become one? Nevertheless, it was carried out by Christ in His ministry....

To Unite and Mingle the Triune God with the Tripartite Man -

In His full ministry in the first stage of His incarnation, Christ also **united and mingled** the Triune God with the tripartite man. The Triune God is mysterious, and the tripartite man is difficult to understand. Concerning the Triune God, the Father is the source, the Son is the expression, and the Spirit is the entering in. Concerning the tripartite man, the spirit is the innermost part, the soul is in the middle, and the body is on the outside... **[W]e need to know these things.** If we do not have the knowledge, we cannot have the experience or the enjoyment. If we do not have the experience and enjoyment of Christ, we simply cannot gain Christ. Then when we go to speak to others, we will have nothing to say and will be poor in utterance and void of words. Even if we compel ourselves to speak, what we speak will be shallow, simple, and trite.

Some co-workers and elders often would say to me, “I don’t dare to speak about these high truths because the believers whom I am serving cannot understand them according to their present spiritual condition.” My reply is, “It is not that they cannot understand, but it is that you cannot speak clearly.” It is only after we have known, experienced, and gained Christ that we can speak to others, according to the **new language** in the Lord’s recovery, concerning this Christ whom we have gained.

To Express in His Humanity the Bountiful God in His Rich Attributes through His Aromatic Virtues

In His full ministry in the first stage of His incarnation, **Christ also expressed in His humanity the bountiful God in His rich attributes through His aromatic virtues.** No one can deny that the human virtues of Christ were aromatic; even when non-Christians read the four Gospels, they sense that the Jesus recorded in these books was a sweet and fragrant One, whose virtues were aromatic. This is because He expressed in His humanity the bountiful God in His rich attributes. Our attributes are the characteristics of what we are. For example, losing one’s temper easily, loving to speak first, speaking carelessly and irresponsibly, and acting lightly are human attributes. On the other hand, behaving cautiously, speaking rationally, doing things purposefully, and not acting irresponsibly or carelessly are also human attributes. Our God has His attributes, and His attributes are rich because He is great and bountiful. He is love, light, holiness, and righteousness. These rich attributes were expressed by the Lord Jesus in His humanity to become the aromatic virtues in His humanity.

Furthermore, Christ in His humanity expressed God through His aromatic virtues by which He attracted and captivated people. The record in Matthew 4 shows that when the Lord Jesus was walking beside the Sea of Galilee, He saw Peter, John, and James, who were either fishing or mending nets with their fathers. Then He called them, saying, “Come after Me.” Immediately, they followed Him, giving up their net mending, abandoning their boats, and forsaking their father (vv. 18-22). To this day I still do not understand why it is that when He simply said, “Come after Me,” the disciples forsook everything to follow Him. I truly believe that at that time the Lord Jesus must have displayed an aromatic power in His countenance and His voice that could really attract and captivate people. (*How to be a Co-worker and an Elder, chapter 1*)

Luke 1:35

And the angel answered and said to her, The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore also the holy thing which is born will be called the Son of God.

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 of the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me.

Matt 4:19-20

And He said to them, Come after Me, and I will make you fishers of men. And immediately leaving the nets, they followed Him.

The Lord Jesus must have possessed some aromatic virtues in His humanity that could attract and captivate people. Otherwise, there could not have been so many people who would follow Him. Among them, there were even a number of noble women who cared for the Lord and who simply followed Him continually for three and a half years (Luke 8:1-3). Sometimes when the Lord spoke certain words that were in another realm, the divine and mystical realm, His disciples could not understand or apprehend them because they had not yet entered into that realm. It was not until after the Lord's resurrection, when they had been regenerated, that they understood what the Lord had told them before (John 16:13; cf. 2:22). Christ expressed His aromatic virtues by which He attracted and captivated people, not by living His human life in the flesh but by living His divine life in resurrection. He was in the flesh, but He did not live by His human life in His flesh; rather, He lived by His divine life in His resurrection. Today, as God-men, **by which life do we live?** No doubt, we are all in the flesh. Nevertheless, we can get out of the realm of the flesh and enter into resurrection to live by the divine life in resurrection, that is, **in the divine and mystical realm.**

We must not live by the human life but by the divine life. Galatians 2:20 says, "It is no longer I who live, but it is Christ who lives in me." This means that we should not live the life of the old "I" but the life of the new "I." Dear brothers, we cannot listen to these detailed points and simply let them go. May the Lord cover me. It is after I have studied these things for several decades that I can be led by the Lord to put them into writing. You need to actually experience these things.

To Accomplish His All-inclusive Judicial Redemption

In His full ministry in the first stage of His incarnation, Christ accomplished four great things. First, He brought the infinite God into the finite man; second, He united and mingled the Triune God with the tripartite man; third, He expressed the bountiful God in His rich attributes through His aromatic virtues; and fourth, eventually, He accomplished His all-inclusive judicial redemption. The first two things were concerning His birth, the third thing was concerning His human living, and the fourth thing was concerning His death. After He passed through His human living, He went to die on the cross for the accomplishment of His all-inclusive judicial redemption.

The all-inclusive judicial redemption of Christ is of five aspects. **First, He terminated all things of the old creation. Second, He redeemed all the things created by God and fallen in sin** (Heb. 2:9; Col. 1:20). Everything belonging to the old creation was terminated by Christ through His death. After this termination He redeemed back all the things created by God and fallen in sin. **Third, He created (conceived) the new man with His divine element.** Ephesians 2:15 says that on the cross He created the Jewish believers and the Gentile believers in Himself into one new man. That creation was a conception.... While the Lord Jesus was dying on the cross, He was creating the new man. **Fourth, when Christ accomplished His all-inclusive judicial redemption, He released His divine life from the shell of His humanity.** John 12:24 says that the Lord Jesus was a grain of wheat. Unless the grain of wheat falls into the ground and dies, its outer shell cannot be broken, and its life within cannot be released. Christ had the divine life, but it was concealed in the shell of His humanity. Hence, He needed to suffer death on the cross so that the shell of His humanity might be broken to release His divine life from His human shell. **Fifth, in accomplishing His all-inclusive judicial death, Christ also laid a foundation for His organic salvation and set up the procedure to attain His ministry in the stage of His inclusion.** Christ's judicial redemption is the foundation of His organic salvation. Christ in His full ministry in the second stage of His inclusion requires a procedure, and His judicial redemption is such a procedure to accomplish His ministry in the stage of His inclusion. (*How to be a Co-worker and an Elder, chapter 1*)

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.

Gen 3:15

And I will put enmity / Between you and the woman / And between your seed and her seed; / He will bruise you on the head, / But you will bruise him on the heel.

2 Sam 7:12

When your days are fulfilled and you sleep with your fathers, I will raise up your seed after you, which will come forth from your body, and I will establish his kingdom.

Christians have paid **a great deal of attention to the matter of incarnation**. Every year at Christmas so many believers celebrate the Lord's incarnation; however, not many realize what the intrinsic significance of the incarnation is. Through incarnation Christ as God became flesh. **John 1:14 tells us that the Word, who is the very God, became flesh.**

A WONDERFUL PERSON IN THREE STAGES

If we would know Christ in these three stages, **we need to consider the whole Bible**. The Old Testament contains many types and prophecies concerning Christ, the Messiah, the coming One. In the New Testament we have the fulfillment of the types and prophecies regarding Christ in the Old Testament. (Gen 3:15; 2 Sam 7:12.) The whole New Testament is concerned with one person—Christ. The New Testament clearly reveals that as the fulfillment of the types and prophecies in the Old Testament, Christ is a wonderful person in three stages. As the wonderful One, He is deep, mysterious, and very complicated.

The First Stage—Incarnation—the Stage of Christ in the Flesh

Throughout the centuries the New Testament has been read, studied, and investigated by millions of people. I myself have been reading and studying the New Testament for seventy years. My study has been in three stages: the first stage in mainland China, the second stage in Taiwan, and the third stage in the United States. When I was in China, I was greatly helped, even tutored, by Brother Nee. I studied every book of the New Testament and also many different interpretations of the Scriptures. Although I was helped to the uttermost by Brother Nee, my study while I was in China was limited mainly to the first stage of Christ, that is, the stage of Christ in the flesh, Christ in His incarnation.

As the record of the four Gospels indicates, this stage lasted only thirty-three and a half years. This was the time in which the Lord Jesus accomplished God's redemption judicially. The four Gospels reveal Christ in the flesh as the One who lived a human life on earth and who was then crucified, dying for our sins in order to redeem us back to God. Strictly speaking, this is a matter not of salvation but of **judicial redemption**.

God's judicial redemption includes the **forgiveness of sins** (Luke 24:47), the **purification of sins** (Heb. 1:3), **justification** (Rom. 3:24-25), **reconciliation to God** (5:10a), and **positional sanctification** (1 Cor. 1:2; Heb. 13:12). In a judicial sense, one who has been forgiven, washed, justified by God, reconciled to God, and sanctified unto God is **a saved person**. This judicial redemption is not God's full salvation. Rather, judicial redemption is simply the initial part, the foundational part, of God's full salvation; it is the base upon which God's complete, organic salvation is built.

In the first stage, the stage of Christ in the flesh, Christ produced a group of redeemed persons, such as Peter and all the other disciples. Although a redeemed people had been produced, the church had not yet been produced. The church was produced by Christ in the second stage. In this stage Christ is the pneumatic Christ, the compound, life-giving Spirit who produced the church on the day of Pentecost. The redeemed saints, who were produced by Christ in the flesh, became the church produced by Christ as the life-giving Spirit. (*How to be a Co-worker and an Elder, chapter 1*)

Morning Nourishment

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 20:22

And when He had said this, He breathed into them and said to them, Receive the Holy Spirit.

DOING A WORK OF THREE SECTIONS

I am burdened that all the co-workers in the Lord's recovery would realize that **we need to do a work of three sections**. We should not only be able to do the work of the first section, the section of incarnation, to produce redeemed people, but we should also be able to do a work that can serve the purpose of the second section, the section of inclusion, to produce churches. Furthermore, we should be able to do a work to build up the Body of Christ consummating the New Jerusalem. This is the work of the stage of intensification.

The first stage—incarnation—is in the physical realm for the accomplishment of judicial redemption, which is a **physical matter**. The second stage—inclusion—is **divine and mystical**. In the third stage—intensification—there will be a **maturing and a ripening** in the divine and mystical realm, and the Body will be built up to consummate the New Jerusalem.

In releasing this message, I am concerned that the co-workers are not carrying out a threefold work: the work in the stage of incarnation, the work in the stage of inclusion, and the work in the stage of intensification. If we are carrying out this threefold work, we will work not only to produce redeemed ones and work to establish churches but will also work to build up the Body consummating the New Jerusalem.

I would ask the co-workers to consider what kind of work they have done in the past and ask themselves if they have been doing a work of three sections. Regarding my own work, I can say that the work which I did in mainland China was mainly to produce redeemed people. Only a small part of my work there was for the producing of churches. This indicates that my work in China was mainly a work in the first stage. However, when I came to Taiwan, I began to do a work in the stage of inclusion, and many churches were raised up. Now I am burdened to carry out a work in the stage of intensification. Therefore, I pray to the Lord, saying, *"Lord, I am endeavoring to do my best to be an overcomer for the building up of Your Body to consummate the New Jerusalem."*

I hope that all the co-workers will see the three stages, the three sections, of Christ: incarnation—the stage of Christ in the flesh; inclusion—the stage of Christ as the life-giving Spirit; and intensification—the stage of Christ as the sevenfold intensified life-giving Spirit. These three stages are the three sections of Christ's history. This means that Christ's history is divided into the section of His incarnation, the section of His inclusion, and the section of His intensification. Therefore, we emphasize these three words—*incarnation*, *inclusion*, and *intensification*—and stress the facts that incarnation produces redeemed people, that inclusion produces the churches, and that intensification produces the overcomers to build up the Body, which consummates in the New Jerusalem as the unique goal of God's economy. This is the revelation in the New Testament.

What kind of work should we be doing today? **We should be doing a work of all three sections**. I am concerned that many of the co-workers are still working only in the first section, the section of incarnation. If this is your situation, you need **to improve** and **to advance**. What you have learned and what you have done in the past are not adequate. Of course, you should not discard the things of the first stage, for those things are the foundation. Now you need to begin building on this foundation and eventually have the completion of the building. The foundation is the work in the stage of incarnation; the building up is the work in the stage of inclusion; and the completion of the building is the work in the stage of intensification. (*How to be a Co-worker and an Elder, chapter 1*)