

HWMR: LOVING THE LORD AND LOVING ONE ANOTHER FOR THE ORGANIC BUILDING UP OF THE CHURCH AS THE BODY OF CHRIST, (Week 3)

Scripture Reading: Eph. 6:24; 1:4; 2:10; 3:16-17; 4:22-24; 5:18-19; 6:10-11

LOVING THE LORD JESUS CHRIST IN INCORRUPTIBILITY

Ephesians 6:24	Grace be with all those who love our Lord Jesus Christ in incorruptibility.
Ephesians 1:4	Even as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world to be holy and without blemish before Him in love,
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 3:16	That He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with power through His Spirit into the inner man,
Ephesians 3:17	That Christ may make His home in your hearts through faith, that you, being rooted and grounded in love,
Ephesians 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,
Ephesians 4:23	And that you be renewed in the spirit of your mind
Ephesians 4:24	And put on the new man, which was created according to God in righteousness and holiness of the reality.
Ephesians 5:18	And do not be drunk with wine, in which is dissoluteness, but be filled in spirit,
Ephesians 5:19	Speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and psalming with your heart to the Lord,
Ephesians 6:10	Finally, be empowered in the Lord and in the might of His strength.
Ephesians 6:11	Put on the whole armor of God that you may be able to stand against the stratagems of the devil,

Day 1

Ephesians 6:24 - Grace be with all those who **love** our Lord Jesus Christ in **incorruptibility**.

Ephesians 1:4 - Even as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world to be holy and without blemish before Him in **love**,

I. “Grace be with all those who **love our Lord Jesus Christ in **incorruptibility**”—Eph. 6:24:**

- A. **Grace** is needed for us to live a church life that fulfills God’s purpose and solves God’s problem with His enemy—1:2; 3:2, 8, 10-11; 4:7, 29.
- B. The enjoyment of the Lord as grace is with **those who love Him**—6:24:
 1. Love in 1:4 refers to the love with which **God loves** His chosen ones and His chosen ones **love Him**:
 - a. It is in this **love** that God’s chosen ones **become** holy and **without** blemish before Him.
 - b. **God first loved us**, and then this divine love inspires us to love Him in return.
 - c. In such a condition and **atmosphere of love**, we are saturated with God to be holy and without blemish, just as He is.

2. According to 3:17, we may be **rooted and grounded in love**, and according to verse 19, we can know the knowledge-surpassing **love of Christ**; as God's cultivated land, we need to be rooted for our growth, and as God's building, we need to be grounded for our building up—1 Cor. 3:9.

In verse 24 Paul says, "Grace be with all those who love our Lord Jesus Christ in incorruption." Grace is needed for us to live a church life that fulfills God's eternal purpose and solves God's problem with His enemy. The enjoyment of the Lord as grace is to those who love Him. For the proper church life **we need to love the Lord in incorruption**, that is, in a condition which is incorruptible. Our **love** for the Lord must be incorruptible, immortal, and imperishable. Such a love is genuine and sincere.

This **love** is from **God the Father** and the **Lord Jesus Christ**. This indicates that love does not originate with us; it originates with God. Eventually, however, God's love becomes our love. This is the reason Paul speaks, in verse 24, of those who love our Lord Jesus Christ. God's love to us becomes our love for Him. Peace is maintained by this kind of love. By living in the intimacy of God's presence, love comes to us. Then this love returns to the Lord and becomes our love for Him. **By this traffic of love, peace is maintained, and we are preserved in the enjoyment of grace**. This is the reason Paul speaks of peace, love, and grace. (*Life-Study of Ephesians, chapter 67*)

Day 2

Ephesians 4:2 - With all lowliness and meekness, with long-suffering, bearing one another in **love**,

Ephesians 4:15-16 - But holding to truth in **love**, we may grow up into Him in all things, who is the Head, Christ, Out from whom all the Body, being joined together and being knit together through every joint of the rich supply and through the operation in the measure of each one part, causes the growth of the Body unto the building up of itself in love.

3. Ephesians 4:15-16 reveals that we hold to truth in **love** and that the Body builds itself up in **love**:
 - a. This is the **love of God in Christ**, which becomes the love of Christ in us, by which **we love Christ and the fellow members of His Body**—1 John 4:7-8, 10-12, 16, 19.
 - b. **Love** is the **inner substance of God**; the goal of Ephesians is to bring us into God's inner substance so that we may enjoy God as love and enjoy His presence in the sweetness of the divine love, and thereby love others as Christ did—5:2, 25.
- C. For the proper church life we need to **love the Lord in incorruptibility**—6:24:
 1. According to the usage of *incorruptible* in the writings of Paul, this word refers mainly to **God and the things of God**; everything natural is corruptible, but God, the divine life, and all things that are in resurrection are **incorruptible**—1 Tim. 1:17; 2 Tim. 1:10; 1 Cor. 15:42, 52-54.

Day 3

2 Corinthians 5:17 - So then if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old things have passed away; behold, they have become new.

Galatians 6:15 - For neither is circumcision anything nor uncircumcision, but a new creation is what matters.

2. To love the Lord in incorruptibility is to **love Him in the new creation**, not in the old creation—Eph. 2:15; 4:24; 2 Cor. 5:17.
3. To love the Lord in incorruptibility is to **love Him in the regenerated and renewed spirit** indwelt by the Holy Spirit—John 3:6; 1 Cor. 6:17; 2 Tim. 1:7.
4. To love the Lord in incorruptibility means to love Him according to **all the incorruptible things** revealed in Ephesians:
 - a. **We need to love the Lord Jesus in His being the embodiment of the Triune God** (Col. 2:9); in His being the element of the Body (1 Cor. 12:12); in His being reality, grace, peace, love, and light (John 1:17; 8:12; 14:6; Eph. 2:14; 1 John 4:8); and in His being the constituent of the one new man (Eph. 2:15; Col. 3:10-11).
 - b. All these things are related to what is revealed and taught in Ephesians, including the **Triune God, Christ, and His Body**, the church.
 - c. Ephesians speaks concerning the **dispensing of the Triune God** to produce the church (1:3-23; 3:16-21), of what Christ is and has done for the church (1:7; 2:13-18; 5:25-27, 29), and about the church being the Body of Christ, being the bride of Christ, and being one with Christ in the heavenlies (1:22-23; 5:23, 25-27; 2:6).
 - d. **All these matters are incorruptible**, and if we love the Lord Jesus in all these things, our love toward Him will be incorruptible (6:24); such a love is not a natural love; it is a love in resurrection, the love that God Himself is in His divine essence (1 John 4:16).
5. In the Lord's recovery **we need to love our Lord Jesus Christ** in all the divine, spiritual, heavenly, and incorruptible things revealed in Ephesians concerning the Triune God, the divine life, what Christ is to us, what He has done, and the church—1:3-23; 2:5-6, 13-18; 3:16-21; 4:4-6; 5:23, 25-27.

We need to consider if our love for the Lord is in corruptible things or in incorruptible things. **We need to learn** how to shepherd new believers for the building up of the Body of Christ in order to love Him in incorruptibility. One day we will stand before the Lord and give an account concerning how we loved Him. In order to endeavor to learn something new, such as how to shepherd new believers, it seems that we will have to pay a price, but we will actually **enjoy the Lord and receive His supply**. The **more** we love the Lord in incorruptibility, the **more** we enjoy Him. Likewise, when we speak in the meetings, we are made joyful and even enlivened in our mortal bodies, because we are loving the Lord in incorruptibility by working to directly build up the Body of Christ.

Whether we love the Lord in incorruptibility **depends** on the things we love Him in. Although many other things will be corrupted, the Body of Christ is incorruptible. The building of this Body comprises three main categories of work: **visiting** others with the gospel to bring them into Triune God, **shepherding** new believers in home meetings, and **speaking** in the church meetings. The issue of these three kinds of labor will remain forever and will never be corrupted. Therefore, to do them out of our love for the Lord is to love Him in incorruptibility. I hope that all the saints will enter into this kind of incorruptible love toward our Lord Jesus Christ. (CWWL, 1988, vol. 1, chapter 3)

Day 4

Revelation 2:4-5 - But I have one thing against you, that you have left your first love. Remember therefore where you have fallen from and repent and do the first works; but if not, I am coming to you and will remove your lampstand out of its place, unless you repent.

II. Paul's blessing at the end of his Epistle to the Ephesians foreshadows a problem that would arise: the love in the church in Ephesus would fade, as indicated by the Lord's rebuke in Revelation 2:2-5:

- A. The concluding word of Ephesians 6:24 adds a condition to the presence of grace: **loving the Lord in incorruptibility**; this seems to imply that if the Ephesians did not love the Lord in such a way, the grace of the Lord would no longer be with them.
- B. Ephesians emphasizes the relationship between grace and love (1:2, 4; 3:17; 4:2, 15-16; 5:2; 6:23-24); this indicates that if we want to receive and enjoy grace continually, **we need to fulfill one condition—love**.
- C. The church in Ephesus failed in the matter of **loving the Lord**; such a failure became the main reason for the failure of the church throughout the ages—Matt. 24:12; Mark 12:30-31; cf. Dan. 7:25:
 1. The genuine ministry of the New Testament **always** stirs us up to **love the Lord Jesus with the first love**, strengthening us in the simplicity of enjoying Christ as our life supply—2 Cor. 11:2-3; 3:3-6.
 2. The churches in Asia, including the church in Ephesus, turned away from the apostle Paul's betrothing ministry (2 Tim. 1:15; 2 Cor. 11:2-3); approximately twenty-six years later, when the apostle John wrote the epistle to the church in Ephesus, they had **left** their first love and **lost** the genuine enjoyment of Christ, resulting in the loss of the testimony of the Lord (Rev. 2:4-5, 7).

In Ephesians 1:22-23 Paul speaks of the church as the Body of Christ, "the fullness of the One who fills all in all." To be sure, the church in these verses does not refer to any religious organization. The **church as the Body of Christ is incorruptible**, but religious organizations are corruptible. To stand on the genuine ground of oneness, the **oneness of the Body of Christ, is incorruptible**. In contrast, to take any ground other than that of the unique oneness of the Body of Christ kept and expressed in the local churches is to take the ground of corruption. Instead of loving the Lord in corruptibility, we should **love Him in incorruptibility**, that is, in a pure way that can stand forever.

Paul concludes his Epistle according to its contents, because whatever is revealed in this Epistle is incorruptible. The Triune God, His dispensing, and the issue of His dispensing—the church, the Body of Christ, the new man, and the bride—are all **incorruptible**, whereas all other things in the universe will be corrupted. Paul does not conclude his Epistle by simply saying, "Grace be with everyone." Rather, he declares, "Grace be with all those who love our Lord Jesus Christ in incorruptibility." The reason for this is that the condition for receiving grace is that we love the Lord in incorruptibility. If we would receive grace and practice the proper church life, we need to love the Lord in incorruptibility. For the church our love toward the Lord must be **incorruptible, immortal, and imperishable**. Such a love is genuine and sincere. (*The Conclusion of the New Testament: Experiencing, Enjoying, and Expressing Christ, Volume 2, chapter 345*)

Day 5

*Ephesians 4:11-12 - And He Himself gave some as apostles and some as prophets and some as evangelists and some as shepherds and teachers, For the perfecting of the saints unto the work of the ministry, unto the **building up of the Body of Christ**,*

III. The revelation of the church in the Epistle to the Ephesians has two main aspects: the first aspect is the work of the ministry to **build up the Body of Christ, and the second aspect is our **spiritual life**, which comprises many spiritual experiences that enable us to live a life that matches the church life:**

- A. We need to love the Lord in incorruptibility by **doing the work of the ministry to build up the Body of Christ**:
1. What is needed today is an organic building of the Body not directly by Christ as the Head or by the gifted persons but by **all the members being perfected** to function as the gifted persons do—4:11-16.
 2. The building up of the Body of Christ comprises the following categories of work, which are eternal and glorious:
 - a. **We need to visit** others with the gospel to bring them into the Triune God (Matt. 28:19; Mark 16:15; Luke 24:47; John 15:5; cf. 2 Tim. 1:10), offering them as sacrifices to God (Rom. 15:16).
 - b. **We need to shepherd** the new believers in home meetings (John 15:16; 21:15-17), nourishing them and helping them to grow so that they can offer themselves as living sacrifices to God (1 Pet. 2:2; Rom. 12:1).
 - c. **We need to perfect** the saints in group meetings that they may do the work of the ministry unto the organic building up of the Body of Christ—Eph. 4:11-16; Heb. 10:24-25.
 - d. **We need to lead** the saints to prophesy, to speak for God, one by one in the church meetings for the organic building up of the church—1 Cor. 14:3, 4b, 12, 26, 31.
 3. This is the **organic service of the Body of Christ**, which is also the organic service of the New Testament priesthood of the gospel (1 Pet. 2:5, 9), in which we have to be like the apostle Paul, who labored and struggled in all wisdom to present every man full-grown in Christ to God (Col. 1:28-29).

Day 6

*Ephesians 5:16-17 - That He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with power through His Spirit into the inner man, That Christ may make His home in your hearts through faith, that you, being **rooted and grounded in love**,*

- B. We need to **love the Lord in incorruptibility** in the spiritual experiences that match the church life as unveiled in each chapter of Ephesians:

1. Chapter 1 unveils our being **chosen** in Christ to be holy and without blemish before God in love (v. 4); chapter 2 unveils our being **God's masterpiece**, created in Christ Jesus for good works (v. 10); chapter 3 unveils the **unsearchable riches of Christ** becoming our enjoyment, Christ making His home in our hearts, and our being filled unto all the fullness of God (vv. 8, 14-19); chapter 4 unveils our **putting off the old man and putting on the new man** (vv. 22-24); chapter 5 unveils our being **filled in spirit**, speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and psalming with our heart to the Lord (vv. 18-19); and chapter 6 unveils our being **empowered** in the Lord and putting on the whole armor of God (vv. 10-11).
2. The key to all the spiritual experiences in Ephesians is to be **strengthened into the inner man** (3:16) in order to be supplied with the supporting grace (vv. 2, 8; 6:24).
3. This is the miraculous yet normal way to live the church life, a revived life, a life that continually overcomes, and a **life that loves the Lord in incorruptibility**.

We need to turn to our regenerated spirit. Even after being regenerated, we are often not in our spirit. Instead, we are mostly in our soul, which comprises our mind, emotion, and will—the parts of our heart. In Philippians 2:12-14 Paul writes, “Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God who operates in you both the willing and the working for His good pleasure. Do all things without murmurings and reasonings.” Since God is operating within us, we should not murmur or reason. We need to be saved from our murmurings and reasonings. Murmurings pertain mainly to the sisters because they are often in their emotions, and reasonings pertain mainly to the brothers because they are often in their mind. We murmur and reason because we remain in our soul. Therefore, we need to be strengthened by God the Father through His Spirit into our regenerated spirit. Then Christ will be able to make His home in our hearts. Christ is within us, but **He is waiting for an opportunity to take over every room of our heart in order to make our heart His dwelling place.**

Paul concludes Ephesians by saying, “Grace be with all those who love our Lord Jesus Christ in incorruptibility” (6:24). We can still love the Lord if we remain in our soul, but to love the Lord in our soul is not to love Him in incorruptibility. **When we are strengthened into our spirit and allow the Lord to make His home in our heart, we are loving Him in incorruptibility.** Loving the Lord in this way makes us worthy of the church life. To love the Lord in the soul does not match the church life. The more we love the Lord in our soul, the more we will cause trouble in the church life. If we love the Lord in our soul, we may be too hot in our emotion, unable to bridle or control our emotion in responding to or proposing things. We may be easily offended. When we feel joyful in our emotion, if we express it in a natural way, it will not benefit the church. **Loving the Lord in our soul may cause turmoil in the church.**

We need to love the Lord by turning to our spirit. This is to **love Him in incorruptibility**, and this kind of love edifies the saints and builds up the Body of Christ. To love the Lord in incorruptibility is to love Him in the things that are fitting for the church life. In order to live the church life, we need to be strengthened into our inner man so that Christ may have the opportunity to take our whole heart as His dwelling place. (*Loving the Lord in Incorruptibility, chapter 4*)