

FULL OF THE STATURE OF CHRIST

The Experience is in the **Body**

We shall now study the nineteenth lesson concerning life, which is also the last experience of life—being full of the stature of Christ. We shall deal with this subject in a rather simple manner, because many of the related aspects have already been discussed in the previous chapters, leaving very little to be said at this point. Furthermore, we have only experienced this lesson very little; therefore, we do not have much to say. Concerning being full of the stature of Christ, we must first realize that none can attain to this stage individually. This experience is attainable only in the Body. It is entirely an experience which is gained **in the Body**.

Full of **Life and **Nature** of Christ**

Concerning **the content**, being full of the stature of Christ means that **we are full of the life and nature of Christ**. When a person's experience of life reaches its climax, the life and nature of Christ have permeated all the various parts of his being. The different parts of his spirit as well as the mind, will, and emotion of his soul are filled with the life and nature of Christ. Even his physical body at times is supported by this strength from the spirit. (Christians today cannot as yet be full of the element of Christ in their bodies; this can only be attained when we are raptured and transfigured.) At this time his life comes to maturity.

There are many among us who have believed in the Lord for years, but to this day there is but little of the element of Christ in them. Their thoughts are filled largely with themselves. Though there is little filthiness or corruption in their thoughts, there is also little of Christ. This also means that in their thoughts there is very little of the stature of Christ. With regard to their will, though it may not rebel against God, oppose Him, or seem to be wrong in any way, the element within it is largely of themselves and very little of Christ. With regard to their emotion, their mood, desire, and inclination may be blameless, but they are still not filled with the element of Christ. This proves that the stature of Christ within them has not reached full measure, and that they have made **very little progress** in spiritual growth.

How can we gradually be filled with the life and nature of Christ? We know that man has three parts: spirit, soul and body. The spirit is the center, the body is the outer circumference, and between these two is the soul. When we are regenerated, Christ as the Spirit enters into our spirit. From this time, He lives and grows within us. **First**

He fills us in our spirit; then He spreads outward from our spirit to the mind, emotion, and will in our soul. He uses the cross to deal with our self and our natural constitution, that is, to deal especially with the soul life which is in our mind, emotion, and will. The more our mind, emotion, and will are dealt with and broken by the cross, the more Christ as the life-giving Spirit can enter into these parts. At a certain point, all the elements of our mind, emotion, and will are Christ; then the stature of Christ is fully grown in us.

At this time, all the considerations, concepts, ideas, and viewpoint of our mind; all the pleasure, anger, sorrow, joy, delight, and inclination of our emotion; and all the judgment, decision, intention, and choice of our will, are filled with the element of Christ. Our mind is like the mind of Christ, our delight is His delight, and our intention is His intention. In other words, when we think, it is Christ that thinks; when we delight, it is He that delights; and when we intend, it is He that intends. At this time, every part of our inward being has been dealt with by the cross, and there is no place for self or the natural constitution; **all the ground has been given over to Christ.** We can say that our whole being is filled with Christ's life and nature.

Sharing The Same Position With Christ

When a person arrives at the full stature of Christ, **he is in the same position as Christ, not only in objective fact, but also in experience.** Christ is seated in the heavens, so also is he; Christ is on the throne, and so is he. At this time **he is not easily shaken;** neither can he fall easily.

Before a man's spiritual life attains to maturity, he is not stable. A month ago he may have been greatly uplifted and zealous for the Lord; the next month he may be exceedingly depressed and weak to the point of even being unwilling to come to the meetings. Some brothers and sisters, when they are well received and lifted up, become overjoyed and beside themselves; but when they are opposed and troubled, they become depressed and downcast. These ups and downs prove that the life is still immature. However, when man's life has attained maturity and is seated with Christ on the throne in the heavens, he does not rise and fall nor waver easily. When you welcome him, he is a certain kind of person; when you oppose him, he remains the same. If you lift him up, he is on the throne; if you trouble him, he is still on the throne.

Reigning With Christ

Another condition of one who is full of the stature of Christ is that **he reigns with Christ**. One must attain to the position of reigning with Christ that his life might become mature. If we desire to learn whether or not we are mature in life, we should ascertain whether or not we can **reign in the spiritual life**. We cannot ask a six-year-old child to rule; even if we crown him king and give him reign, with everything subject to his control, he will run off to play ball. If the life is insufficient, there is no possibility of reigning. When one's life attains to maturity, he reigns automatically.

This is true not only of the spiritual life, but also of the physical life. A statement made by a child is of very little significance. The same statement, in the same situation, at the same time, when spoken by an adult, has some measure of weight, and when spoken by an elderly person of seventy or eighty years of age, is more weighty. The weight of the word is measured according to age. When a certain age is attained, the word has depth. In like manner, authority is based on life. When life matures, it can reign. Therefore, the experience of reigning depends on the maturity in life.

Together With Christ Dealing With **The Enemy**

Another issue of one who is full of the stature of Christ is that of **dealing, together with Christ, with the enemy**... When we are really full of the stature of Christ and our life has attained unto full maturity, our spiritual warfare is over. Then we are seated far above all in a victorious position and need only to deal with the enemy.

It was in the same process that the Lord Jesus fought the battle. From the time of His temptation at the beginning of His ministry, He continually fought with Satan. But **when He ascended to the throne, He ceased fighting**. Nevertheless, He continues to deal with the enemy, until eventually he will be subdued beneath His feet and become His footstool (Heb. 1:13). When we attain to the stage of dealing, together with Christ, with the enemy, it is proof that our life has attained to its **highest peak**. For **a victorious one, there is no need to fight**. All he needs to do is to be situated in a certain place; then all the robbers and prowlers will disappear completely, daring no more to act foolishly or do evil. His awe-inspiring reputation has been gained through much warfare in the past. This example explains the principle of Christ in dealing with the enemy.

Sometimes we see the same condition in the church or in the work. As long as there are one or more who have a deeper life, trouble can hardly arise in the church or in

the work. Once those persons leave, however, many problems arise. This is because they are in authority dealing, together with Christ, with the enemy. **Their presence** there subdues the enemy. It is as if there were no need for dealing, but in reality their presence is the dealing. Therefore, dealing with the enemy is superior to fighting the warfare.

When the life of a Christian reaches this stage, **every part** of his being comes to maturity. He is waiting to be raptured to enter into glory with Christ. The Bible uses the reaping of the harvest to illustrate the rapture of the saints. When the harvest is ripe, it is ready to be reaped. Therefore, we should not view the matter of rapture merely as prophecy. **Rapture is a matter of life.** As the life of the church or the life of the saints grows and matures continuously in Christ, at a certain stage it becomes fully ripened and, in the sight of the Lord, is ready to be reaped from the field of the world into the barn of heaven. This occurs at the time of the Lord's return, the time of the rapture of the church (Rev. 14). When we are raptured, we will be brought by the Lord into His glory to enjoy the glory with Him. Thus, the purpose of God's salvation is fulfilled.

Therefore, when the life experience of a Christian attains to the full stature of Christ, it has reached the **climax**. He shares the same position with Christ, and he reigns and deals with the enemy together with Christ. His whole being is filled with the element of Christ. Aside from the fact that the body has not yet been transfigured into the body of glory, all else has reached its highest or final point. The life experience of a saint in Christ thus comes to a conclusion. Other than waiting to be raptured and entering into glory, there is nothing else left to be desired. (*Experience of Life, Chapter 19*)