

**Outline of the Messages
for the Memorial Day Conference
May 27-30, 2011**

**GENERAL SUBJECT:
THE CRUCIAL ELEMENTS OF THE BIBLE**

Message One

**The Crucial Elements of the Bible—
Christ, the Spirit, Life, and the Church**

Scripture Reading: Matt. 16:16, 18; John 3:15; Rom. 8:2; Eph. 1:22-23; 4:4-6

Matt. 16:16 And Simon Peter answered and said, You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.

Matt. 16:18 And I also say to you that you are Peter, and upon this rock I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it.

John 3:15 That everyone who believes into Him may have eternal life.

Rom. 8:2 For the law of the Spirit of life has freed me in Christ Jesus from the law of sin and of death.

Eph. 1:22 And He subjected all things under His feet and gave Him to be Head over all things to the church,

Eph. 1:23 Which is His Body, the fullness of the One who fills all in all.

Eph. 4:4 One Body and one Spirit, even as also you were called in one hope of your calling;

Eph. 4:5 One Lord, one faith, one baptism;

Eph. 4:6 One God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all.

I. Christ, the Spirit, life, and the church are the crucial elements of the Bible— Matt. 16:16, 18; John 20:31; 7:39; Rom. 8:11; Col. 3:4; Eph. 1:22-23:

Matt. 16:16 And Simon Peter answered and said, You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.

Matt. 16:18 And I also say to you that you are Peter, and upon this rock I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it.

John 20:31 But these have been written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing, you may have life in His name.

John 7:39 But this He said concerning the Spirit, whom those who believed into Him were about to receive; for the Spirit was not yet, because Jesus had not yet been glorified.

Rom. 8:11 And if the Spirit of the One who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who indwells you.

Col. 3:4 When Christ our life is manifested, then you also will be manifested with Him in glory.

Eph. 1:22 And He subjected all things under His feet and gave Him to be Head over all things to the church,

Eph. 1:23 Which is His Body, the fullness of the One who fills all in all.

A. Christ, the Spirit, life, and the church are the contents of the Bible.

B. A principle that we must apply in our interpretation of the Bible is Christ, the Spirit, life, and the church—Rom. 9:5; 8:2, 11; 12:4-5; 16:1, 4-5, 16b.

Rom. 9:5 Whose are the fathers, and out of whom, as regards what is according to flesh, is the Christ, who is God over all, blessed forever. Amen.

Rom. 8:2 For the law of the Spirit of life has freed me in Christ Jesus from the law of sin and of death.

Rom. 8:11 And if the Spirit of the One who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who indwells you.

Rom. 12:4 For just as in one body we have many members, and all the members do not have the same function,

Rom. 12:5 So we who are many are one Body in Christ, and individually members one of another.

Rom. 16:1 I commend to you Phoebe our sister, who is a deaconess of the church which is in Cenchrea,

Rom. 16:4 Who risked their own necks for my life, to whom not only I give thanks, but also all the churches of the Gentiles;

Rom. 16:5 And greet the church, which is in their house. Greet Epaenetus, my beloved, who is the firstfruits of Asia unto Christ.

Rom. 16:16b All the churches of Christ greet you.

II. Christ, the Spirit, life, and the church are the extracts of the Bible:

A. With Christ the emphasis is that Christ is the believers' life and is united and mingled with the believers—Col. 3:4; John 15:4-5; 1 Cor. 6:17:

Col. 3:4 When Christ our life is manifested, then you also will be manifested with Him in glory.

John 15:4 Abide in Me and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself unless it abides in the vine, so neither can you unless you abide in Me.

John 15:5 I am the vine; you are the branches. He who abides in Me and I in him, he bears much fruit; for apart from Me you can do nothing.

1 Cor. 6:17 But he who is joined to the Lord is one spirit.

1. In addition to knowing Christ as the Savior and the Redeemer, we need to know Him in a deeper way—that He is our life and that He is in us to be united and mingled with us—**Col. 3:4; 1:27; John 15:4-5.**

Col. 3:4 When Christ our life is manifested, then you also will be manifested with Him in glory.

Col. 1:27 To whom God willed to make known what are the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory,

John 15:4 Abide in Me and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself unless it abides in the vine, so neither can you unless you abide in Me.

John 15:5 I am the vine; you are the branches. He who abides in Me and I in him, he bears much fruit; for apart from Me you can do nothing.

2. Because the Lord is the Spirit, we can abide in Him and the Lord can abide in us; we coinhere with the Lord; that is, we are in Him and He is in us—**2 Cor. 3:17a; John 14:20; 17:21.**

2 Cor. 3:17a And the Lord is the Spirit;

John 14:20 In that day you will know that I am in My Father, and you in Me, and I in you.

John 17:21 That they all may be one; even as You, Father, are in Me and I in You, that they also may be in Us; that the world may believe that You have sent Me.

3. Our being united and mingled with the Lord can take place only in our regenerated spirit; hence, this mingling results in our being joined to the Lord as one spirit—**1 Cor. 6:17.**

1 Cor. 6:17 But he who is joined to the Lord is one spirit.

4. Christ is our life and our person, and He is united and mingled with us; He is also working in us to transform us until we are the same as He is in life, nature, and expression but not in the Godhead—**2 Cor. 3:18.**

2 Cor. 3:18 But we all with unveiled face, beholding and reflecting like a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, even as from the Lord Spirit.

5. He and we are one; He is the Head of the Body, and we are the members of the Body—**1 Cor. 12:12-13; Eph. 1:22-23.**

1 Cor. 12:12 For even as the body is one and has many members, yet all the members of the body, being many, are one body, so also is the Christ.

1 Cor. 12:13 For also in one Spirit we were all baptized into one Body, whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free, and were all given to drink one Spirit.

Eph. 1:22 And He subjected all things under His feet and gave Him to be Head over all things to the church,

Eph. 1:23 Which is His Body, the fullness of the One who fills all in all.

6. “O what a miracle, my Lord, / That I’m in Thee and Thou in me, / That Thou and I are really one; / O what a wondrous mystery!”—*Hymns, #233.*

- B. With the Spirit the emphasis is that the Holy Spirit of God has been compounded with Christ’s divinity, humanity, crucifixion, and resurrection to be the compound, life-giving, indwelling, sanctifying, transforming, and sevenfold intensified Spirit—**Exo. 30:23-25; 1 Cor. 15:45b; Rom. 8:11; 15:16b; 2 Cor. 3:18; Rev. 4:5:**

Exo. 30:23 You also take the finest spices: of flowing myrrh five hundred shekels, and of fragrant cinnamon half as much, two hundred fifty shekels, and of fragrant calamus two hundred fifty shekels,

Exo. 30:24 And of cassia five hundred shekels, according to the shekel of the sanctuary, and a hin of olive oil.

Exo. 30:25 And you shall make it a holy anointing oil, a fragrant ointment compounded according to the work of a compounder; it shall be a holy anointing oil.

1 Cor. 15:45b the last Adam became a life-giving Spirit.

Rom. 8:11 And if the Spirit of the One who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who indwells you.

Rom. 15:16b in order that the offering of the Gentiles might be acceptable, having been sanctified in the Holy Spirit.

2 Cor. 3:18 But we all with unveiled face, beholding and reflecting like a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, even as from the Lord Spirit.

Rev. 4:5 And out of the throne come forth lightnings and voices and thunders. And there were seven lamps of fire burning before the throne, which are the seven Spirits of God;

1. The Spirit is the consummation of the Triune God after passing through various processes; in the Spirit there are the elements of the Father, the Son, and the Spirit—**Matt. 1:18, 20; Luke 1:35; Heb. 9:14; Rom. 8:11.**

Matt. 1:18 Now the origin of Jesus Christ was in this way: His mother, Mary, after she had been engaged to Joseph, before they came together, was found to be with child of the Holy Spirit.

Matt. 1:20 But while he pondered these things, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary your wife, for that which has been begotten in her is of the Holy Spirit.

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.

Heb. 9:14 How much more will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without blemish to God, purify our conscience from dead works to serve the living God?

Rom. 8:11 And if the Spirit of the One who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who indwells you.

2. Today the Spirit is the compound Spirit (Exo. 30:23-25), compounded with the Spirit of God and Christ's two natures—the divine nature and the human nature—with His death and resurrection to be the compound, life-giving (1 Cor. 15:45b), indwelling (Rom. 8:11), sanctifying (15:16b), and transforming Spirit (2 Cor. 3:18).

Exo. 30:23 You also take the finest spices: of flowing myrrh five hundred shekels, and of fragrant cinnamon half as much, two hundred fifty shekels, and of fragrant calamus two hundred fifty shekels,

Exo. 30:24 And of cassia five hundred shekels, according to the shekel of the sanctuary, and a hin of olive oil.

Exo. 30:25 And you shall make it a holy anointing oil, a fragrant ointment compounded according to the work of a compounder; it shall be a holy anointing oil.

1 Cor. 15:45b the last Adam became a life-giving Spirit.

Rom. 8:11 And if the Spirit of the One who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who indwells you.

Rom. 15:16b in order that the offering of the Gentiles might be acceptable, having been sanctified in the Holy Spirit.

2 Cor. 3:18 But we all with unveiled face, beholding and reflecting like a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, even as from the Lord Spirit.

3. Such a Spirit has the bountiful supply and even is the bountiful supply for our experience and enjoyment—Phil. 1:19.

Phil. 1:19 For I know that for me this will turn out to salvation through your petition and the bountiful supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ,

4. Economically, the compound Spirit has become the seven Spirits of God to supply us in a sevenfold intensified way so that we may accomplish God's economy concerning the church in this age of degradation—Rev. 1:4; 3:1; 4:5; 5:6.

Rev. 1:4 John to the seven churches which are in Asia: Grace to you and peace from Him who is and who was and who is coming, and from the seven Spirits who are before His throne,

Rev. 3:1 And to the messenger of the church in Sardis write: These things says He who has the seven Spirits of God and the seven stars: I know your works, that you have a name that you are living, and yet you are dead.

Rev. 4:5 And out of the throne come forth lightnings and voices and thunders. And there were seven lamps of fire burning before the throne, which are the seven Spirits of God;

Rev. 5:6 And I saw in the midst of the throne and of the four living creatures and in the midst of the elders a Lamb standing as having just been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent forth into all the earth.

C. With life the emphasis is that God in Christ as the Spirit of reality is the believers' life so that they may live Him out as the processed Triune God—1 Cor. 1:30; John 14:17; Phil. 1:19-21a:

1 Cor. 1:30 But of Him you are in Christ Jesus, who became wisdom to us from God: both righteousness and sanctification and redemption,

John 14:17 Even the Spirit of reality, whom the world cannot receive, because it does not behold Him or know Him; but you know Him, because He abides with you and shall be in you.

Phil. 1:19 For I know that for me this will turn out to salvation through your petition and the bountiful supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ,

Phil. 1:20 According to my earnest expectation and hope that in nothing I will be put to shame, but with all boldness, as always, even now Christ will be magnified in my body, whether through life or through death.

Phil. 1:21a For to me, to live is Christ

1. Life is the Spirit, who is the Triune God Himself, and life is Christ—Rom. 8:2; John 11:25; 14:6; Col. 3:4.

Rom. 8:2 For the law of the Spirit of life has freed me in Christ Jesus from the law of sin and of death.

John 11:25 Jesus said to her, I am the resurrection and the life; he who believes into Me, even if he should die, shall live;

John 14:6 Jesus said to him, I am the way and the reality and the life; no one comes to the Father except through Me.

Col. 3:4 When Christ our life is manifested, then you also will be manifested with Him in glory.

2. God has given to us eternal life, and this life is in His Son; if we have the Son, we have the life—1 John 5:11-12.

1 John 5:11 And this is the testimony, that God gave to us eternal life and this life is in His Son.

1 John 5:12 He who has the Son has the life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have the life.

3. God in Christ has passed through His various processes and was consummated as the Spirit; now as the Spirit of reality He is life to the believers so that they may live Him out as the processed Triune God—John 7:39; 14:17, 19b.

John 7:39 But this He said concerning the Spirit, whom those who believed into Him were about to receive; for the Spirit was not yet, because Jesus had not yet been glorified.

John 14:17 Even the Spirit of reality, whom the world cannot receive, because it does not behold Him or know Him; but you know Him, because He abides with you and shall be in you.

John 14:19b because I live, you also shall live.

4. When we believed in Christ, the Son of God, He came into us to be our life and person and to live and move with us—3:15-16; Gal. 2:20.

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.

Gen. 3:16 To the woman He said, I will greatly multiply / Your pain in your childbearing; / In pain you will bring forth children. / And your desire will be to your husband, / And he will rule over you.

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.

D. With the church the emphasis is that the believers are on the ground of oneness to be the testimony of the Body of Christ—Eph. 1:23; 4:1-6:

Eph. 1:23 Which is His Body, the fullness of the One who fills all in all.

Eph. 4:1 I beseech you therefore, I, the prisoner in the Lord, to walk worthily of the calling with which you were called,

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

Eph. 4:3 Being diligent to keep the oneness of the Spirit in the uniting bond of peace:

Eph. 4:4 One Body and one Spirit, even as also you were called in one hope of your calling;

Eph. 4:5 One Lord, one faith, one baptism;

Eph. 4:6 One God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all.

1. The church is composed of a group of people who have been called out of the world by God; God has called us out of every tribe, tongue, people, and nation and has gathered us together to be the church—Matt. 16:18; 18:17; Rev. 5:9; 7:9.

Matt. 16:18 And I also say to you that you are Peter, and upon this rock I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it.

Matt. 18:17 And if he refuses to hear them, tell it to the church; and if he refuses to hear the church also, let him be to you just like the Gentile and the tax collector.

Rev. 5:9 And they sing a new song, saying: You are worthy to take the scroll and to open its seals, for You were slain and have purchased for God by Your blood men out of every tribe and tongue and people and nation,

Rev. 7:9 After these things I saw, and behold, there was a great multitude which no one could number, out of every nation and all tribes and peoples and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed in white robes and palm branches in their hands.

2. As believers in Christ, we have been begotten of God with His life and we have the divine life within us; we have been regenerated to become people of the kingdom of the heavens and brothers and sisters in His universal family—John 1:12-13; 3:3, 5, 15; Eph. 2:19.

John 1:12 But as many as received Him, to them He gave the authority to become children of God, to those who believe into His name,

John 1:13 Who were begotten not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

John 3:3 Jesus answered and said to him, Truly, truly, I say to you, Unless one is born anew, he cannot see the kingdom of God.

John 3:5 Jesus answered, Truly, truly, I say to you, Unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.

John 3:15 That everyone who believes into Him may have eternal life.

Eph. 2:19 So then you are no longer strangers and sojourners, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God,

3. The church is an entity of life, an organism, with a life and person; this life and person are the Triune God Himself, who is the element of the oneness of the church—4:3-6.

Eph. 4:3 Being diligent to keep the oneness of the Spirit in the uniting bond of peace:

Eph. 4:4 One Body and one Spirit, even as also you were called in one hope of your calling;

Eph. 4:5 One Lord, one faith, one baptism;

Eph. 4:6 One God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all.

4. The universal Body of Christ is expressed as local churches; the ground of the church is the oneness of the Body of Christ—1 Cor. 12:12-13, 27; 1:2; Eph. 1:23; 4:3-6.

1 Cor. 12:12 For even as the body is one and has many members, yet all the members of the body, being many, are one body, so also is the Christ.

1 Cor. 12:13 For also in one Spirit we were all baptized into one Body, whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free, and were all given to drink one Spirit.

1 Cor. 12:27 Now you are the Body of Christ, and members individually.

1 Cor. 1:2 To the church of God which is in Corinth, to those who have been sanctified in Christ Jesus, the called saints, with all those who call upon the name of our Lord Jesus Christ in every place, who is theirs and ours:

Eph. 1:23 Which is His Body, the fullness of the One who fills all in all.

Eph. 4:3 Being diligent to keep the oneness of the Spirit in the uniting bond of peace:

Eph. 4:4 One Body and one Spirit, even as also you were called in one hope of your calling;

Eph. 4:5 One Lord, one faith, one baptism;

Eph. 4:6 One God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all.

5. We were all baptized into one Body, and we all have one Spirit, one Lord, and one God and Father; now we must stand on the ground of oneness to be the unique testimony of the Body of Christ and to live the practical church life—1 Cor. 12:13; Eph. 4:4-6; Rev. 1:11.

1 Cor. 12:13 For also in one Spirit we were all baptized into one Body, whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free, and were all given to drink one Spirit.

Eph. 4:4 One Body and one Spirit, even as also you were called in one hope of your calling;

Eph. 4:5 One Lord, one faith, one baptism;

Eph. 4:6 One God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all.

Rev. 1:11 Saying, What you see write in a scroll and send it to the seven churches: to Ephesus and to Smyrna and to Pergamos and to Thyatira and to Sardis and to Philadelphia and to Laodicea.

III. We must develop any biblical truth in the way of Christ, the Spirit, life, and the church—2 Tim. 2:15:

2 Tim. 2:15 Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, an unashamed workman, cutting straight the word of the truth.

- A. Any message or development of the truth in the Bible without Christ, the Spirit, life, and the church is an empty shell with no content—1 Tim. 1:6-7.

1 Tim. 1:6 From which things some, having misaimed, have turned aside to vain talking,

1 Tim. 1:7 Desiring to be teachers of the law, though they understand neither the things that they say, nor concerning what they confidently affirm.

- B. It is always safe to develop a biblical truth in the way of Christ, the Spirit, life, and the church; for example, we should develop the truth concerning holiness with Christ, the Spirit, life, and the church—1 Cor. 1:30; Rom. 6:22; Eph. 5:26.

1 Cor. 1:30 But of Him you are in Christ Jesus, who became wisdom to us from God: both righteousness and sanctification and redemption,

Rom. 6:22 But now, having been freed from sin and enslaved to God, you have your fruit unto sanctification, and the end, eternal life.

Eph. 5:26 That He might sanctify her, cleansing her by the washing of the water in the word,

Message Two

The All-inclusive Christ in the Gospel of Matthew

Scripture Reading: Matt. 1:1; 16:16; 4:16; 9:12, 15-17, 36, 38; 15:26-27; 28:18-19

Matt. 1:1 The book of the generation of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham:

Matt. 16:16 And Simon Peter answered and said, You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.

Matt. 4:16 The people sitting in darkness have seen a great light; and to those sitting in the region and shadow of death, to them light has risen.”

Matt. 9:12 Now when He heard this, He said, Those who are strong have no need of a physician, but those who are ill.

Matt. 9:15 And Jesus said to them, The sons of the bridechamber cannot mourn as long as the bridegroom is with them, can they? But days will come when the bridegroom will be taken away from them, and then they will fast.

Matt. 9:16 No one puts a patch of unfulled cloth on an old garment, for that which fills it up pulls away from the garment, and a worse tear is made.

Matt. 9:17 Neither do they put new wine into old wineskins; otherwise, the wineskins burst, and the wine pours out, and the wineskins are ruined; but they put new wine into fresh wineskins, and both are preserved.

Matt. 9:36 And seeing the crowds, He was moved with compassion for them, because they were harassed and cast away like sheep not having a shepherd.

Matt. 9:38 Therefore beseech the Lord of the harvest that He would thrust out workers into His harvest.

Matt. 15:26 But He answered and said, It is not good to take the children’s bread and throw it to the little dogs.

Matt. 15:27 And she said, Yes, Lord, for even the little dogs eat of the crumbs which fall from their masters’ table.

Matt. 28:18 And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth.

Matt. 28:19 Go therefore and disciple all the nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit

I. Christ is the son of David and the son of Abraham—Matt. 1:1:

Matt. 1:1 The book of the generation of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham:

- A. Solomon, the son of David, is a type of Christ inheriting the kingdom (2 Sam. 7:12b, 13b; Jer. 23:5; Luke 1:32-33), having wisdom and speaking the word of wisdom (Matt. 12:42), and building the temple of God (2 Sam. 7:13a).

2 Sam. 7:12b I will raise up your seed after you, which will come forth from your body, and I will establish his kingdom.

2 Sam. 7:13b and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever.

Jer. 23:5 Indeed, days are coming, / Declares Jehovah, / When I will raise up to David a righteous Shoot; / And He will reign as King and act prudently / And will execute justice and righteousness in the land.

Luke 1:32 He will be great and will be called Son of the Most High; and the Lord God will give to Him the throne of David His father,

Luke 1:33 And He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of His kingdom there will be no end.

Matt. 12:42 The queen of the south will rise up in the judgment with this generation and will condemn it, because she came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon, and behold, something more than Solomon is here.

2 Sam. 7:13a It is he who will build a house for My name,

- B. Isaac, the son of Abraham, is a type of Christ as the promised One who brought the blessing to all the nations (Gen. 22:18; Gal. 3:16, 14), who was offered to God unto death and was resurrected (Gen. 22:1-12; Heb. 11:17, 19), and who will receive the bride (Gen. 24:67; John 3:29; Rev. 19:7).

Gen. 22:18 And in your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed, because you have obeyed My voice.

Gal. 3:16 But to Abraham were the promises spoken and to his seed. He does not say, “And to the seeds,” as concerning many, but as concerning one: “And to your seed,” who is Christ.

Gal. 3:14 In order that the blessing of Abraham might come to the Gentiles in Christ Jesus, that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.

Gen. 22:1 Now after these things God tested Abraham and said to him, Abraham. And he said, Here I am.

Gen. 22:2 And He said, Take now your son, your only son, whom you love, Isaac, and go to the land of Moriah, and offer him there as a burnt offering on one of the mountains of which I will tell you.

Gen. 22:3 And Abraham rose early in the morning and saddled his donkey and took two of his young men with him and Isaac his son. And he split the wood for the burnt offering and rose up and went to the place of which God had told him.

Gen. 22:4 On the third day Abraham lifted up his eyes and saw the place from afar.

Gen. 22:5 And Abraham said to his young men, Stay here with the donkey; and I and the boy will go over there, and we will worship, and then we will return to you.

Gen. 22:6 And Abraham took the wood for the burnt offering and laid it upon Isaac his son. And he took in his hand the fire and the knife. And the two of them walked together.

Gen. 22:7 And Isaac spoke to Abraham his father and said, My father! And he said, Here I am, my son. And he said, The fire and the wood are here, but where is the lamb for a burnt offering?

Gen. 22:8 And Abraham said, God Himself will provide the lamb for a burnt offering, my son. So the two of them walked on together.

Gen. 22:9 And they came to the place of which God had told him. And Abraham built the altar there and laid the wood in order and bound Isaac his son and laid him on the altar on top of the wood.

Gen. 22:10 And Abraham stretched out his hand and took the knife to slaughter his son.

Gen. 22:11 And the Angel of Jehovah called to him from the heavens and said, Abraham, Abraham. And he said, Here I am.

Gen. 22:12 And He said, Do not stretch out your hand upon the boy, nor do anything to him; for now I know that you fear God, since

you have not withheld your son, your only son, from Me.

Heb. 11:17 By faith Abraham, being tested, offered up Isaac; indeed he who gladly received the promises was offering up his only begotten,

Heb. 11:19 Counting that God was able to raise men even from the dead, from which he also received him back in figure.

Gen. 24:67 And Isaac brought her into the tent of Sarah his mother. And he took Rebekah, and she became his wife, and he loved her. And Isaac was comforted after the death of his mother.

John 3:29 He who has the bride is the bridegroom; but the friend of the bridegroom, who stands and hears him, rejoices with joy because of the bridegroom's voice. This joy of mine therefore is made full.

Rev. 19:7 Let us rejoice and exult, and let us give the glory to Him, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and His wife has made herself ready.

II. Christ is the heavenly King—Matt. 2:1-2; 21:5:

Matt. 2:1 Now after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, behold, magi from the east arrived in Jerusalem,

Matt. 2:2 Saying, Where is He who has been born King of the Jews? For we saw His star at its rising and have come to worship Him.

Matt. 21:5 "Say to the daughter of Zion, Behold, your King is coming to you, meek and mounted on a donkey, and on a colt, a foal of a beast of burden."

A. Matthew proves that Jesus is the King, the Messiah prophesied in the Old Testament—1:1, 17; 2:1-2; 27:11, 37.

Matt. 1:1 The book of the generation of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham:

Matt. 1:17 Thus all the generations from Abraham until David are fourteen generations, and from David until the deportation to Babylon, fourteen generations, and from the deportation to Babylon until the Christ, fourteen generations.

Matt. 2:1 Now after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, behold, magi from the east arrived in Jerusalem,

Matt. 2:2 Saying, Where is He who has been born King of the Jews? For we saw His star at its rising and have come to worship Him.

Matt. 27:11 And Jesus stood before the governor, and the governor questioned Him, saying, Are You the King of the Jews? And Jesus said, It is as you say.

Matt. 27:37 And they set in writing over His head the charge against Him: THIS IS JESUS, THE KING OF THE JEWS.

B. The heavenly King did not come with haughty splendor but with gentle, humble meekness—21:5.

Matt. 21:5 "Say to the daughter of Zion, Behold, your King is coming to you, meek and mounted on a donkey, and on a colt, a foal of a beast of burden."

III. The Lord Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God—16:16:

Matt. 16:16 And Simon Peter answered and said, You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.

A. The Christ refers to the anointed One of God and speaks of the Lord's commission to accomplish God's eternal purpose through His crucifixion, resurrection, ascension, and second coming—vv. 21, 27.

Matt. 16:21 From that time Jesus began to show to His disciples that He must go to Jerusalem and suffer many things from the elders and chief priests and scribes and be killed and on the third day be raised.

Matt. 16:27 For the Son of Man is to come in the glory of His Father with His angels, and then He will repay each man according to his doings.

B. The Son of the living God speaks of His person, which embodies the Father and consummates in the Spirit for a full expression of the Triune God—John 14:10-11a; 1 Cor. 15:45b.

John 14:10 Do you not believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in Me? The words that I say to you I do not speak from Myself, but the Father who abides in Me does His works.

John 14:11a Believe Me that I am in the Father and the Father is in Me;

1 Cor. 15:45b the last Adam became a life-giving Spirit.

IV. Christ is the Son of Man—Matt. 8:20; 11:19; 13:37; 16:13:

Matt. 8:20 And Jesus said to him, The foxes have holes, and the birds of heaven have roosts, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay His head.

Matt. 11:19 The Son of Man came eating and drinking; and they say, Behold, a gluttonous man and a drunkard, a friend of tax collectors and sinners. Yet wisdom is justified by her works.

Matt. 13:37 And He answered and said, He who sows the good seed is the Son of Man;

Matt. 16:13 Now when Jesus came into the parts of Caesarea Philippi, He asked His disciples, saying, Who do men say that the Son of Man is?

A. Christ is the man who brings God's dominion to earth and makes God's name excellent on earth—9:6; 12:8; 13:41; 16:27-28.

Matt. 9:6 But that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins—then He said to the paralytic, Rise, take up your bed and go to your house.

Matt. 12:8 For the Son of Man is Lord of the Sabbath.

Matt. 13:41 The Son of Man will send His angels, and they will collect out of His kingdom all the stumbling blocks and those who

practice lawlessness,

Matt. 16:27 For the Son of Man is to come in the glory of His Father with His angels, and then He will repay each man according to his doings.

Matt. 16:28 Truly I say to you, There are some of those standing here who shall by no means taste death until they see the Son of Man coming in His kingdom.

- B. In order for the kingdom of the heavens to be established, the Lord Jesus stood as a victorious man—a man who could defeat Satan and withstand any hardship, opposition, or attack—4:4; 12:40; 26:64.

Matt. 4:4 But He answered and said, It is written, “Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that proceeds out through the mouth of God.”

Matt. 12:40 For just as Jonah was in the belly of the great fish three days and three nights, so will the Son of Man be in the heart of the earth three days and three nights.

Matt. 26:64 Jesus said to him, You have said rightly. Nevertheless I say to you, From now on you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of Power and coming on the clouds of heaven.

V. Christ is the Baptizer—3:11:

Matt. 3:11 I baptize you in water unto repentance, but He who is coming after me is stronger than I, whose sandals I am not worthy to carry. He Himself will baptize you in the Holy Spirit and fire,

- A. The Lord’s baptism in the Holy Spirit, which is based on His redemption, initiated the kingdom of the heavens, bringing His believers into the kingdom of the heavens—v. 12a.

Matt. 3:12a Whose winnowing fan is in His hand. And He will thoroughly cleanse His threshing floor and will gather His wheat into the barn,

- B. The Lord’s baptism in fire, which is based on His judgment, will conclude the kingdom of the heavens, putting the unbelievers into the lake of fire—v. 12b.

Matt. 3:12b but the chaff He will burn up with unquenchable fire.

VI. Christ is the light of life shining in the darkness of death—4:12-16:

Matt. 4:12 Now when He heard that John was delivered up, He withdrew into Galilee.

Matt. 4:13 And leaving Nazareth, He came and dwelt in Capernaum, which is beside the sea in the borders of Zebulun and Naphtali,

Matt. 4:14 In order that what was spoken through Isaiah the prophet might be fulfilled, saying,

Matt. 4:15 “Land of Zebulun and land of Naphtali, the way to the sea, beyond the Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles:

Matt. 4:16 The people sitting in darkness have seen a great light; and to those sitting in the region and shadow of death, to them light has risen.”

- A. Christ’s ministry for the kingdom of the heavens began not with earthly power but with heavenly light.
- B. The Lord Jesus attracted the disciples to Himself as the great light for the establishment of the kingdom of the heavens.

VII. Christ is the Physician and the Bridegroom—9:9-15:

Matt. 9:9 And as Jesus passed on from there, He saw a man sitting at the tax office, called Matthew, and He said to him, Follow Me. And he rose and followed Him.

Matt. 9:10 And as He was reclining at table in the house, behold, many tax collectors and sinners came and reclined together with Jesus and His disciples.

Matt. 9:11 And when the Pharisees saw it, they said to His disciples, Why does your Teacher eat with the tax collectors and sinners?

Matt. 9:12 Now when He heard this, He said, Those who are strong have no need of a physician, but those who are ill.

Matt. 9:13 But go and learn what this means, “I desire mercy and not sacrifice,” for I did not come to call the righteous, but sinners.

Matt. 9:14 Then the disciples of John came to Him, saying, Why do we and the Pharisees fast much, but Your disciples do not fast?

Matt. 9:15 And Jesus said to them, The sons of the bridechamber cannot mourn as long as the bridegroom is with them, can they? But days will come when the bridegroom will be taken away from them, and then they will fast.

- A. He came as a Physician to heal and enliven us so that we might be reconstituted to be citizens of the kingdom of the heavens—vv. 9-13.

Matt. 9:9 And as Jesus passed on from there, He saw a man sitting at the tax office, called Matthew, and He said to him, Follow Me. And he rose and followed Him.

Matt. 9:10 And as He was reclining at table in the house, behold, many tax collectors and sinners came and reclined together with Jesus and His disciples.

Matt. 9:11 And when the Pharisees saw it, they said to His disciples, Why does your Teacher eat with the tax collectors and sinners?

Matt. 9:12 Now when He heard this, He said, Those who are strong have no need of a physician, but those who are ill.

Matt. 9:13 But go and learn what this means, “I desire mercy and not sacrifice,” for I did not come to call the righteous, but sinners.

- B. We need to appreciate Him as the Bridegroom that we might have the enjoyment of living in

His presence—vv. 14-15.

Matt. 9:14 Then the disciples of John came to Him, saying, Why do we and the Pharisees fast much, but Your disciples do not fast?

Matt. 9:15 And Jesus said to them, The sons of the bridechamber cannot mourn as long as the bridegroom is with them, can they? But days will come when the bridegroom will be taken away from them, and then they will fast.

VIII. Christ is the unfulled cloth for making a new garment—v. 16; Luke 5:36:

Matt. 9:16 No one puts a patch of unfulled cloth on an old garment, for that which fills it up pulls away from the garment, and a worse tear is made.

Luke 5:36 And He also spoke a parable to them: No one tears a patch from a new garment and puts it on an old garment; otherwise, he will tear the new garment, and also the patch from the new will not match the old.

- A. From His incarnation to His crucifixion, He was the unfulled cloth for making a new garment.
- B. Through His death and resurrection, Christ was made a new garment to cover us as our righteousness before God that we might be justified by God and be acceptable to Him—15:22; Gal. 3:27; 1 Cor. 1:30.

Matt. 15:22 And behold, a Canaanite woman came out from those borders and cried out, saying, Have mercy on me, Lord, Son of David! My daughter suffers terribly from demon possession.

Gal. 3:27 For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ.

1 Cor. 1:30 But of Him you are in Christ Jesus, who became wisdom to us from God: both righteousness and sanctification and redemption,

IX. The individual Christ is the new wine, and the corporate Christ is the fresh wineskin—Matt. 9:17:

Matt. 9:17 Neither do they put new wine into old wineskins; otherwise, the wineskins burst, and the wine pours out, and the wineskins are ruined; but they put new wine into fresh wineskins, and both are preserved.

- A. The new wine signifies Christ as the new life, full of vigor and cheering strength, stirring us to excitement and satisfying us.
- B. The fresh wineskin signifies the corporate Christ, the outward container that holds the new wine—1 Cor. 12:12.

1 Cor. 12:12 For even as the body is one and has many members, yet all the members of the body, being many, are one body, so also is the Christ.

X. Christ is the Shepherd—Matt. 9:36:

Matt. 9:36 And seeing the crowds, He was moved with compassion for them, because they were harassed and cast away like sheep not having a shepherd.

- A. In verse 36 harassed refers to the sheep's being skinned by cruel shepherds and thus suffering pain, and cast away refers to the sheep's being abandoned by wicked shepherds and falling into a distressed condition in which they are homeless and helpless.
- B. In His ministry for the establishing of His heavenly kingdom, the Lord Jesus ministered as a Shepherd—v. 36.

Matt. 9:36 And seeing the crowds, He was moved with compassion for them, because they were harassed and cast away like sheep not having a shepherd.

XI. Christ is the Lord of the harvest—vv. 37-38:

Matt. 9:37 Then He said to His disciples, The harvest is great, but the workers few;

Matt. 9:38 Therefore beseech the Lord of the harvest that He would thrust out workers into His harvest.

- A. As the Lord of the harvest, the Lord who owns the crop, Christ establishes His kingdom with things of life that can grow and multiply—v. 38.

Matt. 9:38 Therefore beseech the Lord of the harvest that He would thrust out workers into His harvest.

- B. If we see the vision of Christ as the Lord of the harvest, we will beseech Him to thrust out workers into His harvest—vv. 37-38.

Matt. 9:37 Then He said to His disciples, The harvest is great, but the workers few;

Matt. 9:38 Therefore beseech the Lord of the harvest that He would thrust out workers into His harvest.

XII. Christ is the Friend of sinners and the wisdom of God—11:19:

Matt. 11:19 The Son of Man came eating and drinking; and they say, Behold, a gluttonous man and a drunkard, a friend of tax collectors and sinners. Yet wisdom is justified by her works.

- A. As the Friend of sinners, Christ sympathizes with their problems and senses their grief—v. 19a.

Matt. 11:19a The Son of Man came eating and drinking; and they say, Behold, a gluttonous man and a drunkard, a friend of tax collectors and sinners.

- B. Whatever Christ did was done by the wisdom of God, which is Himself; this wisdom was vindicated by His wise works—v. 19b; 1 Cor. 1:24, 30.

Matt. 11:19b Yet wisdom is justified by her works.

1 Cor. 1:24 But to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God.

1 Cor. 1:30 But of Him you are in Christ Jesus, who became wisdom to us from God: both righteousness and sanctification and redemption,

XIII. Christ is the One who gives rest—Matt. 11:28-30:

Matt. 11:28 Come to Me all who toil and are burdened, and I will give you rest.

Matt. 11:29 Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am meek and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.

Matt. 11:30 For My yoke is easy and My burden is light.

- A. To take the Lord's yoke is to take the will of the Father and to be constrained by the will of the Father—v. 29; John 4:34; 5:30; 6:38.

Matt. 11:29 Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am meek and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.

John 4:34 Jesus said to them, My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me and to finish His work.

John 5:30 I can do nothing from Myself; as I hear, I judge, and My judgment is just, because I do not seek My own will but the will of Him who sent Me.

John 6:38 For I have come down from heaven not to do My own will but the will of Him who sent Me.

- B. Because the Lord was always satisfied with the Father's will, He always had rest in His heart; now He asks us to learn from Him—Matt. 11:28-30.

Matt. 11:28 Come to Me all who toil and are burdened, and I will give you rest.

Matt. 11:29 Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am meek and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.

Matt. 11:30 For My yoke is easy and My burden is light.

XIV. Christ as the Son of Man is Lord of the Sabbath—12:8:

Matt. 12:8 For the Son of Man is Lord of the Sabbath.

- A. As the Lord of the Sabbath, He had the right to change the regulations concerning the Sabbath.
- B. He was above all rituals and regulations; He could do whatever He liked on the Sabbath, and whatever He did was justified by Himself.

XV. Christ is greater than the temple—v. 6:

Matt. 12:6 But I say to you that something greater than the temple is here.

- A. In verse 6 we have a type-fulfilling turn from the temple to a person who is greater than the temple.
- B. Since the priests were guiltless in acting on the Sabbath in the temple, the Lord's disciples were guiltless in acting on the Sabbath in Christ, who is greater than the temple.

XVI. Christ is the greater Jonah—vv. 39-41; 16:4:

Matt. 12:39 But He answered and said to them, An evil and adulterous generation seeks after a sign, and a sign shall not be given to it except the sign of Jonah the prophet.

Matt. 12:40 For just as Jonah was in the belly of the great fish three days and three nights, so will the Son of Man be in the heart of the earth three days and three nights.

Matt. 12:41 Ninevite men will stand up in the judgment with this generation and will condemn it, because they repented at the preaching of Jonah, and behold, something more than Jonah is here.

Matt. 16:4 An evil and adulterous generation seeks after a sign, and a sign shall not be given to it, except the sign of Jonah. And He left them and went away.

- A. Jonah is a type of Christ in His death, burial, and resurrection—12:39-41.

Matt. 12:39 But He answered and said to them, An evil and adulterous generation seeks after a sign, and a sign shall not be given to it except the sign of Jonah the prophet.

Matt. 12:40 For just as Jonah was in the belly of the great fish three days and three nights, so will the Son of Man be in the heart of the earth three days and three nights.

Matt. 12:41 Ninevite men will stand up in the judgment with this generation and will condemn it, because they repented at the preaching of Jonah, and behold, something more than Jonah is here.

- B. For the evil and adulterous Jewish and religious generation, the Lord Jesus would do nothing but die and be resurrected as the greatest sign to them that they might be saved if they would believe—16:4.

Matt. 16:4 An evil and adulterous generation seeks after a sign, and a sign shall not be given to it, except the sign of Jonah. And He left them and went away.

XVII. Christ is the greater Solomon—12:42:

Matt. 12:42 The queen of the south will rise up in the judgment with this generation and will condemn it, because she came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon, and behold, something more than Solomon is here.

- A. Solomon is a type of Christ, the King, who is building the church, making it the temple of God—1 Kings 6:2; 1 Cor. 3:16-17; Eph. 2:21.

1 Kings 6:2 And the house which King Solomon built to Jehovah was sixty cubits long and twenty cubits wide and thirty cubits high.

1 Cor. 3:16 Do you not know that you are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwells in you?

1 Cor. 3:17 If anyone destroys the temple of God, God will destroy him; for the temple of God is holy, and such are you.

Eph. 2:21 In whom all the building, being fitted together, is growing into a holy temple in the Lord;

- B. According to spiritual significance, Christ as the greater Jonah precedes Christ as the greater Solomon, for first He had to die and be resurrected and then build the church as the temple of God—Matt. 16:18, 21.

Matt. 16:18 And I also say to you that you are Peter, and upon this rock I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it.

Matt. 16:21 From that time Jesus began to show to His disciples that He must go to Jerusalem and suffer many things from the elders and chief priests and scribes and be killed and on the third day be raised.

XVIII. Christ is the One who found a treasure hidden in the field, and He is the merchant seeking fine pearls—13:44-46:

Matt. 13:44 The kingdom of the heavens is like a treasure hidden in the field, which a man found and hid, and in his joy goes and sells all that he has, and buys that field.

Matt. 13:45 Again, the kingdom of the heavens is like a merchant seeking fine pearls;

Matt. 13:46 And finding one pearl of great value, he went and sold all that he had and bought it.

- A. Christ found the kingdom of the heavens, and in His joy He went to the cross to sell all that He had to buy the field, that is, redeem the created and lost earth, for the kingdom—v. 44.

Matt. 13:44 The kingdom of the heavens is like a treasure hidden in the field, which a man found and hid, and in his joy goes and sells all that he has, and buys that field.

- B. Christ was seeking the church for His kingdom, and He went to the cross and sold all that He had and bought it for the kingdom—vv. 45-46.

Matt. 13:45 Again, the kingdom of the heavens is like a merchant seeking fine pearls;

Matt. 13:46 And finding one pearl of great value, he went and sold all that he had and bought it.

XIX. Christ is the bread and the crumbs under the table—15:21-38:

Matt. 15:21 And Jesus went from there and withdrew into the parts of Tyre and Sidon.

Matt. 15:22 And behold, a Canaanite woman came out from those borders and cried out, saying, Have mercy on me, Lord, Son of David! My daughter suffers terribly from demon possession.

Matt. 15:23 But He did not answer her a word. And His disciples came and implored Him, saying, Send her away, for she is crying out after us.

Matt. 15:24 But He answered and said, I was not sent except to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.

Matt. 15:25 But she came and worshipped Him, saying, Lord, help me!

Matt. 15:26 But He answered and said, It is not good to take the children's bread and throw it to the little dogs.

Matt. 15:27 And she said, Yes, Lord, for even the little dogs eat of the crumbs which fall from their masters' table.

Matt. 15:28 Then Jesus answered and said to her, O woman, great is your faith! Be it done to you as you wish. And her daughter was healed from that hour.

Matt. 15:29 And Jesus departed from there and came beside the Sea of Galilee; and He went up to the mountain and sat there.

Matt. 15:30 And great crowds came to Him, having with them the lame, the blind, the crippled, the dumb, and many other sick ones; and they laid them at His feet, and He healed them,

Matt. 15:31 So that the crowd marveled, because they saw the dumb speaking, the crippled healthy and the lame walking, and the blind seeing. And they glorified the God of Israel.

Matt. 15:32 And Jesus called His disciples to Him and said, I am moved with compassion for the crowd, because for three days now they have remained with Me and they do not have anything to eat. And I am not willing to send them away hungry, lest they faint on the way.

Matt. 15:33 And the disciples said to Him, Where can we get so many loaves in this desolate place to satisfy so great a crowd?

Matt. 15:34 And Jesus said to them, How many loaves do you have? And they said, Seven, and a few small fish.

Matt. 15:35 And after He commanded the crowd to recline on the ground,

Matt. 15:36 He took the seven loaves and the fish, and giving thanks, He broke them and gave them to the disciples, and the disciples

to the crowds.

Matt. 15:37 And they all ate and were satisfied. And they took up what was left over of the broken pieces, seven baskets full.

Matt. 15:38 And those who ate were four thousand men, apart from women and children.

- A. God's economy is not a matter of outward things but of Christ coming into us as food—vv. 26, 34, 36.

Matt. 15:26 But He answered and said, It is not good to take the children's bread and throw it to the little dogs.

Matt. 15:34 And Jesus said to them, How many loaves do you have? And they said, Seven, and a few small fish.

Matt. 15:36 He took the seven loaves and the fish, and giving thanks, He broke them and gave them to the disciples, and the disciples to the crowds.

- B. We need to take in the edible Christ by eating Him as bread, even as the crumbs under the table—v. 27.

Matt. 15:27 And she said, Yes, Lord, for even the little dogs eat of the crumbs which fall from their masters' table.

XX. Christ in His humanity is the resurrected One with all authority in heaven and on earth—28:18-19:

Matt. 28:18 And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth.

Matt. 28:19 Go therefore and disciple all the nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit

- A. In His humanity, as the Son of Man and the heavenly King, all authority was given to Christ after His resurrection—v. 18.

Matt. 28:18 And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth.

- B. Because the Gospel of Matthew is concerned for the kingdom and the kingdom requires authority, in Matthew Christ's resurrection is a matter of authority for discipling the nations—v. 19.

Matt. 28:19 Go therefore and disciple all the nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit

Message Three

Experiencing the Indwelling Christ

Scripture Reading: John 14:16-18, 20; Rom. 8:9-10; Gal. 2:20a; 4:19; Eph. 3:17a

John 14:16 And I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Comforter, that He may be with you forever,
John 14:17 Even the Spirit of reality, whom the world cannot receive, because it does not behold Him or know Him; but you know Him, because He abides with you and shall be in you.
John 14:18 I will not leave you as orphans; I am coming to you.
John 14:20 In that day you will know that I am in My Father, and you in Me, and I in you.
Rom. 8:9 But you are not in the flesh, but in the spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you. Yet if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he is not of Him.
Rom. 8:10 But if Christ is in you, though the body is dead because of sin, the spirit is life because of righteousness.
Gal. 2:20a I am crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but it is Christ who lives in me;
Gal. 4:19 My children, with whom I travail again in birth until Christ is formed in you,
Eph. 3:17a That Christ may make His home in your hearts through faith,

I. Christ is a mystery, and His indwelling is also a mystery—Col. 1:27:

Col. 1:27 To whom God willed to make known what are the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory,

- A. Christ's indwelling is very real and intimate because it takes place within us and is intimately related to us—John 14:20; Eph. 3:17a.

John 14:20 In that day you will know that I am in My Father, and you in Me, and I in you.
Eph. 3:17a That Christ may make His home in your hearts through faith,

- B. The experience of the indwelling Christ is a real and subjective matter—Rom. 8:10; 2 Cor. 13:5; Gal. 4:19.

Rom. 8:10 But if Christ is in you, though the body is dead because of sin, the spirit is life because of righteousness.
2 Cor. 13:5 Test yourselves whether you are in the faith; prove yourselves. Or do you not realize about yourselves that Jesus Christ is in you, unless you are disappointed?
Gal. 4:19 My children, with whom I travail again in birth until Christ is formed in you,

II. While the Lord Jesus was on earth, He was the Comforter outside His disciples, but after His resurrection He became the Comforter inside His disciples—John 14:16-18, 20:

John 14:16 And I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Comforter, that He may be with you forever,
John 14:17 Even the Spirit of reality, whom the world cannot receive, because it does not behold Him or know Him; but you know Him, because He abides with you and shall be in you.
John 14:18 I will not leave you as orphans; I am coming to you.
John 14:20 In that day you will know that I am in My Father, and you in Me, and I in you.

- A. The Greek word for Comforter means "advocate," "one alongside who takes care of our cause, our affairs."
B. While the Lord Jesus was on earth, He was with His disciples in an outward way as a tender, caring Comforter; although His physical presence with the disciples was wonderful, He could be with them only in an outward way since He was still in the flesh, limited by space and time—v. 16.

John 14:16 And I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Comforter, that He may be with you forever,

- C. In order to be the indwelling Comforter, the Comforter inside the disciples, it was necessary for the Lord Jesus to pass through death and enter into resurrection to become the Spirit of reality, the life-giving Spirit—v. 17; 1 Cor. 15:45b:

John 14:17 Even the Spirit of reality, whom the world cannot receive, because it does not behold Him or know Him; but you know Him, because He abides with you and shall be in you.
1 Cor. 15:45b the last Adam became a life-giving Spirit.

1. The most precious result of our faith in Christ is that we receive Christ into us; He is now able to enter into us to be with us at any time and in any place as the Comforter within us—John 1:12-13; 3:15; 14:16-17.

John 1:12 But as many as received Him, to them He gave the authority to become children of God, to those who believe into His name,
John 1:13 Who were begotten not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.
John 3:15 That everyone who believes into Him may have eternal life.

John 14:16 And I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Comforter, that He may be with you forever,
John 14:17 Even the Spirit of reality, whom the world cannot receive, because it does not behold Him or know Him; but you know Him, because He abides with you and shall be in you.

2. The “He” who is the Spirit of reality in verse 17 becomes the “I” who is the Lord Himself in verse 18; this means that the Christ who was in the flesh went through death and resurrection to become the life-giving Spirit, the pneumatic Christ—1 Cor. 15:45b; 2 Cor. 3:17a.

1 Cor. 15:45b the last Adam became a life-giving Spirit.

2 Cor. 3:17a And the Lord is the Spirit;

- D. The Gospel of John reveals that Christ became flesh to be the Lamb of God and that in resurrection He became the life-giving Spirit, another Comforter, to breathe Himself into the disciples—1:14, 29; 14:16-17; 20:22:

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 1:29 The next day he saw Jesus coming to him and said, Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!

John 14:16 And I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Comforter, that He may be with you forever,

John 14:17 Even the Spirit of reality, whom the world cannot receive, because it does not behold Him or know Him; but you know Him, because He abides with you and shall be in you.

John 20:22 And when He had said this, He breathed into them and said to them, Receive the Holy Spirit.

1. It is as the Spirit that He was breathed into His disciples and that He can live in them and they can live because of Him—14:19-20.

John 14:19 Yet a little while and the world beholds Me no longer, but you behold Me; because I live, you also shall live.

John 14:20 In that day you will know that I am in My Father, and you in Me, and I in you.

2. The Holy Spirit in 20:22 is actually the resurrected Christ Himself, because this Spirit is His breath; the Spirit is the breath of the resurrected Christ.

John 20:22 And when He had said this, He breathed into them and said to them, Receive the Holy Spirit.

III. As the subject of Romans, the gospel of God concerns Christ as the Spirit living within the believers after His resurrection—1:1, 3-4:

Rom. 1:1 Paul, a slave of Christ Jesus, a called apostle, separated unto the gospel of God,

Rom. 1:3 Concerning His Son, who came out of the seed of David according to the flesh,

Rom. 1:4 Who was designated the Son of God in power according to the Spirit of holiness out of the resurrection of the dead, Jesus Christ our Lord;

- A. Christ has resurrected and has become the life-giving Spirit; He is no longer merely the Christ outside the believers but the Christ within them—8:9-10.

Rom. 8:9 But you are not in the flesh, but in the spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you. Yet if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he is not of Him.

Rom. 8:10 But if Christ is in you, though the body is dead because of sin, the spirit is life because of righteousness.

- B. The gospel in the Epistle to the Romans is the gospel of the One who is now indwelling His believers as their subjective Savior—1:1, 3-4; 8:10; 5:10.

Rom. 1:1 Paul, a slave of Christ Jesus, a called apostle, separated unto the gospel of God,

Rom. 1:3 Concerning His Son, who came out of the seed of David according to the flesh,

Rom. 1:4 Who was designated the Son of God in power according to the Spirit of holiness out of the resurrection of the dead, Jesus Christ our Lord;

Rom. 8:10 But if Christ is in you, though the body is dead because of sin, the spirit is life because of righteousness.

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,

IV. The apostle Paul is a pattern of a believer who experienced the indwelling Christ—1 Tim. 1:16:

1 Tim. 1:16 But because of this I was shown mercy, that in me, the foremost, Jesus Christ might display all His long-suffering for a pattern to those who are to believe on Him unto eternal life.

- A. “It pleased God...to reveal His Son in me”—Gal. 1:15a, 16a:

Gal. 1:15a But when it pleased God,

Gal. 1:16a To reveal His Son in me that I might announce Him as the gospel among the Gentiles,

1. To reveal the Son of God brings pleasure to God; nothing is more pleasing to God than the unveiling of the living person of the Son of God.
2. We need to be brought into a state where we are full of the revelation of the Son of God

and thereby become a new creation with Christ living in us.

B. “I am crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but it is Christ who lives in me”—
2:20a:

Gal. 2:20a I am crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but it is Christ who lives in me;

1. Paul did not say that the life of Christ lived in him but that Christ, the person, lived in him.
2. God’s economy is that the “I” be crucified in Christ’s death and that Christ live in us in His resurrection.

C. “My children, with whom I travail again in birth until Christ is formed in you”—4:19:

Gal. 4:19 My children, with whom I travail again in birth until Christ is formed in you,

1. To have Christ formed in us is to have Christ grown in us in full.
2. Christ has been born into us, He is now living in us in our Christian life, and He will be formed in us at our maturity.

D. “As many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ”—3:27:

Gal. 3:27 For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ.

1. To be baptized is to be immersed into the reality of the person of Christ.
2. We have put on the pneumatic Christ as our clothing; this means that, as our person, Christ is not only our inner being but also our outward expression.

E. “That Christ may make His home in your hearts through faith”—Eph. 3:17a:

Eph. 3:17a That Christ may make His home in your hearts through faith,

1. God the Father is exercising His authority through God the Spirit to strengthen us into the inner man that God the Son may make His home deep downward in our hearts.
2. If we allow Christ to have all the room within us and if we give Him the full right and full liberty to do whatever He wants within us, then our heart will become His home.

F. “God is my witness how I long after you all in the inward parts of Christ Jesus”—Phil. 1:8:

Phil. 1:8 For God is my witness how I long after you all in the inward parts of Christ Jesus.

1. Paul did not live in his natural inner being; he lived a life in the inward parts of Christ, experienced Christ in His inward parts, and was one with Christ in His inward parts.
2. Paul did not keep his own inward parts but took Christ’s inward parts as his; Paul’s inner being was reconstituted with the inward parts of Christ.

G. “Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus”—2:5:

Phil. 2:5 Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus,

1. To let Christ’s mind be in us is to allow the indwelling Christ to live in us by denying our natural mind and taking His mind.
2. If we want to experience the indwelling Christ and live Him, we need to deny our mind and have our mind replaced by the mind of Christ—1:21a.

Phil. 1:21a For to me, to live is Christ

H. “For also what I have forgiven, if I have forgiven anything, it is for your sake in the person of Christ”—2 Cor. 2:10b:

2 Cor. 2:10b for also what I have forgiven, if I have forgiven anything, it is for your sake in the person of Christ;

1. Paul lived Christ in the closest and most intimate contact with Him, acting according to the index of His eyes.
2. Paul was a person who was one with Christ, full of Christ, and saturated with Christ; he truly experienced the indwelling Christ—Col. 3:11.

Col. 3:11 Where there cannot be Greek and Jew, circumcision and uncircumcision, barbarian, Scythian, slave, free man, but Christ is all and in all.

Message Four

The Spirit

Scripture Reading: John 7:37-39; 1 Cor. 15:45b; Rom. 8:16;
1 Cor. 6:17; Rev. 1:4; 4:5; 5:6; 22:17a

John 7:37 Now on the last day, the great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried out, saying, If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink.

John 7:38 He who believes into Me, as the Scripture said, out of his innermost being shall flow rivers of living water.

John 7:39 But this He said concerning the Spirit, whom those who believed into Him were about to receive; for the Spirit was not yet, because Jesus had not yet been glorified.

1 Cor. 15:45b the last Adam became a life-giving Spirit.

Rom. 8:16 The Spirit Himself witnesses with our spirit that we are children of God.

1 Cor. 6:17 But he who is joined to the Lord is one spirit.

Rev. 1:4 John to the seven churches which are in Asia: Grace to you and peace from Him who is and who was and who is coming, and from the seven Spirits who are before His throne,

Rev. 4:5 And out of the throne come forth lightnings and voices and thunders. And there were seven lamps of fire burning before the throne, which are the seven Spirits of God;

Rev. 5:6 And I saw in the midst of the throne and of the four living creatures and in the midst of the elders a Lamb standing as having just been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent forth into all the earth.

Rev. 22:17a And the Spirit and the bride say, Come!

I. The Spirit of God moved in God's creation of the universe—Gen. 1:2.

Gen. 1:2 But the earth became waste and emptiness, and darkness was on the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was brooding upon the surface of the waters.

II. The Spirit of Jehovah acted in God's reaching of men and in His care for men— Judg. 3:10; 6:34; Gen. 6:3a.

Judg. 3:10 And the Spirit of Jehovah came upon him, and he judged Israel. And he went out to battle, and Jehovah delivered Cushan-rishathaim the king of Aram into his hand; and his hand prevailed over Cushan-rishathaim.

Judg. 6:34 And the Spirit of Jehovah clothed Gideon; and he blew the trumpet, and the Abiezrites were called up behind him.

Gen. 6:3a And Jehovah said, My Spirit will not strive with man forever, for he indeed is flesh;

III. The Spirit of holiness was for God's making His chosen people holy unto Himself— Psa. 51:11; Isa. 63:10-11.

Psa. 51:11 Do not cast me from Your presence, / And do not take the Spirit of Your holiness away from me.

Isa. 63:10 But they rebelled and grieved / His Spirit of holiness; / Therefore He turned to become their enemy; / He fought against them.

Isa. 63:11 Then He remembered the days of old, Moses and His people: / Where is He who brought them up out of the sea / With the shepherds of His flock? / Where is He who put in their midst / His Spirit of holiness;

IV. The Spirit was the Holy Spirit in the conception of John the Baptist to introduce God's becoming a man in His incarnation (Luke 1:13-17) and in the conception of Jesus in God's incarnation to be a man in the flesh (vv. 30-36; Matt. 1:18-20).

Luke 1:13 But the angel said to him, Do not be afraid, Zachariah, because your petition has been heard, and your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you shall call his name John.

Luke 1:14 And you will have joy and exultation, and many will rejoice at his birth.

Luke 1:15 For he will be great in the sight of the Lord, and he shall by no means drink wine and liquor. And he will be filled with the Holy Spirit, even from his mother's womb,

Luke 1:16 And many of the sons of Israel he will turn to the Lord their God.

Luke 1:17 And it is he who will go before Him in the spirit and power of Elijah to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the prudence of the righteous, to prepare for the Lord a people made ready.

Luke 1:30 And the angel said to her, Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found grace with God.

Luke 1:31 And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall call His name Jesus.

Luke 1:32 He will be great and will be called Son of the Most High; and the Lord God will give to Him the throne of David His father,

Luke 1:33 And He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of His kingdom there will be no end.

Luke 1:34 But Mary said to the angel, How will this be, since I have not known a man?

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.

Luke 1:36 And behold, Elizabeth your relative, she also has conceived a son in her old age, and this is the sixth month for her who is called barren,

Matt. 1:18 Now the origin of Jesus Christ was in this way: His mother, Mary, after she had been engaged to Joseph, before they came together, was found to be with child of the Holy Spirit.

Matt. 1:19 And Joseph her husband, being righteous and not willing to disgrace her openly, intended to send her away secretly.

Matt. 1:20 But while he pondered these things, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary your wife, for that which has been begotten in her is of the Holy Spirit.

V. The Spirit was the Spirit with whom Jesus was anointed and who was in the move of the man Jesus in His ministry to God on the earth—Mark 1:10, 12; Matt. 4:1; Luke 4:1, 18; John 1:32-33.

Mark 1:10 And immediately, coming up out of the water, He saw the heavens being parted and the Spirit as a dove descending upon Him.

Mark 1:12 And immediately the Spirit thrust Him out into the wilderness.

Matt. 4:1 Then Jesus was led up into the wilderness by the Spirit to be tempted by the devil.

Luke 4:1 And Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led by the Spirit in the wilderness, while being tempted for forty days by the devil.

Luke 4:18 "The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, because He has anointed Me to announce the gospel to the poor; He has sent Me to proclaim release to the captives, and recovery of sight to the blind, to send away in release those who are oppressed,

John 1:32 And John testified, saying, I beheld the Spirit descending as a dove out of heaven, and He abode upon Him.

John 1:33 And I did not know Him, but He who sent me to baptize in water, He said to me, He upon whom you see the Spirit descending and abiding upon Him, this is He who baptizes in the Holy Spirit.

VI. The Spirit was there to anoint and to move with Christ, but at that time the Spirit had not yet entered into the believers to flow out as rivers of living water; in this sense, the Spirit was not yet, because by that time Jesus had not yet been glorified in His resurrection—7:37-39; Luke 24:26.

John 7:37 Now on the last day, the great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried out, saying, If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink.

John 7:38 He who believes into Me, as the Scripture said, out of his innermost being shall flow rivers of living water.

John 7:39 But this He said concerning the Spirit, whom those who believed into Him were about to receive; for the Spirit was not yet, because Jesus had not yet been glorified.

Luke 24:26 Was it not necessary for the Christ to suffer these things and enter into His glory?

VII. Through and in His resurrection Christ as the last Adam became the life-giving Spirit to enter into His believers to flow out as rivers of living water—1 Cor. 15:45b; Rev. 21:6; 22:17c:

1 Cor. 15:45b the last Adam became a life-giving Spirit.

Rev. 21:6 And He said to me, They have come to pass. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End. I will give to him who thirsts from the spring of the water of life freely.

Rev. 22:17c let him who wills take the water of life freely.

- A. The life-giving Spirit as the Spirit of Jesus is concerning Jesus in His humanity, who passed through human living and death on the cross, indicating that in the Spirit there are not only the divine element of God but also the human element of Jesus and the elements of His human living and of His suffering of death as well—Acts 16:7.

Acts 16:7 And when they had come to Mysia, they tried to go into Bithynia, yet the Spirit of Jesus did not allow them.

- B. The life-giving Spirit as the Spirit of Christ is concerning Christ in His divinity, who conquered death and became the life in resurrection with the resurrection power, indicating that in the Spirit there is the element of divinity that became the death- conquering and life-dispensing Spirit—Rom. 8:9b.

Rom. 8:9b Yet if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he is not of Him.

- C. The life-giving Spirit as the Spirit of Jesus Christ comprises all the elements of Jesus' humanity with His death and Christ's divinity with His resurrection, which become the bountiful supply of the unsearchable Christ for the support of His believers—Phil. 1:19b.

Phil. 1:19b the bountiful supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ,

- D. The life-giving Spirit as the Lord Spirit, the pneumatic Christ, is for the metabolic transformation of the believers into the Lord's image from glory to glory by the renewing of the mind (2 Cor. 3:17-18; Rom. 12:2b) and is for the growth and the building up of the Body of Christ (1 Cor. 3:6, 9b, 12a; Eph. 4:16b).

2 Cor. 3:17 And the Lord is the Spirit; and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom.

2 Cor. 3:18 But we all with unveiled face, beholding and reflecting like a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, even as from the Lord Spirit.

Rom. 12:2b but be transformed by the renewing of the mind that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and well pleasing and perfect.

1 Cor. 3:6 I planted, Apollos watered, but God caused the growth.

1 Cor. 3:9b you are God's cultivated land, God's building.

1 Cor. 3:12a But if anyone builds upon the foundation gold, silver, precious stones,

Eph. 4:16b causes the growth of the Body unto the building up of itself in love.

E. When the man Jesus became the life-giving Spirit, the Triune God was fully completed, consummated:

1. The Triune God was consummated in Christ's resurrection, so after His resurrection, the Lord came back to say that we are to baptize people into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit—Matt. 28:19b.

Matt. 28:19b baptizing them into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit

2. The Triune God has been consummated in the life-giving Spirit, the Spirit of Jesus, the Spirit of Christ, the Spirit of Jesus Christ, and the Lord Spirit, so this Spirit today is the consummation of the Triune God.

F. The life-giving Spirit as the consummation of the processed Triune God is the Paraclete, the Comforter, to the believers—John 14:16-17.

John 14:16 And I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Comforter, that He may be with you forever,

John 14:17 Even the Spirit of reality, whom the world cannot receive, because it does not behold Him or know Him; but you know Him, because He abides with you and shall be in you.

G. The life-giving Spirit is the reality of the processed Triune God—v. 17a; 15:26b; 16:13; 1 John 5:6b.

John 14:17a Even the Spirit of reality,

John 15:26b the Spirit of reality, who proceeds from the Father, He will testify concerning Me;

John 16:13 But when He, the Spirit of reality, comes, He will guide you into all the reality; for He will not speak from Himself, but what He hears He will speak; and He will declare to you the things that are coming.

1 John 5:6b and the Spirit is He who testifies, because the Spirit is the reality.

H. The life-giving Spirit is the reaching of the processed Triune God to the believers.

- I. The life-giving Spirit is the believers' access unto the Father, the source of the Divine Trinity—Eph. 2:18.

Eph. 2:18 For through Him we both have access in one Spirit unto the Father.

J. The life-giving Spirit is the fellowship of the processed Triune God with the believers for their enjoyment of the riches of the Divine Trinity—2 Cor. 13:14.

2 Cor. 13:14 The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

VIII. The Spirit is the compound anointing Spirit—Exo. 30:22-30:

Exo. 30:22 Moreover Jehovah spoke to Moses, saying,

Exo. 30:23 You also take the finest spices: of flowing myrrh five hundred shekels, and of fragrant cinnamon half as much, two hundred fifty shekels, and of fragrant calamus two hundred fifty shekels,

Exo. 30:24 And of cassia five hundred shekels, according to the shekel of the sanctuary, and a hin of olive oil.

Exo. 30:25 And you shall make it a holy anointing oil, a fragrant ointment compounded according to the work of a compounder; it shall be a holy anointing oil.

Exo. 30:26 And with it you shall anoint the Tent of Meeting and the Ark of the Testimony,

Exo. 30:27 And the table and all its utensils, and the lampstand and its utensils, and the altar of incense,

Exo. 30:28 And the altar of burnt offering with all its utensils, and the laver and its base.

Exo. 30:29 Thus you shall sanctify them that they may be most holy; whatever touches them shall be holy.

Exo. 30:30 And you shall anoint Aaron and his sons and sanctify them that they may serve Me as priests.

A. The Spirit is compounded with the unique God as the base, as the divinity of Christ, typified by the one hin of olive oil—v. 24b.

Exo. 30:24b according to the shekel of the sanctuary, and a hin of olive oil.

B. The Spirit is compounded with God's Divine Trinity, typified by the three units of five hundred shekels of the spices—vv. 23-24a.

Exo. 30:23 You also take the finest spices: of flowing myrrh five hundred shekels, and of fragrant cinnamon half as much, two hundred fifty shekels, and of fragrant calamus two hundred fifty shekels,

Exo. 30:24a And of cassia five hundred shekels,

C. The Spirit is compounded with Christ's humanity, typified by the four kinds of spices.

D. The Spirit is compounded with Christ's death and its killing effectiveness, typified by myrrh and cinnamon—v. 23a.

Exo. 30:23a You also take the finest spices: of flowing myrrh five hundred shekels, and of fragrant cinnamon half as much, two hundred fifty shekels,

E. The Spirit is compounded with Christ's resurrection and its repelling power, typified by calamus and cassia—vv. 23b-24a.

Exo. 30:23b and of fragrant calamus two hundred fifty shekels,

Exo. 30:24a And of cassia five hundred shekels,

F. All the above elements compounded together create an ointment for the anointing of all the things and persons related to the worship of God—vv. 25-30; 2 Cor. 1:21; 1 John 2:20, 27.

Exo. 30:25 And you shall make it a holy anointing oil, a fragrant ointment compounded according to the work of a compounder; it shall be a holy anointing oil.

Exo. 30:26 And with it you shall anoint the Tent of Meeting and the Ark of the Testimony,

Exo. 30:27 And the table and all its utensils, and the lampstand and its utensils, and the altar of incense,

Exo. 30:28 And the altar of burnt offering with all its utensils, and the laver and its base.

Exo. 30:29 Thus you shall sanctify them that they may be most holy; whatever touches them shall be holy.

Exo. 30:30 And you shall anoint Aaron and his sons and sanctify them that they may serve Me as priests.

2 Cor. 1:21 But the One who firmly attaches us with you unto Christ and has anointed us is God,

1 John 2:20 And you have an anointing from the Holy One, and all of you know.

1 John 2:27 And as for you, the anointing which you have received from Him abides in you, and you have no need that anyone teach you; but as His anointing teaches you concerning all things and is true and is not a lie, and even as it has taught you, abide in Him

G. The compound anointing Spirit operates as the Holy Spirit to seal the believers of Christ—Eph. 1:13; 4:30b; 2 Cor. 1:22a.

Eph. 1:13 In whom you also, having heard the word of the truth, the gospel of your salvation, in Him also believing, you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of the promise,

Eph. 4:30b in whom you were sealed unto the day of redemption.

2 Cor. 1:22a He who has also sealed us

H. The sealing Spirit becomes a pledge to the believers, guaranteeing God as the inheritance of the believers and giving them a foretaste of God as their heritage—Eph. 1:14; 2 Cor. 1:22b.

Eph. 1:14 Who is the pledge of our inheritance unto the redemption of the acquired possession, to the praise of His glory.

2 Cor. 1:22b and given the Spirit in our hearts as a pledge.

IX. The Spirit is the blessing of the gospel—Gal. 3:8, 14:

Gal. 3:8 And the Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles out of faith, announced the gospel beforehand to Abraham: "In you shall all the nations be blessed."

Gal. 3:14 In order that the blessing of Abraham might come to the Gentiles in Christ Jesus, that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.

A. The Spirit regenerates the believers, begetting them as the many sons of God—John 3:5-6.

John 3:5 Jesus answered, Truly, truly, I say to you, Unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.

John 3:6 That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.

B. The Spirit is the Spirit of the Son to cry, "Abba, Father!" in the believers' hearts and to lead the believers to walk as the sons of God—Gal. 4:6; Rom. 8:14-16.

Gal. 4:6 And because you are sons, God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into our hearts, crying, Abba, Father!

Rom. 8:14 For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God.

Rom. 8:15 For you have not received a spirit of slavery bringing you into fear again, but you have received a spirit of sonship in which we cry, Abba, Father!

Rom. 8:16 The Spirit Himself witnesses with our spirit that we are children of God.

C. The Spirit is for the priesthood of the gospel to sanctify the believers—15:16.

Rom. 15:16 That I might be a minister of Christ Jesus to the Gentiles, a laboring priest of the gospel of God, in order that the offering of the Gentiles might be acceptable, having been sanctified in the Holy Spirit.

D. The Spirit intercedes for the believers—8:26.

Rom. 8:26 Moreover, in like manner the Spirit also joins in to help us in our weakness, for we do not know for what we should pray as is fitting, but the Spirit Himself intercedes for us with groanings which cannot be uttered.

E. The Spirit renews the believers, making them the new creation of God—Titus 3:5b; 2 Cor. 5:17.

Titus 3:5b through the washing of regeneration and the renewing of the Holy Spirit,

2 Cor. 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.

X. The seven Spirits are the sevenfold intensified Spirit for the church's degradation in the dark age; in Revelation 1 the sevenfold Spirit is ranked as the second in the Divine Trinity instead of the third, indicating the intensification of the Spirit—vv.

4-5a:

Rev. 1:4 John to the seven churches which are in Asia: Grace to you and peace from Him who is and who was and who is coming, and from the seven Spirits who are before His throne,

Rev. 1:5a And from Jesus Christ, the faithful Witness, the Firstborn of the dead, and the Ruler of the kings of the earth.

- A. The seven Spirits are the seven lamps of fire burning before the throne of God to carry out the divine administration for the consummation of the divine economy—4:5.

Rev. 4:5 And out of the throne come forth lightnings and voices and thunders. And there were seven lamps of fire burning before the throne, which are the seven Spirits of God;

- B. The seven Spirits are the seven eyes of the Lamb, the observing parts of our Redeemer, to observe all the churches in all the nations and to transfuse all His riches into us for the building up of His Body to consummate the building up of the New Jerusalem, thus accomplishing the eternal economy of God—5:6; 21:1-3.

Rev. 5:6 And I saw in the midst of the throne and of the four living creatures and in the midst of the elders a Lamb standing as having just been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent forth into all the earth.

Rev. 21:1 And I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth passed away, and the sea is no more.

Rev. 21:2 And I saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.

Rev. 21:3 And I heard a loud voice out of the throne, saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will tabernacle with them, and they will be His peoples, and God Himself will be with them and be their God.

- C. The sevenfold intensified Spirit is the speaking Spirit to all the churches—2:7, 11, 17, 29; 3:6, 13, 22.

Rev. 2:7 He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes, to him I will give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the Paradise of God.

Rev. 2:11 He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. He who overcomes shall by no means be hurt of the second death.

Rev. 2:17 He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes, to him I will give of the hidden manna, and to him I will give a white stone, and upon the stone a new name written, which no one knows except him who receives it.

Rev. 2:29 He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.

Rev. 3:6 He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.

Rev. 3:13 He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.

Rev. 3:22 He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.

XI. The Spirit is the essential Spirit and the economical Spirit of the processed Triune God:

- A. The essential Spirit of God, the Spirit of life, was breathed into the believers as the divine essence of the divine life—John 20:22.

John 20:22 And when He had said this, He breathed into them and said to them, Receive the Holy Spirit.

- B. The economical Spirit of God, the Spirit of power, was poured out upon the believers as the divine essence of the divine power—Acts 1:8; 2:2, 4, 17.

Acts 1:8 But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you, and you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria and unto the uttermost part of the earth.

Acts 2:2 And suddenly there was a sound out of heaven, as of a rushing violent wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting.

Acts 2:4 And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in different tongues, even as the Spirit gave to them to speak forth.

Acts 2:17 “And it shall be in the last days, says God, that I will pour out of My Spirit upon all flesh, and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream things in dreams;

XII. The Spirit is the consummation of the processed Triune God:

- A. The Spirit and the bride speak together as a universal couple—Rev. 22:17a.

Rev. 22:17a And the Spirit and the bride say, Come!

- B. The processed and consummated Triune God marries the redeemed, regenerated, and transformed tripartite people for His final manifestation and ultimate expression in glory for eternity—21:1—22:5.

Rev. 21:1 And I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth passed away, and the sea is no more.

Rev. 21:2 And I saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.

Rev. 21:3 And I heard a loud voice out of the throne, saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will tabernacle with them, and they will be His peoples, and God Himself will be with them and be their God.

Rev. 21:4 And He will wipe away every tear from their eyes; and death will be no more, nor will there be sorrow or crying or pain anymore; for the former things have passed away.

Rev. 21:5 And He who sits on the throne said, Behold, I make all things new. And He said, Write, for these words are faithful and true.

Rev. 21:6 And He said to me, They have come to pass. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End. I will give to him who thirsts from the spring of the water of life freely.

Rev. 21:7 He who overcomes will inherit these things, and I will be God to him, and he will be a son to Me.

Rev. 21:8 But the cowardly and unbelieving and abominable and murderers and fornicators and sorcerers and idolaters and all the false, their part will be in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death.

Rev. 21:9 And one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls full of the seven last plagues came and spoke with me, saying, Come here; I will show you the bride, the wife of the Lamb.

Rev. 21:10 And he carried me away in spirit onto a great and high mountain and showed me the holy city, Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God,

Rev. 21:11 Having the glory of God. Her light was like a most precious stone, like a jasper stone, as clear as crystal.

Rev. 21:12 It had a great and high wall and had twelve gates, and at the gates twelve angels, and names inscribed, which are the names of the twelve tribes of the sons of Israel:

Rev. 21:13 On the east three gates, and on the north three gates, and on the south three gates, and on the west three gates.

Rev. 21:14 And the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and on them the twelve names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb.

Rev. 21:15 And he who spoke with me had a golden reed as a measure that he might measure the city and its gates and its wall.

Rev. 21:16 And the city lies square, and its length is as great as the breadth. And he measured the city with the reed to a length of twelve thousand stadia; the length and the breadth and the height of it are equal.

Rev. 21:17 And he measured its wall, a hundred and forty-four cubits, according to the measure of a man, that is, of an angel.

Rev. 21:18 And the building work of its wall was jasper; and the city was pure gold, like clear glass.

Rev. 21:19 The foundations of the wall of the city were adorned with every precious stone: the first foundation was jasper; the second, sapphire; the third, chalcedony; the fourth, emerald;

Rev. 21:20 The fifth, sardonyx; the sixth, sardius; the seventh, chrysolite; the eighth, beryl; the ninth, topaz; the tenth, chrysoprase; the eleventh, jacinth; the twelfth, amethyst.

Rev. 21:21 And the twelve gates were twelve pearls; each one of the gates was, respectively, of one pearl. And the street of the city was pure gold, like transparent glass.

Rev. 21:22 And I saw no temple in it, for the Lord God the Almighty and the Lamb are its temple.

Rev. 21:23 And the city has no need of the sun or of the moon that they should shine in it, for the glory of God illumined it, and its lamp is the Lamb.

Rev. 21:24 And the nations will walk by its light; and the kings of the earth bring their glory into it.

Rev. 21:25 And its gates shall by no means be shut by day, for there will be no night there.

Rev. 21:26 And they will bring the glory and the honor of the nations into it.

Rev. 21:27 And anything common and he who makes an abomination and a lie shall by no means enter into it, but only those who are written in the Lamb's book of life.

Rev. 22:1 And he showed me a river of water of life, bright as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb in the middle of its street.

Rev. 22:2 And on this side and on that side of the river was the tree of life, producing twelve fruits, yielding its fruit each month; and the leaves of the tree are for the healing of the nations.

Rev. 22:3 And there will no longer be a curse. And the throne of God and of the Lamb will be in it, and His slaves will serve Him;

Rev. 22:4 And they will see His face, and His name will be on their foreheads.

Rev. 22:5 And night will be no more; and they have no need of the light of a lamp and of the light of the sun, for the Lord God will shine upon them; and they will reign forever and ever.

XIII. The key to our meaning and to the meaning of the universe is in God's existence as the Spirit and also in our having a spirit; without God being the Spirit and without us having a spirit to contact God, to be one with God, the whole universe is empty, and we are nothing—John 3:6; 4:24; Rom. 8:16; 1 Cor. 6:17:

John 3:6 That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.

John 4:24 God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truthfulness.

Rom. 8:16 The Spirit Himself witnesses with our spirit that we are children of God.

1 Cor. 6:17 But he who is joined to the Lord is one spirit.

A. The spirit of man was created by God, in a particular sense, to complete God's purpose in the creation of the heavens and the earth—Gen. 2:7; Zech. 12:1; Isa. 42:5; Job 32:8.

Gen. 2:7 Jehovah God formed man from the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living soul.

Zech. 12:1 The burden of the word of Jehovah concerning Israel. Thus declares Jehovah, who stretches forth the heavens and lays the foundations of the earth and forms the spirit of man within him,

Isa. 42:5 Thus says God Jehovah, / Who created the heavens and stretched them out, / Who spread forth the earth and what springs up from it, / Who gives breath to the people upon it / And spirit to those who walk on it:

Job 32:8 But there is a spirit in man, / And the breath of the Almighty gives them understanding.

B. Man's spirit is his inward organ for him to contact God, receive God, contain God, and assimilate God into his entire being as his life and everything—Gen. 2:7; cf. Prov. 20:27.

Gen. 2:7 Jehovah God formed man from the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living soul.

Prov. 20:27 The spirit of man is the lamp of Jehovah, / Searching all the innermost parts of the inner being.

C. God is Spirit for man to contact Him and receive Him, and man has a spirit to contact God and contain God so that God and man may have an organic union—John 4:24; 1 John 4:13; 2 Tim. 4:22a; 1 Cor. 6:17.

John 4:24 God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truthfulness.

1 John 4:13 In this we know that we abide in Him and He in us, that He has given to us of His Spirit.

2 Tim. 4:22a The Lord be with your spirit.

1 Cor. 6:17 But he who is joined to the Lord is one spirit.

D. Our spirit is the destination of the “journeying” Triune God—John 1:1; 4:24; Rom. 8:16.

John 1:1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

John 4:24 God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truthfulness.

Rom. 8:16 The Spirit Himself witnesses with our spirit that we are children of God.

E. It is in our spirit that we are regenerated (John 3:6), it is in our spirit that the Holy Spirit dwells and works (Rom. 8:16), and it is in our spirit that we enjoy Christ and His grace (2 Tim. 4:22; Gal. 6:18).

John 3:6 That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.

Rom. 8:16 The Spirit Himself witnesses with our spirit that we are children of God.

2 Tim. 4:22 The Lord be with your spirit. Grace be with you.

Gal. 6:18 The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit, brothers. Amen.

F. Man’s spirit is distinct from his soul—Heb. 4:12; 1 Thes. 5:23a.

Heb. 4:12 For the word of God is living and operative and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing even to the dividing of soul and spirit and of joints and marrow, and able to discern the thoughts and intentions of the heart.

1 Thes. 5:23a And the God of peace Himself sanctify you wholly, and may your spirit and soul and body be preserved complete,

G. Our spirit is composed of the conscience (Rom. 9:1; cf. 8:16), the fellowship (John 4:24; Rom. 1:9; Luke 1:47), and the intuition (1 Cor. 2:11; Mark 2:8).

Rom. 9:1 I speak the truth in Christ, I do not lie, my conscience bearing witness with me in the Holy Spirit,

Rom. 8:16 The Spirit Himself witnesses with our spirit that we are children of God.

John 4:24 God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truthfulness.

Rom. 1:9 For God is my witness, whom I serve in my spirit in the gospel of His Son, how unceasingly I make mention of you always in my prayers,

Luke 1:47 And my spirit has exulted in God my Savior;

1 Cor. 2:11 For who among men knows the things of man, except the spirit of man which is in him? In the same way, the things of God also no one has known except the Spirit of God.

Mark 2:8 And immediately Jesus, knowing fully in His spirit that they were reasoning this way within themselves, said to them, Why are you reasoning about these things in your hearts?

H. To exercise ourselves unto godliness is to exercise our spirit to live Christ as the Spirit in our daily life—1 Tim. 4:7:

1 Tim. 4:7 But the profane and old-womanish myths refuse, and exercise yourself unto godliness.

1. We need to fan our spirit into flame—2 Tim. 1:6-7.

2 Tim. 1:6 For which cause I remind you to fan into flame the gift of God, which is in you through the laying on of my hands.

2 Tim. 1:7 For God has not given us a spirit of cowardice, but of power and of love and of sobermindedness.

2. We need to set our mind on our spirit—Rom. 8:6.

Rom. 8:6 For the mind set on the flesh is death, but the mind set on the spirit is life and peace.

3. We need to discern our spirit from our soul—Heb. 4:12.

Heb. 4:12 For the word of God is living and operative and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing even to the dividing of soul and spirit and of joints and marrow, and able to discern the thoughts and intentions of the heart.

I. The Lord is with our spirit so that we may enjoy Him as grace in order to stand against the downward current of the church’s decline and to carry out God’s economy through His indwelling Spirit and equipping word—2 Tim. 4:22; 1:14; 3:16-17.

2 Tim. 4:22 The Lord be with your spirit. Grace be with you.

2 Tim. 1:14 Guard the good deposit through the Holy Spirit who dwells in us.

2 Tim. 3:16 All Scripture is God-breathed and profitable for teaching, for conviction, for correction, for instruction in righteousness,

2 Tim. 3:17 That the man of God may be complete, fully equipped for every good work.

Message Five

Eating the Lord as the Tree of Life and Living on the Line of Life

Scripture Reading: Gen. 2:9; John 1:4; 10:10b; 14:6a; 1 Cor. 15:45b; 2 Cor. 3:6; Rev. 2:7; 22:1-2

Gen. 2:9 And out of the ground Jehovah God caused to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for food, as well as the tree of life in the middle of the garden and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

John 1:4 In Him was life, and the life was the light of men.

John 10:10b I have come that they may have life and may have it abundantly.

John 14:6a Jesus said to him, I am the way and the reality and the life;

1 Cor. 15:45b the last Adam became a life-giving Spirit.

2 Cor. 3:6 Who has also made us sufficient as ministers of a new covenant, ministers not of the letter but of the Spirit; for the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life.

Rev. 2:7 He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes, to him I will give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the Paradise of God.

Rev. 22:1 And he showed me a river of water of life, bright as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb in the middle of its street.

Rev. 22:2 And on this side and on that side of the river was the tree of life, producing twelve fruits, yielding its fruit each month; and the leaves of the tree are for the healing of the nations.

I. The tree of life signifies the Triune God embodied in Christ as life to man in the form of food—Gen. 2:9; John 1:4; 10:10b; 14:6a; 1 Cor. 15:45b; John 6:35, 57:

Gen. 2:9 And out of the ground Jehovah God caused to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for food, as well as the tree of life in the middle of the garden and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

John 1:4 In Him was life, and the life was the light of men.

John 10:10b I have come that they may have life and may have it abundantly.

John 14:6a Jesus said to him, I am the way and the reality and the life;

1 Cor. 15:45b the last Adam became a life-giving Spirit.

John 6:35 Jesus said to them, I am the bread of life; he who comes to Me shall by no means hunger, and he who believes into Me shall by no means ever thirst.

John 6:57 As the living Father has sent Me and I live because of the Father, so he who eats Me, he also shall live because of Me.

- A. God's placing man in front of the tree of life indicates that God wanted man to receive Him as his life by eating Him organically and assimilating Him metabolically so that God might become the very constituent of man's being—cf. 5:39-40; 2 Cor. 3:6.

John 5:39 You search the Scriptures, because you think that in them you have eternal life; and it is these that testify concerning Me.

John 5:40 Yet you are not willing to come to Me that you may have life.

2 Cor. 3:6 Who has also made us sufficient as ministers of a new covenant, ministers not of the letter but of the Spirit; for the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life.

- B. The tree of life grows along the two sides of the river of water of life, indicating that it is a vine; since Christ is a vine tree and is also life, He is the tree of life—Rev. 2:7; 22:1-2; John 15:1; 14:6a.

Rev. 2:7 He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes, to him I will give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the Paradise of God.

Rev. 22:1 And he showed me a river of water of life, bright as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb in the middle of its street.

Rev. 22:2 And on this side and on that side of the river was the tree of life, producing twelve fruits, yielding its fruit each month; and the leaves of the tree are for the healing of the nations.

John 15:1 I am the true vine, and My Father is the husbandman.

John 14:6a Jesus said to him, I am the way and the reality and the life;

- C. Christ was processed through incarnation, crucifixion, and resurrection so that man might have life and live by eating Him—10:10b; 6:51, 57, 63.

John 10:10b I have come that they may have life and may have it abundantly.

John 6:51 I am the living bread which came down out of heaven; if anyone eats of this bread, he shall live forever; And the bread which I will give is My flesh, given for the life of the world.

John 6:57 As the living Father has sent Me and I live because of the Father, so he who eats Me, he also shall live because of Me.

John 6:63 It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh profits nothing; the words which I have spoken to you are spirit and are life.

II. We can eat the Lord as the tree of life, our spiritual food, in the following ways:

- A. We can eat Him by eating His words:

1. "Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that proceeds out through the mouth of God"—Matt. 4:4.

Matt. 4:4 But He answered and said, It is written, “Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that proceeds out through the mouth of God.”

2. “How sweet are Your words to my taste! / Sweeter than honey to my mouth!”—Psa. 119:103.

Psa. 119:103 How sweet are Your words to my taste! / Sweeter than honey to my mouth!

3. “Then He said to me, Son of man, eat what you find; eat this scroll, and go, speak to the house of Israel. So I opened my mouth, and He gave me that scroll to eat. And He said to me, Son of man, feed your stomach and fill your inward parts with this scroll that I am giving you. And I ate it, and it was like honey in my mouth in its sweetness. Then He said to me, Son of man, go to the house of Israel and speak with My words to them”—Ezek. 3:1-4.

Ezek. 3:1 Then He said to me, Son of man, eat what you find; eat this scroll, and go, speak to the house of Israel.

Ezek. 3:2 So I opened my mouth, and He gave me that scroll to eat.

Ezek. 3:3 And He said to me, Son of man, feed your stomach and fill your inward parts with this scroll that I am giving you. And I ate it, and it was like honey in my mouth in its sweetness.

Ezek. 3:4 Then He said to me, Son of man, go to the house of Israel and speak with My words to them.

4. “Your words were found and I ate them, / And Your word became to me / The gladness and joy of my heart, / For I am called by Your name, / O Jehovah, God of hosts”—Jer. 15:16.

Jer. 15:16 Your words were found and I ate them, / And Your word became to me / The gladness and joy of my heart, / For I am called by Your name, / O Jehovah, God of hosts.

5. “He who eats Me, he also shall live because of Me...It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh profits nothing; the words which I have spoken to you are spirit and are life”—John 6:57, 63.

John 6:57 As the living Father has sent Me and I live because of the Father, so he who eats Me, he also shall live because of Me.

John 6:63 It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh profits nothing; the words which I have spoken to you are spirit and are life.

B. We can eat Him by doing the will of the Father to satisfy the hungry and thirsty ones and by glorifying the Father on earth in living the life of a God-man—Matt. 24:45-47:

Matt. 24:45 Who then is the faithful and prudent slave, whom the master has set over his household to give them food at the proper time?

Matt. 24:46 Blessed is that slave whom his master, when he comes, will find so doing.

Matt. 24:47 Truly I say to you that he will set him over all his possessions.

1. “My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me and to finish His work”—John 4:34.

John 4:34 Jesus said to them, My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me and to finish His work.

2. “I have glorified You on earth, finishing the work which You have given Me to do”—17:4; cf. Col. 1:9-11.

John 17:4 I have glorified You on earth, finishing the work which You have given Me to do.

Col. 1:9 Therefore we also, since the day we heard of it, do not cease praying and asking on your behalf that you may be filled with the full knowledge of His will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding,

Col. 1:10 To walk worthily of the Lord to please Him in all things, bearing fruit in every good work and growing by the full knowledge of God,

Col. 1:11 Being empowered with all power, according to the might of His glory, unto all endurance and long-suffering with joy,

C. We can eat Him by contacting the proper people—Lev. 11:1-3, 9, 13, 21:

Lev. 11:1 Then Jehovah spoke to Moses and to Aaron, saying to them,

Lev. 11:2 Speak to the children of Israel, saying, These are the animals which you may eat among all the beasts that are on the earth.

Lev. 11:3 Whatever has a divided hoof, that is, has its hoof split in two, and chews the cud among the beasts, that you may eat.

Lev. 11:9 These you may eat of all that are in the water: anything in the water that has fins and scales, in the seas or in the rivers; these you may eat.

Lev. 11:13 And these you shall regard as an abomination among the birds; they shall not be eaten; they are an abomination: the great vulture and the bearded vulture and the black vulture

Lev. 11:21 Yet these you may eat of all flying insects that go on all fours, which have legs above their feet with which to leap on the earth;

1. To eat is to contact things outside of us and to receive them into us, with the result that they eventually become our inner constitution.
2. In Leviticus 11 all the animals signify different kinds of people, and eating signifies our contacting of people—cf. Acts 10:9b-14, 27-29.

Acts 10:9b Peter went up on the housetop to pray around the sixth hour.

Acts 10:10 And he became very hungry and wanted to eat. And while they were preparing, a trance came upon him;

Acts 10:11 And he beheld heaven opened, and a certain vessel like a great sheet descending, being let down by four corners onto the

earth,

Acts 10:12 In which were all the four-footed animals and reptiles of the earth and birds of heaven.

Acts 10:13 And a voice came to him: Rise up, Peter; slay and eat!

Acts 10:14 But Peter said, By no means, Lord, for I have never eaten anything common and unclean.

Acts 10:27 And as he talked with him, he entered and found many who had come together.

Acts 10:28 And he said to them, You understand that it is unlawful for a man who is a Jew to join himself to or come near one of another race; yet God has shown me that I should not call any man common or unclean.

Acts 10:29 Hence, even without objection I came when I had been sent for. I ask therefore, For what reason have you sent for me?

3. For God's people to live a holy life as required by the holy God, they must be careful about the kind of people they contact—cf. Lev. 11:46-47; 1 Cor. 15:33; 2 Cor. 6:14-18; 2 Tim. 2:22:

Lev. 11:46 This is the law of the beast and of the bird, and of every living animal that moves in the waters, and of every creature that swarms upon the earth;

Lev. 11:47 To make a distinction between the unclean and the clean, and between the animal that may be eaten and the animal that may not be eaten.

1 Cor. 15:33 Do not be deceived: Evil companionships corrupt good morals.

2 Cor. 6:14 Do not become dissimilarly yoked with unbelievers. For what partnership do righteousness and lawlessness have? Or what fellowship does light have with darkness?

2 Cor. 6:15 And what concord does Christ have with Belial? Or what part does a believer have with an unbeliever?

2 Cor. 6:16 And what agreement does the temple of God have with idols? For we are the temple of the living God, even as God said, "I will dwell among them and walk among them; and I will be their God, and they will be My people."

2 Cor. 6:17 Therefore "come out from their midst and be separated, says the Lord, and do not touch what is unclean; and I will welcome you";

2 Cor. 6:18 "And I will be a Father to you, and you will be sons and daughters to Me, says the Lord Almighty."

2 Tim. 2:22 But flee youthful lusts, and pursue righteousness, faith, love, peace with those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart.

a. Animals that divide the hoof and chew the cud (Lev. 11:3; cf. vv. 4-8, 26-28) signify persons who have discernment in their activities (Phil. 1:9-10) and who receive the word of God with much reconsideration (Psa. 119:15).

Lev. 11:3 Whatever has a divided hoof, that is, has its hoof split in two, and chews the cud among the beasts, that you may eat.

Lev. 11:4 However these you shall not eat: of those that only chew the cud or of those that only have a divided hoof: the camel, for though it chews the cud, it does not have a divided hoof; it is unclean to you.

Lev. 11:5 And the hyrax, for though it chews the cud, it does not have a divided hoof; it is unclean to you.

Lev. 11:6 And the hare, for though it chews the cud, it does not have a divided hoof; it is unclean to you.

Lev. 11:7 And the pig, for though it has a divided hoof, that is, it has its hoof split in two, it does not chew the cud; it is unclean to you.

Lev. 11:8 You shall not eat of their flesh, nor shall you touch their carcasses; they are unclean to you.

Lev. 11:26 For every beast which has a divided hoof but does not have its hoof split in two or chew the cud is unclean to you; everyone who touches them shall be unclean.

Lev. 11:27 And whatever goes on its paws, among all beasts that go on all fours, are unclean to you; whoever touches their carcass shall be unclean until the evening.

Lev. 11:28 And the one who carries their carcass shall wash his clothes and be unclean until the evening; they are unclean to you.

Phil. 1:9 And this I pray, that your love may abound yet more and more in full knowledge and all discernment,

Phil. 1:10 So that you may approve by testing the things which differ and are more excellent, that you may be pure and without offense unto the day of Christ,

Psa. 119:15 I will muse upon Your precepts / And regard Your ways.

b. Aquatic animals that have fins and scales signify persons who can move and act freely in the world and at the same time resist its influence (fins help fish to move, to act, in water according to their wishes, and scales protect the fish that live in the sea from being salted)—Lev. 11:9.

Lev. 11:9 These you may eat of all that are in the water: anything in the water that has fins and scales, in the seas or in the rivers; these you may eat.

c. Birds that have wings for flying and that eat seeds of life as their food supply signify persons who can live and move in a life that is away from and above the world and who take things of life as their life supply—v. 13.

Lev. 11:13 And these you shall regard as an abomination among the birds; they shall not be eaten; they are an abomination: the great vulture and the bearded vulture and the black vulture

d. Insects that have wings and have legs above their feet for leaping on the ground signify persons who can live and move in a life that is above the world and who can keep themselves from the world—vv. 21-22.

Lev. 11:21 Yet these you may eat of all flying insects that go on all fours, which have legs above their feet with which to leap on the earth;

Lev. 11:22 These of them you may eat: the swarming locust of every kind and the swallowing locust of every kind and the cricket of every kind and the grasshopper of every kind.

D. We can eat Him by feasting on Him in the meetings on the unique ground of oneness:

1. The children of Israel could enjoy the produce of the land in two ways: the common, private way was to enjoy it as a common portion at any time, in any place, and with anyone (Deut. 12:15); the special, corporate way was to enjoy the top portion, the firstfruits and the firstlings, with all the Israelites at the appointed feasts and in the unique place chosen by God (vv. 5-7, 17-18).

Deut. 12:15 Yet you may slaughter and eat meat within all your gates, in all that your soul desires, according to the blessing of Jehovah your God which He has given you; the unclean and the clean may eat it as the gazelle and the deer are eaten.

Deut. 12:5 But to the place which Jehovah your God will choose out of all your tribes to put His name, to His habitation, shall you seek, and there shall you go.

Deut. 12:6 And there you shall bring your burnt offerings and your sacrifices and your tithes and the heave offering of your hand and your vows and your freewill offerings and the firstborn of your herd and of your flock;

Deut. 12:7 And there you shall eat before Jehovah your God, and you and your households shall rejoice in all your undertakings, in which Jehovah your God has blessed you.

Deut. 12:17 You may not eat within your gates the tithe of your grain or of your new wine or of your fresh oil, nor the firstborn of your herd or of your flock, or any of your vows which you vow or of your freewill offerings or of the heave offering of your hand;

Deut. 12:18 But you shall eat them before Jehovah your God in the place which Jehovah your God will choose, you and your son and daughter, and your male servant and female servant, and the Levite who is within your gates; and you shall rejoice before Jehovah your God in all your undertakings.

2. Likewise, the enjoyment of Christ by the New Testament believers is of two aspects: the common, private aspect of enjoying Christ at any time and at any place and the special, corporate aspect of enjoying the top portion of Christ in the meetings of the proper church life on the unique ground of oneness, the place chosen by God— Col. 1:12; 1 Cor. 14:26.

Col. 1:12 Giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified you for a share of the allotted portion of the saints in the light;

1 Cor. 14:26 What then, brothers? Whenever you come together, each one has a psalm, has a teaching, has a revelation, has a tongue, has an interpretation. Let all things be done for building up.

III. The principle of the tree of life is the principle of dependence on God, and it is realized throughout the whole Bible by those who lived on the line of life:

A. Abel contacted God in God's way—Gen. 4:4.

Gen. 4:4 And Abel also brought an offering, from the firstlings of his flock, that is, from their fat portions. And Jehovah had regard for Abel and for his offering.

B. Seth and Enosh called upon the name of the Lord—v. 26.

Gen. 4:26 And to Seth also a son was born, and he called his name Enosh. At that time men began to call upon the name of Jehovah.

C. Enoch walked with God—5:22-24.

Gen. 5:22 And Enoch walked with God after he had begotten Methuselah three hundred years, and he begot more sons and daughters.

Gen. 5:23 And all the days of Enoch were three hundred sixty-five years.

Gen. 5:24 And Enoch walked with God, and he was not, for God took him.

D. Noah walked with God and worked together with God—6:8-9, 14.

Gen. 6:8 But Noah found favor in the sight of Jehovah.

Gen. 6:9 These are the generations of Noah. Noah was a righteous man, blameless in his generations; and Noah walked with God.

Gen. 6:14 Make yourself an ark of gopher wood; you shall make rooms in the ark and shall cover it within and without with pitch.

E. Abraham lived in the appearing of God and called upon the name of the Lord—Acts 7:2; Gen. 12:7-8; 17:1; 18:1; James 2:23.

Acts 7:2 And he said, Men, brothers and fathers, listen. The God of glory appeared to our father Abraham while he was in Mesopotamia, before he dwelt in Haran,

Gen. 12:7 And Jehovah appeared to Abram and said, To your seed I will give this land. And there he built an altar to Jehovah who had appeared to him.

Gen. 12:8 And he proceeded from there to the mountain on the east of Bethel and pitched his tent, with Bethel on the west and Ai on the east; and there he built an altar to Jehovah and called upon the name of Jehovah.

Gen. 17:1 And when Abram was ninety-nine years old, Jehovah appeared to Abram and said to him, I am the All-sufficient God; / Walk before Me, and be perfect.

Gen. 18:1 And Jehovah appeared to him by the oaks of Mamre as he was sitting at the entrance of his tent in the heat of the day.

James 2:23 And the Scripture was fulfilled which says, "And Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him as righteousness"; and he was called the friend of God.

F. Moses lived in the appearing and the presence of God—Exo. 3:2, 16; 33:11, 13-15; 25:9.

Exo. 3:2 And the Angel of Jehovah appeared to him in a flame of fire out of the midst of a thornbush. And when he looked, there was the thornbush, burning with fire; but the thornbush was not consumed.

Exo. 3:16 Go, and gather the elders of Israel together, and say to them, Jehovah, the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, of

Isaac, and of Jacob, has appeared to me, saying, I have surely visited you and seen what is being done to you in Egypt.

Exo. 33:11 And Jehovah would speak to Moses face to face, just as a man speaks to his companion. And Moses would return to the camp, but his attendant Joshua the son of Nun, a young man, would not depart out of the tent.

Exo. 33:13 Now therefore if I have found favor in Your sight, please let me know Your ways, that I may know You, so that I may continue to find favor in Your sight. Consider also that this nation is Your people.

Exo. 33:14 And He said, My presence shall go with you, and I will give you rest.

Exo. 33:15 And he said to Him, If Your presence does not go with us, do not bring us up from here.

Exo. 25:9 According to all that I show you, the pattern of the tabernacle and the pattern of all its furnishings, even so shall you make it.

G. The children of Israel journeyed in the presence of the Lord—13:21-22; Num. 14:14.

Exo. 13:21 And Jehovah went before them by day in a pillar of cloud to lead them on the way and by night in a pillar of fire to give them light, that they might go by day and by night.

Exo. 13:22 Neither the pillar of cloud by day nor the pillar of fire by night departed from before the people.

Num. 14:14 And they will tell the inhabitants of this land. They have heard that You, Jehovah, are in the midst of this people; for You, O Jehovah, are seen in plain sight, and Your cloud stands over them, and You go before them in a pillar of cloud by day and in a pillar of fire by night.

H. Joshua lived and worked in the presence of the Lord—Josh. 1:5-9.

Josh. 1:5 No man will be able to stand before you all the days of your life. As I was with Moses, I will be with you; I will not fail you nor forsake you.

Josh. 1:6 Be strong and take courage, for you will cause this people to inherit the land which I swore to their fathers to give to them.

Josh. 1:7 Only be strong and very courageous, being certain to do according to all the law which Moses My servant commanded you. Do not turn away from it to the right or to the left, that you may have success wherever you go.

Josh. 1:8 This book of the law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall muse upon it day and night so that you may be certain to do according to all that is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous and then you will have success.

Josh. 1:9 Have I not commanded you? Be strong and take courage; do not be afraid or dismayed. For Jehovah your God is with you wherever you go.

I. Gideon fought in and with the presence of the Lord—Judg. 6:12, 16.

Judg. 6:12 And the Angel of Jehovah appeared to him and said to him, Jehovah is with you, valiant warrior.

Judg. 6:16 And Jehovah said to him, Surely I will be with you, and you will strike the Midianites as one man.

J. Samuel prayed and called on the Lord—1 Sam. 12:23; 15:11; Psalms 99:6; Jeremiah 15:1.

1 Sam. 12:23 Moreover as for me, far be it from me that I would sin against Jehovah by ceasing to pray for you, but I will instruct you in the good and right way.

1 Sam. 15:11 I repent that I made Saul king, for he has turned back from following Me and has not fulfilled My words. And Samuel was angry, and he cried to Jehovah all night long.

Psa. 99:6 Moses and Aaron among His priests, / And Samuel among those who called on His name— / They called out to Jehovah, / And He answered them.

Jer. 15:1 And Jehovah said to me, Even though Moses and Samuel were to stand before Me, My soul would not turn toward this people. Send them out of My sight and let them go.

K. David trusted in God, looked to God, and enjoyed God's life—1 Sam. 17:37, 45; 30:6; Psalms 27:4, 8, 14; 36:8-9.

1 Sam. 17:37 And David said, Jehovah, who delivered me from the paw of the lion and from the paw of the bear, He will deliver me from the hand of this Philistine. And Saul said to David, Go, and may Jehovah be with you.

1 Sam. 17:45 Then David said to the Philistine, You come to me with sword and spear and javelin, but I come to you in the name of Jehovah of hosts, the God of the ranks of Israel, whom you have defied.

1 Sam. 30:6 And David was very distressed because the people spoke of stoning him, for the soul of all the people was bitter, every man because of his sons and his daughters. But David strengthened himself in Jehovah his God.

Psa. 27:4 One thing I have asked from Jehovah; / That do I seek: / To dwell in the house of Jehovah / All the days of my life, / To behold the beauty of Jehovah, / And to inquire in His temple.

Psa. 27:8 When You say, Seek My face, / To You my heart says, Your face, O Jehovah, will I seek.

Psa. 27:14 Wait for Jehovah; / Be strong, and let your heart be encouraged. / Yes, wait for Jehovah.

Psa. 36:8 They are saturated with the fatness of Your house, / And You cause them to drink of the river of Your pleasures.

Psa. 36:9 For with You is the fountain of life; / In Your light we see light.

L. Daniel prayed constantly and contacted the Lord continually in utter dependence on Him—Dan. 2:17-23; 6:10-11; 9:2-4; 10:1-3, 12.

Dan. 2:17 Then Daniel went to his house and made the thing known to Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah, his companions,

Dan. 2:18 That they might request compassions from before the God of the heavens concerning this mystery so that Daniel and his companions would not be destroyed with the rest of the wise men of Babylon.

Dan. 2:19 Then the mystery was revealed to Daniel in a night vision. Then Daniel blessed the God of the heavens.

Dan. 2:20 Daniel answered and said, Let the name of God / Be blessed from eternity to eternity, / For wisdom and might are His.

Dan. 2:21 And it is He who changes the times and seasons; / He deposes kings and causes kings to ascend. / He gives wisdom to the wise / And knowledge to those who have understanding.

Dan. 2:22 He reveals the deep things and the hidden things; / He knows what is obscured in the darkness, / And the light dwells with Him.

Dan. 2:23 To You, O God of my fathers, I render thanks and praise, / For You have given me wisdom and might; / And You have now

made known to me what we requested of You, / For You have made known the king's matter to us.

Dan. 6:10 Now when Daniel came to know that the writing had been signed, he went to his house (in his upper room he had windows open toward Jerusalem) and three times daily he knelt on his knees and prayed and gave thanks before his God, because he had always done so previously.

Dan. 6:11 Then these men assembled and found Daniel making petition and supplication before his God.

Dan. 9:2 In the first year of his reign - I, Daniel, understood by means of the Scriptures the number of the years, which came as the word of Jehovah to Jeremiah the prophet, for the completion of the desolations of Jerusalem, that is, seventy years.

Dan. 9:3 So I set my face toward the Lord God to seek Him in prayer and supplications with fasting and sackcloth and ashes.

Dan. 9:4 And I prayed to Jehovah my God and confessed; and I said, Ah, Lord, the great and awesome God, who keeps covenant and lovingkindness with those who love Him and keep His commandments,

Dan. 10:1 In the third year of Cyrus the king of Persia a word was revealed to Daniel, who was named Belteshazzar; and the word was true and concerning a great distress. And he understood the word and had an understanding of the vision.

Dan. 10:2 In those days I, Daniel, had been mourning for three full weeks.

Dan. 10:3 I ate no desirable food, nor did meat or wine enter my mouth, nor did I anoint myself at all, until the three full weeks were completed.

Dan. 10:12 And he said to me, Do not be afraid, Daniel, for from the first day that you set your heart to understand this matter and to afflict yourself before your God, your words were heard; and I have come because of your words.

M. The Lord Jesus as the tree of life and as the Son of God lived because of the Father— John 6:57; 14:10.

John 6:57 As the living Father has sent Me and I live because of the Father, so he who eats Me, he also shall live because of Me.

John 14:10 Do you not believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in Me? The words that I say to you I do not speak from Myself, but the Father who abides in Me does His works.

N. The New Testament believers live because of the Lord by eating Him and by abiding in Him so that He may abide in them—6:57; 15:5.

John 6:57 As the living Father has sent Me and I live because of the Father, so he who eats Me, he also shall live because of Me.

John 15:5 I am the vine; you are the branches. He who abides in Me and I in him, he bears much fruit; for apart from Me you can do nothing.

O. Paul lived out the Lord for His magnification—Gal. 2:20; Phil. 1:19-21a.

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.

Phil. 1:19 For I know that for me this will turn out to salvation through your petition and the bountiful supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ,

Phil. 1:20 According to my earnest expectation and hope that in nothing I will be put to shame, but with all boldness, as always, even now Christ will be magnified in my body, whether through life or through death.

Phil. 1:21a For to me, to live is Christ

P. The church as the Body of Christ depends on Christ and lives by Christ as life—Eph. 1:22-23; Col. 3:4.

Eph. 1:22 And He subjected all things under His feet and gave Him to be Head over all things to the church,

Eph. 1:23 Which is His Body, the fullness of the One who fills all in all.

Col. 3:4 When Christ our life is manifested, then you also will be manifested with Him in glory.

Q. The New Jerusalem is sustained by the river of water of life with the tree of life—Rev. 22:1-2, 14, 17.

Rev. 22:1 And he showed me a river of water of life, bright as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb in the middle of its street.

Rev. 22:2 And on this side and on that side of the river was the tree of life, producing twelve fruits, yielding its fruit each month; and the leaves of the tree are for the healing of the nations.

Rev. 22:14 Blessed are those who wash their robes that they may have right to the tree of life and may enter by the gates into the city.

Rev. 22:17 And the Spirit and the bride say, Come! And let him who hears say, Come! And let him who is thirsty come; let him who wills take the water of life freely.

Message Six

The Church as the Body of Christ— the Mysterious Organism in God's New Testament Economy

Scripture Reading: Eph. 1:22-23; 4:4-6, 11-16, 22-24, 30; 5:25b-27, 29; Rom. 8:2-13; 12:4-8

Eph. 1:22 And He subjected all things under His feet and gave Him to be Head over all things to the church,

Eph. 1:23 Which is His Body, the fullness of the One who fills all in all.

Eph. 4:4 One Body and one Spirit, even as also you were called in one hope of your calling;

Eph. 4:5 One Lord, one faith, one baptism;

Eph. 4:6 One God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all.

Eph. 4:11 And He Himself gave some as apostles and some as prophets and some as evangelists and some as shepherds and teachers,

Eph. 4:12 For the perfecting of the saints unto the work of the ministry, unto the building up of the Body of Christ,

Eph. 4:13 Until we all arrive at the oneness of the faith and of the full knowledge of the Son of God, at a full-grown man, at the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ,

Eph. 4:14 That we may be no longer little children tossed by waves and carried about by every wind of teaching in the sleight of men, in craftiness with a view to a system of error,

Eph. 4:15 But holding to truth in love, we may grow up into Him in all things, who is the Head, Christ,

Eph. 4:16 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.

Eph. 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,

Eph. 4:23 And that you be renewed in the spirit of your mind

Eph. 4:24 And put on the new man, which was created according to God in righteousness and holiness of the reality.

Eph. 4:30 And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, in whom you were sealed unto the day of redemption.

Eph. 5:25b Christ also loved the church and gave Himself up for her

Eph. 5:26 That He might sanctify her, cleansing her by the washing of the water in the word,

Eph. 5:27 That He might present the church to Himself glorious, not having spot or wrinkle or any such things, but that she would be holy and without blemish.

Eph. 5:29 For no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, even as Christ also the church,

Rom. 8:2 For the law of the Spirit of life has freed me in Christ Jesus from the law of sin and of death.

Rom. 8:3 For that which the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God, sending His own Son in the likeness of the flesh of sin and concerning sin, condemned sin in the flesh,

Rom. 8:4 That the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us, who do not walk according to the flesh but according to the spirit.

Rom. 8:5 For those who are according to the flesh mind the things of the flesh; but those who are according to the spirit, the things of the Spirit.

Rom. 8:6 For the mind set on the flesh is death, but the mind set on the spirit is life and peace.

Rom. 8:7 Because the mind set on the flesh is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, for neither can it be.

Rom. 8:8 And those who are in the flesh cannot please God.

Rom. 8:9 But you are not in the flesh, but in the spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you. Yet if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he is not of Him.

Rom. 8:10 But if Christ is in you, though the body is dead because of sin, the spirit is life because of righteousness.

Rom. 8:11 And if the Spirit of the One who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who indwells you.

Rom. 8:12 So then, brothers, we are debtors not to the flesh to live according to the flesh;

Rom. 8:13 For if you live according to the flesh, you must die, but if by the Spirit you put to death the practices of the body, you will live.

Rom. 12:4 For just as in one body we have many members, and all the members do not have the same function,

Rom. 12:5 So we who are many are one Body in Christ, and individually members one of another.

Rom. 12:6 And having gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, whether prophecy, let us prophesy according to the proportion of faith;

Rom. 12:7 Or service, let us be faithful in that service; or he who teaches, in that teaching;

Rom. 12:8 Or he who exhorts, in that exhortation; he who gives, in simplicity; he who leads, in diligence; he who shows mercy, in cheerfulness.

I. The great turning wheel of God's economy has the Body of Christ as its axis:

A. The move of God's New Testament economy is like the turning of a great wheel— cf. Ezek. 1:15-21.

Ezek. 1:15 And as I watched the living creatures, I saw a wheel upon the earth beside the living creatures, for each of their four faces.

Ezek. 1:16 The appearance of the wheels and their workmanship were like the sight of beryl. And the four of them had one likeness; that is, their appearance and their workmanship were as it were a wheel within a wheel.

Ezek. 1:17 Whenever they went, they went in their four directions; they did not turn as they went.

Ezek. 1:18 As for their rims, they were high and they were awesome; and the rims of the four of them were full of eyes all around.

Ezek. 1:19 And whenever the living creatures went, the wheels went beside them; and whenever the living creatures were lifted up above the earth, the wheels were lifted up also.

Ezek. 1:20 Wherever the Spirit was to go, they went—wherever the Spirit was to go. And the wheels were lifted up alongside them, for the Spirit of the living creature was in the wheels.

Ezek. 1:21 Whenever those went, these went; and whenever those stood still, these stood still; and whenever those were lifted up

above the earth, the wheels were lifted up alongside them; for the Spirit of the living creature was in the wheels.

B. This turning wheel in God's economy has the Body of Christ as its axis:

1. All of God's move and work today are joined to and for the Body of Christ—Eph. 1:22-23.

Eph. 1:22 And He subjected all things under His feet and gave Him to be Head over all things to the church,

Eph. 1:23 Which is His Body, the fullness of the One who fills all in all.

2. The New Jerusalem as the ultimate consummation of God's work is the axis of God's move in the whole universe—Rev. 21:2, 11; 22:1.

Rev. 21:2 And I saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.

Rev. 21:11 Having the glory of God. Her light was like a most precious stone, like a jasper stone, as clear as crystal.

Rev. 22:1 And he showed me a river of water of life, bright as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb in the middle of its street.

II. The Body of Christ as the axis of God's economy is the organism of the Triune God:

- A. The church is not an organization manufactured by man but an organism produced by the Triune God as life.

- B. The true vine, a portrait of Christ, is an organism by which the Triune God accomplishes His eternal economy—John 15:1:

John 15:1 I am the true vine, and My Father is the husbandman.

1. A tree with life is organic and is able to produce fruit.
2. A wooden table without life is organizational and is unable to produce fruit.

- C. This divine organism is the structure of the union and mingling of all the believers with the Triune God—Eph. 4:4-6:

Eph. 4:4 One Body and one Spirit, even as also you were called in one hope of your calling;

Eph. 4:5 One Lord, one faith, one baptism;

Eph. 4:6 One God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all.

1. The Father is the person who is over all (managing and caring), through all (penetrating and joining), and in all (dwelling and living)—v. 6.

Eph. 4:6 One God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all.

2. The Son is the element of life; through believing, the believers are joined to the element of Christ's new life, and through baptism, they are cut off from the element of the old adamic life—v. 5.

Eph. 4:5 One Lord, one faith, one baptism;

3. The Spirit is the essence of life; the Spirit of the life of Christ is the essence of the Body of Christ, and the hope is the saturation of the Body of Christ with the splendor of this essence so that the Body of Christ may enter into the glory of the life of Christ—v. 4; Col. 1:27.

Eph. 4:4 One Body and one Spirit, even as also you were called in one hope of your calling;

Col. 1:27 To whom God willed to make known what are the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory,

- D. The metamorphic change of this divine organism is the mingling of God and man—Eph. 4:22-24:

Eph. 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,

Eph. 4:23 And that you be renewed in the spirit of your mind

Eph. 4:24 And put on the new man, which was created according to God in righteousness and holiness of the reality.

1. This metamorphic change is the putting off of the old man, which is being corrupted according to lust, and the putting on of the new man, which was created according to God—vv. 22, 24.

Eph. 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,

Eph. 4:24 And put on the new man, which was created according to God in righteousness and holiness of the reality.

2. This metamorphic change is accomplished through the renewing of the believers in the

spirit of their mind—v. 23.

Eph. 4:23 And that you be renewed in the spirit of your mind

3. This metamorphic change is accomplished through the redemption by the saturating of the Holy Spirit of God as the seal—v. 30.

Eph. 4:30 And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, in whom you were sealed unto the day of redemption.

4. This metamorphic change is accomplished through the nourishing, sanctifying, and washing of Christ's word of life—5:25b-27, 29:

Eph. 5:25b Christ also loved the church and gave Himself up for her

Eph. 5:26 That He might sanctify her, cleansing her by the washing of the water in the word,

Eph. 5:27 That He might present the church to Himself glorious, not having spot or wrinkle or any such things, but that she would be holy and without blemish.

Eph. 5:29 For no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, even as Christ also the church,

- a. Nourishing affords the supply in life and provides at the same time the warm, tender, and loving cherishing.
- b. To be sanctified is to be separated unto and saturated with God and thus to be transformed—v. 26a.

Eph. 5:26a That He might sanctify her

- c. Washing removes the spots and wrinkles in order that the divine organism may become holy and glorious.

E. The growth of this divine organism and the organic building up of the organism by itself are in the divine life—4:11-16:

Eph. 4:11 And He Himself gave some as apostles and some as prophets and some as evangelists and some as shepherds and teachers,

Eph. 4:12 For the perfecting of the saints unto the work of the ministry, unto the building up of the Body of Christ,

Eph. 4:13 Until we all arrive at the oneness of the faith and of the full knowledge of the Son of God, at a full-grown man, at the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ,

Eph. 4:14 That we may be no longer little children tossed by waves and carried about by every wind of teaching in the sleight of men, in craftiness with a view to a system of error,

Eph. 4:15 But holding to truth in love, we may grow up into Him in all things, who is the Head, Christ,

Eph. 4:16 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.

1. The gifted ones in this divine organism perfect others to be like them to do the work of the ministry for the organic building up of the Body of Christ—vv. 11-12.

Eph. 4:11 And He Himself gave some as apostles and some as prophets and some as evangelists and some as shepherds and teachers,

Eph. 4:12 For the perfecting of the saints unto the work of the ministry, unto the building up of the Body of Christ,

2. The growth of this divine organism in the divine life equals the organic building up of the organism by itself in the divine life—vv. 13b-16:

Eph. 4:13b at a full-grown man, at the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ,

Eph. 4:14 That we may be no longer little children tossed by waves and carried about by every wind of teaching in the sleight of men, in craftiness with a view to a system of error,

Eph. 4:15 But holding to truth in love, we may grow up into Him in all things, who is the Head, Christ,

Eph. 4:16 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.

- a. We need to hold to truth in love and grow up into the Head, Christ, in all things— vv. 13b, 15

Eph. 4:13b at a full-grown man, at the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ,

Eph. 4:15 But holding to truth in love, we may grow up into Him in all things, who is the Head, Christ,

- b. Out from the Head, all the Body, being joined together through every joint of the rich supply and being knit together through the operation in the measure of each one part, grows gradually unto the organic building up of itself in love—v. 16.

Eph. 4:16 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.

F. The living of this divine organism is the corporate and organic living of the Body of Christ—
Rom. 12:5:

Rom. 12:5 So we who are many are one Body in Christ, and individually members one of another.

1. All the members live together by taking Christ as life—Col. 3:3-4a.

Col. 3:3 For you died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God.

Col. 3:4a When Christ our life is manifested,

2. All the members care for one another—1 Cor. 12:25-27.

1 Cor. 12:25 That there would be no division in the body, but that the members would have the same care for one another.

1 Cor. 12:26 And whether one member suffers, all the members suffer with it; or one member is glorified, all the members rejoice with it.

1 Cor. 12:27 Now you are the Body of Christ, and members individually.

3. This living is an organic living produced by the union and mingling of the Triune God with the tripartite man—Rom. 8:2-13:

Rom. 8:2 For the law of the Spirit of life has freed me in Christ Jesus from the law of sin and of death.

Rom. 8:3 For that which the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God, sending His own Son in the likeness of the flesh of sin and concerning sin, condemned sin in the flesh,

Rom. 8:4 That the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us, who do not walk according to the flesh but according to the spirit.

Rom. 8:5 For those who are according to the flesh mind the things of the flesh; but those who are according to the spirit, the things of the Spirit.

Rom. 8:6 For the mind set on the flesh is death, but the mind set on the spirit is life and peace.

Rom. 8:7 Because the mind set on the flesh is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, for neither can it be.

Rom. 8:8 And those who are in the flesh cannot please God.

Rom. 8:9 But you are not in the flesh, but in the spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you. Yet if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he is not of Him.

Rom. 8:10 But if Christ is in you, though the body is dead because of sin, the spirit is life because of righteousness.

Rom. 8:11 And if the Spirit of the One who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who indwells you.

Rom. 8:12 So then, brothers, we are debtors not to the flesh to live according to the flesh;

Rom. 8:13 For if you live according to the flesh, you must die, but if by the Spirit you put to death the practices of the body, you will live.

- a. The law of the Spirit of life is the key to the mysterious organism in God's New Testament economy; we can cooperate with this law by prayer and by having a spirit of dependence—v. 2; 1 Thes. 5:17.

Rom. 8:2 For the law of the Spirit of life has freed me in Christ Jesus from the law of sin and of death.

1 Thes. 5:17 Unceasingly pray,

- b. Through the law of the Spirit of life, we were first enlivened in our spirit by the Spirit of Christ—Rom. 8:2, 9-10.

Rom. 8:2 For the law of the Spirit of life has freed me in Christ Jesus from the law of sin and of death.

Rom. 8:9 But you are not in the flesh, but in the spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you. Yet if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he is not of Him.

Rom. 8:10 But if Christ is in you, though the body is dead because of sin, the spirit is life because of righteousness.

- c. Next, we are enlivened in the mind of our soul by the spreading Spirit of God— v. 6b.

Rom. 8:6b the mind set on the spirit is life and peace.

- d. Lastly, we are enlivened in our mortal body by the indwelling Spirit of God— v. 11.

Rom. 8:11 And if the Spirit of the One who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who indwells you.

- e. For this reason, we have to set our mind on the spirit, walk according to the spirit, and put to death the practices of the body through the indwelling Spirit of God—vv. 6b, 4b, 11, 13.

Rom. 8:6b the mind set on the spirit is life and peace.

Rom. 8:4b who do not walk according to the flesh but according to the spirit.

Rom. 8:11 And if the Spirit of the One who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who indwells you.

Rom. 8:13 For if you live according to the flesh, you must die, but if by the Spirit you put to death the practices of the body, you will live.

G. The service of this divine organism is the corporate organic service of the Body of Christ—12:4-8:

Rom. 12:4 For just as in one body we have many members, and all the members do not have the same function,

Rom. 12:5 So we who are many are one Body in Christ, and individually members one of another.

Rom. 12:6 And having gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, whether prophecy, let us prophesy according to the proportion of faith;

Rom. 12:7 Or service, let us be faithful in that service; or he who teaches, in that teaching;

Rom. 12:8 Or he who exhorts, in that exhortation; he who gives, in simplicity; he who leads, in diligence; he who shows mercy, in cheerfulness.

1. Every member is necessary—1 Cor. 12:14-22.

1 Cor. 12:14 For the body is not one member but many.

1 Cor. 12:15 If the foot should say, Because I am not a hand, I am not of the body, it is not that because of this it is not of the body.

1 Cor. 12:16 And if the ear should say, Because I am not an eye, I am not of the body, it is not that because of this it is not of the body.

1 Cor. 12:17 If the whole body were an eye, where would the hearing be? If the whole were the hearing, where would the smelling be?

1 Cor. 12:18 But now God has placed the members, each one of them, in the body, even as He willed.

1 Cor. 12:19 And if all were one member, where would the body be?

1 Cor. 12:20 But now the members are many, but the body one.

1 Cor. 12:21 And the eye cannot say to the hand, I have no need of you; nor again the head to the feet, I have no need of you.

1 Cor. 12:22 But much rather the members of the body which seem to be weaker are necessary.

2. Every member functions organically according to the operation in the measure of each one part.

3. This service is the organic service of the New Testament priesthood of the gospel— 1 Pet. 2:5, 9:

1 Pet. 2:5 You yourselves also, as living stones, are being built up as a spiritual house into a holy priesthood to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.

1 Pet. 2:9 But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people acquired for a possession, so that you may tell out the virtues of Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light;

a. We need to preach the gospel to save sinners and offer them as sacrifices to God— Rom. 15:16.

Rom. 15:16 That I might be a minister of Christ Jesus to the Gentiles, a laboring priest of the gospel of God, in order that the offering of the Gentiles might be acceptable, having been sanctified in the Holy Spirit.

b. We need to nourish the believers and help them to grow so that they can offer themselves as living sacrifices to God—John 21:15; 1 Pet. 2:2; Rom. 12:1.

John 21:15 Then when they had eaten breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, Simon, son of John, do you love Me more than these? He said to Him, Yes, Lord, You know that I love You. He said to him, Feed My lambs.

1 Pet. 2:2 As newborn babes, long for the guileless milk of the word in order that by it you may grow unto salvation,

Rom. 12:1 I exhort you therefore, brothers, through the compassions of God to present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, well pleasing to God, which is your reasonable service.

c. We need to perfect the saints so that they may do the work of the ministry unto the organic building up of the Body of Christ—Eph. 4:11-16.

Eph. 4:11 And He Himself gave some as apostles and some as prophets and some as evangelists and some as shepherds and teachers,

Eph. 4:12 For the perfecting of the saints unto the work of the ministry, unto the building up of the Body of Christ,

Eph. 4:13 Until we all arrive at the oneness of the faith and of the full knowledge of the Son of God, at a full-grown man, at the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ,

Eph. 4:14 That we may be no longer little children tossed by waves and carried about by every wind of teaching in the sleight of men, in craftiness with a view to a system of error,

Eph. 4:15 But holding to truth in love, we may grow up into Him in all things, who is the Head, Christ,

Eph. 4:16 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.

d. We need to lead the saints to prophesy, to speak for God, for the organic building up of the church—1 Cor. 14:1, 3-5, 12, 24, 31.

1 Cor. 14:1 Pursue love, and desire earnestly spiritual gifts, but especially that you may prophesy.

1 Cor. 14:3 But he who prophesies speaks building up and encouragement and consolation to men.

1 Cor. 14:4 He who speaks in a tongue builds up himself, but he who prophesies builds up the church.

1 Cor. 14:5 I desire that you all speak in tongues, but especially that you would prophesy; and greater is he who prophesies than he who speaks in tongues, unless he interprets, that the church may receive building up.

1 Cor. 14:12 So also you, since you are zealous of spirits, seek that you may excel for the building up of the church.

1 Cor. 14:24 But if all prophesy and some unbeliever or unlearned person enters, he is convicted by all, he is examined by all;

1 Cor. 14:31 For you can all prophesy one by one that all may learn and all may be encouraged.

e. We need to labor and struggle in all wisdom to present to God every saint full-grown in Christ—Col. 1:28-29.

Col. 1:28 Whom we announce, admonishing every man and teaching every man in all wisdom that we may present every man full-grown in Christ;

Col. 1:29 For which also I labor, struggling according to His operation which operates in me in power.