

**KANSAS CITY BLENDING CONFERENCE  
FALL 2018**

**TAKING CHRIST AS OUR PERSON  
AND LIVING HIM IN AND FOR THE CHURCH LIFE**

Message One

**Experiencing the Central Work of God  
and**

**Taking Christ as Our Person in and for the Church Life**

Scripture Reading: Eph. 3:16-21; Phil. 2:13; Gal. 2:20; 4:19

- I. In and for the church life, we need to experience the central work of God—Eph. 3:17a; Phil. 2:13:**
- A. God's central work, His unique work, in the universe and throughout all the ages and generations is to work Himself in Christ into His chosen people, making Himself one with them—Gal. 4:19; Eph. 3:17a; 1 Cor. 6:17.
  - B. God desires not mainly to do things for us but to work Himself into our being—Eph. 3:17a.
  - C. God's intention is to have Christ thoroughly worked into our being; however, in our spiritual seeking we may have no concern about this, caring instead only for our intention—Phil. 2:21.
  - D. God's purpose is to work Himself into us, making Himself our inward elements—Eph. 3:11, 16-19:
    - 1. This purpose is the center of the universe, and apart from this purpose the Christian life is meaningless—Rev. 4:11.
    - 2. The principle in God's work is to gain persons and by gaining them to have a way to go on:
      - a. The proper priority is not for us to work for God but for God to work Himself into us—Eph. 2:10; Phil. 2:13.
      - b. In the church life the importance of the person far exceeds that of the work—2 Tim. 2:20-22:
        - 1) What we are is more important than what we do.
        - 2) We cannot serve God beyond what we are as a person.
    - 3. Spiritual progress consists in allowing God to gain ground within us—Col.2:19; Eph. 3:17a.
  - E. For the fulfillment of God's eternal economy, God needs to build Himself in Christ into our being, working Himself in Christ into us as our life, our nature, and our constitution, to make us God in life and in nature but not in the Godhead—2 Sam. 7:12-14a; Rom. 1:3-4; Eph. 3:17a; John 14:23; Col. 3:10-11:
    - 1. We need God to build up Christ into our intrinsic constitution so that our entire being will be reconstituted with Christ—Eph. 3:17a.
    - 2. Christ builds the church by coming into our spirit and spreading Himself from our spirit into our mind, emotion, and will to occupy our entire soul—Matt. 16:18; Eph. 3:17a.

- F. We cooperate with God's central work by being poor in spirit (Matt. 5:3) and pure in heart (v. 8), seeking the Lord with a single heart (Psa. 27:4), turning to the Lord (2 Cor. 3:16), caring for the sense of life (Rom. 8:6), being willing to be enlightened (Eph. 1:17-18), and opening our whole being to the Lord to be filled with God as our content (3:16-19).

## **II. In and for the church life, we need to take Christ as our person—Gal. 2:20; Eph. 3:16-21:**

- A. God's intention in His economy is to work Himself into us not only as our life but also as our person—Gal. 4:19.
- B. Our regenerated spirit is the inner man with the indwelling Christ as its person—Eph. 3:17a:
1. If we would take Christ as our person, we must see that our regenerated spirit is no longer merely an organ for us to contact God but is our person.
  2. In our inner man we have Christ not only as our life but also as our person— 1 John 5:11-12; Col. 3:4; Eph. 3:17a.
  3. Our inner man consists of our renewed soul as its organ and our regenerated spirit indwelt by Christ, the person, as its life and person—Rom. 12:2; 8:10; Eph. 4:23; 2 Cor. 4:16.
  4. We need to live in our spirit as the inner man by taking Christ as our person—Rom. 8:4; 1 Cor. 6:17; Gal. 2:20; Eph. 3:17a.
- C. As regenerated believers, we have both the "I" (the self), our former person, and Christ, our new person—Gal. 2:20:
1. The "I" is in our soul, but Christ is in our spirit—Rom. 8:10; 2 Tim. 4:22.
  2. The "I" is the person of the outer man, the old man, and Christ is the person of the inner man, the new man—2 Cor. 4:16.
  3. The "I," the former person, has been crucified, and Christ, the new person, lives in us—Rom. 6:6; Gal. 2:20.
- D. To take Christ as our person requires that we deny the self, our fallen person; we need to deny our soul-life and live by our new person, the indwelling Christ—Matt. 16:24-25; Col. 1:27.
- E. In order to take Christ as our person, we need to deny our purpose, aim, and preference and take His purpose, aim, and preference—2 Cor. 5:14-15.
- F. When we take Christ as our person and live not by ourselves but by Christ as the person, we become one with Him and no longer do anything according to our preference and taste but do everything according to His preference and taste— v. 15.
- G. In order to have the church life, we need to be strengthened into our spirit as the inner man so that Christ, a living person, may make His home in our heart— Eph. 3:16-17a:
1. The inner man with Christ as its person is for our living in the church— 2:21-22.
  2. We need to take Christ not only as life in our spirit but also as the person in our heart— Col. 3:4; 1:27:
    - a. When Christ makes His home in our heart, He becomes our person— Eph. 3:17a.
    - b. The only way for Christ to be our person is for Him to make His home in our heart— v. 17a.
    - c. If we take Christ as our person, allowing Him to spread into our heart, the person living in our heart will not be the self but Christ—Gal. 2:20.
- H. If we take Christ as our person, we will live Him out as the proper church life— v. 20:
1. Christ, who is our person, is for the church life—Matt. 16:18.
  2. Christ, a living person as our person, is the content of the church life—Gal. 1:1-2, 15-16; 4:19.

3. It is not possible to have the church life when we allow our old man to be our person—Rom. 6:6; Gal. 2:20:
  - a. If we want to live the church life but do not take Christ as our person, we cannot be blended with others.
  - b. Unless we live by Christ as our person, we will remain natural persons, those who are according to their natural constitution, racial culture, national character, or religious background—Col. 1:27; 3:4, 10-11.
4. The proper church life is a life in which we live in the inner man, taking Christ as our person—Eph. 3:17a; 2 Cor. 4:16.
5. We should take Christ as our person and allow Christ to live in us and make His home in our heart so that we may be filled unto all the fullness of God in order to be the practical manifestation of the church as the Body of Christ— Gal. 2:20; Eph. 3:16-21.

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