

**KANSAS CITY BLENDING CONFERENCE
FALL 2018**

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

Message Four

**How One Ought to Conduct Himself in the Church
in Order to Bring Forth the One New Man**

Scripture Reading: 1 Tim. 3:15; Eph. 2:13-16; 3:16-21; Col. 3:10-11; 1 Cor. 12:12-13

I. First Timothy 3:15 says, “If I delay, I write that you may know how one ought to conduct himself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God”:

- A. Here *conduct* refers to administration; Timothy received Paul’s commission to arrange for matters related to the administration of the churches.
- B. When Paul speaks of knowing “how one ought to conduct himself in the house of God,” he is speaking of how to administrate and arrange matters in the church.
- C. It may seem that Paul is speaking only about being delayed himself, but if we have spiritual insight, we will realize that he is actually referring to the Lord being delayed; before the Lord comes back, we must know how to administrate the church, how to conduct ourselves in the church.

II. If we want to clearly know what the church is and what God desires to do in the church, so that we may know how we ought to conduct ourselves in the church, we need to understand Ephesians 2:13-16, Colossians 3:10-11, and 1 Corinthians 12:12-13:

- A. Ephesians 2 is concerning the Gentiles and the Jews becoming one new man in Christ:
 - 1. The new man does not refer to an individual; the new man is a corporate new man; hence, verse 15 clearly says that Christ created the two (the Jews and the Gentiles) into one new man.
 - 2. Christ broke down the middle wall of partition between the Jews and the Gentiles by abolishing the law of the commandments in ordinances; when He was crucified on the cross, all the ordinances were nailed there—v. 15; Col. 2:14:
 - a. Ordinances refer to the ceremonial law with its rituals, which are the forms or ways of living and worship.
 - b. These forms or ways of living and worship create enmity and division; to practice the proper church life, all ordinances should be repudiated and dropped.
 - 3. “And might reconcile both [the Jews and the Gentiles] in one Body to God through the cross, having slain the enmity by it”—Eph. 2:16:
 - a. This one Body, the church (1:23), is the one new man mentioned in the previous verse, 2:15; it was in this one Body that both the Jews and the Gentiles were reconciled to God through the cross.
 - b. We, the believers, whether Jews or Gentiles, were reconciled not only *for* the Body of Christ but also in the Body of Christ; what a revelation is here!
 - c. We were reconciled to God; we were saved in the Body of Christ.
 - 4. Before we were saved, we were in Adam, the old man; when we were saved, we came out of Adam, put off the old man, and put on Christ, the new man—Col. 3:9-10; Eph. 2:15.

- B. “And have put on the new man, which is being renewed unto full knowledge according to the image of Him who created him”—Col. 3:10:
1. Since Christ is the constituent of the new man (v. 11; 1:27-28), we, who are the new man, are one with Christ; this is the most basic and crucial point in the book of Colossians.
 2. Although we have put on Christ (Gal. 3:27) and Christ is in us (Col. 1:27), the new man has not yet been manifested through us.
 3. Because the new man was created with us, who belong to the old creation (Eph. 2:15), as his constituents, he needs to be renewed; this renewing takes place mainly in our mind, as indicated by the phrase *unto full knowledge* in Colossians 3:10.
 4. The new man was created in our spirit and is being renewed in our mind unto full knowledge according to the image of Christ, who is the very expression of God—1:15; Heb. 1:3a.
 5. As we know the Lord more and more (Phil. 3:8, 10), the new man will be renewed more and more, and the image of the Lord will be manifested more for the bringing forth of the one new man.
- C. Colossians 3:11 indicates that Greek and Jew, circumcision and uncircumcision, barbarian, Scythian, slave, and free man are on the cross; *there cannot be* is a strong word indicating that everything has been terminated, that there is no natural person in the new man, and that there cannot be anything in the new man except Christ, who is “all and in all”; if we truly see this light, there will be such a change in our service and work.
- D. Concerning the Body of Christ, 1 Corinthians 12:12-13 says, “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. 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. This corresponds to Colossians 3:11; we have all been baptized in the Holy Spirit into one Body, that is, into one new man, into Christ.
 2. By the cross and by our passing through the cross, Christ has reconciled His redeemed ones and created them in Himself into one new man.
 3. This new man, this Body, is Christ Himself; in this new man there are no differences; there is only Christ; Christ is all the members and in all the members.
- E. It is only when we are clear concerning all the points above that we will know how to administrate and serve (how to conduct ourselves) in the church.

III. We can see ten crucial points in the administration of the church by the pattern of Paul; we should allow the Holy Spirit to inscribe these ten points in the tablets of our heart so that we may live in them—cf. 2 Cor. 3:3:

- A. First, in Galatians 1:15-16 he says that he served God because it pleased God to reveal His Son in him that he might announce Him as the gospel among the Gentiles; Paul announced the living Christ whom God had revealed in him, not knowledge or doctrine—cf. Acts 26:16-19.
- B. Second, we must clearly see that Christ is “our life” (Col. 3:4); Christ being our life means that He is the life of the Body, of the new man; furthermore, that Christ is our life is a strong indication that we are to take Him as life and live by Him, that we are to live Him in our daily life in order to experience the universally extensive Christ revealed in Colossians, so that all He is and has attained and obtained will not remain objective but will become our subjective experience.

- C. Third, along with Paul, we need to realize that we need to live in Christ; he says, “I...have died to law that I might live to God...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”—Gal. 2:19-20.
- D. Fourth, we need to see that what we are and have has been terminated on the cross; Paul says, “I am crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but it is Christ who lives in me”—v. 20.
- E. Fifth, we must not serve according to what we are or what we have in ourselves; in Galatians 6:14 Paul says, “The world has been crucified to me and I to the world.”
- F. Sixth, Paul’s unique goal, and ours, should be to dispense Christ into others so that Christ could increase in them; in Galatians 4:19 he says, “I travail again in birth until Christ is formed in you.”
- G. Seventh, we should not expect those with whom we serve to change in any way; instead, we should desire only that they gain Christ, be filled with Christ, and be fully gained by Christ; in 1 Corinthians 2:2 Paul says, “I did not determine to know anything among you except Jesus Christ, and this One crucified.”
- H. Eighth, we must clearly see that there should only be one result in our service, work, and administration of the church—Christ must be produced in the church so that everyone has Christ, so that Christ increases in every member, and so that all will arrive at the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ (Eph. 4:13); in 2 Corinthians 4:12 Paul says, “Death operates in us, but life in you.”
- I. Ninth, Paul prayed for all these matters (Rom. 1:9; Eph. 1:16; Col. 1:9; 1 Thes. 1:2); we must be men of prayer (Col. 4:2).
- J. Tenth, we must be like the apostle Paul, who had a living faith, believing that God is able “to do superabundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power which operates in us” (Eph. 3:20), especially concerning the points listed above.

IV. Ephesians 3:16-21 reveals the spirit, attitude, prayer, and faith that a serving one should have in order to work out the New Jerusalem and bring forth the one new man:

- A. Paul’s spirit and attitude—what he saw, what he was filled with, what he said, and what he cared about in his heart—were related to the vision of God being manifested in the flesh and being mingled with man in order to build the church with Christ so that the church would be filled with Christ; the most precious point in Ephesians 3:16-21 is not Paul’s prayer and faith but his spirit and attitude.
- B. We should cooperate with Christ so that we can work Christ into others and build Christ as the material into others so that they may become a spiritual temple for the expression, the fullness, of the One who fills all in all—this should be our spirit and attitude.
- C. Paul was so burdened that he said, “I bow my knees unto the Father” (v. 14); Paul knelt down to pray because something within forced him to bow his knees unto the Father; because Paul was obsessed with Christ, in Ephesians 3 he could not help but kneel down.
- D. Every elder, deacon, co-worker, and everyone who serves the Lord must see a vision, a revelation, to the point that he is absolutely obsessed with it and has the same spirit, attitude, and inner mood of Paul.
- E. Paul described four aspects of our need to be strengthened into the inner man by the Father:
 - 1. The first aspect of the strengthening of the believers is that it would be “according to the riches of His glory” (v. 16); God expressed is glory—cf. Exo. 40:34; 2 Chron. 7:3; Ezek. 1:28; 10:4:
 - a. What dwells in Christ is the expression of the riches of what God is, and the glory that is expressed is the fullness (Col. 2:9; Eph. 3:19b); this means that God wants to be expressed.

- b. God's glory is wrought into the church, and He is expressed in the church; hence, to God is the glory in the church—vv. 20-21.
 - c. The glory of the expressed God can enter into the believers and become the strengthening power within them; in turn, they are strengthened to express God's glory.
2. The second aspect of the strengthening of the believers is "through His Spirit" (v. 16); without the Spirit, God cannot be expressed through man; the Father strengthens us from within through the indwelling Spirit, who has been with us and in us since our regeneration.
 3. The third aspect of the strengthening of the believers is that they would be strengthened "with power" (v. 16); this is the power that is referred to in 1:19-22—the power that raised Christ from the dead, seated Christ at the right hand of God in the heavenlies, subjected all things under Christ's feet, and gave Christ to be Head over all things to the church; such power operates in us (vv. 19-20), and with such power God strengthens us for the church.
 4. The fourth aspect of the strengthening of the believers is that they would be strengthened "into the inner man" (3:16); the inner man is our regenerated spirit, which has God's life as its life; this implies that we need to be strengthened into our spirit through the Holy Spirit.
- F. The issue is Christ making His home in our hearts; *hearts* in Ephesians 3:17 is an important word, meaning that Christ can be sensed in us and that we respond to Christ dwelling in us; our heart is the organ of our feeling and emotion, and it is where Christ dwells in us:
1. Paul never neglected the need to work Christ into man; he was obsessed with the matter of Christ increasing in us, which was his central concern, and this became his spirit and attitude; when Paul wrote Ephesians 3:16-21, he transcended even the universe.
 2. When Christ is in our feeling and is real in our heart, we will be rooted and grounded in His love; in such a condition Paul said that we would apprehend with all the saints the breadth, length, height, and depth; these four words added together equal Christ in His immeasurableness.
 3. The result of all this is that we will know the knowledge-surpassing love of Christ and be filled unto all the fullness of God (v. 19); we who serve in the church should have this attitude, and our thoughts and prayers should be for this.
 4. The responsible brothers should be clear as to what they take as their goal: is it an increase in number or an increase in Christ? They should be like Paul, who was totally obsessed with the increase of Christ within God's people.
 5. We should focus on this matter to the extent that we do not know what to pray other than this; this should be the attitude, spirit, and prayer of one who serves the Lord.
- G. Because Paul was concerned that the Ephesian saints might think that the prayer in verses 16 through 19 was too difficult, he expressed his faith by immediately following with verses 20 and 21—"but to Him who is able to do superabundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power which operates in us, to Him be the glory in the church and in Christ Jesus unto all the generations forever and ever. Amen":
1. The full meaning of the phrase *to Him be the glory in the church* is seen in the New Jerusalem; the New Jerusalem is the complete manifestation of God's glory (Rev. 21:10-11), and the church today should be a miniature of the New Jerusalem.
 2. This is the spirit, attitude, prayer, and faith with which we should serve the Lord; in this way our service in the church will be great and glorious, and the brothers and sisters will be filled unto all the fullness of God—Eph. 3:19b; cf. Gal. 4:19

This Outline from Message 08,
International Training for Elders and Responsible Ones (ITERO),
Spring 2018, in Anaheim, CA
Used by Permission of Living Stream Ministry