

Outline of the Messages for the Memorial Day Conference

May 24-27, 2013

GENERAL SUBJECT: THE COMPLETING MINISTRY OF PAUL

Message Six

Hymns 750, 837

Growth in Life through the Transformation of Our Soul for the Building Up of the Body

Scripture Reading: 2 Cor. 3:16-18; Rom. 12:2; 1 Cor. 3:6, 9, 12-13; Phil. 2:2; Eph. 4:12-16

- 2 Cor 3:16 But whenever their heart turns to the Lord, the veil is taken away.
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 12:2 And do not be fashioned according to this age, 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 3:9 For we are God's fellow workers; you are God's cultivated land, God's building.
1 Cor 3:12 But if anyone builds upon the foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, grass, stubble,
1 Cor 3:13 The work of each will become manifest; for the day will declare it, because it is revealed by fire, and the fire itself will prove each one's work, of what sort it is.
- Phil 2:2 Make my joy full, that you think the same thing, having the same love, joined in soul, thinking the one thing,
- 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.

I. The regeneration of our spirit takes place in an instant, and the glorification of our body takes place in the twinkling of an eye (1 Cor. 15:51-52), but the transformation of our soul (our mind, emotion, and will) is a long process, a long "tunnel," through which we must pass:

- 1 Cor 15:51 Behold, I tell you a mystery: We will not all sleep, but we will all be changed,
1 Cor 15:52 In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet; for the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we will be changed.
- A. Our spiritual life began with regeneration; when we believed on the Lord Jesus and called on His name, He as the life-giving Spirit entered into our spirit and regenerated it; since then, the Triune God has indwelt our spirit, and in spirit we are one with Him—John 3:6; 1:12-13; Rom. 10:12-13.
- John 3:6 That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.
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.
Rom 10:12 For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek, for the same Lord is Lord of all and rich to all who call upon Him;
Rom 10:13 For "whoever calls upon the name of the Lord shall be saved."

- B. Now there is the need for Him to spread from our spirit into our soul; when He as the life-giving Spirit has spread into our soul and saturated it, we are transformed—2 Cor. 3:16-18; Rom. 12:2:
- 2 Cor 3:16 But whenever their heart turns to the Lord, the veil is taken away.
 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 12:2 And do not be fashioned according to this age, 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. Transformation is the saturation of our soul by the Triune God.
 2. Regeneration is a birth in our spirit; transformation, a saturation in our soul.
- C. Transformation is a metabolic change; it is not an outward change or correction but the metabolic function of the life of God in the believers, issuing in an outward expression.

II. If the believers are willing to grow in the divine life, the element of the divine life will increase in them and bring forth a metabolic change; thus, their inward disposition will be transformed, and their outward image will also be transformed to be the same as the image of the Lord—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.
- A. Only that which is expressed outwardly through the inward metabolism is genuine health and real beauty—cf. Exo. 28:2; Rom. 13:14, 12.
- Exo 28:2 And you shall make holy garments for Aaron your brother, for glory and for beauty.
 Rom 13:14 But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh to fulfill its lusts.
 Rom 13:12 The night is far advanced, and the day has drawn near. Let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the weapons of light.
- B. When we are transformed into the image of the Lord by beholding Him, this is not the result of our self-cultivation, but it is the Lord Spirit, the life-giving Spirit, who the Lord Christ became in His resurrection, who moves within us to bring forth a metabolic change through the increase of the element of the divine life in us.
- C. When the bountiful supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ spreads from our spirit into our soul, it begins the inner process of metabolism and issues in an outward manifestation; then people will see that what is manifested through us is not ourselves but Christ—Phil. 1:19-21a.
- 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 ...
- D. We must enjoy the bountiful supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ and allow Him to work in us; this is transformation; if we touch the Lord day by day by turning our hearts to Him and allow His element to come into us, metabolism will spontaneously transpire in us so that we may be transformed and express the Lord from glory to glory—2 Cor. 3:16-18.
- 2 Cor 3:16 But whenever their heart turns to the Lord, the veil is taken away.
 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.

- E. In order to be transformed, we need to talk with Him and confer with Him in everything—“in nothing be anxious, but in everything, by prayer and petition with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God”—Phil. 4:6:
1. If we have some problem, we just need to tell the Lord; He is right within us, and He is with us face to face—cf. Exo. 33:11.
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.
 2. When anxiety comes, we should say, “O Lord, this anxiety is Yours, not mine; I give it to You because You bear it for me”; thus, we receive the Lord’s element into us, and metabolism will work constantly in us; this is to live Christ.
 3. Those who do not know this secret (Phil. 4:12, 6) consider that to live Christ is a difficult thing; actually, we just need to practice speaking with the Lord constantly; then spontaneously, we will live Christ.
Phil 4:12 I know also how to be abased, and I know how to abound; in everything and in all things I have learned the secret both to be filled and to hunger, both to abound and to lack.
Phil 4:6 In nothing be anxious, but in everything, by prayer and petition with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God;

III. The real growth in life is the transformation of the soul:

- A. In the parable of the ten virgins (Matt. 25:1-13), the Lord Jesus spoke of the virgins’ lamps and their vessels; both the prudent and the foolish had oil in their lamps (v. 8), but only the prudent took oil in their vessels:
- Matt 25:1 At that time the kingdom of the heavens will be likened to ten virgins, who took their lamps and went forth to meet the bridegroom.
- Matt 25:2 And five of them were foolish and five were prudent.
- Matt 25:3 For the foolish, when they took their lamps, did not take oil with them;
- Matt 25:4 But the prudent took oil in their vessels with their lamps.
- Matt 25:5 And while the bridegroom delayed, they all became drowsy and slept.
- Matt 25:6 But at midnight there was a cry, Behold, the bridegroom! Go forth to meet him!
- Matt 25:7 Then all those virgins arose and trimmed their own lamps.
- Matt 25:8 And the foolish said to the prudent, Give us some of your oil, for our lamps are going out.
- Matt 25:9 But the prudent answered, saying, Perhaps there will not be enough for us and for you; go rather to those who sell, and buy for yourselves.
- Matt 25:10 And as they were going away to buy, the bridegroom came; and those who were ready went in with him to the wedding feast. And the door was shut.
- Matt 25:11 And later the rest of the virgins came also, saying, Lord, lord, open to us!
- Matt 25:12 But he answered and said, Truly I say to you, I do not know you.
- Matt 25:13 Watch therefore, for you do not know the day nor the hour.
1. Two portions of oil were needed, one for the lamp and the other for the vessel.
 2. Those who are saved all have oil in the lamp; that is, we have the Spirit in our spirit (Prov. 20:27); whether we have an extra portion of oil in our vessel (Rom. 9:21, 23), our soul, however, is another question.
Prov 20:27 The spirit of man is the lamp of Jehovah, / Searching all the innermost parts of the inner being.
Rom 9:21 Or does not the potter have authority over the clay to make out of the same lump one vessel unto honor and another unto dishonor?
Rom 9:23 In order that He might make known the riches of His glory upon vessels of mercy, which He had before prepared unto glory,
 3. Whether we are foolish or prudent virgins depends not on our spirit but on our soul; our spirit has been regenerated, but our soul needs to be saturated with the Spirit; we need to have the extra portion of oil in our vessel.

- B. This parable shows us that after we have been regenerated, we need to be transformed; that is, we need to grow in life; the life abiding in our spirit needs to spread into our soul until it is saturated; as the new elements of the divine Spirit enter into our soul, it is organically transformed, and this transformation is the growth in life.

IV. First Corinthians 3 says, “I planted, Apollos watered, but God caused the growth...You are God’s cultivated land [farm], God’s building...But if anyone builds upon the foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, grass, stubble, the work of each will become manifest”—vv. 6, 9, 12-13:

- A. These verses show that transformation and the growth in life are the same—we start out as plants growing on God’s farm, but the end result is our being transformed into gold, silver, and precious stones.
- B. This farm that is also a building illustrates the way that the indwelling Spirit spreads from our spirit to permeate our soul and thus to transform us.

V. If we let the indwelling Spirit in our spirit spread into and saturate our soul, we shall spontaneously be one—we shall be “joined in soul”; the natural concepts will give place to the spreading Spirit; this is the way that we grow in life, and out of this growth in life comes oneness—Phil. 2:2:

Phil 2:2 Make my joy full, that you think the same thing, having the same love, joined in soul, thinking the one thing,

- A. The Philippians had Christ in their spirit through regeneration, but they did not have Christ in their soul through transformation; only by having Christ saturate and occupy their entire soul could they be made one in soul.
- B. Will we allow the indwelling Spirit to thoroughly saturate our soul so that it is organically transformed? Will we give the Spirit the freedom to permeate our soul as well as our spirit? When our soul is saturated by the indwelling Spirit, we are one with the new man and built up in the Body.

VI. Ephesians 4:12-16 tells us that the building up of the Body of Christ depends on the growth in life:

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.

- A. Our growing up into Him in all things comes about through our soul being saturated with the Spirit; there must be “the growth of the Body” for the Lord to have the new man—2:15; 4:23-24; Col. 3:10-11.

Eph 2:15 Abolishing in His flesh the law of the commandments in ordinances, that He might create the two in Himself into one new man, so making peace,

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.

Col 3:10 And have put on the new man, which is being renewed unto full knowledge according to the image of Him who created him,

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

- B. When His Body is built up, He will have the new man on earth to carry out God's eternal purpose; this is the goal that the Lord is pursuing.
- C. Let us pray for this to be realized and offer ourselves to Him for this: "Lord, spread Yourself from my spirit into my soul. Saturate my soul. Transform me metabolically. I want to be organically changed."
- D. After some time we shall be transformed by the growth in life; then we shall be built into the Body and be members of the new man; the coming into being of the new man is the Lord's goal; let us be one with Him in pursuing the growth in life through the transformation of the soul for the building up of the Body as the one new man.