

Message 2

The Increase of Christ as Portrayed in the Gospel of John

Scripture Reading: Acts 5:14; John 3:29a, 30a, 31-36; 12:24; 20:17; 17:21-23

OUTLINE

<< DAY 1 >>

I. The increase and spread of the church is the increase and spread of Christ (John 12:24; Acts 5:14; 9:35; 11:21, 24):

- A. After passing through death, the Lord Jesus entered into resurrection to impart His divine life into those who believe into Him so that they could become His reproduction (1 Pet. 1:3; John 3:15; 20:17).
- B. Through His death and resurrection, Christ has been propagated, increased, and spread (Acts 5:14; 11:24).
- C. The church is the Body of Christ, even Christ Himself; hence, the church is Christ's increase and spread on earth (Eph. 1:22-23; 4:4, 16; 1 Cor. 12:12, 27).
- D. The church does not merely announce Christ; the church increases and spreads Christ (Matt. 28:19; Acts 1:8).

<< DAY 2 >>

II. "He who has the bride is the bridegroom...He must increase" (John 3:29a, 30a):

- A. The increase in verse 30 is the bride in verse 29, and the bride is a living composition of all the regenerated people (vv. 3-6):
 1. Regeneration not only brings the divine life into the believers, but it also makes them the corporate bride for Christ's increase (vv. 6, 15, 29a, 30a):
 - a. The bride as the increase of Christ is related to the spiritual part of our being (v. 6b).
 - b. Our regenerated human spirit is part of the increase of Christ, and this increase is Christ's multiplication and reproduction; through regeneration we have become part of Christ's increase.
 2. Christ increases by regenerating redeemed sinners, making them His bride, His wife.
 3. For Christ to increase continually, we need to contact people and help them to be regenerated, thereby producing new spiritual children (1 Cor. 4:14-15; Philem. 10).

<< DAY 3 >>

- B. The Christ who is increasing is the immeasurable and unlimited Son of God (John 3:31-36):

1. He is such an immeasurable and unlimited One, who comes from above, who is above all, to whom the Father has given all, and who dispenses the Spirit without measure (v. 31).
2. Such a One needs a universal increase to be His bride to match Him (vv. 29a, 30a).
3. Christ the Son gives the Spirit without measure to God's people (v. 34):
 - a. The unique way for us to become the increase of the unlimited Christ is to receive the Spirit and be filled with the Spirit; the more we have the Spirit, the more we will be Christ's increase (v. 34).
 - b. This increase begins with our regeneration, and it consummates with our being filled with the immeasurable Spirit (vv. 3-6, 34).

<< DAY 4 >>

III. “Unless the grain of wheat falls into the ground and dies, it abides alone; but if it dies, it bears much fruit” (12:24):

- A. The Gospel of John reveals that the Lord Jesus came to impart the divine life to us so that He might have an increase for Himself (10:10b; 3:15, 29a, 30a).
- B. The Lord Jesus fell into the ground and died to release His divine element, His divine life, from within the shell of His humanity to produce many believers in resurrection (1 Pet. 1:3), just as a grain of wheat has its life element released by falling into the ground and growing up out of the ground to bear much fruit, that is, to bring forth many grains.
- C. These many grains are His many members that constitute His mystical Body—His eternal, boundless increase (1 Cor. 12:12, 27; John 3:30).
- D. We should not remain as whole grains; rather, we need to be broken and ground into fine flour so that we may be blended with others for making a loaf; this loaf is the Body of Christ, which consummates in the New Jerusalem (1 Cor. 10:17; Rev. 21:2).

<< DAY 5 >>

- E. The church life portrayed by the house of feasting in Bethany was marvelous (John 12:1-11):
 1. It was excellent in quality, but it was much too small in quantity.
 2. It was necessary, therefore, for the Lord Jesus to die a life-releasing death so that this kind of church life could be multiplied in resurrection (v. 24).

IV. “Go to My brothers and say to them, I ascend to My Father and your Father, and My God and your God” (20:17):

- A. Through Christ's resurrection His disciples were regenerated (1 Pet. 1:3) with

the divine life, which had been released by His dying as a grain of wheat.

B. He was the Father's only Son, the Father's individual expression; through His death and resurrection the Father's only Begotten became the Firstborn among many brothers (John 1:18; 3:16; Rom. 8:29):

1. His many brothers are the many sons of God and the church, a corporate expression of God the Father in the Son; this is God's ultimate intention (Heb. 2:10-12).
2. The many brothers are the propagation of the Father's life and the multiplication of the Son in the divine life; hence, in the Lord's resurrection God's eternal purpose to have many sons for His eternal, corporate expression is fulfilled (Eph. 1:4-5; 3:9-11).

« DAY 6 »

V. “That they all may be one; even as You, Father, are in Me and I in You, that they also may be in Us...And the glory which You have given Me I have given to them, that they may be one, even as We are one; I in them, and You in Me, that they may be perfected into one” (John 17:21-23a):

- A. We need to see the oneness of the increase of Christ, a oneness in which all the regenerated ones, the grains, and the brothers are one (3:6; 12:24; 20:17).
- B. The Triune God is three, but the three are in a unique oneness—a oneness of coinherence, which is a model of the oneness of the Body of Christ (Eph. 4:4).
- C. The oneness of the Body of Christ, the oneness of the increase of Christ, is the enlarged oneness of the Divine Trinity (John 17:21-23; 14:20; 1 Cor. 12:12).

<< WEEK 2 – DAY 1 >>

Morning Nourishment

John 12:24 "Truly, truly, I say to you, Unless the grain of wheat falls into the ground and dies, it abides alone; but if it dies, it bears much fruit."

Acts 5:14 "And believers were all the more being added to the Lord, multitudes of both men and women."

The knowledge of the truth and growth in life are for the church's increase and spread. However, we also should realize that the increase and spread of the church are the increase and spread of Christ. In John 12:24 the Lord Jesus referred to Himself as a grain of wheat. As the only begotten Son of God, He was the one grain of wheat. When He went to the cross, He fell into the ground and died. Then in resurrection He produced much fruit, that is, many grains as the multiplication of Himself as the unique grain. Much fruit in verse 24 refers to those who believe into Him. (Crucial Words of Leading in the Lord's Recovery, Book 4: The Increase and Spread of the Church, p. 27)

Today's Reading

The New Testament reveals that the only begotten Son of God became flesh, passed through human living, and died on the cross. After passing through death, He entered into resurrection to impart His divine life into those who believe into Him so that they could become many grains. Individually speaking, these grains are individual believers; collectively speaking, they are the one Body of Christ, the church.

Through the multiplication of Christ, He is both increased and spread. The increase and spread of the church is the increase and spread of Christ. Through His death and resurrection, Christ has been propagated, increased, and spread. Christ is present on every continent of the whole earth, and the expression of this spreading Christ is the church.

On the surface, the book of Acts is merely a record of the activities and work of the apostles. In actuality, it shows how the resurrected Christ in His ascension and by the Spirit of power has been multiplied continuously on the earth through His believers. This propagation begins in Acts 2, and it does not stop even at the end of chapter 28...The book of Acts has no conclusion; it is a book that transcends time and space. Perhaps God in the heavens today looks upon the continuing acts of His disciples as further chapters in the book of Acts.

The increase and spread did not begin with us; it began with Peter and continued with Paul. In Acts Peter, Paul, and all the other saints continuously propagated Christ so that Christ could be increased and spread on the earth. Today in the twentieth century there are genuine Christians in every large city of every continent on the earth. The number of those who have been washed by the Lord's precious blood, who have been regenerated with the divine life, and who have become members of Christ to be constituted as the Body of Christ is in the hundreds of millions. This is His propagation. (Crucial Words of Leading in the Lord's Recovery, Book 4: The Increase and Spread of the Church, pp. 27-28)

The church is the Body of Christ, the fullness of Christ, and Christ Himself; hence, the church is Christ's increase and spread on the earth. Many people think that the church is nothing more than a group that proclaims and announces Christ to the world. However, according to the Scriptures, the church does not merely proclaim Christ; the church is Christ. The church does not merely announce Christ; the church increases and spreads Christ. As the Body of Christ, the church is Christ. The church on the earth is Christ on the earth. For example, my body is me...My body is my presence. My body can proclaim me and enables you to see and know me, because my body is my very self. What my body is to me is what the church is to Christ. The church can proclaim Christ on the earth for people to see Christ and to know Christ, because the church is the Body of Christ; the church is Christ. Hence, Christ goes wherever the church goes, and Christ exists wherever the church exists. (Christ and the Cross, p. 50)

Further Reading: CWWL, 1963, vol. 1, "The Enjoyment of Christ for His Increase," ch. 4

<< WEEK 2 — DAY 2 >>

Morning Nourishment

John 3:29-30 "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. He must increase, but I must decrease."

In the Gospels there was Jesus. Then in Acts 1 there were one hundred twenty believers in Jesus, each of whom was His increase. In this regard, the one Jesus was multiplied by one hundred twenty. In chapter 2 three thousand people were saved on the day of Pentecost (v. 41), bringing the number of Christ's multiplication to three thousand one hundred twenty-one. Then in chapter 4 another five thousand men were added (v. 4). In chapter after chapter of Acts there are the continuous increase and multiplication of Christ. In chapter 21, when Paul went up to Jerusalem, James said, "You observe, brother, how many thousands there are among the Jews who have believed" (v. 20). This means that by the time of chapter 21 the propagation of Christ had reached many thousands just in Jerusalem. (Crucial Words of Leading in the Lord's Recovery, Book 4: The Increase and Spread of the Church, p. 28)

Today's Reading

The word of John the Baptist in John 3:29 indicates that Christ is the Bridegroom: "He who has the bride is the bridegroom." The bridegroom is a most pleasant person, who comes for the bride. The believers in Christ as a corporate bride are prepared for Christ as the Bridegroom. To us He should be the attraction, the pleasure, and the satisfaction. All the believers should experience and enjoy Him as the pleasant Bridegroom.

As the Bridegroom Christ has the regenerated ones as His bride. Whereas verse 29 speaks of the bride, verse 30 speaks of the increase. The increase in verse 30 is the bride in verse 29, and the bride is a living composition of all the regenerated people. This indicates that in John 3, a chapter on regeneration, regeneration not only brings the divine life into the believers but also makes them the corporate bride for Christ's increase. Regeneration, therefore, is for the increase of Christ; it is for the producing of the bride. Regeneration is for us to be a part of the bride of Christ.

The bride as the increase of Christ is related to the spiritual part of our being (v. 6b). Our regenerated human spirit is part of the increase of Christ, and this increase is Christ's multiplication and reproduction. Through regeneration we have become part of Christ's increase.

The bride of Christ is the increase of Christ. All of the reborn people are the increase of Christ, and this increase is the bride, which becomes the counterpart of Christ. The bride of Christ is the church, the composition of all the regenerated people. All those who are regenerated are composed together as the corporate bride to match Christ. Without regeneration, Christ cannot have His bride as His increase. Hence, Christ increases by regenerating the redeemed sinners, making them His bride, His wife.

Adam and Eve are a type of Christ with His increase. Adam was a bachelor, a single man, but one day the Lord opened his side, took out a rib, and built that rib into Eve as a wife to match Adam (Gen. 2:20b-24). Eve was Adam's increase, and through his wife Adam has billions of descendants, who are also his increase....Adam is a type of Christ (Rom. 5:14), and Eve is a type of the church as the bride of Christ (2 Cor. 11:2-3; Eph. 5:31-32). Not only the wife but also all the children are the increase of the husband. The increase of Christ today on this earth is immeasurable. Christ is still increasing.

In order for Christ to increase, we need to contact people individually to get them regenerated. Then gradually and steadily with the proper care, we as their parents should feed, nourish, and cherish them day by day through the small groups. For Christ to increase continually, each of us must be in a small group to produce new spiritual children. (The Conclusion of the New Testament, pp. 2858-2859)

Further Reading: Life-study of John, msg. 10

<< WEEK 2 — DAY 3 >>

Morning Nourishment

John 3:31 "He who comes from above is above all; he who is from the earth is of the earth and speaks out of the earth. He who comes from heaven is above all."

34 "For He whom God has sent speaks the words of God, for He gives the Spirit not by measure."

Christ the Son gives the Spirit without measure to God's people. The unique way for us to become the increase of the unlimited Christ is to receive the Spirit and be filled with the Spirit. The more we have of the Spirit, the more we will be Christ's increase. This increase begins with our regeneration, and it consummates with our being filled with the immeasurable Spirit. (The Conclusion of the New Testament, p. 2862)

Today's Reading

[In John 3:29] John the Baptist said, "He who has the bride is the bridegroom." Who is this bride? The bride is the composition, the aggregate, of all the regenerated ones. The totality of all those who have been regenerated is the bride of Christ. We all are part of Christ's bride, and this bride is His increase (v. 30).

In 3:26 the disciples of John the Baptist came to him and said, "Rabbi, He who was with you across the Jordan, of whom you have testified, behold, He is baptizing and all are coming to Him." John's disciples were made jealous by the fact that so many of his followers were coming to the Lord Jesus. As part of his answer to his disciples, John the Baptist said concerning Christ, "He must increase, but I must decrease" (v. 30). The increase in this verse is the bride in the previous verse, and the bride is a living composition of all the regenerated ones. This means that in this chapter regeneration is not only to bring the divine life into the believers but is also to make them the corporate bride for Christ's increase. As Adam was increased in Eve, so Christ is increased in His bride.

Some Christian teachers understand verse 30 in a natural, human way. They think that John the Baptist's word means that Christ must be everything and that we should be nothing. This interpretation is incorrect. As we have indicated, the increase in verse 30 refers to the bride in verse 29. By being the bronze serpent bearing God's judgment, Christ has opened the way for us to believe into Him and receive Him so that we may be regenerated to become His increase. As those who believe into Christ, we are all members of His Body. This is Christ's increase. When Christ was on earth, He was the individual Christ. Now there is the corporate Christ, and this corporate Christ is the increase of the individual Christ. This corporate Christ is the church, the Body, and the bride.

In 3:31-36 we have a very high revelation of Christ. These verses speak of the immeasurable Christ, the One who comes from above and who is above all, who speaks the words of God and gives the Spirit not by measure, and the One to whom the Father has given all things. This is the universal Christ, the immeasurable Christ.

The intention of this chapter in the Gospel of John is to show us that this unlimited Christ must have a universal increase, and He is in the process of gaining this increase today. Wherever we go, Christ is present by the Spirit He gives without measure. Verse 34 says definitely, "He gives the Spirit not by measure." This is the Spirit He gives to His Body, the church. The Spirit given by Christ to His Body is immeasurable. Every one of the millions of persons who believes in the Lord Jesus has received the Spirit, the immeasurable Spirit. This immeasurable Spirit produces a universal increase for the unlimited Christ. I would call your attention to the three adjectives used in the previous sentence: immeasurable, universal, unlimited. I use the word immeasurable to describe the Spirit, the word universal to describe the increase, and the word unlimited to describe Christ. The unlimited Christ gives the immeasurable Spirit in order to produce a universal increase. (CWWL, 1982, vol. 2, "The Fulfillment of the Tabernacle and the Offerings in the Writings of John," pp. 131-133)

Further Reading: CWWL, 1982, vol. 2, "The Fulfillment of the Tabernacle and the Offerings in the Writings of John," chs. 9-10, 13

<< WEEK 2 — DAY 4 >>

Morning Nourishment

John 12:24 "Truly, truly, I say to you, Unless the grain of wheat falls into the ground and dies, it abides alone; but if it dies, it bears much fruit."

1 Cor. 10:17 "Seeing that there is one bread, we who are many are one Body; for we all partake of the one bread."

The Gospel of John reveals that the Lord came to impart life to us in order that He could have an increase for Himself. In 12:24-25 the Lord told us that He was the one grain of wheat that would fall into the earth to die in order to become the many grains. Originally, He was the one grain of wheat, but through death and resurrection He became the many grains, which are the believers as the increase of Christ, the multiplication of the one grain. As the many grains we are exactly the same as the original grain, Christ. In our natural life we are the increase and multiplication of Adam, but as those who have been reborn, we have the life of Christ, and because of this divine life, we are the increase and multiplication of Christ. In the natural realm we are of Adam, but in the spiritual realm we are of Christ. (CWWL, 1963, vol. 1, "Experiencing the Mingling of God with Man for the Oneness of the Body of Christ," p. 368)

Today's Reading

In John 12, according to the worldly view, Jesus was in His golden time. A great crowd of Jews esteemed Him highly and welcomed Him warmly (vv. 12-19), and even the Greeks were seeking after Him (vv. 20-22). However, the Lord neither accepted this kind of exaltation, nor took this opportunity to get a name for Himself; nor did He seize the golden opportunity as the means to have His increase. Rather, knowing that the way for a grain of wheat to multiply is not by being welcomed and honored, but by falling into the ground and dying, the Lord preferred to fall as a grain of wheat into the ground and die that He might produce many grains for the church.

Just as a grain of wheat releases its life by falling into the ground, so Christ released the divine life within Him through death. Through His death on the cross, the shell of His flesh was broken, and the divine life contained and concealed within it was released. If Christ had not fallen into the earth to die, He would have remained one grain. But He fell into the earth and died, and He brought forth many grains as His multiplication.

Christ, who as a grain of wheat fell into the ground and died, grew out of death to produce many grains, which are the believers. The Lord Jesus fell into the ground and died that His divine element, His divine life, might be released from within the shell of His humanity to produce many believers in resurrection (1 Pet. 1:3), just as a grain of wheat has its life element released by falling into the ground and growing up out of the ground to bear much fruit, that is, to bring forth many grains. (The Conclusion of the New Testament, pp. 2900-2901)

These countless grains [are] His many members which constitute His eternal, mystical Body (1 Cor. 12:12, 27; 10:17). This mystical Body [is] His eternal, boundless increase (John 3:30). (The All-inclusiveness and Unlimitedness of Christ, p. 41)

Christ is the one grain of wheat (John 12:24) for death resulting in resurrection. This refers to Himself as the divine seed to produce many grains (the people who receive Him) to become His many members who constitute His organic Body which consummates in the New Jerusalem. If one grain of wheat remains whole, it is only one grain. But when it falls into the earth and dies, it will grow and bring forth many grains in resurrection. These many grains are to be ground and blended into flour to make a loaf, which signifies the Body of Christ (1 Cor. 10:17). Although we are the many grains, we do not like to be ground in order to be blended. But we need to be broken. Then we can be blended with others. We should not remain as whole grains. We have to be broken and ground into fine flour so that we can be blended with others for making a loaf. This loaf is the Body of Christ which consummates in the New Jerusalem. (Crystallization-study of the Gospel of John, pp. 82-83)

Further Reading: Life-study of John, msg. 26; The Conclusion of the New Testament, msg. 282

<< WEEK 2 — DAY 5 >>

Morning Nourishment

John 20:17 "Jesus said to her, Do not touch Me, for I have not yet ascended to the Father; but go to My brothers and say to them, I ascend to My Father and your Father, and My God and your God."

Rom. 8:29 "Because those whom He foreknew, He also predestinated to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the Firstborn among many brothers."

The church life portrayed by the feasting in Bethany was marvelous, but it was too limited. It was excellent in quality, but it was much too small in quantity. Therefore, it was necessary for the Lord Jesus to die in order for this kind of church life to be multiplied. For this reason, the Lord was not willing to receive the exaltation of the crowd but instead told His disciples that He was a grain of wheat to fall into the ground and die in order to produce many grains (John 12:24). As the unique grain, the Lord is the source of the church life....Because the Lord fell into the ground and died, many have been drawn to Him. This was the reason He said, "I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men to Myself" (v. 32). John 12 reveals that the Lord Jesus was ready to die in order to bring His people into God. (CWWL, 1982, vol. 2, "The Fulfillment of the Tabernacle and the Offerings in the Writings of John," p. 318)

Today's Reading

In John 20 Christ is revealed as the resurrected One who brought His believers into God the Father and breathed the Holy Spirit into His believers....Christ, as the resurrected One, brings His believers into God the Father, making His Father their Father and His God their God, and making them His brothers....The Lord's word to Mary [in verse 17] indicated that in resurrection His disciples had become the same as He insofar as they also were sons of God. Previously, the most intimate term the Lord used in reference to His disciples was friends (15:14-15). But after His resurrection He began to call them brothers, for through His resurrection His disciples were regenerated (1 Pet. 1:3) with the divine life, which had been released by His life-imparting death, as indicated in John 12:24. It was through His resurrection that the Lord imparted Himself as the Spirit into His disciples. By receiving His life they were reborn, regenerated, and became His brothers, having the same life as the Lord. He was the one grain of wheat that fell into the ground and died and grew up to bring forth many grains for the producing of the one bread, which is His Body (1 Cor. 10:17). He was the Father's only Son, the Father's individual expression. Through His death and resurrection the Father's only Begotten became the Firstborn among many brothers (Rom. 8:29). His many brothers are the many sons of God and are the church (Heb. 2:10-12), a corporate expression of God the Father in the Son. This is God's ultimate intention. The many brothers are the propagation of the Father's life and the multiplication of the Son in the divine life. Hence, in the Lord's resurrection God's eternal purpose is fulfilled.

In John 20:17 the Lord Jesus also said to Mary, "I ascend to My Father and your Father, and My God and your God." Through His life-imparting death and resurrection, the Lord made His disciples one with Him. Therefore, His Father is the Father of His disciples, and His God is the God of His disciples. In His resurrection they have the Father's life and God's divine nature, just as He has. In making them His brothers, He has imparted the Father's life and God's divine nature into them. By making His Father and His God theirs, He has brought them into His position—the position of the Son—before the Father and God. Thus, in life and nature inwardly and in position outwardly they are the same as the Lord, with whom they have been united. (The Conclusion of the New Testament, pp. 2964-2965)

The Father is not only the Father of the Lord Himself; He is also the Father of the disciples. Henceforth, all the disciples are sons of God. We are the same as the Firstborn, and He is the same as we are. This is the church in His resurrection. Praise Him! (Life-study of John, p. 548)

Further Reading: Life-study of John, msg. 45

<< WEEK 2 — DAY 6 >>

Morning Nourishment

John 17:21-23 "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. And the glory which You have given Me I have given to them, that they may be one, even as We are one; I in them, and You in Me, that they may be perfected into one..."

In John 1:14 the Lord is called the only begotten Son of God, but chapter 20 tells us that the Lord has brothers, indicating that the Lord was multiplied. As the only begotten Son of God, He was the one grain. However, through His death and resurrection, He produced the many grains. He, as the original grain, is the first among the many grains, and all the other grains are out of Him. Thus, the only begotten Son of God became the firstborn Son of God (Rom. 8:29) among the many sons who are His increase...Christ has been increased; He is no longer merely the one grain or merely the only begotten Son. He has been increased and is now the Firstborn among many brothers. (Experiencing the Mingling of God with Man for the Oneness of the Body of Christ, p. 20)

Today's Reading

We must also see the oneness of the increase of Christ. All the grains must be one, all the branches must be one in the one vine, and all the brothers must be one. This is why the Lord prayed in John 17:21-23, "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. And the glory which You have given Me I have given to them, that they may be one, even as We are one; I in them, and You in Me, that they may be perfected into one, that the world may know that You have sent Me and have loved them even as You have loved Me."

This passage shows us the basis for our oneness. Verse 21 shows us that Christ is in the Father, the Father is in Christ, and we are one by being in Christ. Verse 22 mentions the glory that the Lord has given to us. This glory is simply the divine life, which the Father gave to the Son and the Son gave to us so that we might be one. We can be one only in the divine life. Verse 23 says, "I in them," indicating that Christ is in us. It is because Christ is in us that we can be perfected into one. Thus, we are in Christ, we have the divine life, and Christ is in us. These are the most important aspects of the basis for our oneness. It is possible for us to be one with others because we are in Christ, we have the divine life, and Christ is in us.

The Lord is our pattern; while He was on the earth He always realized that He was in the Father, and He never acted outside of the Father (John 14:10; 5:17, 19). All His activities in His daily life were limited by the Father. Now we are in Him, just as He was in the Father. Thus, we must act, walk, work, and live in Christ, who is our limitation, our sphere, and our everything. When we are outside of Christ, we are outside of the oneness of the Body. When we act apart from Christ, we are detached from the Body of Christ. We must learn the lesson of constantly walking in Christ. This is even related to the matter of the church, which is the increase and counterpart of Christ. We cannot be in the church in actuality apart from Christ. We must walk, live, and work in Christ in order to have the real church life. (Experiencing the Mingling of God with Man for the Oneness of the Body of Christ, pp. 21-22)

In John 17 the Lord prayed to the Father for the oneness among all His believers, that it may merge with the genuine oneness of the Divine Trinity...Verses 21 through 23 show the merging of the oneness of the believers with the genuine oneness among the three of the Divine Trinity. The oneness among the three of the Divine Trinity is a model of the oneness of the believers in the Body of Christ, and the oneness of the believers in the Body of Christ is actually the enlargement of the oneness of the Divine Trinity. (1993 Blending Conference Messages concerning the Lord's Recovery and Our Present Need, pp. 82-83)

Further Reading: CWWL, 1963, vol. 1, "Experiencing the Mingling of God with Man for the Oneness of the Body of Christ," ch. 2; Life-study of John, msg. 41

WEEK 2 — HYMN

In the bosom of the Father

Praise of the Lord — His Increase

203

The musical score is written in 3/4 time with a key signature of one flat (Bb). It consists of four staves of music. The first staff begins with a treble clef and a key signature of one flat. The lyrics are: "1. In the bo - som of the Fath - er, Ere the a - ges had be - gun,". The second staff continues the lyrics: "Thou wast in the Fath - er's glo - ry, God's u - nique be - got - ten Son." The third staff continues: "When to us the Fath - er gave Thee, Thou in per - son wast the same,". The fourth staff concludes with: "All the ful - ness of the Fath - er In the Spir - it to pro - claim." Chord symbols are placed above the notes: F, F7/A, Bb, Gm, Am, Dm, G7, C7, F, F7, Bb, Gm, F, F/A, Bb, F/C, C7, F, F/A, Dm, Gm, C7, Dm, F/A, Bb, C7, F, F7, Bb, Gm, F/C, Dm, Bb, F/C, C7, F.

2. By Thy death and resurrection,
Thou wast made God's firstborn Son;
By Thy life to us imparting,
Was Thy duplication done.
We, in Thee regenerated,
Many sons to God became;
Truly as Thy many brethren,
We are as Thyself the same.
3. Once Thou wast the only grain, Lord,
Falling to the earth to die,
That thru death and resurrection
Thou in life may multiply.
We were brought forth in Thy nature
And the many grains became;
As one loaf we all are blended,
All Thy fulness to proclaim.
4. We're Thy total reproduction,
Thy dear Body and Thy Bride,
Thine expression and Thy fulness,
For Thee ever to abide.
We are Thy continuation,
Thy life-increase and Thy spread,
Thy full growth and Thy rich surplus,
One with Thee, our glorious Head.