

Message Five
**The Wings of an Eagle,
the Hands of a Man, and the Feet of a Calf**

JL *Hymns*: 497, 242

Scripture Reading: Ezek. 1:5-11;

Isa. 40:31; Acts 16:7; Eph. 4:1; 1 Cor. 2:15

- Ezek 1:5 And from the midst of it there came the likeness of four living creatures. And this was their appearance: They had the likeness of a man.
- Ezek 1:6 And every one had four faces, and every one of them had four wings.
- Ezek 1:7 And their feet were straight feet, and the sole of their feet was like the sole of a calf's foot; and they sparkled like the sight of burnished bronze.
- Ezek 1:8 And the hands of a man were under their wings on their four sides. And the four of them had their faces and their wings thus:
- Ezek 1:9 Their wings were joined one to another; they did not turn as they went; each went straight forward.
- Ezek 1:10 As for the likeness of their faces, they had the face of a man; and the four of them had the face of a lion on the right side, and the four of them had the face of an ox on the left side, and the four of them had the face of an eagle.
- Ezek 1:11 And thus their faces were. And their wings were spread out upward; two wings of each were joined one to another, and two covered their bodies.
- Isa 40:31 Yet those who wait on Jehovah will renew their strength; / They will mount up with wings like eagles; / They will run and will not faint; / They will walk and will not become weary.
- 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.
- Eph 4:1 I beseech you therefore, I, the prisoner in the Lord, to walk worthily of the calling with which you were called,
- 1 Cor 2:15 But the spiritual man discerns all things, but he himself is discerned by no one.

I. The wings of an eagle signify the resurrection power of Christ, God's power in life applied to us and becoming our grace— Ezek. 1:6b, 9, 11b; Exo. 19:4; Isa. 40:31; 2 Cor. 4:7; 1:12; 12:9; 1 Cor. 15:10:

- Ezek 1:6b ... and every one of them had four wings.
- Ezek 1:9 Their wings were joined one to another; they did not turn as they went; each went straight forward.
- Ezek 1:11b ... And their wings were spread out upward; two wings of each were joined one to another, and two covered their bodies.
- Exo 19:4 You have seen what I did to the Egyptians and how I bore you on eagles' wings and brought you to Myself.
- Isa 40:31 Yet those who wait on Jehovah will renew their strength; / They will mount up with wings like eagles; / They will run and will not faint; / They will walk and will not become weary.
- 2 Cor 4:7 But we have this treasure in earthen vessels that the excellency of the power may be of God and not out of us.
- 2 Cor 1:12 For our boasting is this, the testimony of our conscience, that in singleness and sincerity of God, not in fleshly wisdom but in the grace of God, we have conducted ourselves in the world, and more abundantly toward you.
- 2 Cor 12:9 And He has said to me, My grace is sufficient for you, for My power is perfected in weakness. Most gladly therefore I will rather boast in my weaknesses that the power of Christ might tabernacle over me.
- 1 Cor 15:10 But by the grace of God I am what I am; and His grace unto me did not turn out to be in vain, but, on the contrary, I labored more abundantly than all of them, yet not I but the grace of God which is with me.
- A. The Bible uses the eagle as a symbol of the Spirit when it speaks about the Spirit of power—Isa. 40:31.
- Isa 40:31 Yet those who wait on Jehovah will renew their strength; / They will mount up with wings like eagles; / They will run and will not faint; / They will walk and will not become weary.

- B. When God saved the Israelites out of Egypt and brought them to Himself at Mount Sinai, He told them that He bore them like an eagle, carrying them upon His wings; this was a word of grace to let them know that He was full of grace toward them— Exo. 19:4.
Exo 19:4 You have seen what I did to the Egyptians and how I bore you on eagles' wings and brought you to Myself.
- C. Psalm 103:5 says that God can satisfy us so that our youth is renewed like the eagle; it is possible for us to have our youth renewed like the eagle by taking Christ as our life—Col. 3:4.
Psa 103:5 He satisfies the prime of your life with good, / So that your youth is renewed like the eagle.
Col 3:4 When Christ our life is manifested, then you also will be manifested with Him in glory.
- D. “Those who wait on Jehovah will renew their strength; / They will mount up with wings like eagles; / They will run and will not become weary; / They will walk and will not faint”—Isa. 40:31:
- To wait on Jehovah, the eternal God, means that we terminate ourselves, that is, that we stop ourselves with our living, our doing, and our activity, and receive God in Christ as our life, our person, and our replacement—8:17; Gal. 2:20; Heb. 12:2; Col. 4:2.
Isa 8:17 And I will wait on Jehovah, who hides His face from the house of Jacob, and I will look eagerly for Him.
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 in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me.
Heb 12:2 Looking away unto Jesus, the Author and Perfecter of our faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down on the right hand of the throne of God.
Col 4:2 Persevere in prayer, watching in it with thanksgiving,
 - Such a waiting one will be renewed and strengthened to such an extent that he will mount up with wings like eagles; as a transformed person, he will not only walk and run but also soar in the heavens, far above every earthly frustration.
- E. What we are and what we do should not be according to our own wisdom, strength, and ability but by the grace of God, for we have no boast in ourselves or in anything else but only in the Lord—2 Cor. 1:12; 10:17; 1 Cor. 3:21; Gal. 6:14; Phil. 3:3; Jer. 9:23-24.
2 Cor 1:12 For our boasting is this, the testimony of our conscience, that in singleness and sincerity of God, not in fleshly wisdom but in the grace of God, we have conducted ourselves in the world, and more abundantly toward you.
2 Cor 10:17 But he who boasts, let him boast in the Lord;
1 Cor 3:21 So then let no one boast in men, for all things are yours,
Gal 6:14 But far be it from me to boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom the world has been crucified to me and I to the world.
Phil 3:3 For we are the circumcision, the ones who serve by the Spirit of God and boast in Christ Jesus and have no confidence in the flesh,
Jer 9:23 Thus says Jehovah, / Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, / And let not the mighty man glory in his might; / Let not the rich man glory in his riches.
Jer 9:24 But let him who glories glory in this, / That he has insight and knows Me, / That I am Jehovah who exercises lovingkindness, / Justice, and righteousness on earth; / For in these things I delight, declares Jehovah.
- F. The grace, power, and strength of the Lord are both for moving and for covering us:
- On the one hand, the Lord’s grace is the power for us to move; on the other hand, the Lord’s power is our protection, our hiding place—1 Cor. 15:10; 2 Cor. 12:9; Psa. 17:8; 57:1; 63:7; 91:4.
1 Cor 15:10 But by the grace of God I am what I am; and His grace unto me did not turn out to be in vain, but, on the contrary, I labored more abundantly than all of them, yet not I but the grace of God which is with me.

- 2 Cor 12:9 And He has said to me, My grace is sufficient for you, for My power is perfected in weakness. Most gladly therefore I will rather boast in my weaknesses that the power of Christ might tabernacle over me.
- Psa 17:8 Guard me like the pupil of Your eye; / In the shadow of Your wings hide me
- Psa 57:1 Be gracious to me, O God, be gracious to me; / For my soul takes refuge in You; / Indeed in the shadow of Your wings I will take refuge, / Until the destruction passes by.
- Psa 63:7 For You have been my help, / And in the shadow of Your wings I will shout for joy.
- Psa 91:4 With His pinions He will cover You, / And under His wings You will take refuge; / His truth is a shield and a buckler.
2. The front face of the four living creatures is the face of a man, but the body is that of an eagle—Ezek. 1:10a, 11b:
- Ezek 1:10a As for the likeness of their faces, they had the face of a man; ...
- Ezek 1:11b ... And their wings were spread out upward; two wings of each were joined one to another, and two covered their bodies.
- a. The living creatures look like a man but move like an eagle.
 - b. The two wings for moving and the two wings for covering indicate that there is something mysterious about us and that this gives others the impression of the Divine Being.

II. The spiritual significance of the hands of a man is that a normal Christian should always do things exactly like a man—v. 8a; Acts 20:34:

- Ezek 1:8a And the hands of a man were under their wings on their four sides. ...
- Acts 20:34 You yourselves know that these hands have ministered to my needs and to those who are with me.
- A. Paul's writings indicate that although he experienced the eagle's wings, he was still very human in his living, taking the human way and doing things in a human way—1 Thes. 2:5-8; 1 Tim. 5:23; 2 Tim. 4:20.
- 1 Thes 2:5 For neither were we found at any time with flattering speech, even as you know, nor with a pretext for covetousness; God is witness.
- 1 Thes 2:6 Nor did we seek glory from men, neither from you nor from others, though we could have stood on our authority as apostles of Christ.
- 1 Thes 2:7 But we were gentle in your midst, as a nursing mother would cherish her own children.
- 1 Thes 2:8 Yearning in this way over you, we were well pleased to impart to you not only the gospel of God but also our own souls, because you became beloved to us.
- 1 Tim 5:23 No longer drink water only, but use a little wine for the sake of your stomach and your frequent illnesses.
- 2 Tim 4:20 Erastus remained in Corinth, and Trophimus I left at Miletus sick.
- B. No matter how much the grace of God is with us and no matter how much the Lord is empowering us, we must nevertheless do things in a human way:
1. Under the eagle's wings there should be human hands, and these hands should always be working—Eph. 4:28; Acts 20:35; 18:3; 2 Thes. 3:6-12.
- Eph 4:28 He who steals should steal no more, but rather should labor, working with his own hands in that which is respectable, that he may have something to share with him who has need.
- Acts 20:35 In all things I have shown you by example that toiling in this way we ought to support the weak and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, that He Himself said, It is more blessed to give than to receive.
- Acts 18:3 And because he was of the same trade, he remained with them and worked; for they were tentmakers by trade.
- 2 Thes 3:6 Now we charge you, brothers, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you keep away from every brother walking disorderly and not according to the things which were handed down to you and which you received from us.
- 2 Thes 3:7 For you yourselves know how you ought to imitate us, because we were not disorderly among you;

- 2 Thes 3:8 Nor did we eat bread as a gift from anyone, but in labor and hardship we worked night and day so that we would not be burdensome to any of you;
- 2 Thes 3:9 Not because we do not have the right, but in order that we might give ourselves to you as a pattern that you might imitate us.
- 2 Thes 3:10 For even when we were with you, we gave you this charge, that if anyone does not want to work, neither should he eat.
- 2 Thes 3:11 For we hear of some walking among you disorderly, doing no work at all, but being busybodies.
- 2 Thes 3:12 Now such ones we charge and exhort in the Lord Jesus Christ to work with quietness and eat their own bread.
2. We need both the wings of the Lord's empowering grace and the hands of a man, cooperating with God in a human way.
- C. The highest humanity is one in which divinity is added to our humanity and in which the divine attributes are expressed in our human virtues—1 Cor. 12:31b—13:8a; Matt. 5:44; Phil. 4:5-7; Luke 23:34a; Matt. 18:21-22; 1 Cor. 4:2; 7:25b; Psa. 37:3; 1 Pet. 5:5-6; John 13:3-5; 1 Pet. 3:8; Phil. 2:3; Eph. 4:2.
- 1 Cor 12:31b ... And moreover I show to you a most excellent way.
- 1 Cor 13:1 If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels but do not have love, I have become sounding brass or a clanging cymbal.
- 1 Cor 13:2 And if I have the gift of prophecy and know all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have all faith so as to remove mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing.
- 1 Cor 13:3 And if I dole out all my possessions to feed others, and if I deliver up my body that I may boast, but do not have love, I profit nothing.
- 1 Cor 13:4 Love suffers long. Love is kind; it is not jealous. Love does not brag and is not puffed up;
- 1 Cor 13:5 It does not behave unbecomingly and does not seek its own things; it is not provoked and does not take account of evil;
- 1 Cor 13:6 It does not rejoice because of unrighteousness, but rejoices with the truth;
- 1 Cor 13:7 It covers all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.
- 1 Cor 13:8a Love never falls away. ...
- Matt 5:44 But I say to you, Love your enemies, and pray for those who persecute you,
- Phil 4:5 Let your forbearance be known to all men. The Lord is near.
- Phil 4:6 In nothing be anxious, but in everything, by prayer and petition with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God;
- Phil 4:7 And the peace of God, which surpasses every man's understanding, will guard your hearts and your thoughts in Christ Jesus.
- Luke 23:34a And Jesus said, Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing. ...
- Matt 18:21 Then Peter came and said to Him, Lord, how often shall my brother sin against me and I forgive him? Up to seven times?
- Matt 18:22 Jesus said to him, I do not say to you, Up to seven times, but, Up to seventy times seven.
- 1 Cor 4:2 Here, furthermore, it is sought in stewards that one be found faithful.
- 1 Cor 7:25b ... but I give my opinion as one who has been shown mercy by the Lord to be faithful.
- Psa 37:3 Trust in Jehovah, and do good; / Dwell in the land, and feed on His faithfulness.
- 1 Pet 5:5 In like manner, younger men, be subject to elders; and all of you gird yourselves with humility toward one another, because God resists the proud but gives grace to the humble.
- 1 Pet 5:6 Therefore be humbled under the mighty hand of God that He may exalt you in due time,
- John 13:3 Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all into His hands and that He had come forth from God and was going to God,
- John 13:4 Rose from supper and laid aside His outer garments; and taking a towel, He girded Himself;
- John 13:5 Then He poured water into the basin and began to wash the disciples' feet and to wipe them with the towel with which He was girded.
- 1 Pet 3:8 And finally be all of the same mind, sympathetic, loving the brothers, tenderhearted, humble-minded;
- Phil 2:3 Doing nothing by way of selfish ambition nor by way of vainglory, but in lowliness of mind considering one another more excellent than yourselves;
- Eph 4:2 With all lowliness and meekness, with long-suffering, bearing one another in love,

- D. Christian humanity does not refer to our natural virtues; rather, it is the Christ who lives in us and out of us—Gal. 2:20; Phil. 1:19-21a; 2 Cor. 12:2.
- 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 in 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 ...
- 2 Cor 12:2 I know a man in Christ, fourteen years ago (whether in the body I do not know, or outside the body I do not know; God knows) such a one was caught away to the third heaven.
- E. We all need to learn to be human Christians, living in a Jesusly human way according to the humanity of Jesus, which is His human life in resurrection— 4:10-11:
- 2 Cor 4:10 Always bearing about in the body the putting to death of Jesus that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our body.
- 2 Cor 4:11 For we who are alive are always being delivered unto death for Jesus' sake that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our mortal flesh.
1. To damage humanity is to ruin both the means and the channel created by God for His economy.
 2. The more spiritual we are, the more human we will be.
 3. If we would live Christ, we need to learn to be human in a genuine way:
 - a. On the one hand, we have the divine nature (2 Pet. 1:4); on the other hand, we are normal human beings.
2 Pet 1:4 Through which He has granted to us precious and exceedingly great promises that through these you might become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption which is in the world by lust.
 - b. The fact that we have the divine nature with the divine life does not mean that we no longer need to be human.
 - c. We need to live a genuinely human life by the divine life and nature; in this way we will be able to live the highest human life, a life like that of the Lord Jesus—Eph. 4:20-21.
Eph 4:20 But you did not so learn Christ,
Eph 4:21 If indeed you have heard Him and have been taught in Him as the reality is in Jesus,
- F. When Christ comes into us as life, He is the eternal life with both the divine life and nature and the human life and nature; now our wonderful Savior lives, acts, moves, and works as life within us in a quiet, normal, ordinary way and also in a very human way—Col. 3:4, 12-14.
- Col 3:4 When Christ our life is manifested, then you also will be manifested with Him in glory.
- Col 3:12 Put on therefore, as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, inward parts of compassion, kindness, lowliness, meekness, long-suffering;
- Col 3:13 Bearing one another and forgiving one another, if anyone should have a complaint against anyone; even as the Lord forgave you, so also should you forgive.
- Col 3:14 And over all these things put on love, which is the uniting bond of perfectness.
- G. The Spirit, who was not yet because Jesus had not yet been glorified in resurrection, is the Spirit with the humanity of Jesus; the Spirit today has been constituted with the glorified humanity of Jesus—Luke 24:26; John 7:37-39.
- Luke 24:26 Was it not necessary for the Christ to suffer these things and enter into His glory?
- 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.

H. We need to experience the Spirit of God as the Spirit of Jesus— 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.

1. The Spirit of Jesus refers to the Spirit of the incarnated Savior who, as Jesus in His humanity, passed through human living and death on the cross.
2. This indicates that in the Spirit of Jesus there is not only the divine element of God but also the human element of Jesus and the elements of His human living and His suffering of death as well.

III. The spiritual significance of the feet of a calf is that we should walk like a calf, having straight feet; we should walk not according to our crooked human feet but with the feet of a calf—Ezek. 1:7; 2 Cor. 1:12:

Ezek 1:7 And their feet were straight feet, and the sole of their feet was like the sole of a calf's foot; and they sparkled like the sight of burnished bronze.

2 Cor 1:12 For our boasting is this, the testimony of our conscience, that in singleness and sincerity of God, not in fleshly wisdom but in the grace of God, we have conducted ourselves in the world, and more abundantly toward you.

A. The apostle Paul speaks of walking with the straight feet of a calf—2:17; 1 Thes. 2:3-4, 12; Eph. 4:1.

2 Cor 2:17 For we are not like the many, adulterating the word of God for profit; but as out of sincerity, but as out of God, before God we speak in Christ.

1 Thes 2:3 For our exhortation is not out of deception nor out of uncleanness nor in guile;

1 Thes 2:4 But even as we have been approved by God to be entrusted with the gospel, so we speak, not as pleasing men but God, who proves our hearts.

1 Thes 2:12 So that you might walk in a manner worthy of God, who calls you into His own kingdom and glory.

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

B. The calf's feet are not only straight but also cloven, divided; the divided hoof signifies that in our Christian walk we need discernment of what is right and what is wrong in the eyes of God—Lev. 11:4-6; Phil. 1:9; 1 Cor. 2:14-15:

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.

Phil 1:9 And this I pray, that your love may abound yet more and more in full knowledge and all discernment,

1 Cor 2:14 But a soulish man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him and he is not able to know them because they are discerned spiritually.

1 Cor 2:15 But the spiritual man discerns all things, but he himself is discerned by no one.

1. The development of the ability to discern is based upon learning and experience—Heb. 4:12; 5:14; 1 Cor. 2:15:

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.

Heb 5:14 But solid food is for the full-grown, who because of practice have their faculties exercised for discriminating between both good and evil.

1 Cor 2:15 But the spiritual man discerns all things, but he himself is discerned by no one.

a. The degree of the learning and experience we have before God is the degree of the discernment we will have.

- b. The most profound discernment comes from the most profound dealings.
- 2. “This I pray, that your love may abound yet more and more in full knowledge and all discernment”—Phil. 1:9:
 - a. Discernment is the ability to sense things; the Greek word for *discernment* means “sensitive perception, moral tact.”
 - b. According to Paul, we should love with a mind full of knowledge and discernment:
 - 1) This knowledge and discernment are Christ Himself; when we experience Christ, He becomes our knowledge and discernment, our perceptive power.
 - 2) The more we experience Christ, the more we will discern matters not by our cleverness but by the Christ who lives within us—Gal. 2:20.
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 in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me.
- 3. We need to discern between ethics and Christ, for ethical teachings are not of Christ, of the Spirit, of resurrection, or of the new creation—6:15.
Gal 6:15 For neither is circumcision anything nor uncircumcision, but a new creation is what matters.
- 4. Romans 8 reveals that the best way to discern a matter— the secret of discernment—is to discern according to life or death.
Rom 8 be omitted.
- C. The calf ’s feet “sparkled like the sight of burnished bronze” (Ezek. 1:7); this indicates that we need a walk that has been tested and burned by the Lord so that it will be like shining bronze, enlightening and testing others—Rev. 1:15a.
Ezek 1:7 And their feet were straight feet, and the sole of their feet was like the sole of a calf’s foot; and they sparkled like the sight of burnished bronze.
Rev 1:15a And His feet were like shining bronze, as having been fired in a furnace; ...
- D. In the Bible a calf signifies freshness, livingness, and vigor:
 - 1. A calf is young, vigorous, and full of energy; this indicates that our Christian walk should be a “skipping walk,” a walk that is full of life—Psa. 29:6; Mal. 4:2.
 - 2. If we enjoy grace and live in the presence of God, we will always be new and fresh, and with us there will be no oldness.
Psa 29:6 And He makes Lebanon skip like a calf, / And Sirion like a young wild ox.
Mal 4:2 But unto you who fear My name will the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in His wings, and you will go forth and leap about like well-fed calves.

IV. If as living creatures we have the wings of an eagle, the hands of a man, and the feet of a calf, we can be coordinated and become one corporate entity for the carrying out of God’s economy.