

Week One

God's Eternal Purpose and the One New Man

Scripture Reading: Gen. 1:26-28; Eph. 2:15-16; 4:24; 6:10-13; Col. 3:10

Outline

Day 1

- I. The eternal purpose—the purpose of the ages—is the eternal plan that God made in eternity past—Eph. 3:11; 1:9, 11; Rom. 8:28:**
 - A. The purpose of God in the universe is to produce a group of people who will be exactly the same as He is; this is the unique subject of the Bible—John 1:12-13; 1 John 3:2:**
 1. In life, nature, image, appearance, radiance, glory, and outward expression, they will be the same as God—Rev. 4:2-3; 21:10-11, 18.
 2. God's purpose is accomplished by the divine life dispensed into His chosen and redeemed people; as God's life is wrought into His people, a metabolic reaction takes place within them that causes them to be transformed and become the same as God—John 3:15; 1 John 5:11-12; 2 Cor. 3:18; Rom. 8:29.
 - B. Man is a great word in the Bible—Gen. 1:26; Psa. 8:4-6:**
 1. God's intention is with man, God's thought is focused on man, and God's heart is set upon man.
 2. It is man who fulfills God's plan, it is man who expresses God, it is man who defeats God's enemy, and it is man who brings the kingdom of God into the human race.
 3. Man is the means of God's manifestation, man is the means of God's move, and man is the means of God's administration—Ezek. 1:26, 5, 10.
 - C. The eternal purpose of God is to have a corporate man to**

express Him and represent Him; this was God's purpose in creating man—Gen. 1:26-28; 5:1-2; Eph. 3:11; 1:9, 11.

Day 2

II. “Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness”—Gen. 1:26:

A. In the Bible there is a mysterious thought concerning the relationship between God and man—v. 26; Ezek. 1:26; 1 John 3:2b; Rev. 4:3a; 21:11b:

1. God's desire is to become the same as man is and to make man the same as He is—1 John 3:2b.
2. God's intention is to work Himself in Christ into us, making Himself the same as we are and making us the same as He is—Eph. 3:17a.

B. Let Us make man reveals that a council was held among the three of the Godhead regarding the creation of man—Gen. 1:26a:

1. The decision to create man was made in eternity past, indicating that the creation of man was for the eternal purpose of the Triune God—Eph. 3:9-11.
2. God's intention in creating man was to carry out His divine economy for the dispensing of Himself into man—1 Tim. 1:4; Rom. 8:11.

C. God created man in His own image, according to His likeness—Gen. 1:26a:

1. God's image, referring to God's inner being, is the expression of the inward essence of God's attributes, the most prominent of which are love (1 John 4:8), light (1:5), holiness (Rev. 4:8), and righteousness (Jer. 23:6).
2. God's likeness, referring to God's form (Phil. 2:6), is the expression of the essence and nature of God's person.
3. God created man to be a duplication of Himself so that man may have the capacity to contain God and express Him—2 Cor. 4:6-7; 3:18.

D. God created man in His image and according to His likeness

because His intention is to come into man and to be one with man—Eph. 3:17a.

E. God created man in His own image so that through His economy man may receive His life and nature and thereby become His expression—1 Tim. 1:4; John 3:16; 2 Pet. 1:4; 2 Cor. 3:18:

1. Because we were created according to God's kind, our human virtues have the capacity to contain the divine attributes—10:1; 11:10.
2. For God to create man in His image means that God created man with the intention that man would become a duplicate of God, the reproduction of God, for His corporate expression; this reproduction makes God happy because it looks like Him, speaks like Him, and lives like Him—John 12:24; Rom. 8:29; Heb. 2:10; 1 John 3:1-2.

Day 3

III. “Let them have dominion...Fill the earth and subdue it, and have dominion”—Gen. 1:26, 28:

A. God's intention in giving man dominion is to subdue God's enemy, Satan, who rebelled against God—vv. 26, 28:

1. The creeping things that creep upon the earth typify Satan, the serpent, and his angels, as well as the demons, who follow Satan—v. 26; 3:1, 14; Rev. 12:4, 7, 9; Matt. 25:41; cf. Luke 10:19.

Day 4

2. Subdue in Genesis 1:28 implies that a war is raging on earth between God and His enemy, Satan; whoever gains the earth will have the victory.
3. God has a problem, and this problem is Satan, the archangel who rebelled against God and became His enemy in the universe and especially on the earth—Isa. 14:12-14; Ezek. 28:12-18:
 - a. In order to subdue His enemy and thus solve His problem, God gave man authority to rule over all things created by God—Gen. 1:26.
 - b. Man especially must rule over the earth and even subdue the earth

because the earth has been usurped by God's rebellious enemy—v. 28.

4. God needs man to exercise His authority over all the creeping things, and God needs man to subdue and conquer the rebellious earth so that God may recover the earth for His kingdom—Matt. 6:9-10.

B. God's intention in giving man dominion is to recover the earth—Gen. 1:28:

1. God created man with the intention of recovering the earth for Himself—v. 26.
2. Man was created by God to have dominion over the earth, to subdue it, to conquer it, and thereby recover the earth for God—vv. 26, 28.
3. God wants to regain the earth; the earth has become a crucial place, a place that Satan wants to hold and a place that God wants to regain.

C. God's intention in giving man dominion is for him to exercise God's authority over the earth in order that the kingdom of God may come to the earth, the will of God may be done on the earth, and the glory of God may be manifested on the earth—Matt. 6:10, 13b.

Day 5

IV. The church as the one new man is the corporate man in God's intention, and this new man will fulfill the twofold purpose of bearing God's image to express Him and of fighting against God's enemy for God's kingdom—Eph. 2:15; 4:24; 6:10-13; Col. 3:10:

A. The Bible reveals that the one new man is not an individual but a corporate, universal man—Eph. 2:15; 4:24; Col. 3:10-11:

1. The one new man is a corporate God-man:
 - a. The first God-man, the firstborn Son of God, is the Head of this corporate God-man—the new man—Rom. 8:29; Eph. 4:15.
 - b. The many God-men, the many sons of God, are the Body of this corporate God-man—the new man—vv. 16, 24.

2. We, the believers in Christ, are all one with Christ to be the new man; we all are parts of the one new man—2:15-16; 4:24:
 - a. There are many believers and many local churches, but there is only one new man in the universe—Col. 3:10; 4:15-16.
 - b. All the believers are components of this one corporate and universal new man.

Day 6

B. The one new man is a warrior fighting against God's enemy—Eph. 6:10-13:

1. The warrior is not a status of the church but an aspect of the church as the new man.
2. The church as the corporate new man is the warrior, and the believers together make up this new man.
3. We must fight the spiritual warfare not individually but in the Body, in the one new man.

WEEK 1 — DAY1

Morning Nourishment

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.

26 And above the expanse that was over their heads was the likeness of a throne, like the appearance of a sapphire stone; and upon the likeness of the throne was One in appearance like a man, above it.

Man was created in God's image in order to be God's expression. God is the center of the universe, but He needs an expression, and this expression is through man....The millions of angels cannot be the expression of God. God needs a corporate man to express Him. You should never despise the fact that you are a man.

We may talk about the church as the expression of Christ, but we may not realize what the expression of Christ is. The Christ whom the church must express is the man upon the throne. If we would express Christ, we need to realize Christ today is still a man. We do not express merely God; we express God in a man. The church is the expression of Christ. This means that the church is an expression not merely of God but also of a man. (Life-study of Ezekiel, pp. 48-49)

Today's Reading

Ezekiel 1:26 shows us that the Lord today is a man on the throne. God needs a man, and eventually He became a man. We as the living creatures express Him as a man. He is the man on the throne, and we also bear the appearance of a man. It is man who fulfills God's plan, it is man who expresses God, it is man who defeats the enemy, and it is man who brings the kingdom of God into the human race. God needs a man.

The religious teachings in Christianity encourage us either to be like an angel or to be like God. However, the divine revelation unveils that God's desire is to have a man. We need to remember that the subtle one tempted the first man by telling him that if he ate of the fruit of the tree of the

knowledge of good and evil, he would be like God (Gen. 3:5). From that day the concept of being like God has been in our blood. Every fallen human being has the concept of wanting to be like God. Certain devilish teachings encourage people to be something other than man. But in His redemption and salvation God has no intention of making anything other than man. God's redemption and God's salvation are to bring us back to the beginning and to recover us to being a proper man. We are the living creatures and we have God's life within us, yet we bear the appearance of a man. We should not try to be like an angel. Instead, in whatever we do, in whatever we say, and in whatever we express, we should be a man. This is what God needs today.

The vision in Ezekiel 1 reveals three crucial matters concerning the four living creatures' bearing the appearance of a man. First, God's glory is manifested upon them. The manifestation of God's glory depends upon their having the appearance of a man. Where they are, there God's glory is. God's glory is not separate from them, and apart from them God's glory cannot be manifested. Second, these living creatures are the means of God's move. God's move depends on them. When they move, God will move, for His move is with them. Third, the four living creatures, who bear the appearance of a man, are the means of God's administration. Ezekiel 1 reveals that God is sitting on the throne. God's throne dominates everything on earth and everything recorded in this book. This throne, therefore, is the center of God's administration. However, the center of God's administration depends on the four living creatures having the appearance of a man. Because of this, there is the administration of God's throne. If we put these three things together, we will see that man is the means of God's manifestation, that man is the means of God's move, and that man is the means of God's administration. In God's eyes and in God's hands, man has such an important position. (Life-study of Ezekiel, pp. 49-50)

Further Reading: Life-study of Ezekiel, msgs. 5, 12; CWWL, 1971, vol. 1, "The Meaning of Human Life and a Proper Consecration," ch. 2; CWWL, 1984, vol. 3, "The Divine Economy," ch. 2

WEEK 1 – DAY2

Morning Nourishment

Gen. 1:26 And God said, Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness...

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.

Man was created by the Triune God in Their (inward) image. All human beings bear the expression, the image, of God. God is love, and we also have a kind of love. Our love is a copy of God's love. God's love is the real love, and our love is a photograph of God's love. Human beings are pictures, figures, or photographs, of God in His attributes. God is also light. We as human beings also have some amount of light. We also like light and hate to be in the dark. When we do something in darkness, we do not like to let people know. But when we do something in the light, we surely like people to see that we are bright and of the light. We also like to be holy; that is, we do not like to be common. We like to be separated from the common things. We also like to be righteous and to do things right. We do not like to cheat people, even though at times we may steal from others because of our fallen nature. Even before we were saved, we all liked to be loving, bright, holy, and righteous. In our nature we wanted to love our parents, yet very often we did not. We realized that this was not good. This proves that we have a copy of God's attributes. Hence, we bear God's image. (CWWL, 1991-1992, vol. 1, "The Central Line of the Divine Revelation," pp. 366-367)

Today's Reading

Man was made in God's image and according to His likeness. God created man in such a way as a preparation for His dispensing of Himself into man for the fulfillment of His divine economy, His divine plan. Man was

created in the image and likeness of God so that he can express God. Man is a photograph of God. A photograph taken of a certain person is for expression. In the same way, man was created for God's expression.

The first item of God's positive intention in His economy is to have man in His image and according to His likeness for man to be one with Him that He may express Himself in humanity (Gen. 1:26a). As a man on this earth, Jesus was made, or created, in God's image and according to God's likeness. Christ was not only born but also created. When He entered into a human womb, Christ joined Himself with the created man, Adam. Hence, Christ was created in God's image and according to God's likeness. As human beings, we all were begotten of our parents. But we were not only begotten; we were also created. We were created when Adam was created. Our birth caused us merely to participate in that creation. In the same way, Christ was created in God's image and according to God's likeness to be one with man and one with God.

Man was made in God's image and according to His likeness so that God could express Himself in humanity. God expressed Himself in the humanity of Jesus while He was on the earth for thirty-three and a half years. John 1:18 says, "No one has ever seen God; the only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, He has declared Him." When He wept, Jesus expressed God. When He was angry with the Pharisees, He expressed God. He did everything to express God in His humanity.

Although God was seen in the humanity of the one man Jesus, this was not sufficient. The man Jesus had to be duplicated, mass-produced. In Christ's incarnation God entered into only one man, but in Christ's becoming the life-giving Spirit, God entered into millions of people. On the day of Pentecost three thousand were produced at one time (Acts 2:41). All these believers were made small "Christs"; that is, they were the mass production of Christ. (CWWL, 1991-1992, vol. 1, "The Central Line of the Divine Revelation," pp. 376, 408)

Further Reading: CWWL, 1991-1992, vol. 1, "The Central Line of the Divine Revelation," chs. 5-6, 9; CWWL, 1970, vol. 1, pp. 94-107; CWWL, 1985, vol. 5, "The Mystery of the Universe and the Meaning of Human Life," ch. 1

WEEK 1 – DAY3

Morning Nourishment

Gen. 1:26 And God said,...Let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of heaven and over the cattle and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth.

Luke 10:19 Behold, I have given you the authority to tread upon serpents and scorpions and over all the power of the enemy, and nothing shall by any means hurt you.

God created a corporate man to exercise His dominion (Gen. 1:26-28)....Dominion means having authority to rule and to form a kingdom. Dominion means having a kingdom as a sphere in which to exercise authority. If I have authority, but no sphere over which to rule, I have no dominion. God said, "Let man have dominion." Man was given dominion over all things.

An image is an expression....The invisible God desires to be expressed....Dominion means kingdom, authority. Man was made in God's image to express God and was given authority to represent God and to have dominion. We are God's expression and we are God's representative. (Life-study of Genesis, p. 78)

Today's Reading

Man must have dominion over all things on the earth, the field of Satan's activities. Satan is very active on the earth (Luke 4:5-6). So, here in Genesis 1:26 it especially says that man may have the dominion "over all the earth." The earth has been usurped by Satan. Thus, it needs to be ruled over by man, God's representative.

Remember that the sphere of God's dominion which He committed to man includes three sections: the seas, the dwelling place of the demons; the air, the place where Satan and his angels are; the earth, the field of Satan's activities. When the Lord Jesus was on this earth, He had to deal with Satan,

fallen angels, or demons wherever He went. That was why the Lord Jesus rebuked the wind and the waves during a storm. The wind came from the fallen angels in the air and the waves came from the demons in the water. The Lord told the wind, "Stop" and the waves, "Be calm." Immediately the wind ceased and the waves were calm. The fallen angels and the demons were subdued and overruled by the Lord Jesus. If we know how to read the Bible, we will see in the four Gospels that the Lord Jesus exercised God's authority over the seas, the air, and the earth. This is the sphere of God's dominion which He committed to man.

The first aspect of God's intention [in giving man dominion] is to deal with His enemy,...Satan, typified by the creeping things (Gen. 1:26). In the Bible, the creeping things are demonic, devilish, and Satanic....Satan is typified by the serpent (Gen. 3:1). In Revelation 12:9 Satan is called the "ancient serpent."

We need to express God and to deal with Satan in our home life.... I have learned this by experience. Sometimes, when I saw Satan expressed in the members of my family, I did not say a word. I went to my bedroom, knelt down, and prayed, "Lord, bind the serpent." A number of times I realized that I myself was expressing the serpent. Again I ran away to pray, "O Lord, forgive me. Bind the serpent." On many occasions, the divine authority of God is not exercised. The evil power of Satan is expressed instead.... We all must realize that today God has this double goal to accomplish—to express Himself and to deal with His enemy. It is not really your husband who loses his temper. It is the serpent. It is not really your wife who says something to provoke your temper. It is the serpent. Do not deal with the husband and do not deal with the wife. It is not their fault. We must deal with the serpent that is behind them. Exchanging words can never deal with Satan. The more we argue, the more Satan gains ground. The only way to deal with Satan is to go on our knees, pray, call on the name of Jesus, and ask Him to bind the serpent. (Life-study of Genesis, pp. 79-80)

Further Reading: Life-study of Genesis, msgs. 6-8; CWWL, 1972, vol. 2, "The Kingdom," ch. 7

WEEK 1 — DAY4

Morning Nourishment

Gen. 1:28 And God blessed them; and God said to them, Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth and subdue it...

Matt. 6:10 Your kingdom come; Your will be done, as in heaven, so also on earth.

The second aspect of God's intention in giving man dominion is to recover the earth (Gen. 1:26-28). Man is to have dominion over the earth, to subdue it, and to conquer it. To conquer the earth means that the enemy is there already, that a war is raging. Therefore, we must fight and conquer.

The young people who are preparing to enter into marriage must realize that marriage is a battle. Many of us know this by experience. Even when we were on our honeymoon, we were on the battlefield, fighting with our husband or wife. If we did not fight outwardly, we fought inwardly. Every area of life—school life, work life, family life—is a battlefield. The enemy never sleeps. All day long he is on the alert, not only in the family life, but also in the church life. Even in the church life, Satan and all his messengers are busy. On the earth a warfare is raging. God's intention is to recover the earth. (Life-study of Genesis, p. 81)

Today's Reading

God wants to regain the earth. The earth has become a crucial place, a place that Satan wants to hold and a place that God wants to regain. The battle is over the earth. Whoever gains the earth is the winner. If Satan can keep the earth under his hand, he has the victory. If God can regain the earth, He will have the victory. The Lord Jesus has not returned because the earth is still so much under Satan's usurping. This is why God needs the church. The church must fight the battle to regain the earth, if not the whole earth, at least some stepping stones, some outpost for the Lord Jesus to put His feet upon. The earth is crucial.

This point has been fully proved by Psalm 8. Psalm 8 begins by saying, "O Jehovah our Lord, / How excellent is Your name / In all the earth!" It also ends the same way. There is no doubt that the Lord's name is excellent in the heavens, but, in a sense, the name of the Lord is not excellent on this earth. His name is not excellent among so many of the fallen people. We need to pray, "Your name be sanctified" (Matt. 6:9). Oh, the Lord's name must be sanctified on this earth. The problem is not in the heavens; the problem is here on earth.

God desires that His kingdom come to this earth and that His will be done on earth (Matt. 6:10). Now we can understand the prayer which the Lord Jesus established. He said, "Your name be sanctified; Your kingdom come." Certainly this means to come from the heavens to the earth. The prayer continues, "Your will be done, as in heaven, so also on earth." God's will is now being done in heaven. But on the earth there are many frustrations, hindering God's will from being done. We must pray, "Your name be sanctified; Your kingdom come; Your will be done, as in heaven, so also on earth." We must fight to recover the earth.

The third aspect of God's intention in giving man dominion is to bring in God's authority, to exercise God's authority over the earth. Man must exercise God's authority in order that the kingdom of God may come to earth, that the will of God may be done on earth, and that the glory of God may be manifested on earth. All of this will be on the earth. God will never be satisfied to have His kingdom only in the heavens. Neither will He be happy to have His will done only in the heavens nor to see His glory expressed only in the heavens. He wants all these things to happen on the earth. This is the responsibility of the church today. In the church we have the kingdom of God. In the church the will of God is done. In the church the glory of God is expressed. Hallelujah! We have a foretaste. Now we can see why God gave man dominion over everything in the seas, in the air, and on the earth. God's intention is to eliminate the enemy, regain the earth, and manifest His glory. (Life-study of Genesis, pp. 81-83)

Further Reading: CWWL, 1964, vol. 4, "The Vision of God's Building," ch. 1

WEEK 1 – DAY5

Morning Nourishment

Col. 3:10-11 And have put on the new man, which is being renewed unto full knowledge according to the image of Him who created him, where there cannot be Greek and Jew, circumcision and uncircumcision, barbarian, Scythian, slave, free man, but Christ is all and in all.

Ephesians 2:15 says that Christ through the cross abolished “in His flesh the law of the commandments in ordinances, that He might create the two in Himself into one new man.” Then in Ephesians 4:22-24 we are told to put off the old man and to put on the new man. This new man is the Body of Christ. To put on the new man means to live a life by the Body. Before our salvation we were living in the old man, in the old society, but now we are members of Christ, living in His Body. We should put off the old man with the old social life, and we should put on the new man, the church. In this new man there is nothing natural, nothing Jewish, nothing Greek, nothing of social rank; everyone is full of Christ, so Christ is everyone, and Christ is in everyone (Col. 3:10-11). There is nothing but Christ in the new man. Our life is Christ, our living is Christ, our intention is Christ, our ambition is Christ, our will is Christ, our love is Christ, and everything else about us is Christ. He saturates our entire being.

This new man, according to Ephesians 4:17-32, lives a life by grace and reality. These are the two main factors in the living of such a new man to fulfill God’s purpose. God needs a new man on this earth to fulfill His purpose, to carry out His intention. (CWWL, 1983, vol. 3, “The Basic Revelation in the Holy Scriptures,” p. 431)

Today’s Reading

God’s creation of man in Genesis 1 is a picture of the new man in God’s new creation. This means that the old creation is a figure, a type, of the new creation. In God’s old creation the central character is man. It is the same in

God's new creation. Therefore, in both the old creation and the new creation man is the center.

God created man in His own image (Gen. 1:26) and then gave man His dominion. Image is for expression. God wants man to be His expression. Dominion, however, is a matter not of expression but of representation. God wants man to represent Him in His authority for His dominion. In the old creation man was created to have God's image to express Him and also to have His dominion to represent Him.

The image refers to God's positive intention, and dominion to God's negative intention. God's positive intention is that man would express Him, whereas God's negative intention is that man would deal with God's enemy, Satan, the devil. In the universe God has a problem, the problem of dealing with His enemy. Since God's enemy, the devil, is a creature, God will not deal with him directly Himself; instead, He will deal with him by man, a creature of His creation. God deals with His enemy through man. Hence, in God's creation of man there were two intentions. The positive intention is that man would bear God's image for His expression; the negative intention is that man would have God's dominion to represent Him to deal with His enemy.

In the old creation the dominion given to man was limited to the earth. This means that in the old creation the dealing with God's enemy was restricted to the earth. However, in God's new creation the dominion has been enlarged to the entire universe. Eventually, the church as the new man is the man in God's intention. God wanted a man, and in the old creation He created a figure, a type, not the real man. The real man is the man Christ created on the cross through His all-inclusive death. This man is called the new man. The old man did not fulfill God's dual purpose. However, the new man in God's new creation does fulfill the twofold purpose of expressing God and dealing with God's enemy. (The Conclusion of the New Testament, pp. 2302-2303)

Further Reading: CWWL, 1994-1997, vol. 2, "The God-men," ch. 1; CWWL, 1977, vol. 3, "One Body, One Spirit, and One New Man," chs. 5, 7-8; CWWL, 1977, vol. 3, "The One New Man," chs. 1-2, 4

WEEK 1 — DAY6

Morning Nourishment

Eph. 6:10-12 Finally, be empowered in the Lord and in the might of His strength. Put on the whole armor of God that you may be able to stand against the stratagems of the devil, for our wrestling is not against blood and flesh but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the world-rulers of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenlies.

Ephesians 6:10-20 reveals that the church, which is the new man, needs to fight against the enemy of God....The church is a warrior. However, the warrior is not a status of the church but an aspect of the church as the new man. The new man has the obligation of fighting against God's enemy. This is indicated in Genesis 1, where we are told that when God created the old man, He commissioned him to bear His image for His expression and to have His dominion for His representation to deal with the enemy....The new man in the new creation also has the twofold obligation of bearing God's image to express Him and of fighting against God's enemy. Therefore, the church as the new man is a warrior fighting against God's enemy, for the new man is now fulfilling God's purpose to express God and to fight against God's enemy for God's dominion, God's kingdom. (The Conclusion of the New Testament, p. 2321)

Today's Reading

[In Ephesians 6:12] "blood and flesh" refers to human beings. Behind men of blood and flesh are the evil forces of the devil, fighting against God's purpose. Hence, our wrestling, our fighting, must not be against men but against the evil spiritual forces in the heavenlies...."This darkness" refers to today's world, which is fully under the dark ruling of the devil through his evil angels. "The world-rulers of this darkness" are the princes Satan has set up to rule the various nations. Because of the working of Satan, who is

the authority of darkness, the earth and its atmosphere have become “this darkness.” “The spiritual forces of evil in the heavenlies” are Satan and his spiritual forces of evil in the air. The warfare between the church and Satan is a battle between us who love the Lord and who are in His church and the evil powers in the heavenlies. We must fight against these spiritual forces.

The Greek word translated “empowered” in Ephesians 6:10 has the same root as the word “power” in 1:19. To deal with God’s enemy, to fight against the evil forces of darkness, we need to be empowered with the power that raised up Christ from the dead and seated Him in the heavens, far above all the evil spirits in the air. First we are empowered by the power that raised Christ from among the dead and made Him to be the Head over all things, and then we know God’s might and strength. In 6:10 Paul charges us to be empowered “in the Lord.” The fact that we are to be empowered in the Lord indicates that in the spiritual warfare against Satan and his evil kingdom we can fight only in the Lord, not in ourselves. Whenever we are in ourselves, we are defeated.

The new man fights against God’s enemy not only by being empowered in the Lord but also by putting on the various attributes of Christ as the whole armor of God (vv. 11, 13-17). The whole armor of God is for the entire Body, not for any individual member of the Body. The church as the corporate new man is the warrior, and the believers together make up this new man. Only the corporate new man as the warrior can wear the whole armor of God; no individual believer can wear it. Therefore, we must fight the spiritual warfare not individually but in the Body, in the new man.

In 6:14-17 we have the various attributes of Christ as the whole armor of God: the girdle of truth, or reality, the breastplate of righteousness, the firm foundation of the gospel of peace (the shoes), the shield of faith, the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit. Of these six aspects of Christ as our armor, only the sword is for offensive warfare. All the other items are for defense. (The Conclusion of the New Testament, pp. 2321-2323)

Further Reading: The Conclusion of the New Testament, msgs. 14, 21, 102, 112, 114, 147-148, 218, 316-317, 358, 401; CWWL, 1956, vol. 1, “The Church as the Body of Christ,” chs. 1-2, 4

<< WEEK 1 — HYMN >>

Hymns, #971 God's eternal purpose

Ultimate Manifestation — God's Eternal Purpose

- 1 God's eternal purpose**
Is to join with man,
Causing man, His vessel,
To be born again,
His own life imparting,
Filling to the brim;
Man may thus express Him,
And be one with Him.
- 2 God in His own image**
Hath created man,
That he may be able
To fulfill His plan;
That he may receive Him
As the tree of life
To become His fulness
As to man the wife.
- 3 In His life's rich flowing**
Man will be transformed
Into precious substance
And to Him conformed.
Thus will man be builded
As His counterpart,
Thus to be His dwelling,

Satisfy His heart.

**4 'Tis the holy city,
New Jerusalem;
With His saints God mingles,
Makes His home with them.
He becomes their content,
His expression they;
They shall share His glory,
One with Him for aye.**

**5 He's the very center,
Ruling on the throne;
By His life the power,
Saints are kept in one.
By His light of glory,
They are kept in light,
Harmony enjoying
In divine delight.**

**6 He's their living water,
And their food supply;
All their thirst and hunger
He doth satisfy.
He's for them the temple,
In Himself they live,
In His constant presence
Worship ever give.**

