

Message Five

Laboring according to God's Operation to Present Every Believer Full-grown in Christ for the Function and Consummation of the One New Man

Hymns:

Scripture Reading: Col. 1:28-29; 3:10; Eph. 4:13-16, 24; Rev. 21:2, 10

- Col 1:28 Whom we announce, admonishing every man and teaching every man in all wisdom that we may present every man full-grown in Christ;
- Col 1:29 For which also I labor, struggling according to His operation which operates in me in power.
- 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,
- 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.
- Eph 4:24 And put on the new man, which was created according to God in righteousness and holiness of the reality.
- Rev 21:2 And I saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.
- Rev 21:10 And he carried me away in spirit onto a great and high mountain and showed me the holy city, Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God,

Outline

I. For the one new man we all need to arrive at “a full-grown man, at the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ”—Eph. 4:13:

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,

A. A full-grown man is a mature man; for this, maturity in life is necessary—v. 13.

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,

B. The fullness of Christ is the Body of Christ, which has a stature with a measure—1:23:

Eph 1:23 Which is His Body, the fullness of the One who fills all in all.

1. The fullness of Christ is the expression of Christ; as Christ's fullness, the Body is Christ's expression—4:13; 1:23.

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 1:23 Which is His Body, the fullness of the One who fills all in all.

2. Christ's fullness, the Body, has a stature, and with this stature there is a certain measure; hence, 4:13 speaks of the measure of the stature of the fullness 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,

3. To arrive at the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ is to arrive at the full growth and building up of the Body of Christ; it is to arrive at the full completion of the building up of the Body—v. 16.

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.

- C. To arrive at the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ is necessary for the practical oneness—the oneness of the faith and of the full knowledge of Christ—v. 13.

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,

- D. From the oneness in reality (vv. 3-6) we need to proceed to the oneness in practicality until we arrive at the three things mentioned in verse 13—the oneness, a full-grown man, and the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.

Eph 4:3 Being diligent to keep the oneness of the Spirit in the uniting bond of peace:

Eph 4:4 One Body and one Spirit, even as also you were called in one hope of your calling;

Eph 4:5 One Lord, one faith, one baptism;

Eph 4:6 One God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all.

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,

II. In order to arrive at a full-grown man for the fulfillment of God's purpose, we need to grow up into Christ in all things—vv. 15-16, 24:

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.

Eph 4:24 And put on the new man, which was created according to God in righteousness and holiness of the reality.

- A. To be no longer children (v. 14), we need to grow up into Christ; this is to have Christ increase in us in all things until we arrive at a full-grown man.

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,

- B. Whereas taking Christ as our life is for the increase of the measure of the stature of the Body, taking Christ as our person is for the growth of the one new man—3:17a; 4:24:

Eph 3:17 That Christ may make His home in your hearts through faith, that you, being rooted and grounded in love,
Eph 4:24 And put on the new man, which was created according to God in righteousness and holiness of the reality.

1. If we take Christ as our person, we will surely take Him as our life—1 John 5:11-12.

1 John 5:11 And this is the testimony, that God gave to us eternal life and this life is in His Son.

1 John 5:12 He who has the Son has the life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have the life.

2. If we take Christ as our person, we will be able to grow and mature.

C. We all need to grow up into Christ in all things, that is, in every single thing, whether big or small—Eph. 4:15:

Eph 4:15 But holding to truth in love, we may grow up into Him in all things, who is the Head, Christ,

1. There are still many things in which we have not grown up into Christ; in these things we are not in Christ but are outside of Christ.

2. When we all grow up into Christ in all things, we all will be one in Christ; this is the universal one new man—v. 24.

Eph 4:24 And put on the new man, which was created according to God in righteousness and holiness of the reality.

D. Ephesians 4:15 says that we grow up into the Head; the word Head here indicates that our growth in life by the increase of Christ should be the growth of the members in the Body under the Head.

Eph 4:15 But holding to truth in love, we may grow up into Him in all things, who is the Head, Christ,

E. To grow in life is to grow with the growth of God; this means that true growth is the increase of God, the addition of God—Col. 2:19:

Col 2:19 And not holding the Head, out from whom all the Body, being richly supplied and knit together by means of the joints and sinews, grows with the growth of God.

1. God is eternal, perfect, and complete; therefore, with God Himself there can be no growth.

2. The Body needs to grow with the growth, the increase, of God in us:

a. It is necessary for God to grow in us; that is, we all need God to grow, to increase, in us.

b. The way to grow spiritually is to have God added to us:

1) The dispensing of the Triune God into us causes us to grow with the increase of God—2 Cor. 13:14; Eph. 3:16-17a.

2 Cor 13:14 The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

Eph 3:16 That He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with power through His Spirit into the inner man,

Eph 3:17 That Christ may make His home in your hearts through faith, that you, being rooted and grounded in love,

2) God entered into us when we were regenerated, and now He is increasing within us by adding more of Himself to us.

3) This is to grow with the growth, the increase, of God, by having God added into our being.

c. What we absorb of Christ into us—the element of the riches of Christ as the soil—becomes the increase of God in us—Col. 2:6-7.

Col 2:6 As therefore you have received the Christ, Jesus the Lord, walk in Him,
Col 2:7 Having been rooted and being built up in Him, and being established in the faith even as you were taught, abounding in thanksgiving.

d. We need to be permeated and saturated with Christ and to have Christ wrought into our being; then, in reality and practicality, Christ will be every member, every part, of the one new man—3:10-11.

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.

F. Ephesians 4 speaks of the perfecting of the new man through the growth of life:

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

Eph 4:2 With all lowliness and meekness, with long-suffering, bearing one another in love,

Eph 4:3 Being diligent to keep the oneness of the Spirit in the uniting bond of peace:

Eph 4:4 One Body and one Spirit, even as also you were called in one hope of your calling;

Eph 4:5 One Lord, one faith, one baptism;

Eph 4:6 One God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all.

Eph 4:7 But to each one of us grace was given according to the measure of the gift of Christ.

Eph 4:8 Therefore the Scripture says, "Having ascended to the height, He led captive those taken captive and gave gifts to men."

Eph 4:9 (Now this, "He ascended," what is it except that He also descended into the lower parts of the earth?

Eph 4:10 He who descended, He is also the One who ascended far above all the heavens that He might fill all things.)

Eph 4:11 And He Himself gave some as apostles and some as prophets and some as evangelists and some as shepherds and teachers,

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.

Eph 4:17 This therefore I say and testify in the Lord, that you no longer walk as the Gentiles also walk in the vanity of their mind,

Eph 4:18 Being darkened in their understanding, alienated from the life of God because of the ignorance which is in them, because of the hardness of their heart;

Eph 4:19 Who, being past feeling, have given themselves over to lasciviousness to work all uncleanness in greediness.

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,

Eph 4:22 That you put off, as regards your former manner of life, the old man, which is being corrupted according to the lusts of the deceit,

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.
 Eph 4:25 Therefore having put off the lie, speak truth each one with his neighbor, for we are members one of another.
 Eph 4:26 Be angry, yet do not sin; do not let the sun go down on your indignation,
 Eph 4:27 Neither give place to the devil.
 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.
 Eph 4:29 Let no corrupt word proceed out of your mouth, but only that which is good for building up, according to the need, that it may give grace to those who hear.
 Eph 4:30 And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, in whom you were sealed unto the day of redemption.
 Eph 4:31 Let all bitterness and anger and wrath and clamor and evil speaking be removed from you, with all malice.
 Eph 4:32 And be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God in Christ also forgave you.

1. In Ephesians 2:15 we see the creation of the new man organically; in 4:13-16 we see the perfecting of the new man in relation to his function.

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 4:13 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.

2. The organically perfect new man needs to be perfected through the growth of life in order to function in a proper way—vv. 13, 15, 24:

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 4:15 But holding to truth in love, we may grow up into Him in all things, who is the Head, Christ,
 Eph 4:24 And put on the new man, which was created according to God in righteousness and holiness of the reality.

a. The more the new man grows through receiving the proper nourishment, the more he will function normally.

b. The growth into Christ in verse 15 equals the putting on of the new man in verse 24.

Eph 4:15 But holding to truth in love, we may grow up into Him in all things, who is the Head, Christ,
 Eph 4:24 And put on the new man, which was created according to God in righteousness and holiness of the reality.

3. For the growth of the corporate new man, we need to experience the crucified, resurrected, ascended, and descending Christ so that the all-inclusive Christ is wrought into us to be our everything; then the organically perfect new man will become perfect functionally—3:16-17a; 4:13, 24.

Eph 3:16 That He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with power through His Spirit into the inner man,

Eph 3:17 That Christ may make His home in your hearts through faith, that you, being rooted and grounded in love,

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 4:24 And put on the new man, which was created according to God in righteousness and holiness of the reality.

- G. Growing up into Christ in all things is for the practical existence of the universal one new man—v. 24.

Eph 4:24 And put on the new man, which was created according to God in righteousness and holiness of the reality.

III. For the practical existence of the one new man, we need to labor and struggle to present all the saints full-grown in Christ—Col. 1:28-29:

Col 1:28 Whom we announce, admonishing every man and teaching every man in all wisdom that we may present every man full-grown in Christ;

Col 1:29 For which also I labor, struggling according to His operation which operates in me in power.

- A. Paul's ministry was to dispense Christ into others so that they would be perfect and complete by maturing in Christ unto full growth.

- B. Our goal in preaching the gospel to sinners and in fellowshiping with the saints is to minister Christ into them so that they may mature in Him and be presented full-grown in Him; this is for the growth of the new man—v. 28.

Col 1:28 Whom we announce, admonishing every man and teaching every man in all wisdom that we may present every man full-grown in Christ;

- C. Presenting others full-grown in Christ is a very difficult task; this task can be accomplished only by labor in which we struggle according to the operation of God—v. 29.

Col 1:29 For which also I labor, struggling according to His operation which operates in me in power.

- D. What Paul did in struggling to present others full-grown in Christ is an example of laboring to perfect the saints for the building up of the Body of Christ—Eph. 4:11-16:

Eph 4:11 And He Himself gave some as apostles and some as prophets and some as evangelists and some as shepherds and teachers,

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.

1. In His recovery the Lord desires to recover the perfecting of all the members of the Body of Christ—vv. 11-16.

Eph 4:11 And He Himself gave some as apostles and some as prophets and some as evangelists and some as shepherds and teachers,

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.

2. Paul's thought concerning the perfecting of the saints is that God's intention is to have every believer able to do the things that the gifted persons do—v. 11.

Eph 4:11 And He Himself gave some as apostles and some as prophets and some as evangelists and some as shepherds and teachers,

3. The Lord wants to recover the perfecting of the saints so that each one part of the Body of Christ may do the work of the ministry by operating in its measure for the building up of the organic Body of Christ—vv. 12, 16.

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 4:16 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.

IV. When the one new man was created in our spirit through regeneration, it was complete as far as organs are concerned; however, because the new man has not yet been completed in function, there is the need for growth and renewing—Col. 2:19; 3:10; Eph. 4:11-16, 23-24:

Col 2:19 And not holding the Head, out from whom all the Body, being richly supplied and knit together by means of the joints and sinews, grows with the growth of God.

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,

Eph 4:11 And He Himself gave some as apostles and some as prophets and some as evangelists and some as shepherds and teachers,

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.
 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.

- A. The growth of the new man results in the function of the new man.
- B. As long as the new man is short of growth and renewing, it will be lacking in function.
- C. The one new man needs to grow and develop; as a result, the one new man will be perfect in function.

V. The New Jerusalem will be the final consummation of the universal one new man—Rev. 21:2, 10:

Rev 21:2 And I saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.
 Rev 21:10 And he carried me away in spirit onto a great and high mountain and showed me the holy city, Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God,

- A. God's goal is to have the universal one new man, which ultimately will consummate in the New Jerusalem.
- B. When we are in the New Jerusalem, we will enjoy the life of the universal one new man.
- C. Today we may have a foretaste of the consummation of the one new man by setting our mind on the things above and by giving a free way for the new man in our spirit to spread into our whole being—Col. 3:1-2; Eph. 4:23-24.

Col 3:1 If therefore you were raised together with Christ, seek the things which are above, where Christ is, sitting at the right hand of God.
 Col 3:2 Set your mind on the things which are above, not on the things which are on the earth.
 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.