

**Outline of the Messages  
for the Memorial Day Conference  
May 24-27, 2019**

**GENERAL SUBJECT:  
THE EXPERIENCE OF CHRIST**

**The Intrinsic Significance of the Experience of Christ  
(Message 1)**

Scripture Reading: Phil. 1:3-6, 19-21a, 27; 2:2, 20-21, 30; 3:1; 4:1, 4

- I. The experience of Christ is a mystery:
  - A. God is a mystery, Christ is the mystery of God (Col. 2:2), and the church is the mystery of Christ (Eph. 3:4); hence, the church is actually a mystery within a mystery.
  - B. Our Christian living is a mystery; for example, although human love is limited, the proper love lived out by a Christian is unlimited; hence, it is a mystery—cf. v. 19a.
  - C. To magnify Christ is to express Christ without limitation (Phil. 1:20); it is to show the whole universe that the very Christ by whom we live is unlimited.
  - D. Paul's experience of Christ as his unlimited endurance was the magnification of the unlimited Christ; any attribute we have through living Christ by the bountiful supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ will be unlimited and thus mysterious—vv. 19-21a.
  - E. Even our forgiveness of others needs to be a magnification of Christ; our forgiveness is the inexhaustible Christ Himself being magnified in us—Matt. 18:21-22.
  - F. In the midst of suffering, we should simply love the Lord and experience Him; then we will magnify Christ, expressing Him as the One who is unlimited; it is a joy to magnify Christ through suffering—2 Cor. 12:7-10.
  - G. The experience of Christ is a mystery, and whatever we experience of Christ is unlimited; if we see this vision, it will not only control our life but also strengthen our Christian walk; God's intention is to magnify Christ through us. [8]

- H. The church life is the sum total of our Christian living; we all live Christ, and our Christian living is added together to make the church life; when we come together as the church, we are a complete mystery—1 Tim. 3:15-16.
- I. Paul says, “To me, to live is Christ” (Phil. 1:21a); this means that we can live to be Christ; the Christ whom we experience and whom we live is a mystery; we should not have any assurance of our experience, for all experiences of Christ are mysterious.
- II. Philippians unveils that the experience of Christ is our fellowship unto the furtherance of the gospel until the Lord Jesus comes back—1:3-6:
  - A. From the time that we are saved until the time the Lord Jesus comes back, our Christian life should be a gospel-preaching life:
    1. The Christ-experiencing and -enjoying life is a life in the furtherance of the gospel, a gospel-preaching life, not individualistic but corporate; the more fellowship we have in the furtherance of the gospel, the more Christ we experience and enjoy; this kills our self, ambition, preference, and choice.
    2. Whether we speak or remain silent, our life, our living, our being, and our entire person must be a preaching of Christ.
  - B. Paul charges us to conduct ourselves “in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ,” which is to “stand firm in one spirit, with one soul striving together along with the faith of the gospel”—v. 27:
    1. To be with one soul and to be like-souled for the gospel work are more difficult than to be in one spirit for the experience of Christ—2:20-21, 30.
    2. To be with one soul requires that, after having been regenerated in our spirit, we go further to be transformed in our soul—2 Cor. 3:18; Rom. 12:2.
    3. If we are not one in our affections, thoughts, and decisions, we are not with one soul; as long as we are not one in soul, we are not in the fellowship unto the furtherance of the gospel, and our conduct is not worthy of the gospel.
    4. When all the members in the church are in one spirit with one soul, this oneness will be convincing, subduing, and attractive, and we will experience Christ and enjoy Him. [9]
- III. Strictly speaking, Philippians is a book not only on the experience of Christ but also on the enjoyment of Christ:
  - A. Since Philippians is concerned with the experience and enjoyment of Christ, which issue in joy, it is a book filled with

- joy and rejoicing—1:4, 18, 25; 2:2, 17-18, 28-29; 3:1; 4:1, 4.
- B. The experience of Christ is primarily in our spirit, but the enjoyment of Christ is in our soul; like children who are made to eat without enjoying their food, many times we experience Christ without enjoying Him.
  - C. Thus, we can have the experience of Christ without the enjoyment of Christ; the problem here is with our soul—our mind, emotion, and will.
  - D. “I am somewhat concerned that you may not have very much enjoyment of Christ” (*The Experience of Christ*, p. 29); the reason that many lose the enjoyment of Christ is the problem they have in the soul; if you do not have much enjoyment of Christ, it indicates that you are not one in soul, joined in soul (2:2).
  - E. Among the Philippians there was dissension in their thinking (4:2), which troubled the apostle; hence, he asked them to think the same thing, even the same one thing, that they might make his joy full (2:2):
    1. According to the context of this book, *the one thing* must refer to the subjective knowledge and experience of Christ (v. 2; 1:20-21; 2:5; 3:7-9; 4:13); Christ, and Christ alone, should be the centrality and universality of our entire being.
    2. The one thing is the subjective experience of Christ as our enjoyment for the church life, the Body life; this one thing should occupy our mind all the time; if we think the one thing, immediately the enjoyment of Christ will be our portion.
    3. Our thinking should be focused on the excellency of the knowledge and experience of Christ (3:8, 10); focusing on anything else causes us to think differently, thus creating dissensions among us.
    4. To think something other than the one thing is to rebel against God’s economy; God’s economy is that we think the one thing.
    5. Because of the dissension in their thinking, the Philippian believers had different levels of love (2:2); they did not have [10] the same love toward all the saints for the keeping of oneness; if our love toward the saints has been regulated and dealt with, then we will enjoy Christ as we love the saints.
    6. Being one in soul, joined in soul, is not only for the experience of Christ but even more for the enjoyment of Christ; our experience of Christ should also be an enjoyment

of Christ.

7. To experience Christ with enjoyment, we need to be in one spirit with one soul; in order to enjoy Christ, we need to have a proper soul, a “co-soul” that is one with the souls of other saints.
8. The most important thing for us to do is to experience Christ as our enjoyment today so that the church may be built up for His glory; this is the way for us to be preserved in the Lord’s recovery until He comes back.

## **MESSAGE ONE**

### **THE INTRINSIC SIGNIFICANCE OF THE EXPERIENCE OF CHRIST**

Prayer: Lord, we thank You for gathering us together. We pray for this series of messages. We pray for the blending and the flocking together of the saints under Your shepherding. Lord, we pray that we all would be resting, still, and sitting at Your feet to hear the speaking out from Your heart. Lord, we pray for Your cleansing blood to wash us and to sanctify us. Separate us from all the defilement of this world, and separate us from everything that bothers and occupies us. Lord, deliver us from every kind of anxiety. We pray for Your mercy as we are empty and open before You. Lord, we pray for the release of the burden concerning the experience of Christ. We pray that all of us in Your recovery would not be merely Your lovers and seekers but would also become pursuers of You so that we may gain You fully in our subjective experience. We pray that You would have mercy on Your recovery by ushering us into this pure enjoyment of You as the centrality and universality of God’s economy, the church, and the Body. Lord, hear our prayer. Have a new beginning with us even now. Lord, save us from being a Christless church like Sardis. Save us from being Laodicea, a church with You on the outside, knocking on the door. We pray that we would be saved from emptiness and that we would be a people of Christ. Fill the churches and all the saints with the experience and enjoyment of Christ. Amen.

The general subject of this series of messages is “The Experience of Christ.” This general subject was not arbitrarily chosen or created by some brothers; rather, as with all the seven annual feasts, the general subject and

the speaking in the messages are timely and convey the Lord's burden to meet the present need of His recovery. At the outset I would ask all of us, especially the older ones, to not think that we already know what it is to have the experience of Christ. We may be familiar with the book of Philippians, and we should thank the Lord that we know the revelations in that book concerning the experience of Christ. However, we should now seek to be truly refreshed, with a renewed hunger and pursuing spirit as we receive the speaking in these messages. [12]

For the younger ones to be the future of the Lord's recovery and for them to carry the Lord's testimony onward, they need the experience of Christ. If we do not have the experience of the unlimited, immeasurable, and unfathomable Christ in an ever-deepening way, the Lord's recovery will face peril. What will the Lord's recovery become? It is very possible that the Lord's recovery can become empty in experience. Even if we have some knowledge of the truth and certain wonderful practices and are zealous for the gospel, for the increase, and for the spread of the Lord's recovery, we can still be fundamentally Christless in our experience. That would be an alarming prospect for the Lord's recovery.

I have been very much before the Lord—with much fear and trembling as well as burden within—for this first message. In the next five messages, we will consider the secret, the way, and the details of experiencing Christ. In this message, I hope that I can stir up a renewed passion, hunger, thirst, and desire to experience Christ in a pure way. To this end, let us forget everything, not just the bad things but even the good things, such as our spiritual work, our service. Although these are important and integral in our experience of Christ, they may cause us to be distracted and preoccupied. Let us forget everything and think only one thing. In [Philippians 2:2](#) Paul says, "Make my joy full, that you think the same thing, having the same love, joined in soul, thinking the one thing." Let us be of the same one mind to think the one thing. Nothing matters except Christ and our experience of Him. Let us be single-hearted, pure, and simple to pursue Christ together. With such an attitude, the Lord will be pleased to unveil more of the experience of Christ to us.

### **THE KEY STATEMENTS**

The first key statement of this series of messages is "The most important thing for us to do is to experience Christ as our enjoyment today so that the church may be built up for His glory; this is the way for us to be preserved in the Lord's recovery until He comes back." This statement is covered

here in Message 1. We need to see that the most important thing is to experience Christ as our enjoyment today. The goal of this is the building up of the church. In other words, if there is a lack of experience, there will be a lack of building up. The church is not built up by practices and activities; the church is built up by the aggregate subjective experiences of Christ of every saint. Without these experiences of Christ, there is no building up of the church. The building element, the building material, of the church is Christ as our subjective experience and enjoyment. [13] This is the way for us to be preserved in the Lord's recovery until the Lord comes back. I am very burdened for the preservation of all the saints, especially the many young ones, the serving ones, and the working ones.

The second key statement says, "There is an urgent need among us in the Lord's recovery today to know and experience the pattern of the Christian life—Christ as the God-man Savior, who emptied Himself and humbled Himself and who was exalted and glorified by God." This statement will be covered in Message 2, which is about our need to know and experience the pattern of Christ. This is the urgent need among us in the Lord's recovery today.

The third key statement says, "To learn the secret of being in Christ as the empowering One is to learn the secret of abiding in Christ; to abide in Christ is to dwell in Him, to remain in fellowship with Him, so that we may experience and enjoy His abiding in us." The matters encapsulated in this statement will be covered in Message 3, which is on the experience of Christ as our constant salvation; in Message 4, which is on abiding in Christ as the empowering One; and in Message 5, which is on the excellency of the knowledge of Christ, that is, the subjective knowledge of Christ. All of these are crucial aspects of our experience of Christ.

The last key statement says, "In the Lord's recovery today, we should aspire to be found in Christ, not having our own righteousness but the righteousness which is out of God, and to know Christ by experiencing Him, enjoying Him, being one with Him, and having Him live within us." In the final message we will consider what it is to be found in Christ, to know Christ, and to pursue Christ. We need to pray that our being would be focused on this one matter of experiencing Christ throughout these messages.

The title of this message is "The Intrinsic Significance of the Experience of Christ." The main scriptural reference for all the messages of this conference is Philippians. In *The Experience of Christ* Brother Lee says,

Philippians is a book on the experience of Christ. In the

arrangement of the books of the New Testament, Philippians comes between Ephesians, a book on the Body, and Colossians, a book on the Head. Thus, between the Body and the Head we have the experience of Christ. This means that the way to get from the Body to the Head is through the experience of Christ. This is a strong indication that if we would know the Head, we must have the experience of Christ. (*The Collected Works of Witness Lee, 1978, vol. 1, p. 329*) [14]

It is by our experiences of Christ that we grow. What renders the genuine growth of the divine life in us is the experience of this Christ. If we do not experience Christ, we will not grow. However, the more we experience Him and the deeper and broader those experiences are, the more we grow in life. Thus, our growth in life has only one metric—the experience of Christ. For this reason we all need to desperately pursue these experiences. We need to pray, “Lord, I want to experience You much more. I want to advance. I want to go further in my experience of You.” The more we experience Him in different ways and things, the more we will grow up into the Head, Christ. Out from that will come the building up of the Body ([Eph. 4:15-16](#)). The building up of the Body can occur only through our experience of Christ.

### **THE EXPERIENCE OF CHRIST BEING A MYSTERY**

The experience of Christ is a mystery. Even the phrase *experience of Christ* is mysterious. How can human beings experience Christ, who is the embodiment of the Triune God? It is a mystery that human beings can actually experience Christ. God is a mystery, and Christ is the mystery of God. All the experiences of Christ are mysterious and occur in the divine and mystical realm. The human, the natural, and even the religious tendency is to take the mystery out of our experience, to make it something tangible, merely visible, for the five senses, and outward. However, the experience of Christ occurs in the divine and mystical realm. It is mysterious because God, Christ, and even the church are mysterious. We are a mysterious people.

What we are doing even right now is something absolutely mysterious. These messages are being presented in Seattle, Washington, during the Memorial Day weekend. Others may question, but I do not question the reason for my being in Seattle. I do not sense that I have better things to do. Our gathering together here is surely mysterious. Moreover, each one of us can say that we are a mystery. A Christian is a mysterious person, and all

his experiences are totally mysterious. It is difficult to explain to others what we do. There may even be times when we ourselves do not know what we are doing. We may not know why we make certain decisions, nor do we have the assurance that we are making the right decisions. Everything is mysterious. We should not seek for something outward or miraculous; rather, we should seek after the mysterious, that is, seek after Christ, who is the mystery of God. We must know this mystery, pursue this mystery, and experience this mystery. [15]

**God Being a Mystery, Christ Being the Mystery of God,  
and the Church Being the Mystery of Christ;  
Hence, the Church Being Actually a Mystery within a Mystery**

God is a mystery, Christ is the mystery of God ([Col. 2:2](#)), and the church is the mystery of Christ ([Eph. 3:4](#)); hence, the church is actually a mystery within a mystery. God is a mystery, Christ is a mystery, and in Christ the church is a further mystery. The church is a mystery within a mystery. Actually, even the universe is a mystery. [Colossians 2:2](#) says, “That their hearts may be comforted, they being knit together in love and unto all the riches of the full assurance of understanding, unto the full knowledge of the mystery of God, Christ.” There is a promise that we can come to the full knowledge of this wonderful, mysterious Christ as our portion. How wonderful it is that we can know this Christ! Paul knew Him. In [Ephesians 3:3-4](#) Paul says, “That by revelation the mystery was made known to me, as I have written previously in brief, by which, in reading it, you can perceive my understanding in the mystery of Christ.” By reading Paul’s writings, we can perceive his understanding in the mystery of Christ. We can know Christ not only objectively but also subjectively.

**Our Christian Living Being a Mystery; for Example,  
Although Human Love Is Limited, the Proper Love Lived Out  
by a Christian Being Unlimited; Hence, It Being a Mystery**

Our Christian living is a mystery; for example, although human love is limited, the proper love lived out by a Christian is unlimited; hence, it is a mystery (cf. [v. 19a](#)). The entire Christian living is just a mystery. The Christian life and the Christian living should have an expression, which is the expression of the many Christian virtues. Because these virtues are of Christ, who is a mystery, these virtues are likewise mysterious. Human beings have virtues, such as love, endurance, patience, wisdom, and



forgiveness, but human virtues alone are not mysterious. However, Christian patience, endurance, forgiveness, and love are mysterious due to their unlimitedness.

Human love, patience, and forgiveness run out very quickly. A husband who has recently forgiven his wife may begin to reason in his mind, thinking, “How could she do that to me, but I cannot do that to her? Why should I be the only one to apologize? This is not fair.” From our experience, we can testify that our human forgiveness is very limited. However, there are proper virtues within us as Christians, and when we live them out, they are unlimited, immeasurable, and endless. [16]

Brother Nee was imprisoned for twenty years, until his death. Surely in such a circumstance, every bit of his human endurance, patience, forgiveness, and other virtues were tested. His testimony of overcoming is proof that the Christian virtues are unlimited. He lived out these virtues by experiencing the unlimited Christ.

**To Magnify Christ**  
**Being to Express Christ without Limitation;**  
**Its Being to Show the Whole Universe**  
**That the Very Christ by Whom We Live Is Unlimited**

To magnify Christ is to express Christ without limitation ([Phil. 1:20](#)); it is to show the whole universe that the very Christ by whom we live is unlimited. The apostle Paul, like Brother Nee, was also a prisoner. He was arrested and imprisoned in Rome and probably chained to a guard. Paul had an expectation that he might die for the name of Christ; in [verse 20](#) he says, “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.” It was Paul’s earnest expectation and hope that in nothing he would be put to shame in that terrible and awful environment; even in prison, Paul expected that Christ would be magnified in his body, whether he would be left alive or put to death.

Our magnifying of Christ does not mean that Christ is not great. Christ is great to the uttermost. He is the One who fills all in all ([Eph. 1:23](#)). He is the One who fills the universe. He is the fullness of the Godhead ([Col. 2:9](#)). Nevertheless, this great Christ who fills everything needs to be further magnified by human beings, that is, by their expressing Him without limitation. This is the experience of Christ. In that suffering, limited

situation Paul could express Christ without limitation, full of boldness, without shame, and be filled with hope and expectation. Whether through life or through death, Christ can be magnified in us.

**Paul's Experience of Christ as His Unlimited Endurance  
Being the Magnification of the Unlimited Christ;  
Any Attribute We Have through Living Christ  
by the Bountiful Supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ  
Being Unlimited and Thus Mysterious**

Paul's experience of Christ as his unlimited endurance was the magnification of the unlimited Christ; any attribute we have through living [17] Christ by the bountiful supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ will be unlimited and thus mysterious (Phil. 1:19-21a). Christ is unlimited, and Paul magnified the unlimited Christ in his living, including in his suffering. What was his secret? In [verse 19](#) Paul says, "I know that for me this will turn out to salvation through your petition and the bountiful supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ." Paul could magnify such an unlimited Christ because of the prayers of the saints and the bountiful supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ. There could be no other way except by the prayers of the Body and the Spirit of Jesus Christ supplying him from within. The Spirit of Jesus Christ is the Spirit of the incarnated and crucified Jesus as well as the Spirit of the resurrected and ascended Christ. By this bountiful supply, Paul was able to magnify the unlimited Christ. Thus, in [verse 21](#) he could say, "To me, to live is Christ and to die is gain." The top and utmost experience is to live Christ. The experience of Christ is simply to be Christ, not merely to live as Christ and not even to live out the virtues of Christ but to live Christ Himself.

**Even Our Forgiveness of Others  
Needing to Be a Magnification of Christ;  
Our Forgiveness Being the Inexhaustible Christ Himself  
Being Magnified in Us**

Even our forgiveness of others needs to be a magnification of Christ; our forgiveness is the inexhaustible Christ Himself being magnified in us (Matt. 18:21-22). [Verse 21](#) says, "Peter came and said to Him, Lord, how often shall my brother sin against me and I forgive him? Up to seven times?" Many would think that forgiving up to seven times is quite good.

However, [verse 22](#) says, “Jesus said to him, I do not say to you, Up to seven times, but, Up to seventy times seven.” Practically, “seventy times seven” translates into endless forgiveness. If we use the Lord’s requirement as a measurement of our forgiveness, we will be quite short. We all can testify that we are very short in forgiveness. This means that our experience of Christ is wanting and inadequate. It is when we are offended, mistreated, persecuted for no sound reason, perhaps even put in jail, but have no complaints, murmurings, or self-pity and, instead, submit to the Lord’s will and pray that He would live Himself through us that we are experiencing and magnifying Christ. In such times we may pray, “Lord, Your will be done. Live Yourself, Lord Jesus, through me, for You are my very life. Lord, no matter what happens, I expect that You will be magnified in me.” Compared to the sufferings of Paul and of Brother Nee, our experiences of [18] offenses and mistreatments are so insignificant. The fact that even these small offenses occupy our being for days, perhaps weeks, interrupting our church life and disrupting our marriage life, shows that we are short of the experience of the unlimited Christ.

**In the Midst of Suffering,  
Our Needing to Simply Love the Lord  
and Experience Him;  
Then Our Magnifying Christ,  
Expressing Him as the One Who Is Unlimited;  
It Being a Joy to Magnify Christ  
through Suffering**

In the midst of suffering, we should simply love the Lord and experience Him; then we will magnify Christ, expressing Him as the One who is unlimited; it is a joy to magnify Christ through suffering ([2 Cor. 12:7-10](#)). We should never pray for suffering. Even the Lord prayed, “My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from Me; yet not as I will, but as You will” ([Matt. 26:39](#)). According to God’s sovereignty and the heart of our loving Father, sufferings are needed and necessary for our experience and our magnification of Christ. In [2 Corinthians 12:7-9](#) Paul says,

Because of the transcendence of the revelations, in order that I might not be exceedingly lifted up, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, a messenger of Satan, that he might buffet me, in order that I might not be exceedingly lifted up. Concerning this I entreated the Lord three times that it might depart from me. 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.

Paul learned not to pray for the removal of the thorn, the removal of his weakness. Rather, he learned that he should boast in his weaknesses. He goes on to say,

Therefore I am well pleased in weaknesses, in insults, in necessities, in persecutions and distresses, on behalf of Christ; for when I am weak, then I am powerful. (v. 10)

It is when we run out of strength that grace floods in. It is when we run out of hope that the endurance of Christ becomes ours. It is when we find ourselves being weak to the uttermost that we find ourselves powerful in the grace of Christ. We are short of these experiences of Christ. [19]

**The Experience of Christ Being a Mystery,  
and Whatever We Experience of Christ Being Unlimited;  
If We See This Vision, It Not Only Controlling Our Life  
but Also Strengthening Our Christian Walk;  
God's Intention Being to Magnify Christ through Us**

The experience of Christ is a mystery, and whatever we experience of Christ is unlimited; if we see this vision, it will not only control our life but also strengthen our Christian walk; God's intention is to magnify Christ through us. This must become a vision to us. May what is presented in these messages form in us a vision. If what we hear are merely messages, what we hear will eventually pass away. A vision will not only govern and control our life but even strengthen our Christian walk.

In my observation, even among us in the Lord's recovery, who are blessed with the knowledge of these things through the ministry, this vision does not govern us in our daily life adequately. We often live like those in the world. We behave, deal with things, and seek help like them. There is not a vision controlling us in our situations, our sufferings, or the problems that we are experiencing. We pass through certain situations and problems because God has an intention, which is that His Son would be magnified in and through us in those experiences.

We may think that this view is too spiritual and that we should be more practical. We have said that the experience of Christ is mysterious, and it is

mysterious because it is spiritual. However, before we seek advice elsewhere, we should first go to the Lord, touch Him, and open our being to Him in prayer. We may say, “Lord, what is Your intention in this matter? What do You want to gain out of this? What do You want me to gain in my experience of You?” To us this may be a wholly different view and approach to our situation. We need to see that virtually everything that happens in our life is for us to experience Christ in one way or another.

**The Church Life Being the Sum Total of Our Christian Living;  
All Living Christ, and Our Christian Living  
Being Added Together to Make the Church Life;  
When We Come Together as the Church,  
Our Being a Complete Mystery**

The church life is the sum total of our Christian living; we all live Christ, and our Christian living is added together to make the church life; when we come together as the church, we are a complete mystery ([1 Tim. 3:15-16](#)). We need to see the vision of the church life again, to have a [20] renewed vision of the church life. The church life is not the sum total of our Christian practices. We need practices, but the church life is the sum total of our living, both seen and unseen. It includes how we live at home and at work as well as in the meeting hall. This vision is not controlling us adequately. Without this vision it is quite possible that we are simply promoting certain practices, as if to say that our church life depends on successful Christian practices. We do need the proper practices. Brother Lee was practical, and he led us into many profitable practices. However, we must see that the church life in the Lord’s recovery is the sum total of our living. It is possible to be engaged in practices yet be devoid of the proper living. We may have practices without the basis of a proper living. The result will be the lack of the reality of the church with regard to life. The church will not be mysterious. Many leaders in Christianity have observed that in the last thirty years “church” attendance has decreased by half, and they are thinking of various ways to attract the younger generation, including using advanced technology. That is not the way of the Lord’s recovery. The way that we take is by our life and by our living, both of which are Christ. Christ is our life, and for us to live is also Christ.

We are not presenting a super spiritual talk or promoting something impractical. Our living Christ in the church is according to the Bible, the Word of God, and to the ministry that we have received. In [1 Timothy 3:15](#) Paul says, “I write that you may know how one ought to conduct himself in

the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and base of the truth.” We must pay attention to the church of the living God. We need to live as God lives. We need to live God. In [verse 16](#) Paul says, “Confessedly, great is the mystery of godliness: He who was manifested in the flesh, / Justified in the Spirit, / Seen by angels, / Preached among the nations, / Believed on in the world, / Taken up in glory.” The church is for God’s expression. Godliness is simply God-likeness, the expression of God in our living. When God is expressed in the church, when He is manifested in the flesh, that is the mystery of godliness.

**Paul Saying, “To Me, to Live Is Christ”;  
This Meaning That We Can Live to Be Christ;  
the Christ Whom We Experience  
and Whom We Live Being a Mystery;  
Our Needing to Not Have Any Assurance of Our Experience,  
for All Experiences of Christ Being Mysterious**

Paul says, “To me, to live is Christ” ([Phil. 1:21a](#)); this means that we <sup>[21]</sup> can live to be Christ; the Christ whom we experience and whom we live is a mystery; we should not have any assurance of our experience, for all experiences of Christ are mysterious. We may not know how much experience of Christ we really have. Actually, it is when we are unsure of having experienced Christ that our experience may be genuine, but when we are very certain, that experience of Christ may not be genuine. The point is that we should not analyze our experience; analyzing will eventually bring us into our mind. We simply need to pursue, enjoy, and experience Christ as the bountiful supply of His Spirit.

**PHILIPPIANS UNVEILING THAT  
THE EXPERIENCE OF CHRIST IS OUR FELLOWSHIP  
UNTO THE FURTHERANCE OF THE GOSPEL  
UNTIL THE LORD JESUS COMES BACK**

Philippians unveils that the experience of Christ is our fellowship unto the furtherance of the gospel until the Lord Jesus comes back ([1:3-6](#)). In *The Experience of Christ* Brother Lee says, “In Philippians Paul speaks about the experience of Christ in a very peculiar way” (*The Collected Works of Witness Lee, 1978, vol. 1, p. 329*). The experience of Christ is not according to what we would expect. Brother Lee says, “Philippians

unveils the fact that the experience of Christ is the fellowship unto the gospel until the Lord Jesus comes back” (p. 329). We would not normally put together the matter of the gospel with the experience of Christ. In our mind these two are usually different matters. In this message I have a burden to expose and to help us discard this made-up difference between the gospel, or the gospel-preaching life, and our pursuit of experiencing Christ. These two matters do not contradict each other and are not mutually exclusive; in fact, they are inseparable. We should be both a gospel-preaching Christian and a Christ-pursuing Christian. In [verses 3 through 6](#) Paul commended the Philippians for their fellowship unto the furtherance of the gospel and said that the Lord would complete His work in them:

I thank my God upon all my remembrance of you, always in my every petition on behalf of you all, making my petition with joy, for your fellowship unto the furtherance of the gospel from the first day until now, being confident of this very thing, that He who has begun in you a good work will complete it until the day of Christ Jesus.

In this portion we see that the matter of the gospel is inseparable from the experience of Christ. [22]

**From the Time That We Are Saved  
until the Time the Lord Jesus Comes Back,  
Our Christian Life Needing to Be a Gospel-preaching Life**

From the time that we are saved until the time the Lord Jesus comes back, our Christian life should be a gospel-preaching life. We should have a gospel-preaching church life and Christian life. The gospel should not be an occasional activity, a movement, or a campaign. The gospel should be our living, not merely our commission.

*The Christ-experiencing and -enjoying Life  
Being a Life in the Furtherance of the Gospel,  
a Gospel-preaching Life, Not Individualistic but Corporate;  
the More Fellowship We Have in the Furtherance of the Gospel,  
the More Christ Our Experiencing and Enjoying;  
This Killing Our Self, Ambition, Preference, and Choice*

The Christ-experiencing and -enjoying life is a life in the furtherance of

the gospel, a gospel-preaching life, not individualistic but corporate; the more fellowship we have in the furtherance of the gospel, the more Christ we experience and enjoy; this kills our self, ambition, preference, and choice. This life of experiencing Christ is actually a life that places us in the fellowship unto the furtherance of the gospel. [Philippians 1](#) is full of the gospel. It speaks of not only the fellowship but also the defense and confirmation, the advancement, and the faith of the gospel. Thus, [chapter 1 of Philippians](#), the subject of which is the experience of Christ, is on the gospel, showing that in order to have a genuine gospel-preaching life, we need to have a Christ-experiencing life.

***Whether We Speak or Remain Silent,  
Our Life, Our Living, Our Being, and Our Entire Person  
Having to Be a Preaching of Christ***

Whether we speak or remain silent, our life, our living, our being, and our entire person must be a preaching of Christ. Whether in or out of prison, Paul was magnifying Christ. He was preaching the gospel. Watchman Nee preached the gospel in prison without being able to speak it. Instead, he lived the gospel for twenty years. As a result, one of his cellmates was saved. This shows that even when we are restricted from speaking, the gospel can be preached by our living, our being, and our person. [23]

**Paul Charging Us to Conduct Ourselves  
“in a Manner Worthy of the Gospel of Christ,”  
Which Is to “Stand Firm in One Spirit, with One Soul  
Striving Together Along with the Faith of the Gospel”**

Paul charges us to conduct ourselves “in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ,” which is to “stand firm in one spirit, with one soul striving together along with the faith of the gospel” (v. 27). Paul’s concern at the end of [chapter 1](#) is not just the fellowship unto the gospel or gospel preaching but whether the Philippians would be one, stand firm in one spirit, and have one soul, striving together along with the faith of the personified gospel, which is Christ; he was burdened for them. When we, the brothers and sisters in the churches, are one in spirit and in our soul, when we are standing firm in one spirit and striving together along with the faith of this gospel, and when we are preaching the gospel by living it, we will enter a Christ-experiencing and Christ-enjoying life. In contrast, if we



are diversely minded, have different opinions, and contend with one another, even in the ways to preach the gospel, we are through with the experience of Christ.

***To Be with One Soul  
and to Be like-souled for the Gospel Work  
Being More Difficult Than  
to Be in One Spirit for the Experience of Christ***

To be with one soul and to be like-souled for the gospel work are more difficult than to be in one spirit for the experience of Christ (2:20-21, 30). Philippians emphasizes the soul more than the spirit. It is easy to be one in our spirit. When we exercise our spirit, we are spontaneously in one spirit. However, Paul's concern is whether we would be with one soul, like-souled, have the same soul, that is, be one in our mind—the chief organ in our soul—emotion, and will, because our enjoyment of Christ in our experience of Him is in our soul. We contact the Lord in our spirit, but we enjoy Him in our soul, and we express and magnify Him through our soul.

***To Be with One Soul Requiring That,  
after Having Been Regenerated in Our Spirit,  
We Go Further to Be Transformed in Our Soul***

To be with one soul requires that, after having been regenerated in [24] our spirit, we go further to be transformed in our soul (2 Cor. 3:18; Rom. 12:2). Just to be in our spirit is not enough for our experience of Christ; we need to deal with our soul. We need to be transformed in our soul. We need to deal with our mind, emotion, and will, which are the main hindrances to our being one in soul. This is why we need to be transformed in our soul. Second Corinthians 3:18 says, “We all with unveiled face, beholding and reflecting like a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, even as from the Lord Spirit.” Romans 12:2 says, “Do not be fashioned according to this age, but be transformed by the renewing of the mind that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and well pleasing and perfect.” The transformation of our soul is what will cause us to have greater experiences and enjoyment of Christ.

When we are one in spirit and especially one in soul with the saints in

our church life, we are full of the experiences and enjoyment of Christ. When we are in a coordination, in a meeting, or in any gathering with the saints, and we are really one in our feeling, thinking, and intention, there will be the sweet experiences and the wonderful enjoyment of Christ. However, whenever the oneness is absent, whenever there are disagreements, offenses, or rivalries, there will not be the experience of Christ. This is why the oneness is crucial. We must have not just the oneness of the spirit but also the oneness of the soul. It is crucial that we have the oneness in our soul.

*If We Are Not One  
in Our Affections, Thoughts, and Decisions,  
Our Not Being with One Soul;  
as Long as We Are Not One in Soul,  
Our Not Being in the Fellowship  
unto the Furtherance of the Gospel,  
and Our Conduct Not Being Worthy of the Gospel*

If we are not one in our affections, thoughts, and decisions, we are not with one soul; as long as we are not one in soul, we are not in the fellowship unto the furtherance of the gospel, and our conduct is not worthy of the gospel. The most crucial factor is the oneness. We need to deny our soul. We need to put aside our soul-life and to let our soul be transformed so that our soul can be one with the souls of the saints. This is very practical. When we are one with the saints in our soul, we will experience Christ. [25]

*When All the Members in the Church  
Are in One Spirit with One Soul,  
This Oneness Being Convincing, Subduing, and Attractive,  
and Our Experiencing Christ and Enjoying Him*

When all the members in the church are in one spirit with one soul, this oneness will be convincing, subduing, and attractive, and we will experience Christ and enjoy Him. We need to pray that the Lord would bless all the local churches with this oneness.

**STRICTLY SPEAKING, PHILIPPIANS BEING A BOOK  
NOT ONLY ON THE EXPERIENCE OF CHRIST**

## **BUT ALSO ON THE ENJOYMENT OF CHRIST**

### **Since Philippians Is Concerned with the Experience and Enjoyment of Christ, Which Issue in Joy, Its Being a Book Filled with Joy and Rejoicing**

Strictly speaking, Philippians is a book not only on the experience of Christ but also on the enjoyment of Christ. Since Philippians is concerned with the experience and enjoyment of Christ, which issue in joy, it is a book filled with joy and rejoicing (1:4, 18, 25; 2:2, 17-18, 28-29; 3:1; 4:1, 4). The enjoyment of Christ is part of the intrinsic significance of the experience of Christ. I perceive a kind of low-grade depression in the church life. Oftentimes in the churches, no one is really sick, but there may be a low-grade depression, because there is no joy, no happiness. I pray that the church life would be filled with joy and rejoicing, which is a sign that we are enjoying Christ. Paul was in bondage in prison, yet he was rejoicing. In 2:17-18 he says, "Even if I am being poured out as a drink offering upon the sacrifice and service of your faith, I rejoice, and I rejoice together with you all. And in like manner you also rejoice, and you rejoice together with me." In 4:4 he says, "Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, rejoice." Paul had every right to be depressed, yet he was rejoicing.

### **The Experience of Christ Being Primarily in Our Spirit, but the Enjoyment of Christ Being in Our Soul; like Children Who Are Made to Eat without Enjoying Their Food, Many Times Our Experiencing Christ without Enjoying Him**

The experience of Christ is primarily in our spirit, but the enjoyment [26] of Christ is in our soul; like children who are made to eat without enjoying their food, many times we experience Christ without enjoying Him. Children may eat their vegetables, but they may not enjoy them. This should not be the way in which we enjoy Christ. Rather, let us rejoice! Let us experience Christ and enjoy Him.

### **Our Possibly Having the Experience of Christ**

**without the Enjoyment of Christ;  
the Problem Here Being with Our Soul—  
Our Mind, Emotion, and Will**

We can have the experience of Christ without the enjoyment of Christ; the problem here is with our soul—our mind, emotion, and will.

**“I Am Somewhat Concerned  
That You May Not Have Very Much Enjoyment of Christ”;  
the Reason That Many Lose the Enjoyment of Christ  
Being the Problem They Have in the Soul;  
If You Do Not Have Much Enjoyment of Christ,  
Its Indicating That You  
Are Not One in Soul, Joined in Soul**

“I am somewhat concerned that you may not have very much enjoyment of Christ” (*The Collected Works of Witness Lee, 1978*, vol. 1, “The Experience of Christ,” p. 340); the reason that many lose the enjoyment of Christ is the problem they have in the soul; if you do not have much enjoyment of Christ, it indicates that you are not one in soul, joined in soul (2:2). I am concerned that we may not have much enjoyment of Christ. The reason that we may lose the enjoyment of Christ is the problem we have in the soul. If we do not have much enjoyment of Christ, we will not be one in soul and joined in soul. In 2:1-2 Paul says, “If there is therefore any encouragement in Christ, if any consolation of love, if any fellowship of spirit, if any tenderheartedness and compassions, make my joy full, that you think the same thing, having the same love, joined in soul, thinking the one thing.” In short, Paul was encouraging the Philippians to be one.

The problems in the church in Corinth included lawsuits, eating food offered to idols, fornication, and division. It was a fleshly mess. The church in Philippi, however, was an orderly church, a church that took care of the apostle. Nevertheless, the Philippians had one problem—their souls were not joined together. [27]

**Among the Philippians  
There Being Dissension in Their Thinking,  
Which Troubled the Apostle;  
Hence, His Asking Them to Think the Same Thing,**

**Even the Same One Thing,  
That They Might Make His Joy Full**

Among the Philippians there was dissension in their thinking (4:2), which troubled the apostle; hence, he asked them to think the same thing, even the same one thing, that they might make his joy full (2:2). There were differences, arguments, and dissensions among them in their thinking. This troubled the apostle, and he asked, even begged, them to be one in their soul. Nothing made the apostle more happy than when they all thought the same one thing, that is, focusing on the experience and enjoyment of Christ.

*According to the Context of This Book,  
the One Thing Surely Referring to  
the Subjective Knowledge and Experience of Christ;  
Christ, and Christ Alone, Needing to Be  
the Centrality and Universality of Our Entire Being*

According to the context of this book, *the one thing* must refer to the subjective knowledge and experience of Christ (v. 2; 1:20-21; 2:5; 3:7-9; 4:13); Christ, and Christ alone, should be the centrality and universality of our entire being. In the Lord's recovery we are very burdened for the preaching of the gospel, including on the college campuses. However, if we are not careful, our gospel preaching could bring forth dissension, difference of opinions, and different ways. It could stir up the ambition of some and cause rivalry. That would be terrible. Let us think the same thing, even the same one thing. Let us be joined in soul and pursue the subjective knowledge and experience of Christ. Let us gain Christ!

*The One Thing Being the Subjective Experience of Christ  
as Our Enjoyment for the Church Life, the Body Life;  
This One Thing Needing to Occupy Our Mind All the Time;  
If We Think the One Thing,  
Immediately the Enjoyment of Christ Being Our Portion*

The one thing is the subjective experience of Christ as our enjoyment for the church life, the Body life; this one thing should occupy our mind [28] all the time; if we think the one thing, immediately the enjoyment of Christ will be our portion.

***Our Thinking Needing to Be Focused  
on the Excellency of the Knowledge and Experience of Christ;  
Focusing on Anything Else Causing Us to Think Differently,  
Thus Creating Dissensions among Us***

Our thinking should be focused on the excellency of the knowledge and experience of Christ (3:8, 10); focusing on anything else causes us to think differently, thus creating dissensions among us.

***To Think Something Other Than the One Thing  
Being to Rebel against God's Economy;  
God's Economy Being That We Think the One Thing***

To think something other than the one thing is to rebel against God's economy; God's economy is that we think the one thing. This is a serious word. To think anything other than the one thing is to exercise a rebellious mind against God's economy.

***Because of the Dissension in Their Thinking,  
the Philippian Believers Having Different Levels of Love;  
Their Not Having the Same Love toward All the Saints  
for the Keeping of Oneness; If Our Love toward the Saints  
Has Been Regulated and Dealt With,  
Then Our Enjoying Christ as We Love the Saints***

Because of the dissension in their thinking, the Philippian believers had different levels of love (2:2); they did not have the same love toward all the saints for the keeping of oneness; if our love toward the saints has been regulated and dealt with, then we will enjoy Christ as we love the saints. We should not have different levels of love but the same love for all the saints. We should love all the saints with impartiality. This is the way for us to keep the oneness.

***Being One in Soul, Joined in Soul,  
Being Not Only for the Experience of Christ  
but Even More for the Enjoyment of Christ;  
Our Experience of Christ***

***Needing to Also Be an Enjoyment of Christ***

Being one in soul, joined in soul, is not only for the experience of [29] Christ but even more for the enjoyment of Christ; our experience of Christ should also be an enjoyment of Christ.

***To Experience Christ with Enjoyment,  
Our Needing to Be in One Spirit with One Soul;  
in Order to Enjoy Christ, Our Needing to Have a Proper Soul,  
a “Co-soul” That Is One with the Souls of Other Saints***

To experience Christ with enjoyment, we need to be in one spirit with one soul; in order to enjoy Christ, we need to have a proper soul, a “co-soul” that is one with the souls of other saints.

***The Most Important Thing for Us to Do  
Being to Experience Christ as Our Enjoyment Today  
So That the Church May Be Built Up for His Glory;  
This Being the Way for Us to Be Preserved  
in the Lord’s Recovery until He Comes Back***

The most important thing for us to do is to experience Christ as our enjoyment today so that the church may be built up for His glory; this is the way for us to be preserved in the Lord’s recovery until He comes back. This point is the first key statement of this series of messages.—M. C.