

## Message Two

# Living the All-inclusive, Extensive Christ instead of Our Culture

JL, Hymn 541

Scripture Reading: Eph. 3:11, 16-17a; Phil. 1:20-21a; Col. 1:15, 18, 27; 3:4, 10-11

- Eph. 3:11 According to the eternal purpose which He made in Christ Jesus our Lord,  
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,  
Phil. 1:20 According to my earnest expectation and hope that in nothing I will be put to shame, but with all boldness, as always, even now Christ will be magnified in my body, whether through life or through death.  
Phil. 1:21 For to me, to live is Christ and to die is gain.  
Col. 1:15 Who is the image of the invisible God, the Firstborn of all creation,  
Col. 1:18 And He is the Head of the Body, the church; He is the beginning, the Firstborn from the dead, that He Himself might have the first place in all things;  
Col. 1:27 To whom God willed to make known what are the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory,  
Col. 3:4 When Christ our life is manifested, then you also will be manifested with Him in glory.  
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.

### I. The central thought of the Bible is that God desires us to live Christ for the church as the Body of Christ, the one new man—Phil. 1:21a; Eph. 2:15-16:

- Phil. 1:21 For to me, to live is Christ and to die is gain.  
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. 2:16 And might reconcile both in one Body to God through the cross, having slain the enmity by it.

#### A. God's intention is that we become saturated, permeated, filled, and clothed with Christ so that we may live Christ—3:17a; Gal. 2:20; 3:27; 4:19.

- Eph. 3:17 That Christ may make His home in your hearts through faith, that you, being rooted and grounded in love,  
Gal. 2:20 I am crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but it is Christ who lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live in faith, the faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me.  
Gal. 3:27 For as many as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ.  
Gal. 4:19 My children, with whom I travail again in birth until Christ is formed in you,

#### B. The Christian life is the life in which the believers of Christ live Christ and magnify Him—Phil. 1:20-21a.

Phil. 1:20 According to my earnest expectation and hope that in nothing I will be put to shame, but with all boldness, as always, even now Christ will be magnified in my body, whether through life or through death.

Phil. 1:21 For to me, to live is Christ and to die is gain.

C. To live Christ is to live a person, Christ Himself—Col. 1:27; Rom. 8:10:

Col. 1:27 To whom God willed to make known what are the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory,

Rom. 8:10 But if Christ is in you, though the body is dead because of sin, the spirit is life because of righteousness.

1. If we would live Christ, we must take Him as our person and be one person with Him; He and we must be one in a practical way—1 Cor. 6:17.

1 Cor. 6:17 But he who is joined to the Lord is one spirit.

2. If we have light concerning how Christ is replaced in our daily living, we will confess to the Lord that instead of living Him we live many other things, that we live more by culture than by Christ—1 John 1:7.

1 John 1:7 But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus His Son cleanses us from every sin.

D. The reason we do not live Christ is that we are not constituted with Christ; what we are constituted with is what we live—Col. 3:4, 10-11; Eph. 3:17a.

Col. 3:4 When Christ our life is manifested, then you also will be manifested with Him in glory.

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.

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

**II. Concerning the matter of the all-inclusive, extensive Christ versus culture, we need to see that according to the full revelation in the Bible, God's intention is to work Himself in Christ into His chosen, redeemed, and regenerated people—Gal. 1:15-16; 2:20; 4:19:**

Gal. 1:15 But when it pleased God, who set me apart from my mother's womb and called me through His grace,

Gal. 1:16 To reveal His Son in me that I might announce Him as the gospel among the Gentiles, immediately I did not confer with flesh and blood,

Gal. 2:20 I am crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but it is Christ who lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live in faith, the faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me.

Gal. 4:19 My children, with whom I travail again in birth until Christ is formed in you,

A. God's central work, His unique work, in the universe and throughout all the ages and generations is to work Himself in Christ into His chosen people, making Himself one with them—Eph. 3:17a; 1 Cor. 6:17.

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

1 Cor. 6:17 But he who is joined to the Lord is one spirit.

B. God's intention is to thoroughly work Himself in Christ into us, making Himself our inward elements—Eph. 3:11, 16-19.

Eph. 3:11 According to the eternal purpose which He made in Christ Jesus our Lord,

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. 3:18 May be full of strength to apprehend with all the saints what the breadth and length and height and depth are

Eph. 3:19 And to know the knowledge-surpassing love of Christ, that you may be filled unto all the fullness of God.

C. For the fulfillment of God's eternal economy, God needs to build Himself in Christ into our being, building Himself in Christ into us as our life, our nature, and our constitution to make us God in life and in nature but not in the Godhead—2 Sam. 7:12-14a; Rom. 1:3-4; Eph. 3:17a; John 14:23; Col. 3:10-11:

2 Sam. 7:12 When your days are fulfilled and you sleep with your fathers, I will raise up your seed after you, which will come forth from your body, and I will establish his kingdom.

2 Sam. 7:13 It is he who will build a house for My name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever.

2 Sam. 7:14 I will be his Father, and he will be My son. If he commits iniquity, I will strike him with the rod of men and with the stripes of the sons of men;

Rom. 1:3 Concerning His Son, who came out of the seed of David according to the flesh,

Rom. 1:4 Who was designated the Son of God in power according to the Spirit of holiness out of the resurrection of the dead, Jesus Christ our Lord;

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

John 14:23 Jesus answered and said to him, If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word, and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make an abode with him.

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.

1. We need God to build Himself in Christ into our intrinsic constitution so that our entire being will be reconstituted with Christ—Eph. 3:17a.

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

2. Christ builds the church by coming into our spirit and spreading Himself from our spirit into our mind, emotion, and will to occupy our entire soul—Matt. 16:18; Eph. 3:17a.

Matt. 16:18 And I also say to you that you are Peter, and upon this rock I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it.

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

### **III. In saying that Christ is versus culture, we are not saying that we should drop our culture and live without any culture whatsoever—Col. 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.

- A. Those who do not have Christ certainly need to live according to culture, for culture preserves, regulates, and improves people.
- B. Prior to receiving the all-inclusive, extensive Christ, everyone needs culture.
- C. After we have received Christ, we should not allow culture to limit Christ or to frustrate us from experiencing and enjoying Christ; rather, we should begin to learn to live according to Christ, not according to culture—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. As children are growing up, they need culture and the law—Gal. 3:23-28:

Gal. 3:23 But before faith came we were guarded under law, being shut up unto the faith which was to be revealed.

Gal. 3:24 So then the law has become our child-conductor unto Christ that we might be justified out of faith.

Gal. 3:25 But since faith has come, we are no longer under a child-conductor.

Gal. 3:26 For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus.

Gal. 3:27 For as many as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ.

Gal. 3:28 There cannot be Jew nor Greek, there cannot be slave nor free man, there cannot be male and female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus.

- 1. Before children receive Christ, they must be trained according to culture and under the law—vv. 23-24.

Gal. 3:23 But before faith came we were guarded under law, being shut up unto the faith which was to be revealed.

Gal. 3:24 So then the law has become our child-conductor unto Christ that we might be justified out of faith.

- 2. After they have received Christ, gradually we can help them turn from culture to Christ—John 1:12-13; 6:57.

John 1:12 But as many as received Him, to them He gave the authority to become children of God, to those who believe into His name,

John 1:13 Who were begotten not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

John 6:57 As the living Father has sent Me and I live because of the Father, so he who eats Me, he also shall live because of Me.

#### **IV. Since we have received Christ, we should not allow culture to become a substitute for Him—Col. 2:6; 3:10-11:**

Col. 2:6 As therefore you have received the Christ, Jesus the Lord, walk in Him,

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.

- A. Every kind of culture is versus Christ, and Christ is versus every kind of culture—v. 11:

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.

- 1. Any culture, no matter what kind of culture it is, is versus Christ.

2. Apart from Christ, everything we have and every human product and development are part of culture.

B. The factor that limits the expansion of the enjoyment of Christ is culture; spontaneously, the culture within us keeps us from the real experience of Christ—Phil. 3:3-9.

Phil. 3:3 For we are the circumcision, the ones who serve by the Spirit of God and boast in Christ Jesus and have no confidence in the flesh,

Phil. 3:4 Though I myself have something to be confident of in the flesh as well. If any other man thinks that he has confidence in the flesh, I more:

Phil. 3:5 Circumcised the eighth day; of the race of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew born of Hebrews; as to the law, a Pharisee;

Phil. 3:6 As to zeal, persecuting the church; as to the righteousness which is in the law, become blameless.

Phil. 3:7 But what things were gains to me, these I have counted as loss on account of Christ.

Phil. 3:8 But moreover I also count all things to be loss on account of the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, on account of whom I have suffered the loss of all things and count them as refuse that I may gain Christ

Phil. 3:9 And be found in Him, not having my own righteousness which is out of the law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which is out of God and based on faith,

C. Because our culture hinders us from experiencing Christ, enjoying Christ, and living Christ, we are heavily burdened by the Lord that all the saints in the Lord's recovery may learn in a practical way to take Christ as their life and person to replace their culture—Eph. 3:17a; Col. 3:4.

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

Col. 3:4 When Christ our life is manifested, then you also will be manifested with Him in glory.

D. In Christ we have the liberty to set aside our culture in order to enlarge our capacity to enjoy the Lord; all the room within us must be given over to Christ.

E. If our entire inward capacity is made available to Christ, spontaneously the culture within us will be replaced by the Christ who dwells in us—1:27; 3:11.

Col. 1:27 To whom God willed to make known what are the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory,

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.

**V. It is crucial that we see a vision of the all-inclusiveness and extensiveness of Christ; we should not endeavor to drop our culture without such a vision of Christ—Acts 26:19; Eph. 1:17-23:**

Acts 26:19 Therefore, King Agrippa, I was not disobedient to the heavenly vision,

Eph. 1:17 That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to you a spirit of wisdom and revelation in the full knowledge of Him,

Eph. 1:18 The eyes of your heart having been enlightened, that you may know what is the hope of His calling, and what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints,

Eph. 1:19 And what is the surpassing greatness of His power toward us who believe, according to the operation of the might of His strength,

Eph. 1:20 Which He caused to operate in Christ in raising Him from the dead and seating Him at His right hand in the heavenlies,

- Eph. 1:21 Far above all rule and authority and power and lordship and every name that is named not only in this age but also in that which is to come;
- Eph. 1:22 And He subjected all things under His feet and gave Him to be Head over all things to the church,
- Eph. 1:23 Which is His Body, the fullness of the One who fills all in all.

A. The Christ who indwells us is not a small, limited Christ; He is the One who is the image of the invisible God, the embodiment of the fullness of God, and the focal point of God's economy—Col. 1:15, 18; 2:2, 9-10:

- Col. 1:15 Who is the image of the invisible God, the Firstborn of all creation,
- Col. 1:18 And He is the Head of the Body, the church; He is the beginning, the Firstborn from the dead, that He Himself might have the first place in all things;
- Col. 2:2 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,
- Col. 2:9 For in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily,
- Col. 2:10 And you have been made full in Him, who is the Head of all rule and authority.

1. Such a Christ now dwells in us and is waiting for the opportunity to spread Himself throughout our being—1:27.

- Col. 1:27 To whom God willed to make known what are the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory,

2. This Christ should be everything in our daily living, and we should live Him, not giving any ground in our living to culture—Phil. 1:21a; Col. 3:11.

- Phil. 1:21 For to me, to live is Christ and to die is gain.
- 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.

B. As soon as we see the vision of the all-inclusive, extensive Christ, we should begin to set aside our cultural background and not allow it to replace Christ or restrict Him—Acts 9:4-5; 26:19; Phil. 3:7-10:

- Acts 9:4 And he fell on the ground and heard a voice saying to him, Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me?
- Acts 9:5 And he said, Who are You, Lord? And He said, I am Jesus, whom you persecute.
- Acts 26:19 Therefore, King Agrippa, I was not disobedient to the heavenly vision,
- Phil. 3:7 But what things were gains to me, these I have counted as loss on account of Christ.
- Phil. 3:8 But moreover I also count all things to be loss on account of the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, on account of whom I have suffered the loss of all things and count them as refuse that I may gain Christ
- Phil. 3:9 And be found in Him, not having my own righteousness which is out of the law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which is out of God and based on faith,
- Phil. 3:10 To know Him and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death,

1. We should not give any ground in our living to culture.

2. Instead, all the room within us should be given over to the all-inclusive, extensive Christ who dwells in us—Col. 1:27.

- Col. 1:27 To whom God willed to make known what are the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory,

C. If we see such a vision of the indwelling, all-inclusive, extensive Christ, we will

spontaneously drop our culture—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.

1. Formerly, Christ was replaced by culture, but once we have seen this vision, the culture within us will be replaced by Christ—v. 11.

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.

2. Instead of trying to drop our culture, we should simply live Christ, and Christ will replace our culture with Himself—Phil. 1:21a.

Phil. 1:21 For to me, to live is Christ and to die is gain.

D. When we live Christ, we are spontaneously delivered from culture, and automatically the Christ by whom we live replaces our culture; this is the revelation in the book of Colossians—1:15, 18, 27; 2:2, 9-10; 3:4, 10-11.

Col. 1:15 Who is the image of the invisible God, the Firstborn of all creation,

Col. 1:18 And He is the Head of the Body, the church; He is the beginning, the Firstborn from the dead, that He Himself might have the first place in all things;

Col. 1:27 To whom God willed to make known what are the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory,

Col. 2:2 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,

Col. 2:9 For in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily,

Col. 2:10 And you have been made full in Him, who is the Head of all rule and authority.

Col. 3:4 When Christ our life is manifested, then you also will be manifested with Him in glory.

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,

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