

Message Three

The Constituent of the One New Man— the All-inclusive, Extensive Christ Replacing Culture

MR, Hymn 1220

Scripture Reading: Col. 1:15-18, 27; 2:9-10, 16-18; 3:4, 10-11

- Col. 1:15 Who is the image of the invisible God, the Firstborn of all creation,
Col. 1:16 Because in Him all things were created, in the heavens and on the earth, the visible and the invisible, whether thrones or lordships or rulers or authorities; all things have been created through Him and unto Him.
- Col. 1:17 And He is before all things, and all things cohere in Him;
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. 2:9 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. 2:16 Let no one therefore judge you in eating and in drinking or in respect of a feast or of a new moon or of the Sabbath,
Col. 2:17 Which are a shadow of the things to come, but the body is of Christ.
Col. 2:18 Let no one defraud you by judging you unworthy of your prize, in self-chosen lowliness and the worship of the angels, dwelling on the things which he has seen, vainly puffed up by his mind set on the flesh,
- 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. If we get into the depths of the book of Colossians, we will see that in this book Paul is dealing with the hidden matter of human culture:

- A. Paul's use of the word barbarian in Colossians 3:11 is a strong indication that this Epistle deals with culture.
- 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. Culture is the systematic method that we have developed to exist and to maintain our being—
Gen. 4:16-22:
- Gen. 4:16 And Cain went forth from the presence of Jehovah and dwelt in the land of Nod, east of Eden.
Gen. 4:17 And Cain knew his wife, and she conceived and gave birth to Enoch; and he built a city and called the name of the city after the name of his son Enoch.
Gen. 4:18 And Irad was born to Enoch, and Irad begot Mehujael, and Mehujael begot Methushael, and Methushael begot Lamech.
Gen. 4:19 And Lamech took two wives for himself: The name of the first was Adah, and the name of the second Zillah.

- Gen. 4:20 And Adah gave birth to Jabal; he was the father of those who dwell in tents and raise cattle.
- Gen. 4:21 And his brother's name was Jubal; he was the father of all those who play the lyre and pipe.
- Gen. 4:22 And Zillah also gave birth to Tubal-cain, the forger of every cutting instrument of bronze and iron; and the sister of Tubal-cain was Naamah.

1. Culture is the unconscious living of every human being—Eph. 2:2-3; 4:17.

- Eph. 2:2 In which you once walked according to the age of this world, according to the ruler of the authority of the air, of the spirit which is now operating in the sons of disobedience;
- Eph. 2:3 Among whom we also all conducted ourselves once in the lusts of our flesh, doing the desires of the flesh and of the thoughts, and were by nature children of wrath, even as the rest;
- 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,

2. People throughout the world are under the influence of their culture.

C. Just as culture exerted a strong influence on the believers in Colossae, culture today exerts a strong influence on us—Col. 2:8-10, 16-18:

- Col. 2:8 Beware that no one carries you off as spoil through his philosophy and empty deceit, according to the tradition of men, according to the elements of the world, and not according to 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. 2:16 Let no one therefore judge you in eating and in drinking or in respect of a feast or of a new moon or of the Sabbath,
- Col. 2:17 Which are a shadow of the things to come, but the body is of Christ.
- Col. 2:18 Let no one defraud you by judging you unworthy of your prize, in self-chosen lowness and the worship of the angels, dwelling on the things which he has seen, vainly puffed up by his mind set on the flesh,

1. Unconsciously, we are under the influence of the culture into which we were born; the elements of this culture are part of our being—Gal. 4:3, 9; Col. 2:8, 20.

- Gal. 4:3 So also we, when we were children, were kept in slavery under the elements of the world;
- Gal. 4:9 But now, having come to know God, or rather having been known by God, how is it that you turn again to the weak and poor elements, to which you desire to be enslaved yet again?
- Col. 2:8 Beware that no one carries you off as spoil through his philosophy and empty deceit, according to the tradition of men, according to the elements of the world, and not according to Christ;
- Col. 2:20 If you died with Christ from the elements of the world, why, as living in the world, do you subject yourselves to ordinances:

2. When we came into the church life, we brought our culture with us, and this culture undermines our enjoyment of Christ and the church life.

3. To a large extent, Christ as the unique element in the church life has been replaced by culture—v. 8; 3:11:

- Col. 2:8 Beware that no one carries you off as spoil through his philosophy and empty deceit, according to the tradition of men, according to the elements of the world, and not according to Christ;

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. Subconsciously and unconsciously, we all treasure our culture and place a high value on our particular cultural background.

b. In the church life Christ is replaced by culture more than by anything else—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.

II. The book of Colossians reveals that the all-inclusive, extensive Christ is everything in God's economy—1:15-18, 27:

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

Col. 1:16 Because in Him all things were created, in the heavens and on the earth, the visible and the invisible, whether thrones or lordships or rulers or authorities; all things have been created through Him and unto Him.

Col. 1:17 And He is before all things, and all things cohere in Him;

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,

A. We need a clear vision of this wonderful Christ being everything to us.

B. Such a vision will terminate the influence of culture on the experience of Christ and on the church life, and instead of being cultured people, we will be people occupied with, possessed by, and saturated with Christ—3:11b.

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.

III. The preeminent, all-inclusive, extensive Christ is our life and the unique constituent of the one new man—vv. 4, 10-11:

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.

A. The constituent of the church as the new man is Christ and Christ alone; the content of the church is nothing other than the all-inclusive, extensive Christ—1:15-18; 2:9-10.

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

Col. 1:16 Because in Him all things were created, in the heavens and on the earth, the visible and the invisible, whether thrones or lordships or rulers or authorities; all things have been created through Him and unto Him.

Col. 1:17 And He is before all things, and all things cohere in Him;

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. 2:9 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.

B. As our life and the constituent of the one new man, the all-inclusive, extensive Christ replaces our culture with Himself—3:11.

- 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.
- C. The issue of enjoying Christ as our portion is that we experience Him as the content and the constituent of the one new man, and ultimately, the Christ we enjoy becomes the constituent of the new man—1:12; 3:11.
- Col. 1:12 Giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified you for a share of the allotted portion of the saints in the light;
- 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.
- D. According to Colossians 3:11, in the new man there is no possibility for the various cultural distinctions to continue to exist:
- 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. There are no cultural distinctions in the one new man, for every part of the new man is constituted with 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. In the church as the new man, there is no room for regional, cultural, or national distinctions and no place for any race, nationality, culture, or social status.
- E. Because Christ is the unique constituent of the new man, there should be no differences among the believers who are part of this new man, and there should be no differences among the churches—1 Cor. 4:17; Rev. 1:12, 20; 22:16.
- 1 Cor. 4:17 Because of this I have sent Timothy to you, who is my beloved and faithful child in the Lord, who will remind you of my ways which are in Christ, even as I teach everywhere in every church.
- Rev. 1:12 And I turned to see the voice that spoke with me; and when I turned, I saw seven golden lampstands,
- Rev. 1:20 The mystery of the seven stars which you saw upon My right hand and the seven golden lampstands: The seven stars are the messengers of the seven churches, and the seven lampstands are the seven churches.
- Rev. 22:16 I Jesus have sent My angel to testify to you these things for the churches. I am the Root and the Offspring of David, the bright morning star.

IV. As the constituent of the new man, Christ is all and in all; Christ is all the members, and He is in all the members—Col. 3:11:

- 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.
- A. In the church as the new man, Christ is everyone and He is also in everyone—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.
- B. On the one hand, in the new man there is no place for the natural person, because Christ is all the members.
- C. On the other hand, the fact that Christ is in all indicates that the members continue to exist, not without Christ but as those indwelt by Christ—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,
- D. When we take Christ as our life and constitution, we have the sense deep within that we are one with Christ and that Christ is us, and simultaneously, we have an even deeper sense that Christ is in us—3:4.
- Col. 3:4 When Christ our life is manifested, then you also will be manifested with Him in glory.
- E. In the church as the new man, Christ is everything; this implies that all the believers must be constituted with Christ—1:15-18; 2:16-17; 3:4, 10-11:
- Col. 1:15 Who is the image of the invisible God, the Firstborn of all creation,
Col. 1:16 Because in Him all things were created, in the heavens and on the earth, the visible and the invisible, whether thrones or lordships or rulers or authorities; all things have been created through Him and unto Him.
- Col. 1:17 And He is before all things, and all things cohere in Him;
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. 2:16 Let no one therefore judge you in eating and in drinking or in respect of a feast or of a new moon or of the Sabbath,
Col. 2:17 Which are a shadow of the things to come, but the body is of Christ.
- 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.
1. We must be permeated with Christ, saturated with Christ, and have Christ organically wrought into our being—Gal. 4:19; Eph. 3:17a.
- Gal. 4:19 My children, with whom I travail again in birth until Christ is formed in you,
Eph. 3:17 That Christ may make His home in your hearts through faith, that you, being rooted and grounded in love,
2. Eventually, we will be replaced by Christ, and then, in reality, Christ will be all and in all; He will be every part of the new man—Col. 3:11b.
- 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. The new man is Christ in all the saints permeating us and replacing us until all natural distinctions have been eliminated, and everyone is constituted with Christ—Gal. 4:19; Eph. 3:17a; Col. 1:27.
- Gal. 4:19 My children, with whom I travail again in birth until Christ is formed in you,
Eph. 3:17 That Christ may make His home in your hearts through faith, that you, being rooted and grounded in love,
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,
- G. When we have the vision of the all-inclusive, extensive Christ with the adequate experience of Christ, the one new man will appear among us in a practical way, and we will realize the life of the new man—3:10-17; Philem. 10-16.
- 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.
- Col. 3:12 Put on therefore, as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, inward parts of compassion, kindness, lowliness, meekness, long-suffering;
- Col. 3:13 Bearing one another and forgiving one another, if anyone should have a complaint against anyone; even as the Lord forgave you, so also should you forgive.
- Col. 3:14 And over all these things put on love, which is the uniting bond of perfectness.
- Col. 3:15 And let the peace of Christ arbitrate in your hearts, to which also you were called in one Body; and be thankful.
- Col. 3:16 Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another with psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to God.
- Col. 3:17 And whatever you do in word or in deed, do all things in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him.
- Philem. 10 I entreat you concerning my child, whom I have begotten in my bonds, Onesimus,
- Philem. 11 Who formerly was useless to you but now is useful both to you and to me.
- Philem. 12 Him I have sent back to you—him, that is, my very heart—
- Philem. 13 Whom I intended to keep with myself that on your behalf he might minister to me in the bonds of the gospel.
- Philem. 14 But without your mind I did not want to do anything, that your goodness would not be as of necessity, but voluntary.
- Philem. 15 For perhaps for this reason he was separated from you for but an hour, that you might fully have him forever,
- Philem. 16 No longer as a slave, but above a slave, a beloved brother, especially to me, but how much more to you, both in the flesh and in the Lord.

H. If Christ is the living of all the saints, then only He will be in the new man, and all the saints, whatever their nationality, will live Christ; then in a real and practical way, Christ will be all the members of the new man—Col. 3:11; Phil. 1:21a.

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

V. **The New Jerusalem will be the final consummation of the one new man—Eph. 2:15-16; 4:24; Col. 3:10-11; Rev. 21:2, 9-10:**

- 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.
- Eph. 4:24 And put on the new man, which was created according to God in righteousness and holiness of the reality.
- 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.
- 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. 21:9 And one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls full of the seven last plagues came and spoke with me, saying, Come here; I will show you the bride, the wife of the Lamb.
- 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. When we have become the New Jerusalem, we will enjoy the life of the universal one new man.
- B. Today we may have a foretaste of this enjoyment by allowing the all-inclusive, extensive Christ to replace our culture, to constitute us with Himself, and to make us all part of the one new man in reality and practicality—Col. 1:27; 2:10; 3:4, 10-11.

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

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