

Week Three

Loving the Lord Jesus Christ in Incorruptibility

Hymns: 546

Scripture Reading: Eph. 6:24; 1:4; 2:10; 3:16-17; 4:22-24; 5:18-19; 6:10-11

§ Day 1

- I. “Grace be with all those who love our Lord Jesus Christ in incorruptibility”—Eph. 6:24:**
- A. Grace is needed for us to live a church life that fulfills God's purpose and solves God's problem with His enemy—1:2; 3:2, 8, 10-11; 4:7, 29.**
- B. The enjoyment of the Lord as grace is with those who love Him—6:24:**
1. Love in 1:4 refers to the love with which God loves His chosen ones and His chosen ones love Him:
 - a. It is in this love that God's chosen ones become holy and without blemish before Him.
 - b. God first loved us, and then this divine love inspires us to love Him in return.
 - c. In such a condition and atmosphere of love, we are saturated with God to be holy and without blemish, just as He is.
 2. According to 3:17, we may be rooted and grounded in love, and according to verse 19, we can know the knowledge-surpassing love of Christ; as God's cultivated land, we need to be rooted for our growth, and as God's building, we need to be grounded for our building up—1 Cor. 3:9.

§ Day 2

3. Ephesians 4:15-16 reveals that we hold to truth in love and that the Body builds itself up in love:
 - a. This is the love of God in Christ, which becomes the love of Christ in us, by which we love Christ and the fellow members of His Body—1 John

4:7-8, 10-12, 16, 19.

b. Love is the inner substance of God; the goal of Ephesians is to bring us into God's inner substance so that we may enjoy God as love and enjoy His presence in the sweetness of the divine love, and thereby love others as Christ did—5:2, 25.

C. For the proper church life we need to love the Lord in incorruptibility—6:24:

1. According to the usage of incorruptible in the writings of Paul, this word refers mainly to God and the things of God; everything natural is corruptible, but God, the divine life, and all things that are in resurrection are incorruptible—1 Tim. 1:17; 2 Tim. 1:10; 1 Cor. 15:42, 52-54.

§ Day 3

2. To love the Lord in incorruptibility is to love Him in the new creation, not in the old creation—Eph. 2:15; 4:24; 2 Cor. 5:17.

3. To love the Lord in incorruptibility is to love Him in the regenerated and renewed spirit indwelt by the Holy Spirit—John 3:6; 1 Cor. 6:17; 2 Tim. 1:7.

4. To love the Lord in incorruptibility means to love Him according to all the incorruptible things revealed in Ephesians:

a. We need to love the Lord Jesus in His being the embodiment of the Triune God (Col. 2:9); in His being the element of the Body (1 Cor. 12:12); in His being reality, grace, peace, love, and light (John 1:17; 8:12; 14:6; Eph. 2:14; 1 John 4:8); and in His being the constituent of the one new man (Eph. 2:15; Col. 3:10-11).

b. All these things are related to what is revealed and taught in Ephesians, including the Triune God, Christ, and His Body, the church.

c. Ephesians speaks concerning the dispensing of the Triune God to produce the church (1:3-23; 3:16-21), of what Christ is and has done for the church (1:7; 2:13-18; 5:25-27, 29), and about the church being the Body of Christ, being the bride of Christ, and being one with Christ in the heavenlies (1:22-23; 5:23, 25-27; 2:6).

d. All these matters are incorruptible, and if we love the Lord Jesus in all these things, our love toward Him will be incorruptible (6:24); such a love is not a natural love; it is a love in resurrection, the love that God Himself is in His divine essence (1 John 4:16).

5. In the Lord's recovery we need to love our Lord Jesus Christ in all the divine, spiritual, heavenly, and incorruptible things revealed in Ephesians concerning the Triune God, the divine life, what Christ is to us, what He has done, and the church—1:3-23; 2:5-6, 13-18; 3:16-21; 4:4-6; 5:23, 25-27.

§ Day 4

II. Paul's blessing at the end of his Epistle to the Ephesians foreshadows a problem that would arise: the love in the church in Ephesus would fade, as indicated by the Lord's rebuke in Revelation 2:2-5:

- A. The concluding word of Ephesians 6:24 adds a condition to the presence of grace: loving the Lord in incorruptibility; this seems to imply that if the Ephesians did not love the Lord in such a way, the grace of the Lord would no longer be with them.
- B. Ephesians emphasizes the relationship between grace and love (1:2, 4; 3:17; 4:2, 15-16; 5:2; 6:23-24); this indicates that if we want to receive and enjoy grace continually, we need to fulfill one condition—love.
- C. The church in Ephesus failed in the matter of loving the Lord; such a failure became the main reason for the failure of the church throughout the ages—Matt. 24:12; Mark 12:30-31; cf. Dan. 7:25:
1. The genuine ministry of the New Testament always stirs us up to love the Lord Jesus with the first love, strengthening us in the simplicity of enjoying Christ as our life supply—2 Cor. 11:2-3; 3:3-6.
 2. The churches in Asia, including the church in Ephesus, turned away from the apostle Paul's betrothing ministry (2 Tim. 1:15; 2 Cor. 11:2-3); approximately twenty-six years later, when the apostle John wrote the epistle to the church in Ephesus, they had left their first love and lost the genuine enjoyment of Christ, resulting in the loss of the testimony of the Lord (Rev. 2:4-5, 7).

§ Day 5

III. The revelation of the church in the Epistle to the Ephesians

has two main aspects: the first aspect is the work of the ministry to build up the Body of Christ, and the second aspect is our spiritual life, which comprises many spiritual experiences that enable us to live a life that matches the church life:

A. We need to love the Lord in incorruptibility by doing the work of the ministry to build up the Body of Christ:

1. What is needed today is an organic building of the Body not directly by Christ as the Head or by the gifted persons but by all the members being perfected to function as the gifted persons do—4:11-16.
2. The building up of the Body of Christ comprises the following categories of work, which are eternal and glorious:
 - a. We need to visit others with the gospel to bring them into the Triune God (Matt. 28:19; Mark 16:15; Luke 24:47; John 15:5; cf. 2 Tim. 1:10), offering them as sacrifices to God (Rom. 15:16).
 - b. We need to shepherd the new believers in home meetings (John 15:16; 21:15-17), nourishing them and helping them to grow so that they can offer themselves as living sacrifices to God (1 Pet. 2:2; Rom. 12:1).
 - c. We need to perfect the saints in group meetings that they may do the work of the ministry unto the organic building up of the Body of Christ—Eph. 4:11-16; Heb. 10:24-25.
 - d. We need to lead the saints to prophesy, to speak for God, one by one in the church meetings for the organic building up of the church—1 Cor. 14:3, 4b, 12, 26, 31.
3. This is the organic service of the Body of Christ, which is also the organic service of the New Testament priesthood of the gospel (1 Pet. 2:5, 9), in which we have to be like the apostle Paul, who labored and struggled in all wisdom to present every man full-grown in Christ to God (Col. 1:28-29).

§ Day 6

B. We need to love the Lord in incorruptibility in the spiritual experiences that match the church life as unveiled in each chapter of Ephesians:

1. Chapter 1 unveils our being chosen in Christ to be holy and without

blemish before God in love (v. 4); chapter 2 unveils our being God's masterpiece, created in Christ Jesus for good works (v. 10); chapter 3 unveils the unsearchable riches of Christ becoming our enjoyment, Christ making His home in our hearts, and our being filled unto all the fullness of God (vv. 8,14-19); chapter 4 unveils our putting off the old man and putting on the new man (vv. 22-24); chapter 5 unveils our being filled in spirit, speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and psalming with our heart to the Lord (vv. 18-19); and chapter 6 unveils our being empowered in the Lord and putting on the whole armor of God (vv. 10-11).

2. The key to all the spiritual experiences in Ephesians is to be strengthened into the inner man (3:16) in order to be supplied with the supporting grace (vv. 2, 8; 6:24).
3. This is the miraculous yet normal way to live the church life, a revived life, a life that continually overcomes, and a life that loves the Lord in incorruptibility.

DAY 1

Morning Nourishment

Eph. 6:24 Grace be with all those who love our Lord Jesus Christ in incorruptibility.

1:4 Even as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world to be holy and without blemish before Him in love.

Grace [is] the enjoyment of the Lord...Grace is needed for us to live a church life that fulfills God's eternal purpose and solves God's problem with His enemy. The enjoyment of the Lord as grace is to those who love Him [Eph. 6:24]. For the proper church life we need to love the Lord in incorruption, that is, in a condition which is incorruptible. Our love for the Lord must be incorruptible, immortal, and imperishable. Such a love is genuine and sincere. (Life-study of Ephesians, p. 562)

Today's Reading

Love in Ephesians 1:4 refers to the love with which God loves His chosen ones and with which His chosen ones love Him. It is in this love, in such a love, that God's chosen ones become holy and without blemish before Him. First, God loved us. Then this divine love inspires us to love Him in return. In such a condition and atmosphere of love, we are saturated with God to be holy and without blemish as He is. In this love, a mutual love, God loves us, and we return this love to Him. It is in this kind of condition that we are being transformed [and] are being saturated with God. (Life-study of Ephesians, pp. 32-33)

The first instance of in love is in Ephesians 1:4...[and] could modify God's choosing of us, our being holy and without blemish before God, or God's predestinating of us [in verse 5].

Since God has chosen us, we should be one with Him and cooperate with Him by affording Him every opportunity to sanctify us and perfect us to be without blemish. This requires that we be in a condition of loving God

with the divine love. Even though God is almighty and omnipotent, He does not have a way to make us holy and without blemish if we do not cooperate with Him by being in the proper condition. In order to be sanctified and perfected, we need to be ones who are continually loving God in His divine love. As we remain in this love, we are in a condition of love that affords God the best opportunity and sufficient time to come into us to sanctify us in every way and make us without blemish.

Because the divine love will never be corrupted, to love the Lord with this love is to love Him in incorruptibility. This condition, loving the Lord with the divine love, is constituted of the divine life incorporated with our being and will remain forever. All Christians say that they love the Lord. However,... not many can truthfully say, “Lord, I love You in a condition and situation that is altogether incorruptible.” In order to be able to say this, we must love the Lord according to Himself—according to His plan, good pleasure, desire, and economy.

The next instance of in love is in Ephesians 3:17: “That Christ may make His home in your hearts through faith, that you, being rooted and grounded in love.”...We are God’s cultivated land and God’s building (1 Cor. 3:9). As God’s cultivated land, we need to be rooted for our growth, and as God’s building, we need to be grounded for our building up... In order for the believers to be rooted for growth in life and grounded for building up, they must be in a condition of love. This love is not ours; it is the divine love. God’s love becomes the love by which we love Him. While we are loving Him with this love, we are in love in the sense of being in a condition of love. As our experience confirms, when we are in this condition of love, we are being deeply rooted and grounded for growth and building up. The Lord is waiting for us to give Him the opportunity to deeply root and ground us. We often hinder Him from doing this because we love Him according to our natural tendency. We need to love Him according to His good pleasure. We should repent and pray, “Lord, help me to love You not according to my preferences but according to You, Your heart’s desire, and Your plan.” (CWWL, 1988, vol. 1, pp. 551, 553-554)

Further Reading: Life-study of Ephesians, msg. 67

DAY 2

Morning Nourishment

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

15-16 But holding to truth in love, we may grow up into Him in all things, who is the Head, Christ, 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.

In Ephesians 4 the phrase in love is used three times. Verse 2 says, “With all lowliness and meekness, with long-suffering, bearing one another in love.” Bearing one another in love is for the oneness of the Body (vv. 3-4). Our natural humanity does not have the ability to bear others, especially troublesome ones. To bear others in love is not merely to tolerate them. To love only certain kinds of saints is not to bear others in love but to make choices according to our preference. Many saints experience a honeymoon period when they first come into the church life. This period usually ends quickly due to a lack of bearing others in love. We often unintentionally offend one another by what we say. Because of this we need to learn to not pay attention to negative speaking. To practice this is not easy. In order to remain in the church life, we need to be prepared to be bothered and criticized. Even the apostle Paul was criticized by the saints in a church that he took care of (2 Cor. 12:16). We can be one who bears others if we are in love. If we are in the divine love, loving the Lord with this love, we will not care for others’ criticism but will quickly let it go. The way to bear one another is by being in love. (CWWL, 1988, vol. 1, pp. 554-555)

Today's Reading

The next verse in Ephesians that uses the phrase in love is 4:15: “Holding to truth in love, we may grow up into Him in all things, who is the Head, Christ.” To hold to truth is to hold whatever is real, whatever is true. According to Ephesians, the true, real things are Christ and His Body. Thus, to hold to truth is to hold to Christ and the church. We need to do this in love. We must love the Lord and the church, His Body, with the divine love. In this way our love can be in incorruptibility.

Verse 16 says, “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.” All the members of the Body cause the growth of the Body so that it can be built up in love. In order for the church to be built up not merely as a congregation or assembly but as a Body organically, we must all function in love. We each need to love Christ and the church, including all the members, with the divine love. It is in this condition that we love the Lord in incorruptibility.

Ephesians 5:2 says, “Walk in love, even as Christ also loved us and gave Himself up for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling savor.” This love is not the natural human love but the divine love. We need to walk—to live, act, and have our being—in the divine love, and it is the divine love with which we should love others.

Paul concludes this Epistle with a blessing: “Grace be with all those who love our Lord Jesus Christ in incorruptibility” (6:24). We need to love the Lord not in a wild way or in any selfish desire or natural good intention but in incorruptibility. In this kind of love we can be made holy and without blemish, be rooted and grounded, bear one another for the oneness of the Body, and hold to truth—to Christ as the Head and the church as the Body—so that we could be joined, knit, and built up together in the Body as an organism for the expression of Christ. We also need to walk and have our being in the divine love. If we love the Lord in these things, we love Him in incorruptibility. (CWWL, 1988, vol. 1, pp. 555-556)

Further Reading: CWWL, 1988, vol. 1, pp. 551-556

DAY 3

Morning Nourishment

2 Cor. 5:17 So then if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old things have passed away; behold, they have become new.

Gal. 6:15 For neither is circumcision anything nor uncircumcision, but a new creation is what matters.

Ephesians 6:24 says, “Grace be with all those who love our Lord Jesus Christ in incorruptibility.” We all must ask ourselves what it means to love the Lord in incorruptibility. In 1 Timothy 1:17 Paul says that God is incorruptible, and in 2 Timothy 1:10 he says that the Lord “nullified death and brought life and incorruption to light through the gospel.” First Corinthians 15 tells us that in resurrection the corruptible things will become incorruptible (vv. 50-53). To love the Lord in incorruptibility means to love Him in the new creation. All the things of the old creation are corruptible. This is proved by Romans 8 where we see that the whole creation is groaning under the slavery of corruption (vv. 21-22). Everything of the old creation is corrupting. Only the new creation is not. (CWWL, 1985, vol. 3, “Elders’ Training, Book 6: The Crucial Points of the Truth in Paul’s Epistles,” p. 517)

Today’s Reading

Ephesians 6:24 is a total conclusion of the entire book of Ephesians...Christ is incorruptible, the church is incorruptible, and all the positive items related to Christ and the church in chapters 1 through 6 are incorruptible items. We must love the Lord in these incorruptible things. This means we must love the Lord in the new creation and not in the old creation. We have to love the Lord according to the Father’s predestination unto sonship. We have to love the Lord according to the Son’s redemption. We have to love the Lord according to the sealing and the pledging of the

Spirit. We have to love the Lord according to the hope of God's calling, according to the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints, and according to the surpassing greatness of His power, which made Christ the Head of all things to the church. We have to love the Lord according to Christ's resurrection, which made us alive, resurrected us, and seated us in the heavens.

Many times we love the Lord in the way of corruption. We should not love the Lord in a natural way, in the way of the old creation, but in the new creation. When some Christian groups wanted to raise money, they put out a list of those who gave, with the ones giving the most at the top of the list. This is to love the Lord in corruption. What is it to love the Lord in incorruptibility in giving? Do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing (Matt. 6:3)... As the kingdom people, our righteous deeds should be kept secret as much as possible (vv. 4, 6, 18). What we do in our spirit, under the heavenly rule to please solely our Father, must not be interfered with by our flesh lusting for man's glory. The kingdom people's living is by the Father's divine life according to their spirit. Thus, they are required to do good things in secret, not in public. Any public exhibition does not correspond with the mysterious, hidden nature of the divine life. In Matthew 6:4 the Lord says that our alms should be in secret, and our Father who sees in secret shall repay us.

To do things in the way of not making a display or a show of oneself is in the new creation. Sometimes when a brother testifies, he testifies because he likes to make a show or a display. When his testifying gets many Amens, he feels glorious. This is to function in corruption because it is in the old creation. When you are testifying, you must remain on the cross. When you are giving a testimony, try your best not to make a show... If we do, we are serving in corruptibility.

To love the Lord in incorruptibility is to love Him in the regenerated, renewed, and indwelt spirit. If you do anything in your flesh, that is in corruption. (CWWL, 1985, vol. 3, "Elders' Training, Book 6: The Crucial Points of the Truth in Paul's Epistles," pp. 517-519)

Further Reading: CWWL, 1985, vol. 2, pp. 52-55

DAY 4

Morning Nourishment

Rev. 2:4-5 ...I have one thing against you, that you have left your first love. Remember therefore where you have fallen from and repent and do the first works; but if not, I am coming to you and will remove your lampstand out of its place, unless you repent.

Paul's words in [Ephesians 6:24] foreshadow a problem that would arise: the love in the church in Ephesus would fade, as indicated by the Lord's rebuke in Revelation 2:2-5. Therefore, the concluding word of Ephesians 6:24 adds a condition to the presence of grace: loving the Lord in incorruptibility. In Revelation 2 the Lord charges the church in Ephesus to repent...; otherwise, He would come to them and remove their lampstand out of its place (v. 5). The light of the lampstand is the light of life (life is grace), and this light of life would be removed by the Lord if the church in Ephesus left their first love. This indicates that in order to maintain the light of life, that is, grace, the first love must be recovered. These verses show the Lord's feeling toward the Ephesian saints: He was concerned about their love toward Him. This is why the apostle repeatedly uses the phrase in love in his Epistle and why, in this concluding blessing, he speaks of grace being with all those who love our Lord Jesus Christ in incorruptibility. This seems to imply that if the Ephesians did not love the Lord in such a way, the grace of the Lord would no longer be with them. (CWWL, 1953, vol. 2, p. 542)

Today's Reading

The enjoyment of the Lord as grace is with those who love Him...One of the main points revealed in Ephesians is that the church, which is the Body of Christ, is also the bride of Christ, Christ's wife. With the Body, the emphasis is on taking Christ as life; with the wife, the emphasis is on loving Christ. Therefore, this book emphasizes and also concludes with our love

toward the Lord. The church in Ephesus, the recipient of this Epistle, failed in the matter of loving the Lord. Such a failure became the source of and main reason for the failure of the church throughout the ages (Rev. 2—3). (The Conclusion of the New Testament, pp. 3473-3474)

Because Paul was wise, he did not argue with the Judaizers concerning doctrine. Instead, he told the Corinthians that he was jealous over them with a jealousy of God. He went on to say that he had betrothed them to one husband in order to present a pure virgin to Christ. What a wonderful way of speaking! Paul's word in 2 Corinthians 11:2 is very touching. It touches our heart in a deep way and stirs up our love for the Lord Jesus. Very often the Life-study messages touch our hearts in the same way. After reading a few pages of a message, the tender feeling within you for the Lord Jesus is stirred up, and you realize afresh how dear and precious He is. However, sometimes your theological and doctrinal mind may be troubled and raise questions about the Trinity or about Christ being the Spirit. You may wonder about modalism. You may question whether the ministry in the Lord's recovery is trustworthy. But after reading a portion of a Life-study message, you once again begin to feel that as the Bridegroom the Lord Jesus is lovely and precious. Spontaneously you say, "O Lord Jesus, dear Bridegroom, I love You. Lord, thank You for Your word, for Your ministry, and for Your recovery."...The Judaizers stir up questions, but the genuine ministry stirs up our love for the Lord Jesus as our Bridegroom.

Today's Judaizers seek to shake the believers away from simply loving the Lord Jesus. Nevertheless, we should turn from the Mosaic law and from the prophets and focus our attention on the Lord. We need to see from 11:2 that we have been betrothed to one husband in order to be presented as a pure virgin to Christ. Therefore, we should say, "Our dear Lord Jesus is our unique Husband, and I am part of His virgin. I don't care for doctrine or theology. I care only for the ministry that ministers Christ to me. He is the pleasant and dear One whom I love." (Life-study of 2 Corinthians, pp. 462-463)

Further Reading: CWWL, 1953, vol. 2, pp. 542-544; Life-study of 2 Corinthians, msgs. 52-53; The Conclusion of the New Testament, msg. 345

DAY 5

Morning Nourishment

Eph. 4:11-12 And He Himself gave some as apostles and some as prophets and some as evangelists and some as shepherds and teachers, for the perfecting of the saints unto the work of the ministry, unto the building up of the Body of Christ.

The revelation of the church in Ephesians has two main aspects. The first aspect is the work of the ministry to build up the Body of Christ. The second aspect is our spiritual life, which comprises many spiritual experiences that enable us to live a life that matches, or is worthy of, the church life.

In Ephesians 4:12 Paul does not speak of the building up of the church, which may be taken to refer to the building up of a congregation or assembly. Instead, Paul speaks of the building up of an organic Body...—a Body full of life (1:23).

All the gifts—the apostles, prophets, evangelists, and shepherds and teachers—are given...to perfect the saints to do the work of the ministry, which is to build up the Body of Christ. The gifts are given to perfect every member, no matter how large, small, strong, weak, old, or young...We should not think that we are too small or weak to be needed in the Body of Christ. Every believer is important and needed as a member of the Body. What is needed today is an organic building of the Body not directly by Christ as the Head or by the gifted persons but by all the members. (CWWL, 1988, vol. 1, pp. 575, 558-559)

Today's Reading

We need to consider if our love for the Lord is in corruptible things or in incorruptible things. We need to learn how to shepherd new believers for the building up of the Body of Christ in order to love Him in incorruptibility. One day we will stand before the Lord and give an account

concerning how we loved Him. In order to endeavor to learn something new, such as how to shepherd new believers, it seems that we will have to pay a price, but we will actually enjoy the Lord and receive His supply. The more we love the Lord in incorruptibility, the more we enjoy Him. Likewise, when we speak in the meetings, we are made joyful and even enlivened in our mortal bodies, because we are loving the Lord in incorruptibility by working to directly build up the Body of Christ.

Whether we love the Lord in incorruptibility [Eph. 6:24] depends on the things we love Him in. Although many other things will be corrupted, the Body of Christ is incorruptible. The building of this Body comprises three main categories of work: visiting others with the gospel to bring them into the Triune God, shepherding new believers in home meetings, and speaking in the church meetings. The issue of these three kinds of labor will remain forever and will never be corrupted. Therefore, to do them out of our love for the Lord is to love Him in incorruptibility. (CWWL, 1988, vol. 1, pp. 573-574)

The organic service of the New Testament priesthood of the gospel (1 Pet. 2:5, 9)... involves the preaching of the gospel for the saving of sinners, offering them up as sacrifices to God (Rom. 15:16). Following that, there is the nourishing of the believers and helping them to grow so that they can offer themselves up as living sacrifices to God (John 21:15; 1 Pet. 2:2; Rom. 12:1). In addition, there is the perfecting of the saints that they may do the work of the ministry unto the organic building up of the Body of Christ (Eph. 4:11-16). Finally, we have to lead the saints to prophesy, to speak for God, for the organic building up of the church (1 Cor. 14:1, 3-5, 12, 24, 31)... We all have to be like the apostle Paul, who labored and struggled in all wisdom to present every man full-grown in Christ to God (Col. 1:28-29). This is the organic service of the Body of Christ. It is for everyone, and it is in a priesthood. Everyone preaches the gospel to save sinners, everyone nourishes the believers, everyone perfects the saints, and everyone prophesies. In this way all of us will arrive at a full-grown stage, and the Body of Christ will be built up. (CWWL, 1990, vol. 2, "The Mysteries in God's New Testament Economy," pp. 217-218)

Further Reading: CWWL, 1988, vol. 1, pp. 557-574

DAY 6

Morning Nourishment

Eph. 3:16-17 That He would grant you...to be strengthened with power through His Spirit into the inner man, that Christ may make His home in your hearts through faith, that you, being rooted and grounded in love.

Paul concludes Ephesians by saying, “Grace be with all those who love our Lord Jesus Christ in incorruptibility” (6:24). We can still love the Lord if we remain in our soul, but to love the Lord in our soul is not to love Him in incorruptibility. When we are strengthened into our spirit and allow the Lord to make His home in our heart, we are loving Him in incorruptibility... If we love the Lord in our soul, we may be too hot in our emotion, unable to bridle or control our emotion in responding to or proposing things. We may be easily offended [or] cause turmoil in the church. We need to love the Lord by turning to our spirit. This is to love Him in incorruptibility, and this kind of love edifies the saints and builds up the Body of Christ. To love the Lord in incorruptibility is to love Him in the things that are fitting for the church life. (CWWL, 1988, vol. 1, pp. 579-580)

Today's Reading

First, we must turn to our spirit so that Christ can settle down in our heart. Then we will be rooted and grounded in love and will be able to apprehend with all the saints the dimensions of Christ. We will also be able to know the knowledge-surpassing love of Christ (Eph. 3:19a). Christ's love surpasses human knowledge, yet we can know it by experiencing it. Finally, we will be corporately filled unto all the fullness of the Triune God (v. 19b). This is to be filled to the extent that we become the expression of the processed Triune God. These spiritual experiences in the divine life make us fit for the church life.

The secret to all the spiritual experiences revealed in Ephesians is in

the last verse. [According to] Ephesians 6:24,... grace is the source [of loving the Lord in incorruptibility]. According to chapter 3, grace is unsearchably great because it supplies us with the unsearchable riches of Christ (vv. 2, 8). The key to experiencing this supporting grace is in verse 16, where the apostle prayed for us to be strengthened into the inner man... It is when we are in the inner man that Christ makes His home in our hearts. If Christ is making His home in us, everything He is and has will be available in us for our enjoyment. As He abides and settles down in us, He is gracing us, giving us all the riches of His grace. With this supporting grace we can be holy and without blemish, walk as God's masterpiece in the good works prepared by God, put off the old man, put on the new man, be filled in spirit, be empowered, and put on the whole armor of God.

Regeneration is miraculous, yet it is normal... Similarly, to be holy, which is to be like God, is miraculous, but it is very normal because we can experience it simply by praying that the Father would strengthen us into our inner man so that Christ may make His home in our heart...We can experience all the things spoken of in Ephesians in this miraculous yet normal way.

We can be revived in a miraculous yet normal way every morning, and we can be revived again and again throughout the day in the same way. If we sense that we are sinful, we should immediately pray, "Lord, I am sinful. Forgive me of all my sinfulness and cleanse me with Your precious blood." Right away we will be cleansed and revived. We do not need to pray for many days but can simply speak a brief word to the Lord in order to be instantly revived. In this way we can live Christ, walk according to the spirit, speak Christ everywhere and at any moment, and then come to the meetings and overflow, which is to have rivers of living water flowing out of our inner man... (John 7:38). This is the way to live the church life, a revived life, a life that continually overcomes, and a life that loves the Lord in incorruptibility. (CWWL, 1988, vol. 1, pp. 580, 582-584)

Further Reading: CWWL, 1988, vol. 1, pp. 575-584, 493-499, 539-541, 621-625

<< **WEEK 3 — HYMN** >>

Hymns, #546 I love my Lord, but with no love of mine

Experience of Christ — Love for Him

1

I love my Lord, but with no love of mine,
For I have none to give;
I love Thee, Lord, but all the love is Thine,
For by Thy love I live.

I am as nothing, and rejoice to be
Emptied, and lost, and swallowed up in Thee.

2

Thou, Lord, alone, art all Thy children need,
And there is none beside;
From Thee the streams of blessedness proceed,
In Thee the bless'd abide.
Fountain of life, and all-abounding grace,
Our source, our center, and our dwelling-place.

