

**KNOWING, EXPERIENCING, AND LIVING
THE ALL-INCLUSIVE CHRIST
FOR THE GENUINE CHURCH LIFE**

(Friday—Second Morning Session)

Message Two

**Enjoying Christ as the Reality of the Meal Offering
to Have a Meal-offering Christian Life
and a Meal-offering Church Life,
Consummating in the New Jerusalem
as a Great Meal Offering—
the Ultimate Consummation of the Mingling
of the Triune God with the Tripartite Man**

EM Hymns: 501, 1174

Scripture Reading: Lev. 2:1-16; John 6:57, 63; 12:24; 1 Cor. 10:17; 12:12, 24-25

- Lev 2:1 And when anyone presents an offering of a meal offering to Jehovah, his offering shall be of fine flour; and he shall pour oil on it and put frankincense on it.
- Lev 2:2 Then he shall bring it to Aaron's sons the priests, and he shall take from it his handful of its fine flour and of its oil with all its frankincense. And the priest shall burn it as its memorial portion on the altar, an offering by fire, a satisfying fragrance to Jehovah.
- Lev 2:3 And what is left of the meal offering shall be Aaron's and his sons'; it is a thing most holy of Jehovah's offerings by fire.
- Lev 2:4 And when you present an offering of a meal offering baked in the oven, it shall be of fine flour, unleavened cakes mingled with oil or unleavened wafers anointed with oil.
- Lev 2:5 And if your offering is a meal offering baked on a flat plate, it shall be of fine flour mingled with oil, unleavened.
- Lev 2:6 You shall break it in pieces and pour oil on it; it is a meal offering.
- Lev 2:7 And if your offering is a meal offering made in a pot, it shall be made of fine flour with oil.
- Lev 2:8 And you shall bring to Jehovah the meal offering that is made of these things and present it to the priest, and he shall bring it to the altar.
- Lev 2:9 And the priest shall take up from the meal offering its memorial portion and shall burn it on the altar, an offering by fire, a satisfying fragrance to Jehovah.
- Lev 2:10 And that which is left of the meal offering shall be Aaron's and his sons'; it is a thing most holy of Jehovah's offerings by fire.
- Lev 2:11 No meal offering that you present to Jehovah shall be made with leaven, for you shall not burn any leaven or any honey as an offering by fire to Jehovah.
- Lev 2:12 You may present them to Jehovah, as an offering of firstfruits, but they shall not be offered up for a satisfying fragrance on the altar.
- Lev 2:13 And every offering of your meal offering you shall season with salt, and you shall not omit the salt of the covenant of your God from your meal offering; with all your offerings you shall present salt.
- Lev 2:14 And if you present a meal offering of firstfruits to Jehovah, you shall present for the meal offering of your firstfruits new grain roasted with fire, crushed grain of the fresh ear.
- Lev 2:15 And you shall put oil on it and place frankincense on it; it is a meal offering.
- Lev 2:16 And the priest shall burn as its memorial portion some of its crushed grain and some of its oil, with all its frankincense, as an offering by fire to Jehovah.
- 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.
- John 6:63 It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh profits nothing; the words which I have spoken to you are spirit and are life.
- John 12:24 Truly, truly, I say to you, Unless the grain of wheat falls into the ground and dies, it abides alone; but if it dies, it bears much fruit.
- 1 Cor 10:17 Seeing that there is one bread, we who are many are one Body; for we all partake of the one bread.

- 1 Cor 12:12 For even as the body is one and has many members, yet all the members of the body, being many, are one body, so also is the Christ.
- 1 Cor 12:24 But our comely members have no need. But God has blended the body together, giving more abundant honor to the member that lacked,
- 1 Cor 12:25 That there would be no division in the body, but that the members would have the same care for one another.

I. The meal offering typifies Christ in His God-man living—Lev. 2:1-16:

- Lev 2:1 And when anyone presents an offering of a meal offering to Jehovah, his offering shall be of fine flour; and he shall pour oil on it and put frankincense on it.
- Lev 2:2 Then he shall bring it to Aaron's sons the priests, and he shall take from it his handful of its fine flour and of its oil with all its frankincense. And the priest shall burn it as its memorial portion on the altar, an offering by fire, a satisfying fragrance to Jehovah.
- Lev 2:3 And what is left of the meal offering shall be Aaron's and his sons'; it is a thing most holy of Jehovah's offerings by fire.
- Lev 2:4 And when you present an offering of a meal offering baked in the oven, it shall be of fine flour, unleavened cakes mingled with oil or unleavened wafers anointed with oil.
- Lev 2:5 And if your offering is a meal offering baked on a flat plate, it shall be of fine flour mingled with oil, unleavened.
- Lev 2:6 You shall break it in pieces and pour oil on it; it is a meal offering.
- Lev 2:7 And if your offering is a meal offering made in a pot, it shall be made of fine flour with oil.
- Lev 2:8 And you shall bring to Jehovah the meal offering that is made of these things and present it to the priest, and he shall bring it to the altar.
- Lev 2:9 And the priest shall take up from the meal offering its memorial portion and shall burn it on the altar, an offering by fire, a satisfying fragrance to Jehovah.
- Lev 2:10 And that which is left of the meal offering shall be Aaron's and his sons'; it is a thing most holy of Jehovah's offerings by fire.
- Lev 2:11 No meal offering that you present to Jehovah shall be made with leaven, for you shall not burn any leaven or any honey as an offering by fire to Jehovah.
- Lev 2:12 You may present them to Jehovah, as an offering of firstfruits, but they shall not be offered up for a satisfying fragrance on the altar.
- Lev 2:13 And every offering of your meal offering you shall season with salt, and you shall not omit the salt of the covenant of your God from your meal offering; with all your offerings you shall present salt.
- Lev 2:14 And if you present a meal offering of firstfruits to Jehovah, you shall present for the meal offering of your firstfruits new grain roasted with fire, crushed grain of the fresh ear.
- Lev 2:15 And you shall put oil on it and place frankincense on it; it is a meal offering.
- Lev 2:16 And the priest shall burn as its memorial portion some of its crushed grain and some of its oil, with all its frankincense, as an offering by fire to Jehovah.

- A. Fine flour, the main element of the meal offering, signifies Christ's humanity, which is fine, perfect, tender, balanced, and right in every way, with no excess and no deficiency; this signifies the beauty and excellence of Christ's human living and daily walk—v. 1; John 18:38; 19:4, 6b; Luke 2:40; 23:14; Isa. 53:3.

- Lev 2:1 And when anyone presents an offering of a meal offering to Jehovah, his offering shall be of fine flour; and he shall pour oil on it and put frankincense on it.
- John 18:38 Pilate said to Him, What is truth? And having said this, he again went out to the Jews and said to them, I find no fault in Him.
- John 19:4 And Pilate went outside again and said to them, Behold, I am bringing Him out to you that you may know that I find no fault in Him.
- John 19:6b ... Pilate said to them, You take Him and crucify Him, for I do not find fault in Him.
- Luke 2:40 And the little child grew and became strong, being filled with wisdom, and the grace of God was upon Him.
- Luke 23:14 Said to them, You have brought this man to me as one who turns the people away, and behold, I have examined Him before you and found no fault in this man regarding the accusations you bring against Him.
- Isa 53:3 He was despised and forsaken of men, / A man of sorrows and acquainted with grief; / And like one from whom men hide their faces, / He was despised; and we did not esteem Him.

- B. The oil of the meal offering signifies the Spirit of God as the divine element of Christ—Lev. 2:1; Luke 1:35; 3:22; 4:18; Heb. 1:9.
- Lev 2:1 And when anyone presents an offering of a meal offering to Jehovah, his offering shall be of fine flour; and he shall pour oil on it and put frankincense on it.
- Luke 1:35 And the angel answered and said to her, The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore also the holy thing which is born will be called the Son of God.
- Luke 3:22 And the Holy Spirit descended in bodily form as a dove upon Him. And a voice came out of heaven: You are My Son, the Beloved; in You I have found My delight.
- Luke 4:18 "The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, because He has anointed Me to announce the gospel to the poor; He has sent Me to proclaim release to the captives, and recovery of sight to the blind, to send away in release those who are oppressed,
- Heb 1:9 You have loved righteousness and hated lawlessness; therefore God, Your God, has anointed You with the oil of exultant joy above Your partners";
- C. The mingling of fine flour with the oil in the meal offering signifies that Christ's humanity is mingled with the Holy Spirit and His human nature is mingled with God's divine nature, making Him a God-man, possessing the divine nature and the human nature distinctly, without a third nature being produced—Lev. 2:4-5; Matt. 1:18, 20.
- Lev 2:4 And when you present an offering of a meal offering baked in the oven, it shall be of fine flour, unleavened cakes mingled with oil or unleavened wafers anointed with oil.
- Lev 2:5 And if your offering is a meal offering baked on a flat plate, it shall be of fine flour mingled with oil, unleavened.
- Matt 1:18 Now the origin of Jesus Christ was in this way: His mother, Mary, after she had been engaged to Joseph, before they came together, was found to be with child of the Holy Spirit.
- Matt 1:20 But while he pondered these things, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary your wife, for that which has been begotten in her is of the Holy Spirit.
- D. The frankincense in the meal offering signifies the fragrance of Christ in His resurrection; that the frankincense was put on the fine flour signifies that Christ's humanity bears the aroma of His resurrection—Lev. 2:1-2; cf. Matt. 2:11; 11:20-30; Luke 10:21:
- Lev 2:1 And when anyone presents an offering of a meal offering to Jehovah, his offering shall be of fine flour; and he shall pour oil on it and put frankincense on it.
- Lev 2:2 Then he shall bring it to Aaron's sons the priests, and he shall take from it his handful of its fine flour and of its oil with all its frankincense. And the priest shall burn it as its memorial portion on the altar, an offering by fire, a satisfying fragrance to Jehovah.
- Matt 2:11 And they came into the house and saw the child with Mary His mother. And falling down, they worshipped Him; and opening their treasures, they offered gifts to Him, gold and frankincense and myrrh.
- Matt 11:20 Then He began to reproach the cities in which most of His works of power took place, because they did not repent:
- Matt 11:21 Woe to you, Chorazin! Woe to you, Bethsaida! For if the works of power which took place in you had taken place in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes.
- Matt 11:22 But I say to you, It will be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon in the day of judgment than for you.
- Matt 11:23 And you, Capernaum, who have been exalted to heaven, to Hades you will be brought down. For if the works of power which took place in you had taken place in Sodom, it would have remained until today.
- Matt 11:24 But I say to you that it will be more tolerable for the land of Sodom in the day of judgment than for you.
- Matt 11:25 At that time Jesus answered and said, I extol You, Father, Lord of heaven and of earth, because You have hidden these things from the wise and intelligent and have revealed them to infants.
- Matt 11:26 Yes, Father, for thus it has been well-pleasing in Your sight.
- Matt 11:27 All things have been delivered to Me by My Father, and no one fully knows the Son except the Father; neither does anyone fully know the Father except the Son and him to whom the Son wills to reveal Him.

Matt 11:28 Come to Me all who toil and are burdened, and I will give you rest.
 Matt 11:29 Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am meek and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.
 Matt 11:30 For My yoke is easy and My burden is light.
 Luke 10:21 In that hour He exulted in the Holy Spirit and said, I extol You, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because You have hidden these things from the wise and intelligent and have revealed them to babes. Yes, Father, for thus it has been well pleasing in Your sight.

1. As portrayed in the four Gospels, Christ lived a life in His humanity mingled with His divinity and expressing resurrection out from His sufferings—cf. John 18:4-8; 19:26-27a.
 - John 18:4 Jesus therefore, knowing all the things that were coming upon Him, went forth and said to them, Whom do you seek?
 - John 18:5 They answered Him, Jesus the Nazarene. He said to them, I am. And Judas also, who was betraying Him, was standing with them.
 - John 18:6 When therefore He said to them, I am, they drew back and fell to the ground.
 - John 18:7 Then again He asked them, Whom do you seek? And they said, Jesus the Nazarene.
 - John 18:8 Jesus answered, I told you that I am; if therefore you seek Me, let these go away,
 - John 19:26 Then Jesus, seeing His mother and the disciple whom He loved standing by, said to His mother, Woman, behold, your son.
 - John 19:27a Then He said to the disciple, Behold, your mother. ...
2. Christ's Spirit-filled and resurrection-saturated living was a satisfying fragrance to God, giving God rest, peace, joy, enjoyment, and full satisfaction—Lev. 2:2; Luke 4:1; John 11:25; Matt. 3:17; 17:5.
 - Lev 2:2 Then he shall bring it to Aaron's sons the priests, and he shall take from it his handful of its fine flour and of its oil with all its frankincense. And the priest shall burn it as its memorial portion on the altar, an offering by fire, a satisfying fragrance to Jehovah.
 - Luke 4:1 And Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led by the Spirit in the wilderness, while being tempted for forty days by the devil.
 - John 11:25 Jesus said to her, I am the resurrection and the life; he who believes into Me, even if he should die, shall live;
 - Matt 3:17 And behold, a voice out of the heavens, saying, This is My Son, the Beloved, in whom I have found My delight.
 - Matt 17:5 While he was still speaking, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them, and behold, a voice out of the cloud, saying, This is My Son, the Beloved, in whom I have found My delight. Hear Him!

E. Salt, with which the meal offering was seasoned, signifies the death, or the cross, of Christ; salt functions to season, kill germs, and preserve—Lev. 2:13:

Lev 2:13 And every offering of your meal offering you shall season with salt, and you shall not omit the salt of the covenant of your God from your meal offering; with all your offerings you shall present salt.

1. The Lord Jesus always lived a life of being salted, a life under the cross—Mark 10:38; John 12:24; Luke 12:49-50.
 - Mark 10:38 But Jesus said to them, You do not know what you are asking. Are you able to drink the cup which I drink, or to be baptized with the baptism with which I am baptized?
 - John 12:24 Truly, truly, I say to you, Unless the grain of wheat falls into the ground and dies, it abides alone; but if it dies, it bears much fruit.
 - Luke 12:49 I have come to cast fire on the earth, and how I wish that it were already kindled!
 - Luke 12:50 But I have a baptism to be baptized with, and how I am pressed until it is accomplished!
2. Even before He was actually crucified, Christ daily lived a crucified life, denying Himself and His natural life and living the Father's life in resurrection— John 6:38; 7:6, 16-18; cf. Gal. 2:20.
 - John 6:38 For I have come down from heaven not to do My own will but the will of Him who sent Me.

- John 7:6 Jesus therefore said to them, My time has not yet come, but your time is always ready.
- John 7:16 Jesus therefore answered them and said, My teaching is not Mine, but His who sent Me.
- John 7:17 If anyone resolves to do His will, he will know concerning the teaching, whether it is of God or whether I speak from Myself.
- John 7:18 He who speaks from himself seeks his own glory; but He who seeks the glory of Him who sent Him, this One is true, and unrighteousness is not in Him.
- 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.
3. The basic factor of God's covenant is the cross, the crucifixion of Christ, signified by salt; it is by the cross that God's covenant is preserved to be an eternal covenant—cf. Heb. 13:20.
- Heb 13:20 Now the God of peace, He who brought up from the dead our Lord Jesus, the great Shepherd of the sheep, in the blood of an eternal covenant,
- F. That the meal offering was without leaven signifies that in Christ there is no sin or any negative thing—Lev. 2:4-5, 11; 2 Cor. 5:21; Heb. 4:15; 1 Pet. 2:22; Luke 23:14; cf. 1 Cor. 5:6-8.
- Lev 2:4 And when you present an offering of a meal offering baked in the oven, it shall be of fine flour, unleavened cakes mingled with oil or unleavened wafers anointed with oil.
- Lev 2:5 And if your offering is a meal offering baked on a flat plate, it shall be of fine flour mingled with oil, unleavened.
- Lev 2:11 No meal offering that you present to Jehovah shall be made with leaven, for you shall not burn any leaven or any honey as an offering by fire to Jehovah.
- 2 Cor 5:21 Him who did not know sin He made sin on our behalf that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.
- Heb 4:15 For we do not have a High Priest who cannot be touched with the feeling of our weaknesses, but One who has been tempted in all respects like us, yet without sin.
- 1 Pet 2:22 Who committed no sin, nor was guile found in His mouth;
- Luke 23:14 Said to them, You have brought this man to me as one who turns the people away, and behold, I have examined Him before you and found no fault in this man regarding the accusations you bring against Him.
- 1 Cor 5:6 Your boasting is not good. Do you not know that a little leaven leavens the whole lump?
- 1 Cor 5:7 Purge out the old leaven that you may be a new lump, even as you are unleavened; for our Passover, Christ, also has been sacrificed.
- 1 Cor 5:8 So then let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and evil, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.
- G. That the meal offering was without honey signifies that in Christ there is no natural affection or natural goodness—Lev. 2:11; Matt. 10:34-39; 12:46-50; Mark 10:18.
- Lev 2:11 No meal offering that you present to Jehovah shall be made with leaven, for you shall not burn any leaven or any honey as an offering by fire to Jehovah.
- Matt 10:34 Do not think that I have come to bring peace on the earth; I have not come to bring peace, but a sword.
- Matt 10:35 For I have come to set men at variance: a man against his father, and a daughter against her mother, and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law;
- Matt 10:36 And a man's enemies will be those of his household.
- Matt 10:37 He who loves father or mother above Me is not worthy of Me; and he who loves son or daughter above Me is not worthy of Me;
- Matt 10:38 And he who does not take his cross and follow after Me is not worthy of Me.
- Matt 10:39 He who finds his soul-life shall lose it, and he who loses his soul-life for My sake shall find it.
- Matt 12:46 While He was still speaking to the crowds, behold, His mother and His brothers stood outside seeking to speak to Him.
- Matt 12:47 And someone said to Him, Behold, Your mother and Your brothers are standing outside seeking to speak to You.

- Matt 12:48 But He answered and said to him who spoke to Him, Who is My mother, and who are My brothers?
- Matt 12:49 And stretching out His hand toward His disciples, He said, Behold, My mother and My brothers!
- Matt 12:50 For whoever does the will of My Father who is in the heavens, he is My brother and sister and mother.
- Mark 10:18 And Jesus said to him, Why do you call Me good? No one is good except One-God.

II. The meal offering typifies our Christian life as a duplication of Christ's God-man living—Lev. 2:4; Psa. 92:10; 1 Pet. 2:21; Rom. 8:2-3, 11, 13:

- Lev 2:4 And when you present an offering of a meal offering baked in the oven, it shall be of fine flour, unleavened cakes mingled with oil or unleavened wafers anointed with oil.
- Psa 92:10 But You have exalted my horn like that of a wild ox; / I am anointed with fresh oil.
- 1 Pet 2:21 For to this you were called, because Christ also suffered on your behalf, leaving you a model so that you may follow in His steps;
- Rom 8:2 For the law of the Spirit of life has freed me in Christ Jesus from the law of sin and of death.
- Rom 8:3 For that which the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God, sending His own Son in the likeness of the flesh of sin and concerning sin, condemned sin in the flesh,
- Rom 8:11 And if the Spirit of the One who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who indwells you.
- Rom 8:13 For if you live according to the flesh, you must die, but if by the Spirit you put to death the practices of the body, you will live.

- A. We need to enjoy Christ as our meal offering day by day for our priestly diet so that He can live again on the earth through us in His divinely enriched humanity; if we eat Christ as the meal offering, we will become what we eat and live by what we eat—Lev. 2:3; John 6:57, 63; cf. Psa. 92:10; 1 Cor. 10:17; Phil. 1:19-21a.

- Lev 2:3 And what is left of the meal offering shall be Aaron's and his sons'; it is a thing most holy of Jehovah's offerings by fire.
- 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.
- John 6:63 It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh profits nothing; the words which I have spoken to you are spirit and are life.
- Psa 92:10 But You have exalted my horn like that of a wild ox; / I am anointed with fresh oil.
- 1 Cor 10:17 Seeing that there is one bread, we who are many are one Body; for we all partake of the one bread.
- Phil 1:19 For I know that for me this will turn out to salvation through your petition and the bountiful supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ,
- 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 1:21a For to me, to live is Christ ...

- B. By exercising our spirit to touch the Spirit consolidated in the Word, we eat the human life and living of Jesus, we are constituted with Jesus, and the human living of Jesus becomes our human living (Eph. 6:17-18; Jer. 15:16; Gal. 6:17) with the following characteristics of His divinely enriched humanity:

- Eph 6:17 And receive the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which Spirit is the word of God,
- Eph 6:18 By means of all prayer and petition, praying at every time in spirit and watching unto this in all perseverance and petition concerning all the saints,
- Jer 15:16 Your words were found and I ate them, / And Your word became to me / The gladness and joy of my heart, / For I am called by Your name, / O Jehovah, God of hosts.
- Gal 6:17 Henceforth let no one trouble me, for I bear in my body the brands of Jesus.

1. The humanity of Jesus fulfills all righteousness—Matt. 3:13-15.

Matt 3:13 Then Jesus came from Galilee to the Jordan to John to be baptized by him.

Matt 3:14 But John tried to prevent Him, saying, It is I who have need of being baptized by You, and You come to me?

- Matt 3:15 But Jesus answered and said to him, Permit it for now, for it is fitting for us in this way to fulfill all righteousness. Then he permitted Him.
2. The humanity of Jesus has no resting place—8:20.
Matt 8:20 And Jesus said to him, The foxes have holes, and the birds of heaven have roosts, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay His head.
 3. The humanity of Jesus is lowly in heart—11:29.
Matt 11:29 Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am meek and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.
 4. The humanity of Jesus loves the weak ones—12:19-20.
Matt 12:19 He will not strive nor cry out, nor will anyone hear His voice in the streets.
Matt 12:20 A bruised reed He will not break, and smoking flax He will not quench until He brings forth justice unto victory.
 5. The humanity of Jesus is flexible—17:27.
Matt 17:27 But that we do not stumble them, go to the sea and cast a hook, and take the first fish that comes up. And when you open its mouth, you will find a stater; take that and give it to them for Me and you.
 6. The humanity of Jesus serves others—Mark 10:45; see footnote 1 on 1:10.
Mark 10:45 For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve and to give His life as a ransom for many.
Mark 1:10 And ¹immediately, coming up out of the water, He saw the heavens being parted and the Spirit as a dove descending upon Him.
note 1 Mark's record of a Slave reflects not the splendor of the status of this Slave's person but the diligence of His service. The word immediately is used in his record forty-two times, and one more time in alternate MSS.
 7. The humanity of Jesus cherishes people—Luke 4:16-22; 7:34; 19:1-10.
Luke 4:16 And He came to Nazareth, where He had been brought up, and according to His custom He entered on the Sabbath day into the synagogue and stood up to read.
Luke 4:17 And the scroll of the prophet Isaiah was handed to Him. And He unrolled the scroll and found the place where it was written,
Luke 4:18 "The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, because He has anointed Me to announce the gospel to the poor; He has sent Me to proclaim release to the captives, and recovery of sight to the blind, to send away in release those who are oppressed,
Luke 4:19 To proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord, the year of jubilee."
Luke 4:20 And when He rolled up the scroll and gave it back to the attendant, He sat down. And the eyes of all in the synagogue were fixed on Him.
Luke 4:21 And He began to say to them, Today this Scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing.
Luke 4:22 And all bore witness to Him and marveled at the words of grace proceeding out of His mouth, and they said, Is not this Joseph's son?
Luke 7:34 The Son of Man has come eating and drinking, and you say, Behold, a gluttonous man and a drunkard, a friend of tax collectors and sinners.
Luke 19:1 And He entered and was passing through Jericho.
Luke 19:2 And behold, there was a man whose name was called Zaccheus; and he was a chief tax collector, and he was rich.
Luke 19:3 And he was seeking to see Jesus, who He was, and could not because of the crowd, for he was small in stature.
Luke 19:4 And he ran on ahead and climbed up in a sycamore tree in order to see Him, for He was about to pass through that way.
Luke 19:5 And as He came to the place, Jesus looked up and said to him, Zaccheus, hurry and come down, for today I must stay in your house.
Luke 19:6 And he hurried and came down, and received Him, rejoicing.
Luke 19:7 And when they saw it, they all murmured, saying, He has gone in to lodge with a sinful man.
Luke 19:8 And Zaccheus stood and said to the Lord, Behold, the half of my possessions, Lord, I give to the poor, and if I have taken anything from anyone by false accusation, I restore four times as much.

- Luke 19:9 And Jesus said to him, Today salvation has come to this house, because he also is a son of Abraham.
- Luke 19:10 For the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which is lost.
8. The humanity of Jesus is orderly, not sloppy—Mark 6:39-40; John 6:12.
- Mark 6:39 And He ordered them to have all recline by companies on the green grass.
- Mark 6:40 And they sat down in groups, by hundreds and by fifties.
- John 6:12 And when they were filled, He said to His disciples, Gather the broken pieces left over that nothing may be lost.
9. The humanity of Jesus is limited by time—7:6.
- John 7:6 Jesus therefore said to them, My time has not yet come, but your time is always ready.
10. The humanity of Jesus is unique—7:46.
- John 7:46 The attendants answered, Never has a man spoken as this man has.
11. The humanity of Jesus knows when to weep—11:33, 35.
- John 11:33 Then Jesus, when He saw her weeping and the Jews who came with her weeping, was moved with indignation in His spirit and was troubled,
- John 11:35 Jesus wept.
12. The humanity of Jesus is humble—13:4-5.
- John 13:4 Rose from supper and laid aside His outer garments; and taking a towel, He girded Himself;
- John 13:5 Then He poured water into the basin and began to wash the disciples' feet and to wipe them with the towel with which He was girded.

III. Christ's life and our individual Christian life issue in a totality—the church life as a corporate meal offering—Lev. 2:1-2, 4-5; 1 Cor. 10:17; 12:12, 24-25:

- Lev 2:1 And when anyone presents an offering of a meal offering to Jehovah, his offering shall be of fine flour; and he shall pour oil on it and put frankincense on it.
- Lev 2:2 Then he shall bring it to Aaron's sons the priests, and he shall take from it his handful of its fine flour and of its oil with all its frankincense. And the priest shall burn it as its memorial portion on the altar, an offering by fire, a satisfying fragrance to Jehovah.
- Lev 2:4 And when you present an offering of a meal offering baked in the oven, it shall be of fine flour, unleavened cakes mingled with oil or unleavened wafers anointed with oil.
- Lev 2:5 And if your offering is a meal offering baked on a flat plate, it shall be of fine flour mingled with oil, unleavened.
- 1 Cor 10:17 Seeing that there is one bread, we who are many are one Body; for we all partake of the one bread.
- 1 Cor 12:12 For even as the body is one and has many members, yet all the members of the body, being many, are one body, so also is the Christ.
- 1 Cor 12:24 But our comely members have no need. But God has blended the body together, giving more abundant honor to the member that lacked,
- 1 Cor 12:25 That there would be no division in the body, but that the members would have the same care for one another.
- A. Such a life is a life of humanity mingled with the Holy Spirit and that has the Holy Spirit poured upon it, a life with salt and frankincense, but with no leaven or honey; both forms of the meal offering—the individual Christ and the corporate Christ, the church life—are food for God's satisfaction and our nourishment.
- B. The meal offering is a type of blending to bring us into the reality of the Body of Christ for the fulfillment of God's economy:
1. "In 1 Corinthians 10:17 Paul says, 'Seeing that there is one bread, we who are many are one Body; for we all partake of the one bread.' Paul's thought of the church being one bread was...taken from the Old Testament. The meal offering in Leviticus 2:4 consisted of cakes made of fine flour mingled with oil. Every part of the fine flour was mixed, or mingled, with the oil. That is blending" (*The Collected Works of Witness Lee, 1994–1997*, vol. 1, "The Practical Points concerning Blending," p. 112).
- 1 Cor 10:17 Seeing that there is one bread, we who are many are one Body; for we all

- partake of the one bread.
- Lev 2:4 And when you present an offering of a meal offering baked in the oven, it shall be of fine flour, unleavened cakes mingled with oil or unleavened wafers anointed with oil.
2. The reality of the Body of Christ realized through our being blended together, as typified by the meal offering, is the corporate living by the perfected God-men, who are genuine men but are not living by their life but by the life of the processed God, whose attributes have been expressed through their human virtues; to be perfected is to be matured by continually exercising our spirit to reject the self and live by another life, which is Christ as the life of God—Gal. 2:20; Phil. 3:10; 1:19-21a.
 - 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.
 - Phil 3:10 To know Him and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death,
 - Phil 1:19 For I know that for me this will turn out to salvation through your petition and the bountiful supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ,
 - 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 1:21a For to me, to live is Christ ...
 3. God has blended the Body together (1 Cor. 12:24); the Greek word for *blended* implies the losing of distinctions; it also means “harmonized,” “adjusted,” “mingled,” and “tempered.”
 - 1 Cor 12:24 But our comely members have no need. But God has blended the body together, giving more abundant honor to the member that lacked,
 4. In order to be blended in the Body life, the meal-offering church life, we have to go through the cross and do everything by the Spirit, dispensing Christ to one another for the building up of the Body of Christ.
 5. All these points mean that we should fellowship; fellowship blends us; that is, it tempers, adjusts, harmonizes, and mingles us, causing us to lose our distinctions and saving us from leaving the impress of our personality upon the church’s life and work, so that Christ can truly be all and in all—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.
 6. “We should not do anything without fellowshiping with the other saints who are coordinating with us. Fellowship requires us to stop when we are about to do something. In our coordination in the church life and in the Lord’s work, we all have to learn not to do anything without fellowship...Blending means that we should always stop to fellowship with others” (*The Collected Works of Witness Lee, 1994–1997*, vol. 4, “The Divine and Mystical Realm,” p. 160).
- C. The meal-offering church life is seen in 1 Corinthians:
1. Christ is the man given to us by God—1:2, 9, 30.
 - 1 Cor 1:2 To the church of God which is in Corinth, to those who have been sanctified in Christ Jesus, the called saints, with all those who call upon the name of our Lord Jesus Christ in every place, who is theirs and ours:
 - 1 Cor 1:9 God is faithful, through whom you were called into the fellowship of His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.
 - 1 Cor 1:30 But of Him you are in Christ Jesus, who became wisdom to us from God: both righteousness and sanctification and redemption,
 2. Paul’s charge to the Corinthians—“be a man” (16:13, lit.)—means that we should have the high, uplifted humanity of Jesus (9:26-27; 13:4-7) with the highest virtues,

such as extraordinary love, boundless forbearance, unparalleled faithfulness, absolute humility, utmost purity, supreme holiness and righteousness, and brightness and uprightness.

1 Cor 16:13 Watch, stand firm in the faith, be full-grown men, be strong.

1 Cor 9:26 I therefore run in this way, not as though without a clear aim; I box in this way, not as though beating the air;

1 Cor 9:27 But I buffet my body and make it my slave, lest perhaps having preached to others, I myself may become disapproved.

1 Cor 13:4 Love suffers long. Love is kind; it is not jealous. Love does not brag and is not puffed up;

1 Cor 13:5 It does not behave unbecomingly and does not seek its own things; it is not provoked and does not take account of evil;

1 Cor 13:6 It does not rejoice because of unrighteousness, but rejoices with the truth;

1 Cor 13:7 It covers all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.

3. If we love the Lord and love His appearing, looking forward to His coming (Gk. *parousia*, meaning “presence”), we will be kept in the realm of having Christ as our humanity; the humanity of those who serve the Lord is safeguarded by their praying in the Holy Spirit to keep themselves in the love of God in order to love the Lord to the uttermost and by their daily offering themselves willingly to the Lord in the splendor, the beauty, of their consecration to be conceived as the dew to water Christ—Jude 19-21; 2 Tim. 4:8; Matt. 24:3, 37, 39; 2 Cor. 5:14-15; 1 Cor. 2:9-10; Psa. 110:3.

Jude 19 These are those who make divisions, soulless, having no spirit.

Jude 20 But you, beloved, building up yourselves upon your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Spirit,

Jude 21 Keep yourselves in the love of God, awaiting the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life.

2 Tim 4:8 Henceforth there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, with which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will recompense me in that day, and not only me but also all those who have loved His appearing.

Matt 24:3 And as He sat on the Mount of Olives, the disciples came to Him privately, saying, Tell us, When will these things be? And what will be the sign of Your coming and of the consummation of the age?

Matt 24:37 For just as the days of Noah were, so will the coming of the Son of Man be.

Matt 24:39 And they did not know that judgment was coming until the flood came and took all away, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be.

2 Cor 5:14 For the love of Christ constrains us because we have judged this, that One died for all, therefore all died;

2 Cor 5:15 And He died for all that those who live may no longer live to themselves but to Him who died for them and has been raised.

1 Cor 2:9 But as it is written, "Things which eye has not seen and ear has not heard and which have not come up in man's heart; things which God has prepared for those who love Him."

1 Cor 2:10 But to us God has revealed them through the Spirit, for the Spirit searches all things, even the depths of God.

Psa 110:3 Your people will offer themselves willingly / In the day of Your warfare, / In the splendor of their consecration. / Your young men will be to You / Like the dew from the womb of the dawn.

4. The church life is a mingling living of humanity oiled by and with the Spirit and joined to the Spirit—1 Cor. 2:4, 12; 3:16; 6:17.

1 Cor 2:4 And my speech and my proclamation were not in persuasive words of wisdom but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power,

1 Cor 2:12 But we have received not the spirit of the world but the Spirit which is from God, that we may know the things which have been graciously given to us by God;

1 Cor 3:16 Do you not know that you are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwells in you?

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

5. The grace of God that we are enjoying today is the resurrected Christ as the life-giving Spirit—15:10, 45b:
- 1 Cor 15:10 But by the grace of God I am what I am; and His grace unto me did not turn out to be in vain, but, on the contrary, I labored more abundantly than all of them, yet not I but the grace of God which is with me.
- 1 Cor 15:45b ... the last Adam became a life-giving Spirit.
- a. We must die with Christ to self daily so that we may live with Christ to God daily—vv. 31, 36; John 12:24-26.
- 1 Cor 15:31 I protest by the boasting in you, brothers, which I have in Christ Jesus our Lord, I die daily.
- 1 Cor 15:36 Foolish man, what you sow is not made alive unless it dies;
- John 12:24 Truly, truly, I say to you, Unless the grain of wheat falls into the ground and dies, it abides alone; but if it dies, it bears much fruit.
- John 12:25 He who loves his soul-life loses it; and he who hates his soul-life in this world shall keep it unto eternal life.
- John 12:26 If anyone serves Me, let him follow Me; and where I am, there also My servant will be. If anyone serves Me, the Father will honor him.
- b. We must demonstrate the reality of resurrection by being one with God and having God with us in the status in which we were called—1 Cor. 7:24, 21-22a, 10-13.
- 1 Cor 7:24 Each one, brothers, in what status he was called, in this let him remain with God.
- 1 Cor 7:21 Were you called as a slave? Let it not concern you; but even if you are able to become free, use your status as a slave rather.
- 1 Cor 7:22a For the slave who has been called in the Lord is the Lord's freedman; ...
- 1 Cor 7:10 But to the married I charge, not I but the Lord, A wife must not be separated from her husband
- 1 Cor 7:11 (But if indeed she is separated, let her remain unmarried or be reconciled to her husband), and a husband must not leave his wife.
- 1 Cor 7:12 But to the rest I say, I, not the Lord, If any brother has an unbelieving wife and she consents to dwell with him, he must not leave her;
- 1 Cor 7:13 And a wife who has an unbelieving husband, and if he consents to dwell with her, must not leave her husband.
- c. We must labor not by our natural life and natural ability but by the Lord as our resurrection life and power—15:10, 58.
- 1 Cor 15:10 But by the grace of God I am what I am; and His grace unto me did not turn out to be in vain, but, on the contrary, I labored more abundantly than all of them, yet not I but the grace of God which is with me.
- 1 Cor 15:58 Therefore, my beloved brothers, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your labor is not in vain in the Lord.
6. We must enjoy the crucified Christ as the solution to all the problems in the church—1:9, 18, 22-23a; cf. Mark 15:31-32a.
- 1 Cor 1:9 God is faithful, through whom you were called into the fellowship of His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.
- 1 Cor 1:18 For the word of the cross is to those who are perishing foolishness, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.
- 1 Cor 1:22 For indeed Jews require signs and Greeks seek wisdom,
- 1 Cor 1:23a But we preach Christ crucified, ...
- Mark 15:31 Likewise also the chief priests with the scribes mocked Him with one another and said, He saved others; Himself He cannot save.
- Mark 15:32a Let the Christ, the King of Israel, come down now from the cross that we may see and believe. ...
7. We must enjoy Christ as our unleavened banquet—the life supply of sincerity and truth—who is absolutely pure, without mixture, and full of reality—1 Cor. 5:6b-8.
- 1 Cor 5:6b ... Do you not know that a little leaven leavens the whole lump?

- 1 Cor 5:7 Purge out the old leaven that you may be a new lump, even as you are unleavened; for our Passover, Christ, also has been sacrificed.
- 1 Cor 5:8 So then let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and evil, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.
8. In the church life, the natural life must be killed by the salt, by the cross of Christ—15:10; 12:31; 13:8a; 2 Cor. 5:16.
- 1 Cor 15:10 But by the grace of God I am what I am; and His grace unto me did not turn out to be in vain, but, on the contrary, I labored more abundantly than all of them, yet not I but the grace of God which is with me.
- 1 Cor 12:31 But earnestly desire the greater gifts. And moreover I show to you a most excellent way.
- 1 Cor 13:8a Love never falls away. ...
- 2 Cor 5:16 So then we, from now on, know no one according to the flesh; even though we have known Christ according to the flesh, yet now we know Him so no longer.
9. God desires that every local church be a meal offering to satisfy Him and fully supply the saints day by day; this means that we will eat our church life, for the church life will be our daily supply.

IV. As the mingling of the Triune God with the tripartite man, the New Jerusalem will be a great meal offering, the ultimate consummation of the mingling of the Triune God with the tripartite man—Lev. 2:4; 2 Cor. 13:14; 1 Thes. 5:23:

- Lev 2:4 And when you present an offering of a meal offering baked in the oven, it shall be of fine flour, unleavened cakes mingled with oil or unleavened wafers anointed with oil.
- 2 Cor 13:14 The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.
- 1 Thes 5:23 And the God of peace Himself sanctify you wholly, and may your spirit and soul and body be preserved complete, without blame, at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.
- A. The number twelve, which represents the New Jerusalem, indicates that the New Jerusalem is the mingling of the Triune God (three) with His creature man (four)—Rev. 21:12, 14, 21; 22:2.
- Rev 21:12 It had a great and high wall and had twelve gates, and at the gates twelve angels, and names inscribed, which are the names of the twelve tribes of the sons of Israel:
- Rev 21:14 And the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and on them the twelve names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb.
- Rev 21:21 And the twelve gates were twelve pearls; each one of the gates was, respectively, of one pearl. And the street of the city was pure gold, like transparent glass.
- Rev 22:2 And on this side and on that side of the river was the tree of life, producing twelve fruits, yielding its fruit each month; and the leaves of the tree are for the healing of the nations.
- B. The New Jerusalem is the mingling of the processed and consummated Triune God with the processed and consummated tripartite church—v. 17a.
- Rev 22:17a And the Spirit and the bride say, Come! And let him who hears say, Come! ...
- C. Eventually, the triune, eternal God becomes the New Jerusalem united, mingled, and incorporated with all of us—21:3, 22.
- Rev 21:3 And I heard a loud voice out of the throne, saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will tabernacle with them, and they will be His peoples, and God Himself will be with them and be their God.
- Rev 21:22 And I saw no temple in it, for the Lord God the Almighty and the Lamb are its temple.

Excerpts from the Ministry:

THE MEAL-OFFERING CHURCH LIFE

The book of 1 Corinthians shows us a particular kind of church life. Since the church life revealed here has so many aspects, it is difficult for us to summarize this church life in a phrase or a clause or

even a sentence. If we are enlightened concerning the meal offering, which describes the life of the Lord Jesus on earth, we will be able to see that the church life described in 1 Corinthians corresponds to the life of the Lord Jesus. This life was the formation of the meal offering, and the church life presented in 1 Corinthians may be called the meal-offering church life.

We have seen that the meal offering contains four elements: fine flour, oil, frankincense, and salt. The fine flour signifies Christ's fine humanity, the oil signifies the Spirit of God, the frankincense signifies the fragrance of Christ's resurrection, and the salt signifies the cross of Christ, which, in a subjective way, deals with all the negative things in our life.

We have also seen that the meal offering does not have either leaven or honey. Leaven signifies sin and all the negative things. Honey signifies the natural life in its good aspects, including natural affection.

If we read the four Gospels, we will see that the four elements of the meal offering were the components of Christ's life on earth and caused Him to be the real meal offering. As Christians, we should live the same kind of life the Lord Jesus lived. This means that, strictly speaking, the Christian life should be a meal offering.

A LIFE WITH THE HIGHEST HUMANITY

In order for our Christian life to be a meal offering, it must be a life with the highest humanity. This is the reason Paul charged the Corinthians, saying, "Be a man" (1 Cor. 16:13). According to the context of 1 Corinthians, to be a man means that we should have a high, uplifted humanity.

If we have such a humanity, we will exercise self-control. This is indicated by Paul's word in 9:26 and 27. "I therefore so run, not as uncertainly; so I box, not as beating the air; but I buffet my body and lead it as a slave." These verses reveal that Paul had a high humanity and that he had a strong, excellent character. He did not run uncertainly or beat the air but exercised control over himself. He was a real man with a high standard of morality in his human living.

First Corinthians 13:4-7 is a description of love. This description actually shows us a fine humanity. Verse 4 says, "Love suffers long, and is kind; love is not jealous; love does not brag, is not puffed up." In our weak humanity, we have only limited patience, but love suffers long. Also, it is easy for us to be jealous and covetous, but love is not jealous. Furthermore, love does not behave unbecomingly, does not seek its own things, is not provoked, does not take account of evil, and does not rejoice over unrighteousness (vv. 5-6a). On the contrary, love rejoices with the truth, covers all things, believes all things, hopes all things, and endures all things (vv. 6b-7). Here we have a description of a fine humanity and of a high human character. This indicates that 1 Corinthians is a book concerned with the uplifting of humanity.

In 16:13 Paul does not say, "Be a hero"; he says, "Be a man." From every angle and from every side, we should be a man. From the angle of ethics, we should be a man. From the angle of self-control, we should be a man. From the angles of wisdom and love, we should be a man. This is to have an uplifted humanity. In the book of 1 Corinthians, we can see the genuine fine flour. This book surely presents the meal-offering church life.

In the meal-offering church life, the first item is a fine, uplifted humanity. If we would have the proper church life, we all need to have a strong character. This strong character, however, should be balanced, for an unbalanced humanity is a biased humanity. Therefore, we should be strong and also soft. If in the church life we are strong without also being soft, we will offend others. Although we need to be soft as well as strong, we should not be too soft. Those who are too soft are like noodles. There is a proverb which says that we can lift up bamboo but we cannot lift up a noodle. We cannot have a proper church life if the saints are either too strong or too soft. We need to be balanced. For the church life, we need to be a man with a fine, balanced, uplifted humanity.

CHRIST—THE MAN GIVEN TO US BY GOD

Chapter one of 1 Corinthians reveals that Christ is the man given to us by God. Verse 2 says that the Lord Jesus Christ is “theirs and ours.” Christ is yours and mine. As John 3:16 tells us, God loved the world—fallen mankind—and gave His only begotten Son to us. Now Christ is ours, and we have been called into the fellowship of God’s Son, Jesus Christ our Lord (1 Cor. 1:9). We may now enjoy Him, participate in Him, and share Him with one another.

Furthermore, 1:30 says, “Of Him you are in Christ Jesus, who became wisdom to us from God: both righteousness and sanctification and redemption.” It is of God that we are in Christ Jesus, and Christ has become wisdom to us. Such a Christ has been given to us.

Christ is God’s present, God’s gift, to us. This present is a person; He is the Son of God and also the God-man. God has also called us into the enjoyment of this gift and has made this gift to be wisdom to us, righteousness and sanctification and redemption. This is Christ as a man revealed in 1 Corinthians 1.

THE SPIRIT OF GOD

The second element in the meal offering is the oil, which signifies the Spirit of God. First Corinthians has a great deal to say about the Spirit. Paul speaks of the Spirit of God in chapters two and three. In 2:4 he says that his speech and preaching were “in demonstration of the Spirit,” and in verse 12 he tells us that we have received “the Spirit which is from God, that we may know the things which have been freely given to us by God.” Then in 3:16 he goes on to say, “Do you not know that you are a temple of God, and the Spirit of God dwells in you?” Many Christians do not realize that they are the temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwells in them. Do you know that in your daily life there is One who indwells you? Do you realize that the Spirit of God takes you as His dwelling place? The Spirit has been given to us, and now He dwells in us.

In 6:17 Paul says, “He who is joined to the Lord is one spirit.” This indicates the mingling of the Lord as the Spirit with our spirit. Since we are one spirit with the Lord, we are part of Him. This does not mean that we are part of God as an object of worship; it means that we are a part of the Lord in our life experience. In our spirit we are one with the divine Spirit. We have been oiled with the Spirit, and we have even been joined to the Spirit. Not only have we received the Holy Spirit—we are one with Him.

If we were not one with the Spirit, we could not have the church life. The church life is a life of humanity oiled by the Holy Spirit and with the Holy Spirit. We are one with the Holy Spirit, and we need to remain in this oneness.

CHRIST IN RESURRECTION

In 1 Corinthians we also have the frankincense, that is, Christ in resurrection. In fact, one entire chapter, chapter fifteen, is devoted to the matter of resurrection. Therefore, in this book we surely have the fragrance of the resurrected Christ.

Some of the Corinthians had been deceived by the Devil to say that there would be no resurrection of the dead. Paul argued with them, saying, “If there is no resurrection of the dead, neither has Christ been raised; and if Christ has not been raised, then is our preaching vain; your faith also is vain; and we are found also false witnesses of God, because we witnessed concerning God that He raised Christ, whom He did not raise if indeed the dead are not raised. For if the dead are not raised, neither has Christ been raised” (15:13-16).

In 15:9 and 10 Paul speaks concerning his experience of the resurrected Christ. First, in verse 9 he refers to himself as “the least of the apostles.” Then in verse 10 he says, “But by the grace of God I am what I am; and His grace unto me was not in vain, but I labored more abundantly than all of them, yet not I, but the grace of God with me.” In this verse the grace of God equals resurrection; it equals the resurrected Christ. The grace of God which we are enjoying today is Christ in resurrection. With Paul we can say that it is not I but the grace of God, not I but Christ in resurrection.

In verse 58 Paul gives us a word of encouragement. “Wherefore, my beloved brothers, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your labor is not in vain in the Lord.” Our labor is not in vain because we are laboring not in our natural life but in the resurrection of Christ. Our labor for the Lord in His resurrection life will never be in vain.

REMAINING IN THE STATE IN WHICH WE WERE CALLED

In chapter seven Paul charges the believers to remain in the state in which they were called. “Each one, brothers, in what state he was called, in this let him remain with God” (v. 24). He uses the slaves as an example. “Were you a slave when called? Let it not concern you; but, if even you are able to become free, use it rather. For he who was called in the Lord when a slave is the Lord’s freedman” (vv. 21-22a). Instead of doing a work of emancipation, Paul encouraged the believers who were slaves to remain in slavery, the state in which they were called, and live a life that can endure slavery and overcome it. The slaves have a particular opportunity to demonstrate the reality of resurrection and to glorify Christ by living a life that overcomes slavery. What a testimony such a living would be!

The principle is the same with married life. Paul says, “A wife should not be separated from her husband” (v. 10). In verses 12 and 13 he goes on to say, “If any brother has an unbelieving wife and she consents to dwell with him, let him not leave her; and a wife who has an unbelieving husband and he consents to dwell with her, let her not leave her husband.” This requires a high humanity. The reason there are so many divorces today is that people’s humanity is too weak. To stay with a husband or wife who is difficult to live with and whom we may not like requires that we “be a man” and have an uplifted humanity.

I knew a married couple who, before they were saved, decided to get a divorce. They did not love each other, and they were determined to be divorced. However, they heard the gospel, received the Lord Jesus, and were saved. From that time on, they had Christ as another person living in them, and He uplifted their humanity and changed their character. They dropped the idea of divorce and began to live together in sweetness, in the fragrance of Christ’s resurrection. Those who contacted them could sense the fragrance of the resurrection life of Christ.

Paul’s way in 1 Corinthians 7 is very unusual and also very wise. He did not force a brother to stay with his wife. Rather, he charged the saints to remain with God in the state in which they were called. Those who are married should not leave their wife or husband, for to leave one’s spouse is actually to leave God. Married believers are to remain with their spouse in the presence of God.

The point here is that the saints should not expect to have a change in their status. Concerning this, we may take Paul as an example. He, a Jew, was born under Roman imperialism. However, he never encouraged the Jews to emancipate themselves from the Romans. On the contrary, in Romans 13 he charged the saints to be subject to the authorities of the Roman empire. This indicates that he encouraged them not to change their status but to remain in the state in which they were called.

The worse this state is, the more opportunity one has to live Christ. Those in slavery can live Christ in resurrection while they are in slavery. This is to be a man. We all can be men oiled with the Spirit and joined to the Spirit to be one spirit, and we can be fully in resurrection, manifesting the fragrance of the resurrected Christ.

THE CROSS OF CHRIST

The salt—the fourth element of the meal offering—can also be found in 1 Corinthians. In writing to the Corinthians, Paul spoke regarding the cross of Christ and the crucified Christ. “Jews indeed ask for signs and Greeks seek wisdom, but we preach Christ crucified” (1:22-23a). Paul did not say that he preached Christ glorified; he said that he preached Christ crucified. Paul did not preach miracles or wisdom—he preached Christ crucified.

The crucified Christ is a Christ who does nothing to save Himself. When the Lord Jesus was on the cross, “the chief priests with the scribes, mocking with one another, said, He saved others; himself

he cannot save! Let the Christ, the King of Israel, come down now from the cross, that we may see and believe!” (Mark 15:31-32a). No matter how much He was challenged, the Lord Jesus remained on the cross, doing nothing to save Himself.

To the Corinthians Paul preached such a crucified Christ. To the Greeks, who were proud of their culture and wisdom, this was foolishness. The situation is the same today. People are still proud of their culture and wisdom, and we need to preach the crucified Christ to them.

First Corinthians 1:18 says, “The word of the cross is to those who are perishing foolishness, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.” Through the preaching of the gospel, the word of the cross can save people. If we would have power in preaching the gospel, we need to live a crucified life. We must learn to live a crucified life, being crossed out every day. We may experience this in our married life, for every wife is a cross to her husband and every husband is a cross to his wife. This arrangement, which is for our salting, is of the Lord’s sovereignty.

We are salted not only in our married life but also in the church life. There is such a thing as being salted in the church life. On the one hand, in the church life we have happiness. On the other hand, we also have the unpleasantness that comes from being salted. Deep within, the brothers may feel that they are being salted, crossed out, by the sisters. The sisters may have the same feeling about the brothers. In the church life a great deal of salting takes place.

In 1 Corinthians Paul does not teach us to be glorified. He teaches us to be crucified. Without the cross, there is no church life. If there is no salt, there is no meal offering. The meal offering must be salted.

DEALING WITH LEAVEN—THE SINFUL AND NEGATIVE THINGS

We have pointed out that in the meal offering there is neither leaven nor honey. In 1 Corinthians both leaven—the sinful and negative things—and honey—the natural life—are dealt with.

In 5:6b-8 we have the dealing with leaven. “Do you not know that a little leaven leavens the whole lump? Purge out the old leaven, that you may be a new lump, even as you are unleavened. For indeed our Passover, Christ, has been sacrificed. Let us therefore keep the feast, not with old leaven, nor with leaven of malice and evil, but with unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.” Here we see that leaven is not tolerated in the church life.

DEALING WITH HONEY—THE NATURAL LIFE

First Corinthians 15:10 indicates that in Paul’s experience the honey, the natural life, was dealt with. Recall that in this verse he says, “I labored more abundantly than all of them, yet not I, but the grace of God.” Paul’s labor was not by the I, not by the natural life, not by honey.

Paul certainly was not a person with a weak character. Before he was saved, he was very strong in character, taking the lead to persecute the saints. But after he was saved, he was made an apostle and he labored more than the other apostles. However, his labor was not in the natural life.

In the church life the natural life and the natural affection should be dealt with. This means that there should be no honey in the church life. We all like to be natural and live a natural life, but in the church life the natural life is not permitted. It must be put to death. The honey of the natural life must be killed by the salt, by the cross of Christ.

We should not put any leaven or honey in the meal offering. This means that in the church life we should not have the negative things or the natural life.

ONE BREAD

The church life is a corporate meal offering signified by the one bread in 10:17. “Seeing that we who are many are one bread, one Body; for we all partake of the one bread.” This bread, or cake, signifies the corporate life.

We enjoy this corporate life when we partake of the Lord’s table. Do you take the bread and the

cup by yourself ? Of course not! You partake of the bread and the cup with the saints. This is a matter of fellowship. This is the reason 10:16 says, “The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not a fellowship of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not a fellowship of the body of Christ?” Because this is a matter of fellowship, we partake of the bread and of the cup in a corporate way. This corporate partaking is a sign of the church life; it is also a testimony of the church life.

All the points covered in 1 Corinthians are related to the church life, to the corporate life. According to this book, for this corporate life we need to be a man who is oiled with the Holy Spirit, who lives a life under the cross with the resurrection of Christ as the frankincense, and who does not have leaven or honey. This is the church life as a meal offering.

The whole church life is a meal offering. In this meal offering the top portion is for God’s enjoyment, and the remainder is for us to take as our daily food in our service to God. We, therefore, are a meal offering as food for God’s satisfaction and for the nourishment of others.

God wants to have a meal offering in every locality. He desires that every local church be a meal offering that satisfies Him and that fully supplies the saints day by day.

Our hunger is satisfied not only by Christ but also by the church life. The church life satisfies us because the church life is a corporate meal offering, with the top portion for God and the remainder for us. Therefore, we are fed by and with the church life. The church life is the meal offering to be our daily supply. Hallelujah for the meal-offering church life! (*Life-study of Leviticus*, pp. 143-152)