

Guidelines for the Exercise of the Lord's Day Prophecy

Message Four : Knowing the All-inclusive Christ and Growing with the Growth of God

I. Overview:

It is a blessing that we can know and experience the all- inclusive Christ as revealed in Colossians. Christ is the Head of the Body, the church, that He Himself might have the first place in all things. In both the old creation and the new creation, Christ is the first and occupies the first place. Christ, who dwells in our spirit to be our life and person, is our hope of glory. Colossians 3:1 says "If therefore you were raised together with Christ, seek the things which are above, where Christ is, sitting at the right hand of God" Verses 1 through 4 imply that with Christ we have one position, one life, one living, one destiny, and one glory. Colossians 2:19, "Holding the Head, out from whom all the Body, being richly supplied..., grows with the growth of God". To grow is to have Christ added into us. The growth of the Body depends on what comes out of Christ as the Head. The growth of the Body is the building up of the Body. The love in which the Body builds itself up is not our own love but 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.

II. Truth and Enlightenment:

Day 1 —

A. Expound the words in Galatians 3:14, how to be applied, to be experienced.

In Galatians 3:14 Paul says, "In order that the blessing of Abraham might come to the Gentiles in Christ Jesus, that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith." According to the context, this blessing must refer to the good land. In Genesis 12 the blessing God promised to give Abraham was the land. In Galatians 3:14 Paul links the blessing of Abraham to the promise of the Spirit.

B. Explain that Christ is the first in the old creation and in the new creation.

God has two creations: the old creation and the new creation. Colossians 1:18 refers to the new creation. Christ is the Head of the Body, the church, which is God's new creation. Christ is not only the Firstborn of the old creation but also the Firstborn from the dead in the new creation. Both in the old creation and in the new creation, Christ is the first.

Day 2 —

A. List in Colossians some phrases pointing to our experience of Christ.

In the book of Colossians a number of important phrases point to our experience of Christ. Some of these phrases are Christ in you, full-grown in Christ, walk in Him, according to Christ, made alive together with Him, died with Christ, holding the Head, out from whom, and grows with the growth of God. These nine expressions give us a complete picture of the proper experience of Christ.

B. Describe what a Christ who is in us is.

The Christ who is in us is the extensive, immeasurable, unsearchable One. How marvelous that such a Christ dwells in us! We need to become full-grown in such a Christ, to walk in Him, and to be according to Him. Having died with Christ and having been made alive with Him, we should hold Him as the Head out from whom the whole Body grows with the growth of God.

Day 3 —

A. Unveil the words in Colossians 2:2-3, and how to experience them.

To be knit together in love involves the emotion, whereas to have the riches of the full assurance of understanding involves the mind. When our hearts have been comforted, we being knit together in love, and our minds function properly, we will have the full knowledge of Christ as the mystery of God. Ephesians concerns the mystery of Christ, which is the church. Colossians concerns the mystery of God, which is Christ.

B. Explain the word in Colossians 1:19 echoing the word in 2:9.

Colossians 1:19 says that all the fullness was pleased to dwell in Christ. This thought is echoed in 2:9, where Paul says, "In Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily." The fullness both in the old creation and in

the new creation dwells in Christ. This fullness refers not to the riches of God but to the expression of these riches. The expression of God's riches dwells in Christ.

Day 4 —

A. Expound our position to be in Christ.

Our position is that we are in Christ. Because we are in Him, we are where He is—at the right hand of God. In John 17:24 the Lord Jesus prayed, "Father, concerning that which You have given Me, I desire that they also may be with Me where I am." To be where the Lord Jesus is, is not a matter of geography.

B. Explain being in our spirit, that is, to be in heaven.

Praise the Lord that transmission is going on from heaven to our spirit! When we experience this transmission, we are truly in Christ, in the Father, and in heaven. Our spirit is directly related to heaven. The heavenly transmission begins in heaven and ends in our spirit. Because we may experience and enjoy this unique transmission, there is no need for us to go to heaven in order to be in heaven.

Day 5 —

A. State the meaning of holding the Head in Colossians 2:19.

For the Body to hold the Head means that the Body does not allow itself to be separated from the Head by anything. When we live by our culture instead of by Christ, we separate ourselves from Christ as the Head and are defrauded of our prize, which is the enjoyment of Christ. If we are rooted in Christ and walk as He moves, we will spontaneously absorb the riches of Christ into our being and grow with the growth of God.

B. Expound in Colossians 2:7 having been rooted in Christ and of being built up in Him.

Colossians 2:7 speaks of having been rooted in Christ and of being built up in Him. The more a plant grows, the more it builds itself up. A tree, for example, builds itself up by absorbing into itself nourishment from the soil. This implies organic activity. Through this activity the nourishment from the soil is absorbed into the tree.

Day 6 —

A. Fellowship that we should spend time to absorb His riches for the growth.

In 1 Corinthians 3:9 Paul says that the saints are God's cultivated land. In verse 6 he says, "I planted, Apollos watered, but God caused the growth." Through Paul's preaching of the gospel and ministry of the word, many were planted into Christ. Later, Apollos came to water what Paul had planted. Although Paul planted and Apollos watered, it was God who caused the growth.

B. Explain in Ephesians the growth and building.

In Ephesians 2:32 Paul says, "In whom all the building, being fitted together, is growing into a holy temple in the Lord." This verse refers to the universal church. The focal point of the implications of Ephesians 4:15 and 16 is that we should be rooted in Christ and absorb His nourishment into our being to become the element and substance with which we grow and are built up.

III. Conclusion:

The way to seek the things that are above is to turn to the spirit and call on the name of the Lord. From Christ in heaven to us on earth, there is a transmission going on through the all-inclusive Spirit in our spirit. When we turn to the Spirit, we are lifted up to heaven. Because of the transmission from the throne of God in heaven to our spirit, when we enjoy the Lord on earth, we are simultaneously in heaven. Then experientially we are in Christ, in the Father, and in heaven. In our spirit we are in a position with Christ to seek the things that are above. The church is the Body of Christ, and the growth of the Body is the building up of the Body. In a church, as long as some of the brothers and sisters are growing, the church in that locality will certainly be built up. Therefore, growth is really the key to the building, and such growth is the building up of the church.