

**BEING A VESSEL UNTO HONOR, A FULLY EQUIPPED MAN OF GOD,  
BY BEING EMPOWERED IN THE GRACE WHICH IS IN CHRIST JESUS  
TO FULLY ACCOMPLISH OUR MINISTRY  
IN THE UNIQUE MINISTRY OF GOD’S ECONOMY**  
(Saturday—First Morning Session)

Message Four  
**Christ Nullifying Death  
and Bringing Life and Incorruption to Light,  
and Our Remembering Jesus Christ,  
the Seed of David, Raised from the Dead**

Scripture Reading: 2 Tim. 1:10; 2:8; Acts 2:24; Heb. 2:9, 14; 7:16

- 2 Tim 1:10 But now has been manifested through the appearing of our Savior Christ Jesus, who nullified death and brought life and incorruption to light through the gospel,
- 2 Tim 2:8 Remember Jesus Christ, raised from the dead, of the seed of David, according to my gospel,
- Acts 2:24 Whom God has raised up, having loosed the pangs of death, since it was not possible for Him to be held by it.
- Heb 2:9 But we see Jesus, who was made a little inferior to the angels because of the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honor, so that by the grace of God He might taste death on behalf of everything.
- Heb 2:14 Since therefore the children have shared in blood and flesh, He also Himself in like manner partook of the same, that through death He might destroy him who has the might of death, that is, the devil,
- Heb 7:16 Who has been appointed not according to the law of a fleshy commandment but according to the power of an indestructible life.

**I. “Our Savior Christ Jesus, who nullified death and brought life and incorruption to light through the gospel”—2 Tim. 1:10:**

- A. In 2 Timothy 1:10 Paul tells us that Christ nullified death:
- 2 Tim 1:10 But now has been manifested through the appearing of our Savior Christ Jesus, who nullified death and brought life and incorruption to light through the gospel,
1. This means that Christ made death of none effect through His devil-destroying death (Heb. 2:14) and death-swallowing resurrection (1 Cor. 15:52-54).

Heb 2:14 Since therefore the children have shared in blood and flesh, He also Himself in like manner partook of the same, that through death He might destroy him who has the might of death, that is, the devil,

1 Cor 15:52 In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet; for the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we will be changed.

1 Cor 15:53 For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality.

1 Cor 15:54 And when this corruptible will put on incorruption and this mortal will put on immortality, then the word which is written will come to pass, "Death has been swallowed up unto victory."
  2. Christ not only defeated death—He nullified it—2 Tim. 1:10.

2 Tim 1:10 But now has been manifested through the appearing of our Savior Christ Jesus, who nullified death and brought life and incorruption to light through the gospel,
  3. Christ was manifested to nullify death and to bring in eternal, indestructible life—Heb. 7:16.

Heb 7:16 Who has been appointed not according to the law of a fleshy commandment but according to the power of an indestructible life.
  4. Through His resurrection, death has become of none effect; death has lost its power,

even its taste—2:9; Acts 2:24.

Heb 2:9 But we see Jesus, who was made a little inferior to the angels because of the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honor, so that by the grace of God He might taste death on behalf of everything.

Acts 2:24 Whom God has raised up, having loosed the pangs of death, since it was not possible for Him to be held by it.

5. Christ could nullify death because He destroyed the devil, the one who has the might of death—Heb. 2:14:

Heb 2:14 Since therefore the children have shared in blood and flesh, He also Himself in like manner partook of the same, that through death He might destroy him who has the might of death, that is, the devil,

- a. By overcoming Satan and nullifying death, the Lord Jesus also defeated Hades and the grave—Rev. 1:18.

Rev 1:18 And the living One; and I became dead, and behold, I am living forever and ever; and I have the keys of death and of Hades.

- b. Therefore, Christ's resurrection was not only God's vindication and the Lord's success but also His victory over death, Satan, Hades, and the grave— 20:14.

Rev 20:14 And death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death, the lake of fire.

- B. Having nullified death through His death, the Lord Jesus brought life and incorruption to light through the gospel in His resurrection—2 Tim. 1:10:

2 Tim 1:10 But now has been manifested through the appearing of our Savior Christ Jesus, who nullified death and brought life and incorruption to light through the gospel,

1. The last part of 2 Timothy 1:10 speaks of Christ Jesus who brought life and incorruption to light through the gospel.

2 Tim 1:10 But now has been manifested through the appearing of our Savior Christ Jesus, who nullified death and brought life and incorruption to light through the gospel,

2. In the gospel the revelation is brought to us that Christ has nullified death and has brought us eternal, indestructible life—v. 10.

2 Tim 1:10 But now has been manifested through the appearing of our Savior Christ Jesus, who nullified death and brought life and incorruption to light through the gospel,

3. *Life* in 2 Timothy 1:10 refers to the eternal life of God, which is given to all believers in Christ (1 Tim. 1:16) and which is the main element of the divine grace given to us (Rom. 5:17, 21):

2 Tim 1:10 But now has been manifested through the appearing of our Savior Christ Jesus, who nullified death and brought life and incorruption to light through the gospel,

1 Tim 1:16 But because of this I was shown mercy, that in me, the foremost, Jesus Christ might display all His long-suffering for a pattern to those who are to believe on Him unto eternal life.

Rom 5:17 For if, by the offense of the one, death reigned through the one, much more those who receive the abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness will reign in life through the One, Jesus Christ.

Rom 5:21 In order that just as sin reigned in death, so also grace might reign through righteousness unto eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

- a. This life has conquered death (Acts 2:24) and will swallow up death (2 Cor. 5:4).

Acts 2:24 Whom God has raised up, having loosed the pangs of death, since it was not possible for Him to be held by it.

2 Cor 5:4 For also, we who are in this tabernacle groan, being burdened, in that we do not desire to be unclothed, but clothed upon, that what is mortal may be swallowed up by life.

- b. Life is the divine element, even God Himself, imparted into our spirit; incorruption is the consequence of life's saturating our body, giving life to our mortal bodies through His Spirit who indwells us.

- c. This life and incorruption are able to counter death and corruption—2 Tim. 1:10.  
 2 Tim 1:10 But now has been manifested through the appearing of our Savior Christ Jesus, who nullified death and brought life and incorruption to light through the gospel,

## II. “Remember Jesus Christ, raised from the dead, of the seed of David, according to my gospel”—2:8:

- A. The Lord Jesus Christ was raised from the dead—v. 8:  
 2 Tim 2:8 Remember Jesus Christ, raised from the dead, of the seed of David, according to my gospel,
  1. In 2 Timothy 2:8 the word *raised* indicates Christ’s victory over death by His divine life with its resurrection power.  
 2 Tim 2:8 Remember Jesus Christ, raised from the dead, of the seed of David, according to my gospel,
  2. Regarding the Lord Jesus as a man, the New Testament tells us that God raised Him from the dead—Rom. 8:11.  
 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.
  3. Regarding the Lord Jesus as God, the New Testament tells us that He Himself rose from the dead—Acts 10:41; 1 Thes. 4:14.  
 Acts 10:41 Not to all the people, but to witnesses appointed beforehand by God, to us, ones who ate and drank with Him after He rose from the dead.  
 1 Thes 4:14 For if we believe that Jesus died and rose, so also those who have fallen asleep through Jesus, God will bring with Him.
  4. Christ’s being raised from the dead and His raising Himself from the dead indicate His dual status—human and divine:
    - a. The Lord Jesus is God and also resurrection (John 1:1; 11:25), possessing the indestructible life (Heb. 7:16).  
 John 1:1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.  
 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;  
 Heb 7:16 Who has been appointed not according to the law of a fleshy commandment but according to the power of an indestructible life.
    - b. Because Christ is the ever-living One, death was notable to hold Him.
    - c. He delivered Himself to death, but death could not detain Him.
    - d. Rather, death was defeated by Him, and He rose up from it—Acts 2:24.  
 Acts 2:24 Whom God has raised up, having loosed the pangs of death, since it was not possible for Him to be held by it.
  5. On the day of His resurrection, early in the morning, the Lord Jesus ascended to satisfy the Father; the freshness of His resurrection was first for the Father’s enjoyment, as the firstfruits of the harvest were, in type, brought first to God— John 20:17; cf. Lev. 23:10-11; Exo. 23:19a.  
 John 20:17 Jesus said to her, Do not touch Me, for I have not yet ascended to the Father; but go to My brothers and say to them, I ascend to My Father and your Father, and My God and your God.  
 Lev 23:10 Speak to the children of Israel, and say to them, When you come into the land which I am giving you, and reap its harvest, then you shall bring the sheaf of the firstfruits of your harvest to the priest;  
 Lev 23:11 And he shall wave the sheaf before Jehovah for your acceptance; on the day after the Sabbath the priest shall wave it.  
 Exo 23:19a The first of the firstfruits of your ground you shall bring into the house of Jehovah your God. ...
  6. Another aspect of Christ’s work in His resurrection is His rising on the first day of the

week to germinate the new creation—2 Cor. 5:17:

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.

a. The fact that Christ arose on the first day of the week indicates that the entire universe has a new beginning in Christ's resurrection—John 20:1-9.

John 20:1 Now on the first day of the week, Mary the Magdalene came early to the tomb while it was yet dark and saw the stone taken away from the tomb.

John 20:2 She ran therefore and came to Simon Peter and to the other disciple whom Jesus loved and said to them, They have taken away the Lord out of the tomb, and we do not know where they have laid Him.

John 20:3 Peter therefore went forth, as well as the other disciple, and came to the tomb.

John 20:4 And the two ran together, yet the other disciple ran ahead faster than Peter and came first to the tomb.

John 20:5 And stooping to look in, he saw the linen cloths lying there; however, he did not enter.

John 20:6 Then Simon Peter also came, following him, and entered into the tomb; and he beheld the linen cloths lying there

John 20:7 And the handkerchief which had been over His head, not lying with the linen cloths, but folded up in one place apart.

John 20:8 At that time therefore the other disciple also, who came first to the tomb, entered, and he saw and believed;

John 20:9 For as yet they did not understand the Scripture, that He had to rise from among the dead.

b. Christ's resurrection ushered in a new period, a new age.

c. In the sight of God, the entire old creation was crucified with Christ and buried with Him; then on the first day of the week there was a new beginning.

d. Whereas the Lord's death was the termination of the old creation, His resurrection was the germination of the new creation—2 Cor. 5:17.

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.

B. The expression *seed of David* indicates Christ's dignified human nature, which was exalted and glorified along with His divine nature—Rom. 1:3-4:

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

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

1. The prophecy in 2 Samuel 7:12-14a says that the seed of David would be the Son of God, and God would be His Father.

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

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

2 Sam 7:14a I will be his Father, and he will be My son. ...

2. In other words, a human seed would become the divine Son—v. 14a.

2 Sam 7:14a I will be his Father, and he will be My son. ...

3. The word concerning *your seed* in verse 12 and *My son* in verse 14 implies that the seed of David would become a divine Son:

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

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

a. This word corresponds to Paul's word in Romans 1:3-4 concerning Christ as the seed of David being designated the Son of God in His humanity in resurrection.

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

- Rom 1:4 Who was designated the Son of God in power according to the Spirit of holiness out of the resurrection of the dead, Jesus Christ our Lord;
- b. It also relates to the Lord's question in Matthew 22:41-45 concerning how the Christ could be both the son of David and the Son of God as David's Lord—a wonderful person, a God-man with two natures, divinity and humanity.
- Matt 22:41 Now while the Pharisees were gathered together, Jesus questioned them,  
 Matt 22:42 Saying, What do you think concerning the Christ? Whose son is He? They said to Him, David's.
- Matt 22:43 He said to them, How then does David in spirit call Him Lord, saying,  
 Matt 22:44 "The Lord said to my Lord, Sit at My right hand until I put Your enemies underneath Your feet"?
- Matt 22:45 If then David calls Him Lord, how is He his son?
- c. These verses clearly unveil that a seed of man—that is, a son of man— can become the Son of God.
- d. God Himself, the divine One, became a human seed, the seed of a man, David.
- e. This seed was Jesus, the God-man, Jehovah the Savior (1:18-21; 2 Tim. 2:8), who was the Son of God by virtue of His divinity (Luke 1:35).
- 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 1:19 And Joseph her husband, being righteous and not willing to disgrace her openly, intended to send her away secretly.
- 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.
- Matt 1:21 And she will bear a son, and you shall call His name Jesus, for it is He who will save His people from their sins.
- 2 Tim 2:8 Remember Jesus Christ, raised from the dead, of the seed of David, according to my gospel,
- 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.
- f. Through His resurrection He as the human seed became the Son of God in His humanity—Rom. 1:3-4.
- Rom 1:3 Concerning His Son, who came out of the seed of David according to the flesh,  
 Rom 1:4 Who was designated the Son of God in power according to the Spirit of holiness out of the resurrection of the dead, Jesus Christ our Lord;
- g. In Christ God was constituted into man, man was constituted into God, and God and man were mingled together to be one entity, the God-man.
- h. This implies that God's intention in His economy is to make Himself man in order to make man God in life and in nature but not in the Godhead— John 3:6, 16; Rom. 1:3-4; 2 Pet. 1:4.
- John 3:6 That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.
- John 3:16 For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that everyone who believes into Him would not perish, but would have eternal life.
- Rom 1:3 Concerning His Son, who came out of the seed of David according to the flesh,  
 Rom 1:4 Who was designated the Son of God in power according to the Spirit of holiness out of the resurrection of the dead, Jesus Christ our Lord;  
 2 Pet 1:4 Through which He has granted to us precious and exceedingly great promises that through these you might become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption which is in the world by lust.

## **Excerpts from the Ministry:**

### **CHRIST'S TWO NATURES, DIVINE AND HUMAN**

In order to help us get into such a deep word, I want to present the designation of Christ's humanity in the following way. First, we have to see Christ's two natures—divine and human. The Bible is a divine revelation. Quite often, some revelations in the Bible are too deep, far beyond our human understanding. Apparently, all the Christians who read the Bible have come to know that Christ has two natures. Because He is both God and man, He possesses the divine nature and the human nature. In order to enter into the depths of the divine revelation concerning the designation of Christ's humanity, we need to see the two natures of Christ.

#### **Christ's Human Nature—His Humanity**

##### *According to the Flesh, Christ Being out of the Seed of David to Be the Son of Man*

According to the flesh, Christ was a human being who came out of the seed of David (v. 3). The seed of David is a descendant of David. Christ, according to the flesh as a human being, was one of the descendants of David. He was out of the seed of David, not to be the Son of God, because David was not God. David was a man. Therefore, Christ, according to His flesh, came out of the seed of David to be the Son of Man (John 3:14). In the four Gospels the Lord referred to Himself as the Son of Man seventy-eight times.

##### *Typified by the Bronze Serpent*

This is typified by the bronze serpent spoken of in Numbers 21:4-9. In John 3:14 the Lord Jesus Himself said, "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up." The Lord as the Son of Man was a serpent but only a serpent in form, in likeness, not a serpent in poison.

##### *Bearing the Likeness of the Serpent (the Likeness of the Flesh of Sin), without the Poison of the Serpent*

Romans 8:3 says that Christ bore the likeness of the flesh of sin. John 1:14 says, "The Word became flesh." Because *flesh* is a negative term, Chinese translators dared not translate this literally. Their translation of the word *flesh* in this verse is the word for *body*. But the Bible tells us definitely that Christ as the Word of God became flesh. Then Paul in Romans 8:3 gives a definition of what this means. Christ as the Word of God became flesh in the likeness of the flesh of sin.

##### *Related to Sin, Satan, and the World*

By reading the Bible carefully, we can see that there are three big, ugly things involved with the flesh. These three things are sin, Satan, and the world, the cosmos, the satanic system. The flesh, sin, Satan, and the world are four-in-one. God is triune, three-in-one. Now Satan has become four-in-one. Sin and the world came from Satan, and Satan today is in our flesh. We have pointed out that Christ became a man in the likeness of the flesh of sin. This fact indicates that He was indirectly involved with sin, Satan, and the world, yet not in reality, just in the likeness.

Paul, who was very strong in the deeper truths, said in 2 Corinthians 5:21, "Him who did not know sin He made sin on our behalf that we might become the righteousness of God in Him." John said that Christ as God became flesh, and Paul had the boldness to say that God made Christ sin. Christ is the One who knows no sin. He had nothing to do with sin, but God made this One, who had nothing to do with sin, sin.

We can see a picture of this in Numbers 21:4-9 with the children of Israel in the wilderness. They offended God, and He sent serpents among them to bite them. When they cried out to God, He told Moses to make a bronze serpent and lift it up on a pole. Everyone who looked upon this bronze serpent

would live. This bronze serpent was in the form of the biting serpent but without the poison. Such a serpent in the form of a serpent but without the poison became their savior, their deliverer. This bronze serpent delivered them from the poison by imparting life to them.

In John 3:14 the Lord Jesus revealed that He was the reality of that bronze serpent in the wilderness, indicating that when He was in the flesh, He was in the likeness of the flesh of sin, which likeness was equal to the form of the bronze serpent, which did not have the poison of the serpent. Verse 15 goes on to say that whoever believes into Him will receive eternal life.

God's making Christ sin is a very deep and bothering point in the entire Bible. His being made sin includes all sins. During the last three hours of His death on the cross, in the eyes of God Christ was made sin, so He was judged by God and even forsaken by God (Matt. 27:45-46 and footnote 451, Recovery Version). God made Him sin to die for us sinners in the form, the likeness, of the serpent, without the poison of the serpent. If He had had the poison, He could not have been our Redeemer. Also, if He had not been in the likeness of the serpent, He could not have been our Redeemer. He had to be a serpent in the likeness of a serpent but without the poison; then He could be our Redeemer.

I hope that by this simple explanation we can realize that Christ became flesh to be indirectly involved with sin only in the likeness of the flesh of sin but not in the reality. He bore the likeness of the serpent (the likeness of the flesh of sin), without the poison of the serpent (Rom. 8:3b). In this sense, His becoming flesh caused Him to be indirectly related to sin, Satan, and the world. His becoming related to sin is seen in 2 Corinthians 5:21. His being related to Satan is seen in Hebrews 2:14. This verse shows that Christ destroyed Satan by partaking of blood and flesh. By becoming the flesh, Christ crucified, destroyed, Satan on the cross. When God judged Christ on the cross, Satan was destroyed in the flesh. Then John 12:31 tells us that when Christ was judged by God on the cross, the world was also judged. By that one death, that one crucifixion on the cross, four things were cleared up: the flesh (the fallen man), sin, Satan, and the world. When we speak of Christ's human nature, we have to understand all these points.

### **Christ's Divine Nature—His Divinity**

#### ***According to the Spirit of Holiness, Christ Being Designated the Son of God***

Romans 1:4 says that Christ's humanity "was designated the Son of God in power according to the Spirit of holiness out of the resurrection of the dead." Here the Spirit of holiness is different from the Holy Spirit. In the Divine Trinity there are three persons, and the third One is the Holy Spirit, but the Spirit in Romans 1:4 is the same as that mentioned in John 4:24, where the Lord Jesus said, "God is Spirit." This does not mean that God is the Holy Spirit. To say that God is the Holy Spirit is right, but John 4:24 does not refer to the Holy Spirit of the Divine Trinity. It refers to the Spirit as God's essence, God's nature. To say that God is Spirit is like saying that a stand made of steel is steel. Steel is the very essence of the stand. In the same way, Spirit is the essence of God. When Christ became a man, picking up humanity, He did not give up His divinity. He came to be a man in His divinity, and that divinity is the Spirit, as mentioned in Romans 1:4 and John 4:24.

Christ, while He was on the earth, was both God and man. According to His being a man, He was the flesh. According to His being God, He was the Spirit. Christ is one person of two natures, the divine nature and the human nature. The human nature is the flesh, and the divine nature is the Spirit.

First Peter 3:18 says that when Christ was being put to death on the cross, His flesh was being put to death, not His Spirit. His Spirit, at the same time, was very active, was made alive. One person was crucified on the cross. According to His flesh, He was crucified, but according to His Spirit, He was very active, made strong.

According to the Spirit of holiness, Christ was designated the Son of God. According to the flesh, He was the son of David. But according to the Spirit, He was the Son of God. According to His humanity, He was the Son of Man, but how could His humanity become the Son of God? This is one of

the hardest points in the Bible for us to understand.

We are human beings, so we are all sons of man. How can God make us His children? God does this by regeneration. Human beings are the sons of man. God's children are the children of God. We human beings have been made children of God by regeneration. Regeneration is God coming into us, into our spirit, to be an element added into our human spirit. In regeneration our human spirit was made divine. When we were regenerated by God, we were made divine.

In the same principle, while Christ was on the earth before His resurrection, a part of Him, His humanity, was not divine. That human part was the Son of Man, not the Son of God. In His death His human part was crucified. Then in His resurrection God the Spirit as Christ's divinity was made strong, very active, to put divinity into the humanity of Christ to make it divine. This is the same principle of our regeneration. Before Christ's resurrection Christ's humanity was just human. But in Christ's resurrection His divinity as the Spirit was made strong to impart Himself into His humanity to make it divine. Thus, Christ became the Son of God in His humanity.

The Son of God in resurrection is different from the only begotten Son of God. The only begotten Son of God was only divine, without humanity. But the Son of God in resurrection is both divine and human, so this Son of God is not the only Begotten but the Firstborn among many brothers (Rom. 8:29). Thus, we may say that Christ in His humanity was the first one regenerated, so He became our firstborn Brother, and we became His many brothers. He and we all were regenerated in His resurrection.

Ephesians 2 reveals that in our spirit we were dead in offenses, but when Christ in His resurrection was made alive, we were made alive together with Him (v. 5). His humanity was crucified, but in resurrection His humanity was made alive by the Spirit. Ephesians 2 says that we were made alive and resurrected with Christ (vv. 5-6). This confirms Romans 1. We were regenerated by being made alive with Christ, by being raised up with Christ. First Peter 1:3 tells us that in the resurrection of Christ, God has regenerated all the believers.

### ***In Power***

*Power* in Romans 1:4 is the power of life. The phrase *in power* corresponds with 1 Peter 3:18, which says that Christ's flesh was put to death, but His Spirit was made alive. To be made alive means to be empowered.

### ***Out of Resurrection***

Christ came to be a man. He came out of the seed of David, so the seed of David is the source of Christ's flesh. Then Christ's humanity through resurrection became the Son of God out of resurrection. As the Son of Man, He came out of the seed of David. As the Son of God, He came out of resurrection. The resurrection is the Triune God embodied in Christ. In John 11:25 the Lord Jesus, the embodiment of the Triune God, said, "I am the resurrection." This means that the Triune God is the resurrection. If there were no God, there would be no resurrection in the universe. Resurrection is God, and this is the source out of which the firstborn Son of God came into being.

## **CHRIST'S DEATH**

### **For Sins, the Righteous on Behalf of the Unrighteous, That He Might Bring His Believers to God**

First Peter 3:18 says, "Christ also has suffered once for sins, the Righteous on behalf of the unrighteous, that He might bring you to God, on the one hand being put to death in the flesh, but on the other, made alive in the Spirit." It is true that Christ died on the cross for our sins that we might be forgiven and redeemed. But here Peter says that Christ died for the purpose of bringing His believers to God. He not only brought us to God but also brought us into God.

### **On the One Hand, Crucified in the Flesh**

On the one hand, Christ was put to death in the flesh, so He was crucified on the cross in the



flesh.

### **On the Other Hand, Made Alive in the Spirit**

On the other hand, Christ was made alive in the Spirit. Man put Him to death in the flesh, but God made Him alive in the Spirit. One death was going on, but two things were happening. This is what happens to a grain of wheat that has been sown into the earth. On the one hand, the grain dies, but there is another element in the grain, the life element. When the grain is dying, its life element grows.

John 12:24 says clearly that Christ was the grain of wheat. He was dying on the cross, on the one hand, in the flesh. On the other hand, He was growing in the Spirit. Verse 23 says that this was Christ's glorification. Christ gained the glorification through that kind of "dying death" and "living death." On the one hand, He was dying a "dying death." On the other hand, He was dying a "living death." We need to see that while Christ was dying in the flesh on the cross, He was living.

Peter says that in this made-alive Spirit, Christ went and proclaimed to the fallen angels in prison probably the victory of God over Satan their leader through the incarnation of God in Christ and Christ's death in the flesh (1 Pet. 3:19). On the cross Christ was made alive by God to accomplish God's purpose and even to proclaim God's victory over Satan.

First Peter 3:18 shows that in Christ's resurrection, His divine part was made alive to impart divinity into His humanity, making His humanity divine. In this way God, in Christ's resurrection, begot Christ. Acts 13:33 says that on the day of resurrection God said, "This day have I begotten You." That begetting equals our regenerating. Christ was begotten and we were regenerated in the same resurrection, at the same time. This resurrection was a big birth, a big delivery. Among the human race, no one has ever had twelve children at once. But in the universe there was a divine birth, a divine delivery, in which millions of children were born together with Christ as their firstborn Brother.

### **THE DESIGNATION OF CHRIST'S HUMANITY**

#### **Christ's Humanity—the Flesh—Being Not Divine but Human**

Christ's humanity, the flesh, was not divine but human.

#### **In His Resurrection His Humanity Being Designated**

In His resurrection His humanity was designated (resurrected, uplifted) into His divinity, that is, into His divine glory (John 12:23; Luke 24:25-26).

#### ***By the Spirit of Holiness***

The Spirit of holiness is Christ's divine part, His divinity. By His divinity His humanity was made divine.

#### ***In the Divine Power***

Christ's humanity was designated in the divine power. The reality of the power of Christ's resurrection is the Spirit.

#### ***Out of Resurrection***

Christ's humanity was designated into His divinity out of resurrection, which is the Triune God embodied in Christ.

#### ***To Be the Son of God***

By resurrection Christ was designated the Son of God with His humanity. He is the firstborn Son of God, possessing both divinity and humanity.

#### ***Born of God in His Resurrection***

This means that He was born of God in His resurrection (Acts 13:33) to be the firstborn Son of God among His many brothers, the many sons of God (Rom. 8:29).

#### ***His Redeemed Believers Born (Regenerated)***

*with Him in the Same Resurrection*

First Peter 1:3 and Ephesians 2:6 reveal that Christ's redeemed believers were regenerated with Him in the same resurrection.

**THE TWO STATUSES OF CHRIST'S SONSHIP**

Christ as the Son of God has two statuses.

**The Only Begotten Son of God**

Christ is the only begotten Son of God (John 1:18), possessing the divine nature, divinity, from eternity to eternity (Psa. 90:2; Rom. 9:5) as the second in the Divine Trinity—the Father, the Son, and the Spirit (Matt. 28:19).

**The Firstborn Son of God**

Christ is also the firstborn Son of God (Rom. 8:29), possessing both the divine nature and the human nature—divinity and humanity—from His resurrection through His ascension and His second coming to eternity. He is the firstborn Son of God beginning from and not earlier than His resurrection (Acts 13:33). The firstborn Son of God had not come into being before Christ's resurrection.

In Matthew 26:63 the high priest asked the Lord Jesus if He was the Son of God, but He answered with "the Son of Man" (v. 64). He said that when He comes back, He will be the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven. From the time of His resurrection, all of Christ's activity is not as the only begotten Son of God but as the firstborn Son of God in both His divinity and humanity. So in Christ's ascension He is still the Son of Man. Both Stephen and the apostle John saw this (Acts 7:55-56; Rev. 1:13). In His first coming He was God's only begotten Son. In His second coming He will be the Firstborn (Heb. 1:6). For eternity He will be the Son of Man (John 1:51 and footnote 3, Recovery Version).

Many Christians do not realize this deeper truth. They would agree that Christ was both God and man, but they might feel that Christ was no longer a man after His resurrection and ascension. Unconsciously, they may think that Christ was a man only for the thirty-three and a half years from His incarnation to His resurrection.

Joseph from Arimathea took the body of Jesus, and he and Nicodemus bound it in linen cloths and laid it in a new tomb (19:38-42). On the morning of Christ's resurrection, Peter and John saw the linen cloths lying there in the tomb and the handkerchief which had been over His head folded up in one place apart (20:5-7). Christ's body was gone because His body had been resurrected by being transformed from His humanity into His divinity. If you say that Christ was a man only for thirty-three and a half years, then I would ask, "Where is His body today?" The Bible tells us that when He resurrected, He left only the linen cloths and the handkerchief in the tomb. He did not leave His body there. His body was resurrected by being transformed from His humanity into His divinity, and that transformation was God's begetting. God begot Him in resurrection.

These are the deep details in the Bible. After this fellowship I hope that you will be made very clear. Christ's humanity was put on in His incarnation, but this humanity was transformed, begotten by God, from His humanity into His divinity in resurrection. So today He is still the Son of Man, not in the original human form but in the transformed, divine form. In resurrection we were regenerated with Him, but we were not transformed with Him. When He comes, He will transform, or transfigure, our body to be conformed to the body of His glory. Christ is the firstborn Son of God among the many sons of God, His many brothers (Rom. 8:29, 19; Heb. 2:10-12). (*The Collected Works of Witness Lee, 1994–1997*, vol. 1, "Crystallization study of the Epistle to the Romans," pp. 386-395)