

Message One Christ as the Great Light, the One Who Has Authority, the Physician, the Bridegroom, the Unfulfilled Cloth, and the New Wine

Overview

He shines as the great light on those dwelling in the realm of death, like the morning sun coming from on high, illuminating those who sit in darkness and guiding their feet into the way of peace. The centurion was a man under authority who could command those under him. He recognized that the Lord was also under authority—the Lord was fully under the rule of the Father's life and reigned in life. The Lord as the Physician heals us in our spirit and soul; as the Bridegroom, He enables us to enjoy living in His presence. First, He is the unshrunk cloth that became a new garment through death and resurrection, covering us with righteousness before God. The new wine symbolizes Christ as the invigorating new life that makes us joyful. The new wineskin symbolizes the church life in local churches as the vessel for this new wine, which is Christ's life that enlivens and inspires us. The corporate Christ as the church life is God's ultimate goal.

Day 1

1. Please explain Matthew 4:16: How do we experience Christ as the great light?
2. Please clarify why many believers today are still living by the seashore to make a living.

Explanation:

1. Matthew 4:16 shows that we can experience and enjoy Christ as the great light. He appears to those who dwell in the realm and shadow of death, illuminating the people who sit in darkness. This light is actually Christ Himself as the light of life shining in the shadow of death. When He was by the Sea of Galilee, He shone like a great light in the darkness.
2. Peter, Andrew, James, and John did not realize that when they were working for a living by the Sea of Galilee, they were in darkness and under the shadow of death. This illustrates today's situation: many Christians meet the Lord Jesus and are saved but do not value this experience. Instead, they focus on making a living.

Morning Prayer Verse:

"The people sitting in darkness saw a great light; and to those sitting in the region of death..."—Matthew 4:16

Day 2

1. Please explain how the centurion recognized the Lord's authority.
2. Please elaborate on the exercise of authority in the Lord and in us.

Explanation:

1. The Lord is a man of authority. The Gentile centurion recognized the Lord Jesus' authority. The Lord's authority is primarily exercised through His word. When the Lord told the centurion He would come to heal his servant, the centurion replied, "Lord, I am not worthy for You to come under my roof; just say the word, and my servant will be healed." He understood that the Lord's word carried healing authority.
2. On one hand, concerning the Lord, His authority is exercised through His word. On the other hand, concerning us, the Lord's authority is exercised through the faith He infuses into us. When we see the Lord and hear His word, His being and His characteristics infuse us with the ability to believe; this ability comes from Him.

Morning Prayer Verse:

"The centurion answered and said, 'Lord, I am not worthy for You to come under my roof, but just say the word...'—Matthew 8:8

Day 3

1. Please discuss Matthew 9:12, where the Lord reveals Himself as the Physician.
2. Please describe the state of the Pharisees and why the Lord could not heal them.

Explanation:

1. The Lord used the Pharisees' question as an opportunity to reveal Himself as the Physician. The Lord said, "Those who are strong have no need of a physician, but those who are sick." The Lord told the Pharisees that the tax collectors and sinners were sick. The Lord was not their judge but their Physician and healer. The Physician's healing is based on mercy and grace.
2. The self-righteous Pharisees criticized the Lord and condemned all unclean people. Yet the Lord seemed to say, "These people are not unclean; they are sick. I came not as a judge to condemn them but as a Physician to heal them." The Lord pointed out that the self-righteous Pharisees were actually sick like everyone else.

Morning Prayer Verse:

*“But when Jesus heard this, He said, ‘Those who are strong have no need of a physician, but those who are sick.’”—
Matthew 9:12*

Day 4

1. Please explain the Lord as the Physician and the Bridegroom.
2. Please describe the Lord’s different identity when dealing with the old and new religious people.

Explanation:

1. Both the Physician and the Bridegroom are delightful. In the case of the Pharisees, He likened Himself to a Physician. In the case of John’s disciples, He likened Himself to the Bridegroom. Being with the Bridegroom is a time of joy, but when the Bridegroom is taken away, they will fast. During the Lord’s earthly ministry, His disciples were His companions, and later they would become His bride.
2. The royal Savior dealt with the self-righteous and dissenting Pharisees in the old religion by indicating that He was the Physician to heal the sick. When dealing with the dissenting disciples of John in the new religion, He revealed Himself as the Bridegroom to marry the bride. John the Baptist had told his disciples that Christ was the Bridegroom who would marry the bride.

Morning Prayer Verse:

*“And Jesus said to them, ‘Can the attendants of the bridegroom mourn while the bridegroom is with them?...’”—
Matthew 9:15*

Day 5

1. Please share on Matthew 9:16 regarding the Lord as the unshrunk cloth.
2. Please explain Luke 5:36 about Him as the new garment.

Explanation:

1. In Matthew 9:16, the Lord speaks of a finer, sweeter, and more intimate matter. “Unshrunk” in the original text means unfinished, unprocessed, or untreated. The unshrunk cloth symbolizes Christ before His death and resurrection, like untreated new cloth.
2. Luke 5:36 mentions the new garment, which symbolizes Christ who, through the process of crucifixion, became a new garment. Christ was first the unshrunk cloth to become the new garment. Then, through death and resurrection, He became the new garment, our righteousness before God, covering us and making us acceptable to Him.

Morning Prayer Verse:

“But no one puts a patch of unshrunk cloth on an old garment; for the patch pulls away...”—Matthew 9:16

Day 6

1. Please explain Matthew 9:17: Why shouldn’t new wine be put into old wineskins?
2. Please explain the new wine being put into new wineskins.

Explanation:

1. In Matthew 9:17, “new” wine refers to something fresh and new in time. The new wine symbolizes Christ as the new life, full of vitality and invigorating power. New wine is Christ as the life that energizes people. We should not put new wine into old wineskins. Old wineskins symbolize religious practices, as all religions are old wineskins.
2. New wineskins symbolize the church life in the local churches, which are the containers for the new wine. The new wine is Christ Himself as the invigorating life. The kingdom people are built up in the church, which is expressed through the local churches where they live. They are regenerated people, constituting the Body of Christ as the church.

Morning Prayer Verse:

*“Nor do people put new wine into old wineskins; otherwise the wineskins burst, and the wine pours out...”—
Matthew 9:17*

Summary

Christ, the heavenly King, is our Physician, carrying healing authority. His healing is not only a matter of power but also of authority. He does not need to touch us directly; He only needs to speak a word, and His authority follows His word. If we have this vision, whenever we are sick physically, spiritually, or psychologically, we will have faith in Him and rely on Him as our Physician. At the end of this age, the Lord is recovering the final and ultimate item—the church life. Those who enjoy the church life are the church people. Among the church people, the new garment, new wine, and new wineskins are all restored. We have the corporate Christ as our church life. The church is God’s ultimate goal.