

The Mingled Spirit in Ephesians— The Secret of Experiencing Christ for the Building Up and Reality of the Body of Christ

by Ed Marks

Paul's Epistle to the Ephesians contains a great revelation of the economy of God, His divine plan, according to His heart's desire, to dispense His unsearchable riches into His chosen and redeemed people that they may become the reality of the Body of Christ for the glory of Christ, the fullness of Christ, the radiant expression of Christ (3:8-11, 19-21). The resurrected and ascended Christ is "Head over all things to the church, which is His Body, the fullness of the One who fills all in all" (1:22-23). Ephesians presents to us the vision of the church as the Body of Christ in a number of crucial aspects, and we must pray for a spirit of wisdom and revelation to see His Body as the goal of God's heart's desire (1:17). In addition to seeing this vision, we must look to the Lord as the Spirit of reality also to guide us into the reality of living Christ and ministering Christ according to this vision so that we can say with the apostle Paul that we are "not disobedient to the heavenly vision" (Acts 26:19).

The Divine Spirit Dwelling in Our Human Spirit and Mingled Together as One Spirit

The focus of this article will be the secret of experiencing Christ for the building up and reality of the Body of Christ. This secret, this key, is what we refer to as our mingled spirit. In order to enter into this secret and to employ this key, we must see not only the divine Spirit of God but also the human spirit of man (1 Cor. 2:11), and we must see that in our regeneration, our being born anew of God, these two spirits have been joined together as one mingled spirit (John 3:6; Rom. 8:16; 1 Cor. 6:17). The Old Testament says in Proverbs 20:27 that the spirit of man is the lamp of Jehovah and in Zechariah 12:1 that God stretches forth the heavens, lays the foundations of the earth, and forms the spirit of man within him. The New Testament also speaks of the spirit of man, which Paul refers to as "my spirit" and "our spirit" (2 Cor. 2:13; Rom. 8:16).

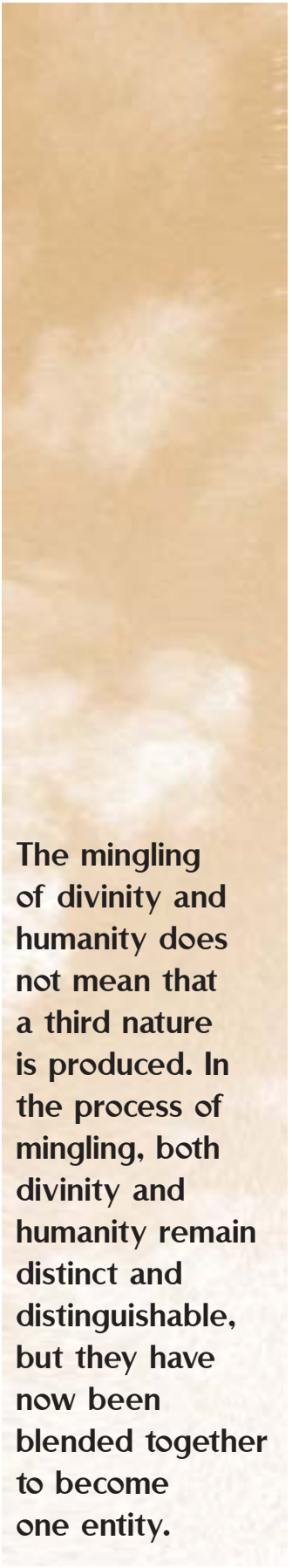
Four verses in the New Testament refer both to the Spirit of God and the spirit of man—John 3:6, 4:24, Romans 8:16, and 1 Corinthians 2:11. John 3:6 says, "That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit"; John 4:24 says that God is Spirit, and we must worship Him in and with our spirit; Romans 8:16 says the Spirit Himself witnesses with our spirit that we are children of God; and 1 Corinthians 2:11 says that the spirit of man knows the things of man, and the Spirit of God knows the things of God. Just as flesh begets flesh, Spirit begets spirit. Our first birth was our being born of the flesh to be flesh. Our second birth, when we received Christ as our new and divine life, was our being born of the divine Spirit of life to become a new creation with a new spirit (2 Cor. 5:17; Ezek. 36:26). Our new spirit has God's life as its life and is organically joined to God's spirit. Second Corinthians 3:17 says that the Lord is the Spirit, and 2 Timothy 4:22 says that the Lord is with our spirit. Then 1 Corinthians 6:17 says, "He who is joined to the Lord is one spirit." Thus, we may say that the Lord Spirit, the divine Spirit, dwells in our human spirit to be mingled together as one spirit.

The word *mingled* is the word that the Scriptures use to describe God's desire, in His relationship with man, to dispense Himself into man and produce a God-man. Leviticus 2:4-5 presents the picture of the meal offering, which is composed of fine flour "mingled" with oil. The fine flour signifies Christ's perfect humanity, and the oil signifies the pure Spirit of God's divinity. The mingling of divinity and humanity does not mean that a third nature is produced. In the process of mingling, both divinity and humanity remain distinct and distinguishable in their combination, but they have now been blended together to become one entity. When God became a man, He was the mingling of God with man, the unique God-man. This God-man was crucified for our redemption as the last Adam and was resurrected to become the Spirit of the God-man, "a life-giving Spirit" (1 Cor. 15:45), so that He could dispense Himself as life, the divine life (Gk., *zoe*), into our spirit. Now it is a remarkable fact that the life-giving Spirit and our spirit are joined to be one entity and are now "one spirit" (6:17).

Furthermore, Christ as the life-giving Spirit imparted the divine life into our spirit to make our spirit the divine life (Gk., *zoe*) itself (Rom. 8:10). Now that the divine Spirit has been mingled with our spirit to be one spirit and now that our spirit is *zoe*, we must continually exercise to deny ourselves and live by the divine life, the indwelling Christ as the Spirit of life in our spirit. The secret to living and serving Christ for the building up of the Body of Christ is for us to learn to use, to care for, to heed, and to live, walk, move, and have our being in and according to our mingled spirit (Gal. 5:25; Phil. 3:3; Rom. 1:9; 2 Cor. 2:13).

C. I. Scofield points out that the Triune God created the tripartite man in His image, making man a "trinity" with a spirit and soul and body, according to 1 Thessalonians 5:23: "Because man is 'spirit' he is capable of God-consciousness, and of communication with God (Job 32:8; Psa. 18:28; Prov. 20:27); because he is 'soul' he has self-consciousness (Psa. 13:2; 42:5, 6, 11); because he is 'body' he has, through his senses, world-consciousness" (1270). Because of man's fall, he became "dead in offenses and sins" (Eph. 2:1). This death means that man's spirit became dead to God in its function to contact God, sense God, and be conscious of the presence of God, who is Spirit. But thank the Lord, through Christ's redeeming death and His life-dispensing resurrection, our spirit has been rebuilt and reinforced with God's renewing Spirit (Titus 3:5), thus making our spirit a new spirit. Ezekiel 36:26-27 reveals that in regeneration God would give us a new spirit by putting His Spirit within us. Now our spirit contains God, and this new spirit can contact God, receive God, worship God, live God, and fulfill God's purpose for God. Now we can live God by walking in newness of life (Rom. 6:4) and serve God by serving in newness of spirit (7:6), which is the newness of our spirit of *zoe*.

In God's new covenant He has put His Spirit into our spirit, installing Himself into our spirit as the law of the Spirit of life (8:2). As "the Spirit-law," the divine and mystical life-law, He is in our spirit as an automatic principle and innate capacity. Because He is such a life-law in our spirit, we simply need to give Him the way to automatically operate in us by cooperating with Him through the exercise of our new spirit by prayer (Phil. 2:13; 4:6-7). To exercise our spirit is to exercise ourselves to live Christ in our daily life for the expression of God (1 Tim. 4:7). According to Ezekiel 36—based on His giving us a new spirit to contact Him, a new heart to love Him, and putting His Spirit within us—He will automatically and spontaneously "cause" us to walk in His statutes (vv. 26-27). This is fulfilled in Romans 8 where Paul speaks of the indwelling Spirit of life being dispensed into our spirit to be a law, an automatic principle and a spontaneous function, within us. As such a law, like the law of electricity, the Spirit mingled with our spirit simply needs to be "switched on" by us in order that He may "electrify" us with Himself, causing Christ as our light to shine in us and through us before men, so that they may see our good works and glorify our heavenly Father (Matt. 5:16). By exercising our spirit to "switch on" the indwelling Spirit as the law of life, we spontaneously live Him out as our salvation by the power of His inner operation (Phil. 2:12). God operates in us



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both the willing and the working for His good pleasure (v. 13), causing us to do all things without murmurings and reasonings and making us shine as His divine and mystical luminaries in this dark and corrupted world (vv. 14-15). “The Spirit...with our spirit” (Rom. 8:16), our spirit joined to the Lord Spirit to make us “one spirit” (1 Cor. 6:17) is the “switch,” the key, to living a Christian life for the Body-life.

Hymns, #745 expresses the great truth and precious experience of the divine Spirit mingled and intertwined with our spirit in a beautiful, poetic song of divine truth:

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| <p>1 O Lord, Thou art the Spirit now
Who in our spirit lives;
One Spirit have the two become,
Which oneness to us gives.</p> <p>2 Thy Spirit with our spirit, Lord,
The witness ever bears
That we the Father’s children are
And of God’s glory heirs.</p> <p>3 ’Tis in our spirit Thee we touch,
Thy riches to enjoy,
And as the Spirit Thou dost give
Thyself without alloy.</p> <p>4 ’Tis in our spirit we may walk
And follow Thee alway,
While, as the Spirit Thou dost lead
And light impart each day.</p> | <p>5 In spirit, by Thy Spirit, Lord,
We live and worship Thee;
Thou, in our spirit, thru Thine own
Strengtheneth constantly.</p> <p>6 In spirit, with Thy Spirit, Lord,
We offer prayer to Thee,
While, as the Spirit, Thou in us
Groanest unutterably.</p> <p>7 We to our spirit would return
And there would contact Thine;
’Tis in the spirit we may share
Our heritage divine.</p> <p>8 What oneness, O my Lord, is this—
Two spirits intertwine!
Thy Spirit in our spirit lives,
And ours abides in Thine!</p> |
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Stanza 7 of *Hymns*, #491 amazingly points out a marvelous revelation and result of the mingling of our spirit with the divine Spirit: “Thy Spirit in my spirit now / Supplies Thyself, unites with me, / Thus I am all the time myself / And constantly am also Thee.” When we live by the Spirit and walk by the Spirit (Gal. 5:25), thus walking according to our spirit in newness of life (Rom. 8:4; 6:4), and when we serve by the Spirit of God, thus serving in our spirit in newness of spirit (1:9; 7:6), we can say to our precious Lord who indwells us that “I am all the time myself / And constantly am also Thee.”

This is what Paul means when he says that Christ lived in him and that he lived Christ (Gal. 2:20; Phil. 1:21). When Paul lived, he was still Paul, but he was also Christ. When people saw Paul, they saw Christ because he enjoyed and was filled with the glorified Christ in resurrection as the bountiful supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ to live Christ for His magnification (Phil. 1:19-21). Christ was magnified, extolled, made great, and enlarged in Paul’s body to make him a letter of Christ so that everyone could read and know Christ in his being. He also ministered Christ as the life-giving “ink”—the Spirit of the living God—to God’s chosen ones in order to make them letters of Christ for the magnification of Christ (2 Cor. 3:3). He lived and ministered by the divine Spirit mingled with his human spirit for the building up of the Body of Christ to express Christ.

Ephesians reveals that the building up of the Body of Christ is absolutely in our mingled spirit—the divine Spirit dwelling in our human spirit and mingled together as one spirit. This mingled spirit is the corporate spirit of the Body, that is, “our spirit,” joining us not only to the divine Spirit but also to the spirits of all the members of the Body. In the *Life-study of Ephesians*, Witness Lee points out the following concerning the words “our spirit” in Romans 8:16:

The words “our spirit” include Paul’s spirit, Martin Luther’s spirit, John Wesley’s spirit, Brother Nee’s spirit, your spirit, and my spirit. How spacious our spirit is! The Bible reveals that God is the God of our spirit (Num. 16:22; Heb. 12:9). Where is God today?

In our spirit. Where is God's dwelling place today? In our spirit. Where is the one new man? Also in our spirit. (213)

Paul's consciousness of his spirit being joined to the spirits of all the saints was so strong due to the continual exercise of his spirit that his spirit actually was in attendance with them in their meeting (1 Cor. 5:4), though he was not physically present.

We can see in the type of the tabernacle, God's dwelling place in the Old Testament, that our mingled spirit is the corporate spirit of the Body. The boards of the tabernacle, made of acacia wood overlaid with gold, typify the believers in Christ who have been transformed with Christ's incorruptible divinity (typified by gold) and with Christ's uplifted humanity (typified by acacia wood). These boards were united together by bars made of acacia wood overlaid with gold. These uniting bars typify the uniting Holy Spirit, the Spirit of the glorified Jesus, with the mingling of divinity and humanity. The Recovery Version points out also that "in actuality, the uniting bars signify not the Holy Spirit alone, but the Holy Spirit mingled with our human spirit (Rom. 8:16)—the mingled spirit, which includes both divinity and humanity" (Exo. 26:26, note 1). It is significant that Exodus 26:28 says that "the middle bar shall pass through in the center of the boards from end to end." Our spirit is "the middle bar," our innermost being, which passes through and is organically joined to the spirits of all the other members of the Body of Christ. This picture reveals that to keep the oneness of the Spirit is to live in the Spirit who has been mingled with our spirit. This mingled spirit, typified by the uniting middle bar to join the boards of the tabernacle, is the uniting bond of peace in the Body of Christ (Eph. 4:3-4).


The mingled spirit, the oneness of the Spirit with our spirit, is so vitally important to the Body life that it is mentioned in each chapter of the book of Ephesians for our experience of the reality of the Body of Christ (1:17; 2:22; 3:5, 16; 4:23; 5:18; 6:18).

A Spirit of Wisdom and Revelation

In Ephesians 1:17 Paul prays for us that "the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to you a spirit of wisdom and revelation in the full knowledge of Him." We need God to grant us such a spirit as a great gift from Him. We need a spirit of wisdom in order to be infused with God's understanding and knowing of Christ by the Spirit of wisdom, the Spirit of understanding, and the Spirit of the knowledge of Jehovah in our spirit (Isa. 11:2), and we need a spirit of revelation, a seeing spirit to see the invisible, divine, mystical, and wonderful Christ. This Christ is the mystery of God (Col. 2:2), and the church as His Body is the mystery of Christ (Eph. 3:4), thus making Christ and the church a great mystery (5:32), which can only be realized by a personal revelation from God in our spirit. Thus, Paul says,

By revelation the mystery was made known to me, as I have written previously in brief, by which, in reading it, you can perceive my understanding in the mystery of Christ, which in other generations was not made known to the sons of men, as it has now been revealed to His holy apostles and prophets in spirit. (3:3-5)

It is only in our spirit through prayer that we can receive a divine revelation of Christ, the One who is both the Head of the Body (Col. 1:18) and the Body of the Head (1 Cor. 12:12). This corporate Christ is what Paul refers to in Ephesians as the "one new man," a corporate new creation by God, a new species of God, a new race of God mingled together with His chosen and redeemed people, to make them the "masterpiece" of God (Eph. 2:15, 10). In this new man there is no room and no possibility for any natural person, but Christ is all the members and is in all the members (Col. 3:10-11). In saying this, we do not mean that we participate in any way in Christ's deity or Godhead. What we are saying according to the Scriptures is that Christ wants to be revealed in us (Gal.



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We need a spirit of wisdom and revelation in order to know Christ as the hope of our calling. Our hope is that the pneumatic Christ in our spirit will spread into and transform our soul and eventually transfigure the body of our humiliation.

1:15-16), that His desire is to live in us (2:20), and that He is longing to be formed in us (4:19) to “Christify” us with Himself as the divine life and the divine nature (1 John 5:11-12; 2 Pet. 1:4), thus making us His duplication as the sons of the living God and the members of His living Body. What a great revelation this is, and how we need to daily pray for a spirit of revelation to see this more and more! We cannot go on in our Christian life and service without a daily, new, up-to-date seeing of Him and of His desire to dispense Himself into us. Such a heavenly vision governs and directs us to stay intimately connected to Him as our Head in our spirit so that out from Him as the Head, all the Body would be richly supplied by us as His functioning members for us to grow with the growth of God, that is, with the increase of God as life within us until we corporately become a full-grown man and arrive at the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ (Col. 2:19; Eph. 4:13).

If we see that God’s desire is to constitute us purely and wholly with the person of Christ so that we would become the reality of the Body of Christ, this will “paralyze” us from exercising anything of our natural man, with its natural strength, ability, and power. Instead, we will live according to the vision that God’s desire is to have a group of people who are constituted purely and wholly with the person of Christ. Thus, our prayer will be, “Lord Jesus, be revealed in me, live in me and through me, and transform me and be formed in me. Lord Jesus, grow in me so that I may grow up into You in all things for the growth, the building up, of Your Body.” May God make us men of prayer who daily pray for a spirit of wisdom and revelation to live and serve in the reality of the revelation of God’s desire for our “Christification” day by day.

Ephesians 1 says that we need a spirit of wisdom and revelation in order to know Christ as the hope of our calling (vv. 17-18). The Christ whom we experience, enjoy, and announce is Christ in us, the hope of glory (Col. 1:27). Our hope is that the pneumatic Christ (the Christ who is the Spirit) in our spirit will spread into and transform our soul (our mind, emotion, and will) and eventually “transfigure the body of our humiliation to be conformed to the body of His glory, according to His operation by which He is able even to subject all things to Himself” (Phil. 3:21). When our mortal bodies are swallowed up by Christ as our life in His second coming (2 Cor. 5:4), we will be exactly like Him in our spirit, our soul, and our body. To be “like Him” is our hope, “and everyone who has this hope set on Him purifies himself, even as He is pure” (1 John 3:2-3).

Along with seeing Christ as our indwelling hope, we also need to see that He is the wealth, the riches of God’s inheritance in the saints (Eph. 1:14, 18). We have Him as the treasure of the Triune God in our earthen vessels (2 Cor. 4:7). This untraceably rich Christ indwells us as our God-given portion for our inheritance (Col. 1:12). By enjoying the wealth of Christ as our inheritance, we are constituted and mingled with Him to become a divine and mystical structure of treasure for His inheritance. Our stewardship is to experience the unsearchable riches of Christ and to dispense these riches into God’s chosen ones (Eph. 3:8) so that they may become the corporate fullness of God (v. 19), the corporate expression of the Christ who fills all in all (1:23). “When the riches of Christ are assimilated into our being metabolically, they constitute us to be the fullness of Christ, the Body of Christ, the church, as His expression” (Recovery Version, Eph. 3:19, note 3).

Paul’s prayer is also for us to have a seeing spirit that we may know Christ as our resurrecting power, ascending power, heading-up power, and subjecting power (1:19-23). Christ as the fourfold power of God (1 Cor. 1:24) is the surpassingly great power toward those who believe (Eph. 1:19), and He is Head over all things “to” the church (vv. 22-23). The word *to* implies transmission. In order to participate in the transmitting of Christ as the resurrecting, ascending, transcending, and heading-up power “to” the church, we must know, we must use, and we must exercise our spirit. Because Christ as

the power of God dwells in our spirit, our spirit is a spirit of power (2 Tim. 1:7), and by exercising our spirit, we are able to do all things in Christ as the empowering One (Phil. 4:13).


Being Built Together into a Dwelling Place of God in Spirit

Ephesians 2:22 says that in Christ we “are being built together into a dwelling place of God in spirit.” God is the Dweller, and our spirit is His dwelling place. If we want to contact a person, we must know more than just his general location. We may know that a person lives in a certain country and may even know the city in which he dwells. But in order to contact him in a definite way, we must know his address. The “address” of Christ, the embodiment of the Triune God, is our regenerated human spirit. Because our spirit is the dwelling place of God, the house of God, it is today’s Bethel, the Hebrew word meaning “house of God.” Bethel is revealed in Genesis 28, which records that Jacob had a dream in which he saw “a ladder set up on the earth, and its top reached to heaven; and there the angels of God were ascending and descending on it” (v. 12). When Jacob awoke, he said, “How awesome is this place! This is none other than the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven” (v. 17). This dream is actually a revelation of Christ, who told His disciple Nathanael, “Truly, truly, I say to you, You shall see heaven opened and the angels of God ascending and descending on the Son of Man” (John 1:51). Heaven signifies God, and earth signifies man; thus, Christ is the heavenly ladder who brings God into man and man into God. Our regenerated spirit is God’s dwelling place today (Eph. 2:22), the place where Christ as the heavenly ladder has been set up (2 Tim. 4:22).

Our spirit is not only the house of God but also the “the gate of heaven.” Thus, when we turn to our spirit, the house of God, we also enter through our spirit as the gate of heaven to enjoy the enthroned Christ in heaven, who is reigning as the reality of the throne of grace to supply us with all that we need to live and enjoy Him as our heavenly life on earth (Heb. 4:16). On the one hand, Christ as the heavenly ladder is in our spirit (Rom. 8:10), bringing God into us; on the other hand, He is sitting at the right hand of God, interceding for us, bringing us into God (v. 34). When we enter into our spirit as the gate of heaven, we enjoy Christ as our great High Priest (Heb. 7:26; 8:1), who is “ministering to us the heavenly life, grace, authority, and power and sustaining us to live a heavenly life on earth” (Recovery Version, Heb. 1:3, note 4). When we turn to our spirit, exercise our spirit, use our spirit, pay attention to our spirit, and live in our spirit, we enjoy “the Christ now, the Christ today, and the Christ on the throne in the heavens, who is our daily salvation and moment-by-moment supply” (note 4).

The fact that we are being built together into a dwelling place of God in our spirit also reveals that our spirit is where the building up of the church takes place. As long as we stay outside of our spirit, we are divided, divisive, and individualistic. But if we remain in the life-giving Spirit in our spirit, we keep the oneness of the Spirit for the building up of the one Body. The apostle Paul wrote 1 Corinthians because he was burdened that the divided and divisive saints in Corinth would aspire to the growth in life that they might become spiritual men, men who live in their mingled spirit. First Corinthians reveals that we can be three kinds of men: fleshly (even fleshy), soulish, or spiritual. A man who is dominated by his sinful flesh is “fleshly” and becomes “fleshy” when he is fully taken over by and constituted with the flesh (3:1, 3). Those who are fleshly are divisive and divide the Body of Christ (vv. 3-4).

A man who is governed by his soul and directed mainly by the natural intelligence of his fallen mind, the leading part of the soul, is a soulish man. Paul says that “a soulish man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him and he is not able to know them because they are discerned spiritually” (2:14). Those who think that they are wise in their mind and strong in themselves need to realize that “the



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foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men” (1:25). If a genuine, regenerated Christian neglects the indwelling Spirit in his spirit and lives in his fallen soul, he will become a divisive person. Jude says that ones who make divisions are “soulish, having no spirit” (v. 19). The Recovery Version quotes Alford as saying that those who are soulish and have no spirit refers to apostate believers who “have not indeed ceased to have a spirit, as a part of their own tripartite nature [1 Thes. 5:23]: but they have ceased to possess it in any worthy sense: it is degraded beneath and under the power of the *psyche* [soul], the personal life, so as to have no real vitality of its own” (Recovery Version, Jude 19, note 2).

We need to ask the Lord to save us not only from being fleshly men but also from being soulish men. A soulish Christian does not deny himself but uses his natural ability, natural strength, and natural man to “serve” the Lord. We must aspire to be spiritual men (1 Cor. 2:15), those who reject everything of themselves and their natural man and who are dominated, governed, led, controlled, and directed by their mingled spirit. A spiritual man exercises his mingled spirit, his new spirit, to contact Christ, and he keeps his new heart turned to the Lord to love God with all his heart. In his loving contact with the Lord, the Spirit reveals the unsearchably rich Christ to him and brings Him into the participation and enjoyment of Christ as the depths of God (vv. 9-12). By the exercise of our mingled spirit, we can know Christ as the complete God and the perfect man; our human spirit reveals the things of Christ’s beautiful humanity with His human virtues to us, and the divine Spirit reveals the things of His glorious divinity with His divine attributes to us (vv. 11-12). By the exercise of our mingled spirit, we are thus clothed with Christ as our glory and our beauty (Exo. 28:2). Furthermore, because the Spirit of reality is in our spirit, He guides us into all the reality of the oneness of the Spirit, which is the oneness of the Body of Christ (John 16:13; Eph. 4:3-4). The building up of the church in the oneness of the Spirit, the oneness for which the Lord prayed in John 17, is possible only with those who are spiritual men, men who live, move, and have their being in their spirit.

Strengthened with Power into the Inner Man

We must follow the apostle Paul’s pattern in Ephesians 3 to pray that God the Father would strengthen us “with power through His Spirit into the inner man,” that Christ may make His home in our hearts (vv. 16-17). Paul first prays in chapter 1 for the Ephesians to receive the revelation of Christ and His Body, whereas in chapter 3 his prayer is for their experience of the reality of Christ and His Body. In Paul’s prayer in chapter 3 he speaks of “the inner man” and our “hearts.” Our inner man is our regenerated spirit, which has been indwelt by and mingled with the Spirit of life. Our heart is composed of all the parts of our soul—the mind (Gen. 6:5; Heb. 4:12), the emotion (John 16:6, 22), and the will (Acts 11:23; Heb. 4:12)—plus our conscience (10:22; 1 John 3:20), which is also the main part of our spirit (Rom. 9:1; cf. 8:16). First Peter 3:4 says that our spirit is the hidden man of our heart, revealing that our spirit is hidden within and encompassed by our heart. The diagram of man’s tripartite being shows our spirit, with the shaded area showing all the surrounding parts of our heart (Lee, *Economy* 64).



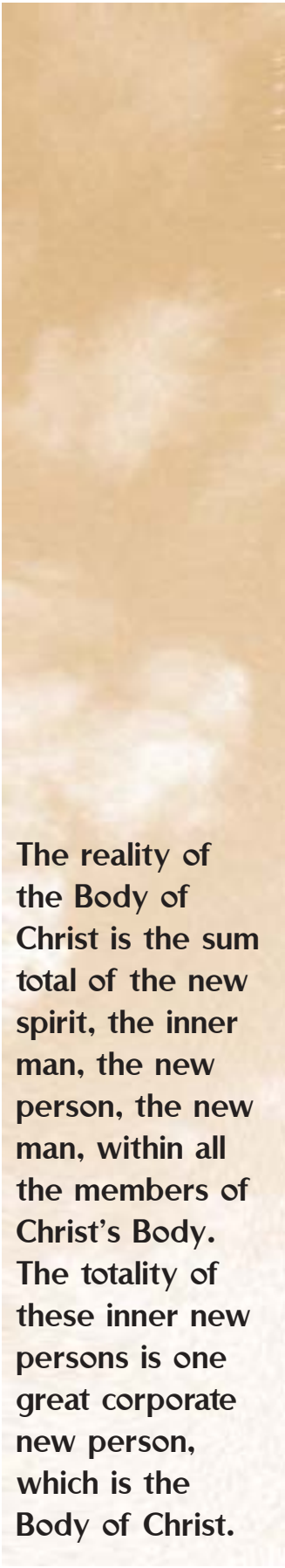
Although Christ as the Spirit dwells in our spirit, He wants to spread from our spirit into all the parts of our heart, making our heart His home. He wants to flow freely as the Spirit in the major “arteries” of our heart—our mind, emotion, and will. He wants our mind to be the mind of Christ (1 Cor. 2:16; Phil. 2:5), the mind of the Spirit (Rom.

8:27); He wants our emotion to love what He loves and hate what He hates (Eph. 5:25; Rev. 2:6); and He wants to operate in us the willing and the working for God's good pleasure (Phil. 2:13; Heb. 10:7). In order to make His home, to settle down, in all the parts of our heart, we must pray to be strengthened with Christ as our resurrecting, ascending, subjecting, and heading-up power in order to be discharged by the empowering Christ out of ourselves and into our inner man, our mingled spirit.

We must see that our mingled spirit is a man—our inner man, our new person, our new man. Before we were regenerated, we lived by our outer man, which is composed of our soul as our person with our body as the soul's organ. Now that we are regenerated, the pneumatic Christ mingled with our spirit is our person with the soul as its organ to express the thoughts, feelings, and intents of Christ so that Christ can be magnified in our body for the carrying out of God's holy purpose (2 Cor. 4:16; Phil. 1:20). Thus, "the soul becomes a servant to the spirit, and the body is conquered to become the soul's servant for the execution of the spirit's will" (Nee 303). We must be strengthened with divine power into our new person, our inner man, our new man, for the building up of the Body of Christ. The reality of the Body of Christ is the sum total of the new spirit, the inner man, the new person, the new man, within all the members of Christ's Body (cf. Heb. 12:9; Rev. 22:6). The totality of these inner new persons is one great corporate new person, which is the Body of Christ as the new man, the great God-man, who is the unique masterpiece and new creation of the Triune God (Eph. 2:10, 15; 4:24; Col. 3:10-11), the ultimate mingling of the Triune God with the tripartite man for God's glory in the church (Eph. 3:21).

Our being strengthened with power into the inner man through our contacting God in prayer causes us to be full of strength to apprehend with all the saints the unlimited and universal dimensions of Christ as the breadth, length, height, and depth (v. 18). Our being strengthened into the inner man causes us to experience Christ in the Body, through the Body, and for the Body, because by being in our mingled spirit, our inner man, we become full of strength to apprehend the unlimited Christ "with all the saints." Furthermore, we experience Christ in the Body as the universal "cube" in a three-dimensional way as the breadth, length, height, and depth. This is a significant revelation for our experience of Christ. The Holy of Holies in the tabernacle was a cube (Exo. 26:2-8), the Holy of Holies in the temple was a cube (1 Kings 6:20), and ultimately the New Jerusalem as the eternal Holy of Holies is an eternal cube (Rev. 21:16). In our corporate experience of Christ He is a "cube," and His Body, the church, is a "cube." Because our spirit is the dwelling place of God, the reality of the Holy of Holies, our spirit is also a "cube." The genuine experience of Christ in our spirit and in the church, as the real temple of God to consummate the New Jerusalem, is a cubic experience of the three-dimensional corporate Christ. In this genuine experience of Christ in a corporate way, we are balanced by the Body and are kept, stabilized, and solidified in the "cube" of Christ, the church, our spirit, and the New Jerusalem as the reality of the Holy of Holies.

We should experience Christ horizontally as the breadth of what He is and then the length. When we go on to experience Him more, we experience Him vertically as the height and the depth. "Our experience of Christ must become three-dimensional, like a cube, and must not be one-dimensional, like a line" (Recovery Version, Eph. 3:18, note 3). If we experience only the length of Christ without being balanced by His breadth, we can become a "one-liner," an unbalanced extremist, whose experience of Christ is on a single "line." Some may have an extreme emphasis on studying the Bible but have very little prayer. Others may have much prayer but very little study of the Bible. Some care only for their personal experience of Christ and neglect the corporate meetings of the church. Others care only for corporate meetings of the church and have very little personal time with the Lord. Some have an extreme emphasis on experiencing Christ as the inner life but neglect the preaching of the gospel. Others preach the gospel to an



The reality of the Body of Christ is the sum total of the new spirit, the inner man, the new person, the new man, within all the members of Christ's Body. The totality of these inner new persons is one great corporate new person, which is the Body of Christ.

**To be renewed
in the spirit of
our mind is
to allow our
mingled spirit,
our inner man
and new person,
to spread into
our mind so
that our mind
is governed,
possessed,
occupied, taken
over, controlled,
and subdued
by our
mingled spirit.**

extreme but neglect drinking the Lord as their inner water of life so that their preaching would be the overflow of life. All of these believers are not balanced by Christ and especially by the members of His Body. They are individualistic and like to do things according to their natural disposition instead of according to Christ as the balanced “cube” in their spirit and according to the Body as the balancing “cube” of corporate fellowship. An unwillingness to crucify our natural disposition and take Christ as our life to be balanced by the Body will make us “one-liners,” will lead us astray, and will take us out of the “cube” of the real Christ and the reality of the Body of Christ.

In the preface to Watchman Nee’s book entitled *The Orthodoxy of the Church*, his intimate co-worker Witness Lee writes,

I have never met a servant of the Lord so balanced as Brother Watchman Nee. He is rich in life, and he is also rich in knowledge. He knows and loves the Lord, and he knows and loves the Bible too. He knows Christ, and he also knows the church...Thus, his ministry has been always balanced with two sides—the spiritual and the practical. (3)

May we all experience Christ in such a balanced way, being balanced by our mingled spirit and by the Body to be consummated as the New Jerusalem, the ultimate cube of the Holy of Holies, for the eternal expression of the “cubic” Christ. When we are strengthened into our inner man through our prayer, Christ makes His home in our heart, controlling our entire inward being and supplying and strengthening every inward part with Himself (Eph. 3:17). Then we experience Him in a balanced and solid way in the Body, through the Body, and for the Body to apprehend Him in His unlimited dimensions with all the saints (v. 18). This results in our knowing the knowledge-surpassing love of Christ that we may be filled unto all the fullness of God. The fullness of God is the expression of our being filled with the riches of God to the extent that we become the “overflow” of God, the full expression of God. This all takes place by the wonderful Christ as the life-giving Spirit mingled with our spirit, by the One who “is able to do superabundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power which operates in us” for His glory in the church (vv. 19-21).

Being Renewed in the Spirit of Our Mind

Ephesians 4:22 charges us to put off the old man, and verse 24 charges us to put on the new man. The old man includes our former, old manner of societal living of the self in the world, whereas the new man includes our new manner of societal living of Christ in the church. The only way we can put off the old man with its old habits and ways and put on the new man to walk in newness of life and serve in newness of spirit is by Paul’s charge in verse 23 for us to “be renewed in the spirit of your mind.” To be renewed in the spirit of our mind is to allow our mingled spirit, our inner man and new person, to spread into our mind so that our mind is governed, possessed, occupied, taken over, controlled, and subdued by our mingled spirit. To be renewed in the spirit of our mind is to eliminate all the old concepts concerning the things of our old human life and to be made new again by the teaching of the Holy Scriptures and the enlightening of the Holy Spirit. Because our fallen mind is filled with the philosophies, traditions, culture, and ways of the world, it needs to be renewed with the knowledge, principles, ways, and thoughts of God in His holy Word. This is why we need to build up a habit of reading the Bible every day in a spirit and atmosphere of prayer, asking the Lord to open our mind and the inner eyes of our heart in order to understand and behold Him as the wonderful One in the Scriptures (Luke 24:45; Eph. 1:18; Psa. 119:18). We need to keep our way pure by guarding it according to His word (v. 9), we need to treasure up His word in our heart that we might not sin against Him (v. 11), and we need to ask Him to establish our footsteps in His word so that no iniquity may have dominion over us (v. 133). Furthermore, we need to appropriate and experience the Lord as our courage in serving Him, by musing upon His word day and night to make our way prosperous with the riches of Christ


and to have the success of living Christ to magnify Christ (Josh. 1:7-8). To muse on the word may be likened to a cow chewing the cud (Psa. 119:15; cf. Lev. 11:3). This is to receive the word of God with much reconsideration. The Hebrew word for *muse*

implies to worship, to converse with oneself, and to speak aloud. To muse on the word is to taste and enjoy it through careful considering. Prayer, speaking to oneself, and praising the Lord may also be included in musing on the word. To muse on the word of God is to enjoy His word as His breath (2 Tim. 3:16) and thus to be infused with God, to breathe God in, and to receive spiritual nourishment. (Recovery Version, Psa. 119:15, note 1)

Whoever was appointed to be a king of Israel was charged by God to write out in a book for himself a copy of the Pentateuch, the first five books of the Bible, and he was to “read in it all the days of his life” (Deut. 17:18-19). This shows that if we are to be today’s kings, Christ’s conquerors, who reign in His life over Satan, sin, and death (Rom. 5:17), we need to read the Bible all the days of our life so that we may be governed, instructed, controlled, led, and directed by the word of God. The shining of the word of God within us becomes a lamp to our feet and a light to our path (Psa. 119:105) to keep us on the constricted way of God’s economy, the way that leads to experiencing and enjoying Christ as the life-giving Spirit mingled with our spirit for the building up of the Body of Christ. To write out God’s words for ourselves and His speaking to us (perhaps in a journal, a notebook, or by other means) and to read His words prayerfully day by day will bring the presence of God into our thoughts and considerations so that we may be kept under the ruling of God, the authority of God, in all that we are and do. Then our living and serving the Lord will not have any trace of the hierarchy of autocracy or the opinions of democracy but will be filled with the divine instructions of God in His divine government, His theocracy. God, *theos* (Gk.), will fill us with His ruling presence to bring in the authority of His kingdom to this earth. By reading the Word of God with the exercise of our spirit of prayer, we will live in the reality of God’s kingdom, a reality of righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit (Rom. 14:17).

To be renewed in the spirit of our mind, we must set our mind on the spirit, not on the flesh. “The mind set on the flesh is death, but the mind set on the spirit is life and peace” (8:6). To set our mind on our spirit is to take heed to our spirit, to pay attention to our spirit (Mal. 2:15-16). Death is versus life and peace, and our spirit, when it is habitually strengthened and exercised by us through prayer, has the sense of life and peace versus the sense of death. Romans 8:6 actually shows that man is a miniature garden of Eden. He daily has the choice of life (the tree of life) in his spirit, or the choice of death (the tree of death—the tree of the knowledge of good and evil) in his flesh. Man must cooperate with the inner operating God to choose life by setting his mind on his spirit. The sense of life is accompanied by the sense of peace. When we set our mind on our mingled spirit, which has become life (v. 10), our mind actually becomes life, and we have the inner sense of life. This is an inner sense of life’s flowing, watering, enlightening, encouraging, uplifting, vivifying, and energizing along with the inner sense of peace, harmony, ease, comfort, rest, and simplicity in our spirit. In contrast to this, when we set our mind on the flesh, our mind actually becomes death, and we have the inner sense of death. This is an inner sense of death’s emptiness, dryness, darkness, depression, killing, weakening, discord, unrest, and confusion.

Isaiah 57:20 says that “the wicked are like the tossed sea, / For it cannot be calm, / And its waters toss up mire and mud.” Note 1 on this verse in the Recovery Version says, “The evil condition of the wicked is that they do not come to the Lord to eat and enjoy the Lord...They do many things, but they do not come to contact the Lord, to take Him, to receive Him, to taste Him, and to enjoy Him. In the sight of God, nothing is more evil than this.” This interpretation is according to the Lord’s word in Jeremiah 2:13 that the children of Israel committed two great evils. The first evil was their forsaking of Him as the fountain of living waters. The second evil was their hewing out of



When we set our mind on our mingled spirit, which has become life, our mind actually becomes life, and we have the inner sense of life. In contrast, when we set our mind on the flesh, our mind actually becomes death, and we have the inner sense of death.

If we act in full dependence on Christ as life in our spirit, we will have the inner sense of life and peace because our new person, Christ as the life-giving Spirit mingled with our spirit, is the One who is acting and working in us and through us.

cisterns (making idols as substitutes for God); these were broken cisterns that could hold no water, that could not satisfy. The desire of God is that we come to Him and drink of Him as the fountain of living waters for our pure, unique, and eternal enjoyment. He wants us to drink of Him so that He becomes the fountain of life in our spirit, gushing up into eternal life (John 4:14). To forsake Him and seek substitutes for Him as our enjoyment is to make idols to replace Him in our life. Thus, nothing is more evil in God's sight than our not enjoying Him as our life and life supply in our spirit so that He can be everything to us, having the first place in every part of our being and in every area of our living. When we are not enjoying the Lord, the inner sense of death is a warning to us that we are setting our mind on the flesh and that we need to turn our mind back to our mingled spirit.

What we do or decide should not be governed by what is right or wrong but by Christ as our inner life and peace. This means that we are not governed by *what* is right or wrong but by *who* is doing it—our inner man or our outer man. If we are acting independently from Christ as life in our spirit, our inner man, we will have the inner sense of death. We may feel that what we are doing is right, but we are “dead right,” because we are acting independently from our mingled spirit according to the “tree of right and wrong” in our flesh. But if we act in full dependence on Christ as life in our spirit, our inner man, trusting in our indwelling Lord helplessly in all that we do, we will have the inner sense of life and peace because our new person, Christ as the life-giving Spirit mingled with our spirit, is the One who is acting and working in us and through us. He is living in us and through us as the tree of life and the fountain of life to be magnified and glorified in us for the building up of His Body.

The apostle Paul was not ruled by the principle of right and wrong or by his environment. He was fully governed by Christ as the life-giving Spirit mingled with his spirit. The greatest example of this is recorded in 2 Corinthians 2, where Paul said that a door was opened to him in the Lord for the preaching of the gospel (v. 12). Surprisingly, however, Paul did not go through this door, contrary to our natural concept. Why not? we may ask. Paul said that he did not go through this opened door, because “I had no rest in my spirit” (v. 13). What a great statement and testimony this is! Paul was not governed by his outward environment, even an environment that was arranged directly by the Lord. Instead, he was governed by the “rest in my spirit.” The words *my spirit* are the center, mark, and focal point of living Christ for the reality of the Body of Christ. Paul was directed by his Lord, who was the Spirit indwelling his spirit (3:17; 2 Tim. 4:22; Rom. 8:16) and mingled with his spirit (1 Cor. 6:17). The rest in his mingled spirit was his “compass” for his being led by God in His move to carry out the gospel of God.

Because Paul was controlled and directed by his mingled spirit, he declared, “Thanks be to God, who always leads us in triumph in the Christ and manifests the savor of the knowledge of Him through us in every place” (2 Cor. 2:14). In their classic study of Paul's life and Epistles, Conybeare and Howson point out that this verse means “*to lead captive in a triumph over the enemies of Christ*” (444). They say that “the metaphor is taken from the triumphal procession of a victorious general. God is celebrating His triumph over His enemies” (444). Both we and Paul were once captives of Satan, but Christ destroyed Satan on the cross and made us, who were once His enemies, His captives. The practical application of this is that we daily need to give Christ the preeminence in our being and in our lives, allowing Him to be our conquering and leading General in our spirit. This means that we submit ourselves to being His captive in order to follow Him wherever He goes by paying attention to Him and to His leading in our spirit. If we have Him as the rest in our spirit, we are in the train of His triumphal procession, He is leading us in His triumph, we are His captives, and we become a fragrance of Christ to spread the aromatic knowledge of Him through us in every place (v. 15). We need to pray, “Lord, make me Your captive by keeping me in my spirit.”

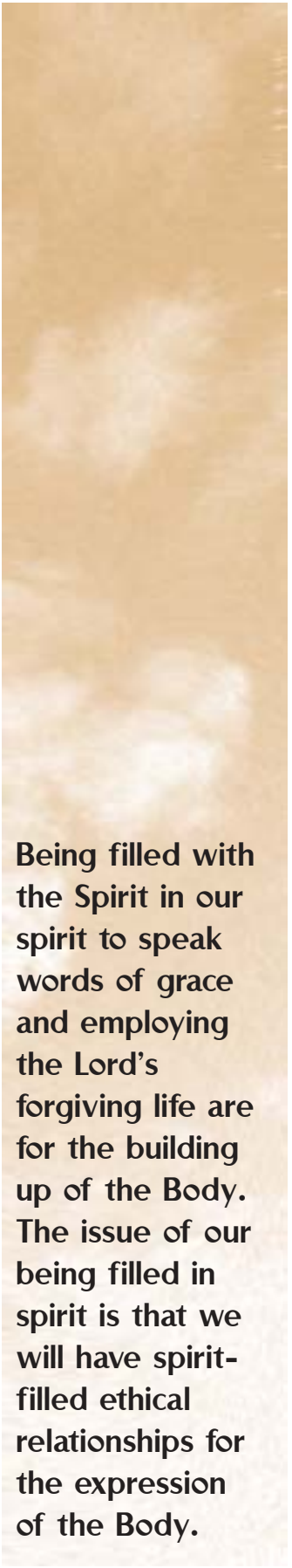
Cause me to live by the Spirit in my spirit and serve by the Spirit in my spirit. Keep me and preserve me in my mingled spirit so that I can live You, follow You, and move in Your moving for the carrying out of Your economy to build up Your Body.”

Being Filled in Spirit

Ephesians 5:18 says, “Do not be drunk with wine, in which is dissoluteness, but be filled in spirit.” Some translations say, “Be filled with the Spirit,” because in a number of places in the New Testament, it is difficult to determine whether the passage is referring to our human spirit or the divine Spirit. However, these varied translations of Ephesians 5:18 intrinsically coincide. Because God has put His Spirit into our spirit, and these two spirits have become one spirit, to be filled with the Spirit is to be filled in our spirit, that is, in our mingled spirit. To be drunk with wine in the body causes us to become dissolute, but to be filled with the Spirit in our spirit causes us to overflow with Christ in speaking, singing, psalming, giving thanks to God, and subjecting ourselves to one another (vv. 18-21). Instead of being drunk with the wine of this world, we need to be filled with the new wine of Christ as the life-giving Spirit for our enjoyment. The new wine signifies Christ as our cheering and constraining love (S. S. 1:2; 2 Cor. 5:14) and as our invigorating and gladdening life (Matt. 9:17; Psa. 104:15). In order to be filled with the Spirit, we must not grieve the Spirit or quench the Spirit (Eph. 4:30; 1 Thes. 5:19). To grieve the Spirit is related to our living Christ as members of Christ, and to quench the Spirit is related to our functioning in Christ as members of Christ. The Spirit is the presence of the Triune God within us. In our experience the presence of the Triune God is His “smile.” To grieve the Spirit is to make Him unhappy, to lose His presence, His “smile.” Once the Spirit enters into and mingles with our spirit, He will never leave us, but do we have His “smile,” His person, His presence? Are we enjoying His shining face and His uplifted countenance in our spirit (Num. 6:25-26)?

According to Ephesians, our not grieving the Spirit (4:30) has everything to do with the words that we speak (v. 29) and with our continually exercising to forgive one another (v. 32). We should not let any corrupt word proceed out of our mouth. Instead, we must exercise our spirit to be one with the Lord in our spirit in order to speak words of grace, words that minister Christ as joy in the Holy Spirit for the building up of the Body (v. 29; Luke 4:22; Rom. 14:17). We also need to take the Lord as the forgiving life in our spirit to forgive one another, taking the apostle Paul’s charge to let the peace of Christ arbitrate in our hearts, to which we were called in one Body (Col. 3:15). Christ as the indwelling peace in our spirit should be the Ruler and Decider of any dispute we have with another member of the Body. Christ as our peace will cause us to be those who are “bearing one another and forgiving one another, if anyone should have a complaint against anyone; even as the Lord forgave you, so also should you forgive” (v. 13). If we are filled with Christ as the Spirit in our spirit, we will be filled with Him as our enjoyable new wine; thus, words of the new enjoyable wine of Christ as grace will flow to others out of our mouth, and the kindness of God’s loving forgiveness will flow to others out of our heart. Being filled with the Spirit in our spirit to speak words of grace and employing the Lord’s forgiving life are for the building up of the Body of Christ. Furthermore, the issue of our being filled in spirit is that we will have spirit-filled ethical relationships for the expression of the Body in the normal church life. Ephesians reveals that the proper daily life and family life are the issue of our being filled in spirit (5:22—6:9).

Furthermore, we must not quench the Spirit (1 Thes. 5:19). The Spirit is also a divine fire burning in our spirit, motivating us to serve the Lord as a slave (2 Tim. 1:6; Rom. 12:11) and causing us to rise up and take action and fight the good fight for the fulfillment of God’s economy to dispense Christ as life into man (Dan. 11:32; 1 Tim. 6:12). To quench the Spirit is to “put out this divine flame” by disregarding and not obeying the speaking Spirit in our spirit. Ruth Paxson in *Life on the Highest Plane* says,



Being filled with the Spirit in our spirit to speak words of grace and employing the Lord’s forgiving life are for the building up of the Body. The issue of our being filled in spirit is that we will have spirit-filled ethical relationships for the expression of the Body.

In order to be filled in spirit by and with the Spirit, we must cooperate with the Lord not to grieve Him as the Spirit and not to quench Him as the Spirit. This will give Him the free way within us to dispense Himself into our tripartite being.

We “quench” the Spirit when we say no to God when He woos us into sanctification and service. To bring the believer to will to let God’s will have absolute sway over the entire being is part of the Spirit’s work, perhaps it is His hardest task. Self-will is a latent thing in every one of us which is prone to manifest itself in secret if not in open rebellion against God.

The only cure for self-will is a deliberate, determined choice to do God’s will in all things, at all times, at all costs. It is to have one’s heart firmly fixed upon the doing of God’s will as the rule for daily life and to permit no exception to this rule. (321)

We need to cooperate with the indwelling and operating God in our spirit by praying that He would operate in us “the willing and the working for His good pleasure” (Phil. 2:13).

The wonderful Christ as the Spirit mingled with our spirit is the One who said to the Father, “Not as I will, but as You will,” and “Your will be done” (Matt. 26:39, 42). Thank the Lord that He lives within us, and we pray that He may continually defeat us, make us His captives, and cause us to say “yes” to Him and “no” to Satan, as expressed in the following hymn (*Hymns*, #880):

- | | |
|---|---|
| <p>1 To the foe my word is always, “No,”
To the Father it is “Yes,”
That His plan and all His counsel
Be accomplished with success;
When Thine orders I’m obeying,
Grant me, Lord, authority
To fulfill Thy plan eternal
Thru the Spirit’s power in me.</p> | <p>Lest while walking in obedience
Satan undermine the way;
When I’m list’ning to Thine orders,
Grant me mercy, Lord, I pray.</p> |
| <p>2 To the foe my word is always, “No,”
To the Father it is, “Yes”;
’Tis my attitude eternal;
May the Lord protect and bless,</p> | <p>3 To the foe my word is always, “No,”
To the Father it is, “Yes”;
I completely would obey Him,
Though deep suff’ring may oppress.
If the Lord will save and keep me,
As I forward press with Him,
Then no trials shall prevent me,
Nor will opposition grim.</p> |

In order to be filled in spirit by and with the Spirit, we must cooperate with the Lord not to grieve Him as the Spirit and not to quench Him as the Spirit. This will give Him the free way within us to dispense Himself into our tripartite being, to live through us for His magnification, and to work through us so that He may build Himself into others for the building up of the Body of Christ.

Praying at Every Time in Spirit

Ephesians 6:18 charges us to be those who are “praying at every time in spirit.” In order to make this charge a reality in our Christian life for the Body life, we must receive the Lord’s word in Matthew 6:6: “When you pray, enter into your private room, and shut your door and pray to your Father who is in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will repay you.” We all need to have an inner room, a place where we can be alone with the Lord to have a private time with Him every day. Ruth Paxson writes,

Do you have an inner room? A shut door? A place to be alone with your Lord? It may be a real “closet” in your own home or it may be only a place in a streetcar or at a desk or on a mountainside or in a sickroom but it will be a place where the world is shut out and in spirit you are shut in alone with your Lord. It will be a place where heaven and earth meet and the intimate, immediate presence of the Lord of glory will be realized.

Our desire to be alone with the Lover-Christ and our delight in the companionship of our

Beloved will reveal the place He really holds in our affections. To have chosen Him as the Lover of one's soul; to have been joined to Him as one spirit; to share His life in its fullness, and then not to hunger and thirst for the privacy of the inner room where His presence may be realized and enjoyed apart from all intrusion of the outer world, is unthinkable. Communion with Christ is the imperative sequence of union with Him because alone with the Lord Jesus behind the closed door one may be both the man that he really is and the man that he longs to be. (397)

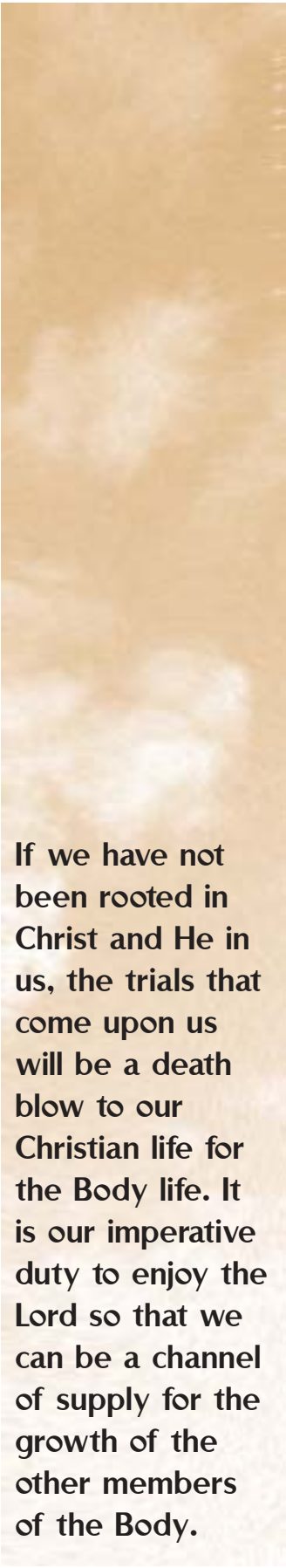
Our personal and private time with the Lord is not for our individual spirituality. We have a private prayer life with the Lord so that He can be deeply rooted in the soil of our heart for His growth within us for the sake of the Body. His growth within all the members of His Body is the growth of the Body, and the growth of the Body is the organic building up of the Body (Col. 2:19; Eph. 4:16). If we do not have a "root system" in our relationship with the Lord, we will not last long in our Christian life. If we do not have a private, secret time to deal day by day with the "rocks" of self and sin in the soil of our heart, the Lord says that when the heat of the sun comes, we will wither because we have no root (Matt. 13:5-6, 21). The scorching heat of the sun signifies the "heat" of persecution, affliction, sufferings, trials, and pressures in our human life. If we allow Christ to be rooted in us and are continually being rooted in Him (Col. 2:7) by our having secret times of fellowship with Him to absorb His divine and mystical nutrients for our enjoyment and rich supply, the "heat" of affliction will help us to grow up into Him in all things for the growth of the Body of Christ. But if we have not been rooted in Christ and He in us, the trials that come upon us will be a death blow to our Christian life for the Body life. Thus, it is our imperative duty to secretly and privately enjoy the Lord, not merely for ourselves but so that we can be a channel of divine supply for the growth of the other members of the Body.

One great secret of having a sustained prayer life with the Lord in our spirit is to use the Scriptures, the words of God to us, as the words for our prayer and fellowship with Him. This is to pray-read the word of God. Arthur T. Pierson, in his biography of George Müller, shares about this secret of mingling the word of God with our prayer, saying that "the Holy Scriptures will thus suggest the *very words* which become the dialect of prayer" (140). He further points out that the Bible

is our God-given liturgy and litany—a divine prayer-book. We have here God's promises, precepts, warnings, and counsels, not to speak of all the Spirit-inspired literal prayers therein contained; and, as we reflect upon these, our prayers take their cast in this matrix. We turn precept and promise, warning and counsel into supplication, with the assurance that we *cannot be asking anything that is not according to His will*, for are we not turning His own word into prayer? (140)

Pierson points out that this was the secret of George Whitefield's power of preaching the gospel and the secret of George Müller's living by faith. He continues by saying,

The prayer habit, on the knees, with the Word open before the disciple, has thus an advantage which it is difficult to put into words: *It provides a sacred channel of approach to God.* The inspired Scriptures form the vehicle of the Spirit in communicating to us the knowledge of the will of God...When therefore the believer uses the word of God as the guide to determine both the spirit and the dialect of his prayer, he is inverting the process of divine revelation and using the channel of God's approach to him as the channel of his approach to God. How can such use of God's word fail to help and strengthen spiritual life? What medium or channel of approach could so insure in the praying soul both an acceptable frame and language taught of the Holy Spirit? If the first thing is not to pray but to hearken, this surely is hearkening for God to speak to us that we may know how to speak to Him. (140-141)



If we have not been rooted in Christ and He in us, the trials that come upon us will be a death blow to our Christian life for the Body life. It is our imperative duty to enjoy the Lord so that we can be a channel of supply for the growth of the other members of the Body.

We all need to look to the Lord for His mercy to always care for our mingled spirit and the Body; to live in our mingled spirit for the reality and building up of the Body is to live a life according to God's heart's desire and perfect will.

Ephesians 6 charges us to pray at every time in spirit by receiving the word of God by means of "all prayer" (vv. 17-18). *All prayer* means various means of prayer. When we pray-read God's Word, His constant and written Word (Gk., *logos*) becomes His instant and personal speaking to us (Gk., *rhema*). In other words, by praying with and over His written words, they are converted into the intimate words of His counsel and love that He Himself instantly and personally speaks to us, and these words that He speaks to us are spirit and life (John 6:63). We all need to pray, "Lord, speak to me! Open my ears to hear Your voice! Give me an ear to hear what the Spirit says to the churches!" Ephesians reveals that God's speaking to us through our prayerful reading of His Word has the functions of beautifying us to be His bride for His expression and of slaying the adversary within us for His dominion. Ephesians 5:25-26 shows the beautifying function of the Lord's instant speaking to us. When we exercise our spirit to pray over and with God's word, His word as the sanctifying Spirit beautifies us to be His bride, cleansing us by the washing of the water in the word to make us Christ's glorious church. Ephesians 6:17-18 shows the killing function of the word of God. In these verses the sword is the Spirit, and the Spirit is the word. When we exercise our spirit to pray over and with God's word, His word slays the adversary in us, killing the negative elements within us, such as hatred, jealousy, pride, and doubts; eventually, as we pray-read the word, self, the worst foe of all and the enemy of the Body, will be put to death, and Christ will be victorious in our entire being in His victory in the Body. Furthermore, by praying in our mingled spirit, we apply Christ as the whole armor of God, and our spiritual fighting becomes our enjoyment of Christ as He spreads a table before us in the presence of our adversaries for us to feast on Him with His riches (vv. 10-11, 18; Psa. 23:5).

We have seen from the book of Ephesians, a book on the Body of Christ, that we need revelation in our spirit, that God's dwelling place is in our spirit, that we need to be strengthened into our spirit, that we need to be renewed in the spirit of our mind, that we need to be filled in spirit, and that we need to pray at every time in spirit. Our mingled spirit, the Spirit mingled with our spirit to be one spirit, is truly the secret and the key to experiencing Christ for the building up of the Body of Christ. We all need to look to the Lord for His mercy to always care for our mingled spirit and the Body; to live in our mingled spirit for the reality and building up of the Body is to live a life according to God's heart's desire and perfect will for His eternal glory and coming kingdom. **LFC**

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