

THE CHURCH AS THE ONE NEW MAN: A GENERAL SKETCH OF THE DIVINE REVELATION

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God's eternal purpose—His determined intention according to the good pleasure of His will—is to have the New Jerusalem as His glorious, corporate expression. As the book of Revelation indicates, the genuine church today in its local expression is a miniature of the New Jerusalem; this is one of the various aspects of the church. Other aspects include its being the assembly, the house of the living God, the kingdom of God, and the counterpart of Christ. In this issue of *Affirmation & Critique* we will consider a crucial aspect of the church that merits serious attention—the one new man. The function of this introductory article is to adumbrate a general sketch of the divine revelation concerning the church as the one new man, a corporate divine-human person.

At the outset, we need to realize that the church as the new man is the church as the Body of Christ (Eph. 2:15-16). The Body and the new man are synonyms but with distinct emphases. With the Body of Christ, an organism, the emphasis is on a particular life—Christ as the life of the Body; with the new man as a corporate person, the emphasis is on a particular person—Christ as a person living in the believers and making His home in their hearts (3:17). Christ is the life of the Body and the person of the new man, which, as we will see, is a corporate God-man, the corporate Christ (1 Cor. 12:12) for the fulfillment of God's purpose.

The one new man is the fulfillment of God's purpose in His creation of humankind and is therefore a corporate person to accomplish God's eternal purpose. God's intention in His creation of humanity was to have a corporate human being to express Him and to represent Him (Gen. 1:26). It is accurate to assert that humankind in Genesis 1 is a picture of the new man in God's new creation (2 Cor. 5:17). This means that man in God's original creation is a figure, a type, of the man in God's new creation. God created man in His own image and then gave man His dominion. *Image* refers to God's positive intention—that humankind would bear God's image for His expression. *Dominion* refers to God's negative

intention—that humankind would have God's dominion to represent Him in dealing with His enemy, Satan. Hence, the new man is a warrior fighting against God's enemy (Eph. 6:10-20), for the warrior is an aspect of the church as the new man. The church as the one new man is therefore the corporate man in God's intention, and this new man will fulfill the twofold purpose of expressing God and of dealing with God's enemy for God's dominion, God's kingdom.

In His incarnation and human living the Lord Jesus, the second man, fulfilled God's purpose in creating humankind in His image and with His dominion. The first man, humanity in God's creation, failed God; however, the second man, the Lord Jesus (1 Cor. 15:47), fully carried out God's intention, and He did so not only to accomplish God's will personally but also to produce a corporate person, a corporate God-man, as His reproduction. The Lord Jesus did not speak His own word, He did not seek His own glory, He did not carry out His own work, He did not do His own will, and He did not promulgate His own teaching. In brief, He did not express Himself—He expressed the Father. In this way He fulfilled God's purpose in creating humanity in His image. Furthermore, as One who lived under God's authority and who represented God with divine authority, the Lord dealt with the enemy by resisting temptation and casting out demons by the Spirit of God. From this we see that, as the second man, the Lord Jesus fulfilled God's purpose in creating humankind in His image and with His authority.

The church as the one new man is a corporate God-man, the reproduction of Christ as the unique God-man. In order to understand this, we need to trace the divine thought in the Scriptures related to the God-man, the God-men, and the corporate God-man, the church as the one new man.

For God to create man in His image means that God created man with the intention that man would become a

duplicate of God, the reproduction of God, for His corporate expression (John 12:24). God's purpose in the creation of man in His image and according to His likeness was that man would receive Him as life and express Him in His attributes (Gen. 1:26-27; 2:9). God created man in His image and according to His likeness because His intention is to come into man and to be one with man (Eph. 3:17). God created humankind in His own image in such a way that man has the capacity to contain God's love, light, righteousness, and holiness (1 John 1:5; 4:8; Eph. 4:24; 5:2, 8-9). Because we were created according to God's kind, our human virtues have the capacity to contain the divine attributes (2 Cor. 10:1; 11:10).

In Christ, God and man have become one entity, the God-man (Luke 1:35; John 1:14; Matt. 1:18, 20-23). Because the Lord Jesus was conceived of the divine essence and born of the human essence, He was born a God-man; hence, for His being as the God-man, He had two essences—the divine essence and the human essence (v. 18). The conception of the Holy Spirit in a human virgin constituted a mingling of the divine nature with the human nature, producing the God-man, the One who is both the complete God and the perfect man (Luke 1:35). As a perfect man and the complete God, the God-man has the human nature with its virtues to contain God and to express Him with the divine attributes.

Initially, the Bible speaks of the God-man; today this God-man has become the God-men (Rom. 1:3-4; 8:29). The Lord Jesus, the first God-man, is the prototype for the producing of the many God-men (1 Pet. 2:21); the many God-men are His reproduction. God became man (Rom. 8:3) to have a mass reproduction of Himself and thereby to produce a new kind (v. 29; Heb. 2:10); this new kind is God-man kind. The Lord Jesus, the God-man, was a grain of wheat falling into the ground in order to produce many grains as His reproduction (John 12:24). The first grain—the first God-man—was the prototype, and the many grains—the many God-men—produced by this one grain through death and resurrection are the reproduction of the first God-man. The many grains, as the many God-men, are the reproduction of God in Christ as the firstborn Son of God. Such a reproduction makes God happy because they look like Him, speak like Him, and live like Him (1 John 3:2; 4:17; 2:6). God is in this reproduction; His reproduction has His life, His nature, and His constitution.

As believers in Christ, we need to see that we are God-men, born of God, possessing the life and nature of God, and belonging to the species of God but not participating in the Godhead (John 1:12-13). As children of God, we are God-men; we are the same as the One of whom we are born (1 John 3:1; 5:1). Because we have been born of

the divine life, we are divinely human persons. Since we have been born of God, we may say, and even we should say, that we are God in life and in nature but not in the Godhead. To think of ourselves as God-men and to know and realize who we are revolutionizes us in our daily experience (2:20; 3:1-2; 5:13, 20).

The church as the one new man is a corporate God-man (Eph. 2:15; 4:24; Col. 3:10-11). The first God-man, the firstborn Son of God, is the Head of this corporate God-man, and the many God-men, the many sons of God, are the Body of this corporate God-man (Rom. 8:29; Col. 1:18; 2:19). The God-men, as the regenerated children of God, constitute the new man (Eph. 5:1; 4:24). The one new man is a corporate man, and this corporate new man is the aggregate of all the God-men. Through His death and resurrection, Christ produced many brothers (Rom. 8:29; Heb. 2:11) who, with Him, have become the universal one new man; this is the corporate God-man, who is God yet man and man yet God. The one new man, as the totality of the God-men, is the corporate Christ (1 Cor. 12:12). In Christ, God became man to produce a corporate God-man for the manifestation of God in the flesh as the one new man (1 Tim. 3:16).

For the one new man as the corporate God-man, we need to live the life of a God-man (Phil. 1:19-21; 3:10). Christ's human living was man living God to express the attributes of God in the human virtues; His human virtues were filled, mingled, and saturated with the divine attributes (Luke 1:26-35; 7:11-17; 10:25-37; 19:1-10). When the Lord Jesus was on earth, though He was a man, He lived by God (John 6:57; 5:19, 30; 6:38; 8:28; 7:16-17). The Lord Jesus lived God and expressed God in everything; whatever He did was God's doing from within Him and through Him (4:10). As the expansion, increase, reproduction, and continuation of the first God-man, we should live the same kind of life He lived (1 John 2:6).

The Lord's God-man living set up a model for our God-man living—being crucified to live so that God might be expressed in humanity (Gal. 2:20). We need to deny ourselves, be conformed to Christ's death, and magnify Him by the bountiful supply of His Spirit (Matt. 16:24; Phil. 3:10; 1:19-21). The One who lived the life of a God-man is now the Spirit living in us and through us; we should not allow anything other than this One to fill us and occupy us (2 Cor. 3:17; 13:5; Eph. 3:16-19).

The new man was created through Christ's death on the cross.

He Himself is our peace, He who has made both one and has broken down the middle wall of partition, the enmity,

abolishing in His flesh the law of the commandments in ordinances, that He might create the two in Himself into one new man, so making peace. (2:14-15)

The one new man was created by Christ with two different materials—the redeemed created man and the divine element; on the cross Christ put these two materials together to produce a new man. In the creation of the one new man, first our natural man was crucified with Christ, and then through the crossing out of the old man, Christ imparted the divine element into us, causing us to become a new entity (Rom. 6:6; 2 Cor. 5:17). It is essential for us to believe that before we were born, we were created into the one new man, and the divine essence was wrought into our being. We need to pray for a clear and sober mind to perceive that not only have we been terminated on the cross but that by means of this termination we have been transferred into Christ (1 Cor. 1:30). Only in the divine essence and with the divine essence were we created into one new man; Christ Himself is this essence. The one new man, as a corporate child, was brought forth by Christ in His resurrection (John 16:21).

The new man was created by Christ, but the believers need to partake of this creation. To bring forth the new man, first Christ's creating work on the cross was needed, and this has been accomplished. In order to partake of this creation, every day we need to put off the old man and put on the new man through renewing (Eph. 4:22-24).

Ephesians 2:15 says that the new man was created, but Colossians 3:10 says that the new man is "being renewed unto full knowledge." Because the new man was created with us who belong to the old creation, he needs to be renewed; this renewing takes place mainly in our mind, as indicated by the phrase *unto full knowledge*. When the new creation took place in our spirit in regeneration, the Holy Spirit with the divine life was added into our being (2 Cor. 5:17; Gal. 6:15). This addition of the Spirit and the divine life produced a new being, a new man. The regeneration of the spirit (John 3:6) is actually the creation of the new man; for this reason we can say that in our spirit the new man has already been created.

Although our spirit has been regenerated, our soul with its faculties of mind, will, and emotion remains in the old

creation and still needs to be renewed (Rom. 12:2; Eph. 4:23). The creation of the new man according to God has already been completed, but in our experience the new man is renewed unto full knowledge little by little. Through the process of renewing, the new man spreads from our spirit into our soul and actually increases within us. To be renewed is to have God's element added into our being to replace and discharge our old element (Rev. 21:5; 2 Cor. 5:17; Rom. 12:2; 2 Cor. 4:16). Newness is God; therefore, to become new is to become God (Rom. 6:4; 7:6). God is forever new, and He infuses His ever-new essence into our being to renew our entire being (12:2).

The Spirit of God renews us by infusing our inward parts with God's attributes, which are forever new, can never become old, and are everlasting and unchanging (Rev. 21:5). The renewing Spirit imparts the divine essence of

the new man into our being to make us a new creation (Titus 3:5).

For the practical existence of the one new man, we need to be renewed in the spirit of our mind (Eph. 4:23). When the life-giving Spirit, who dwells in and is mingled with our regenerated spirit (1 Cor. 6:17), spreads into our mind, this mingled spirit becomes the

spirit of our mind; it is by this mingled spirit that our mind is renewed. In order for the one new man to come into full existence, we need to experience a thorough renewal of our mind, which has been built up according to our nationality and culture. We need to be renewed in the spirit of our mind actually and daily in our living; otherwise, there is no way for the Lord to have the one new man. In order to put off the old man (the old social life) and to put on the new man (the new church life), we need to open our spirit and allow the Spirit of Christ to fill, saturate, and permeate our spirit until the Spirit overflows into our mind, emotion, and will; it is by this overflowing Spirit that we can be renewed for the one new man (Rom. 8:11; 1 Cor. 12:13; Eph. 5:18; 4:22-24; 3:16-19).

The church as the one new man is constituted with Christ as the unique element. God's intention in His economy is that Christ be everything; therefore, it is crucial for us to see that God wants nothing but Christ and that in the eyes of God nothing counts except Christ (Matt. 17:5; Col. 1:18; 2:2, 17; 3:4). God's intention is

IN THE CREATION OF THE ONE NEW MAN, FIRST OUR NATURAL MAN WAS CRUCIFIED WITH CHRIST, AND THEN CHRIST IMPARTED THE DIVINE ELEMENT INTO US, CAUSING US TO BECOME A NEW ENTITY.

to make Christ His Son the center of His economy and also to make Him everything to the believers (1:18; 2:17). God has determined that in His economy one person—His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ—must be everything (Matt. 17:5). God’s economy is to work the all-inclusive Christ into us (Gal. 4:19; Eph. 3:17). The Lord is recovering Christ Himself in our experience (Gal. 1:15-16; 2:20; 4:19; Eph. 3:17; Phil. 1:20-21). The Lord is seeking to recover the all-inclusive Christ as the life-giving Spirit who imparts Himself into the believers as their life and their everything and makes them His living Body, the one new man (1 Cor. 15:45; 2 Tim. 4:22; Rom. 12:4-5).

We need to see that the church is the one new man and that in this new man Christ is all; we have no place. The one new man is not a movement and is not an organization—the one new man is a *man* (Eph. 4:24). There is no natural person in the one new man, and there is no possibility, no room, for any natural person. No matter what kind of person we may be, as far as the one new man is concerned, we all are nothing. Although many different kinds of people make up the one new man, all are part of Christ; there is no longer the natural person. In the one new man there is only one person—the all-inclusive Christ (Col. 2:17; 3:4, 11). The one new man is just Christ—Christ spreading and Christ being enlarged. The new man is uniquely one—one in Christ and one with Christ; we are one by Christ and through Christ). If we are not in Christ, we have no share, no part, in the new man; rather, we have nothing to do with the new man. If we are in Christ but do not live Christ, we have a problem related to the new man. Apart from being in Christ, we could not have been created into one new man, because in ourselves we do not have the divine essence, which is the element of the new man. Only in the divine essence and with the divine essence were we created into the one new man; it is possible to have this essence only in Christ. Christ Himself is the essence of the new man; hence, in Himself He created the two, the Jews and the Gentiles, into one new man.

In the one new man Christ is all because He is the essence with which the new man was created; therefore, the one new man is Christ. The one new man comes into being as we are saturated, filled, and permeated with Christ and replaced by Him through an organic process (2 Cor. 3:18). The new man is Christ in all the saints, permeating us and replacing us until all natural distinctions have been removed, and everyone is constituted of Christ. The all-inclusive Christ must be wrought into us organically until He replaces our natural being with Himself (Eph. 3:17; Gal. 4:19).

In the one new man Christ is all the members and is in all

the members. The Christ who dwells in us is the constituent of the one new man (Col. 1:27). Because Christ is all the members of the new man, there is no room in the new man for any race, nationality, culture, or social status.

In order for us to experience the reality of Christ being all the members of the new man, we need to take Christ as our life and constituent and live Him, not ourselves (Gal. 2:20; Phil. 1:20-21). If Christ is the living of all the members of the one new man, then in reality only He will be in the new man. When all the saints live Christ, then in a real and practical way Christ will be all the members in the new man. It is very significant that Paul says both that Christ is all and that He is in all. We should not think that because Christ is all the members of the one new man, we are nothing and are not needed. The fact that Christ is in all the members of the new man indicates that the members continue to exist.

All the believers in Christ need to take Christ as their person to live the life of the one new man. Christ is both the life of the Body and the person of the new man (Col. 3:4; Eph. 3:17). The church is the Body, and this Body needs Christ to be in it as life. The church is also the one new man, and this one new man needs Christ to be in him as his person. The new man is not about members but about the person (Rom. 12:4-5); therefore, we all need to ask, “Who is my person—I or the Lord Jesus?” In the one new man the natural man has no place; we all have no place in the new man, for here Christ is all and in all. Christ is in all of us, so we all have only one person (Col. 1:27; Eph. 3:17). What God cares for is whether we live by Christ and take Christ as our person (John 6:57; Phil 1:21; Col. 3:4; Eph. 3:17). We should not only eat Christ’s riches in order to take them and assimilate them into our being; we should also allow Christ to be our person. We should take Christ not only to be our life but also to be our person. What is first is not taking Christ as our life but taking Christ as our person. If we take Christ as our person, we will surely take Him as our life (1 John 5:11-12; Col. 3:4). If we take Christ as our person, then we will be able to grow and mature (2:19; Eph. 4:13-16). Taking Christ as our person is for the growth of the new man. Taking Christ as our life is for the increase of the measure of the stature of the Body.

When we live our life by taking Christ as our person, especially in making decisions, our living will be the living of the new man (John 4:34; 5:30; 6:38; 17:4; Rom. 15:32; James 4:13-15). Whereas the Body is for moving, the new man is for living, and much of our living is in making decisions (Phil. 1:21-26). In the new man we take Christ as our person to make plans and to decide how we should live (Rom. 15:32). If we take Christ as our person, we will not decide anything in our life by

ourselves (Philem. 14). Once we see that we are a part of the one new man, we will not be able to decide things merely by ourselves. Since we are part of the new man, our decisions and our living should not be ours; they should be the decisions and living of the corporate new man. The living of the new man is a corporate living; therefore, our decisions are corporate decisions and not our personal decisions (1 Cor. 4:19).

Paul is a pattern of taking Christ as our person to live the life of the new man. "I was shown mercy, that in me...Jesus Christ might display all His long-suffering for a pattern to those who are to believe on Him unto eternal life" (1 Tim. 1:16). Detailed aspects of this pattern are unveiled in Paul's writings.

"It pleased God...to reveal His Son in me" (Gal. 1:15-16). To reveal the Son of God brings pleasure to God; nothing is more pleasing to God than the unveiling of the living person of the Son of God. We need to be brought into a state in which we are full of the revelation of the Son of God and thereby become a new creation with Christ living in us.

"I am crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but it is Christ who lives in me" (2:20). Paul did not say that the life of Christ lived in him but that Christ, the person, lived in him. God's economy is that the "I" be crucified in Christ's death and that Christ live in us in His resurrection.

"My children, with whom I travail again in birth until Christ is formed in you" (4:19). To have Christ formed in us is to have Christ grown in us in full. Christ has been born into us, He is now living in us in our Christian life, and He will be formed in us at our maturity.

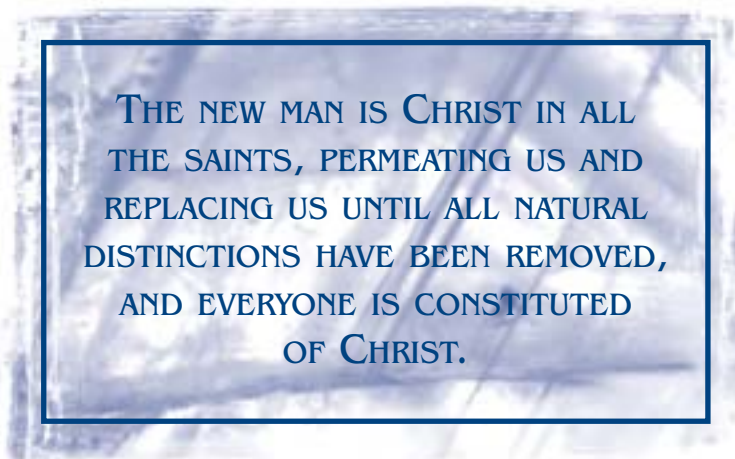
"As many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ" (3:27). To be baptized is to be immersed into the reality of the person of Christ. We have put on Christ as our clothing; this means that, as our person, Christ is not only our inner being but also our outward expression.

"That Christ may make His home in your hearts through faith" (Eph. 3:17). God the Father is exercising His authority through God the Spirit to strengthen us into the inner man so that God the Son may make His home deep in our hearts. If we allow Christ to have all the room

within us and if we give Him the full right and full liberty to do whatever He wants within us, then our heart will become His home.

"God is my witness how I long after you all in the inward parts of Christ Jesus" (Phil. 1:8). Paul did not live in his natural inner being; he lived a life in the inward parts of Christ, experienced Christ in His inward parts, and was one with Christ in His inward parts. Paul did not keep his own inward parts but took Christ's inward parts as his; Paul's inner being was reconstituted with the inward parts of Christ.

"Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus" (2:5). To let Christ's mind be in us is to take Christ as our person by denying our natural mind and taking His mind. If we intend to take Christ as our person, we must be willing to deny our mind and to have our mind replaced by the mind of Christ.



"Also what I have forgiven, if I have forgiven anything, it is for your sake in the person of Christ" (2 Cor. 2:10). Paul lived Christ in the closest and most intimate contact with Him, acting according to the index of His eyes. Paul was

a person who was one with Christ, full of

Christ, and saturated with Christ; a person who was broken and even terminated in his natural life, softened and flexible in his will, affectionate yet restricted in his emotion, considerate and sober in his mind, and pure and genuine in his spirit toward the believers for their benefit. (Lee, Recovery Version, note 3)

"That the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us, who do not walk according to the flesh but according to the spirit" (Rom. 8:4). In practicality, to take Christ as our person is to have our being wholly according to the mingled spirit. In our daily life we should not have our being according to teaching, feeling, concepts, or circumstances but according to the mingled spirit, taking Christ as our person for the one new man.

For the reality and practicality of the church as the one new man, we need to allow the peace of Christ to arbitrate in our hearts. We need to care for the genuine peace of the Body, that is, for Christ as peace in the church as the one new man (Col. 3:15). God is the God of peace (Rom. 15:33; 16:20; 2 Cor. 13:11; Phil. 4:9; 1 Thes. 5:23;

Heb. 13:20). According to Ephesians 2, Christ is peace, Christ made peace, and Christ announced peace as the gospel (vv. 14-15, 17; Col. 1:20). The peace that is in Christ, the peace that is Christ, the peace made by Christ, and the peace announced by Christ as the gospel is the peace in the Body, in the new man (Eph. 4:3). We were called to the peace of Christ in one Body (Col. 3:15). In and for the church as the Body of Christ and the new man, we keep the oneness of the Spirit in the uniting bond of peace (Eph. 4:3). To live in the new man in a practical way is to live in the peace of Christ. As far as it depends on us, we should live in peace with others (Rom. 12:18; Heb. 12:14). In the church as the new man, the peace of God guards our hearts and our thoughts in Christ Jesus (Phil. 4:7).

If we would live in the reality of the one new man, we need to allow the peace of Christ to arbitrate in our hearts (Col. 3:12-15; Eph. 2:14-18; Rom. 5:1; Matt. 18:21-35). The Greek term for *arbitrate* in Colossians 3:15 can also be rendered “umpire,” “preside,” or “be enthroned” as a ruler and decider of everything”; the arbitrating peace of Christ dissolves our complaints against others. If we allow the peace of Christ to arbitrate in our hearts, this peace will settle all the disputes among us; we will have peace with God vertically and with the saints horizontally.

Through the arbitration of the peace of Christ, our problems are solved, and the friction between the saints disappears; then the church life is preserved in oneness and sweetness. The arbitrating of the peace of Christ is Christ working within us to exercise His rule over us, to speak the last word, and to make the final decision (cf. Isa. 9:6-7). If we stay under the ruling of the enthroned peace of Christ, we will not offend others or damage them; rather, by the Lord’s grace and with His peace we will minister life to others. This peace should bind all the believers together and become their uniting bond (Eph. 4:3).

For the reality and practicality of the church as the one new man, we need to let the word of Christ dwell in us richly. The word of Christ is the word spoken by Christ. In His New Testament economy God speaks in the Son, and the Son speaks not only directly in the Gospels but also through His members—the apostles and prophets—in Acts, in the Epistles, and in Revelation (Heb. 1:1-2).

The word of Christ includes the entire New Testament. Colossians is focused on Christ as our Head and our life; the way for Him to exercise His headship and to minister His riches to us is through His word (2:19; 3:4). In Colossians the word is for revealing Christ in His pre-eminence, centrality, and universality. Paul’s concern in Colossians is for the revelation of Christ unto full knowledge; for this, we need the word of Christ.

We need to let the word of Christ dwell in us richly. We should submit to the Lord’s command and allow His word to dwell in us. We should not be closed but should open our being to the Lord and to His word and be willing to be filled with the word of Christ. The Greek word for *dwell* means “to inhabit,” “to be in a house”; this indicates that the word of Christ should be able to make its home in us. We should allow the word of Christ to dwell in us, to inhabit us, to make home in us. The word of Christ, which contains the riches of Christ, should not remain outside of us but should dwell in us richly. For the word of Christ to dwell in us richly means that it has adequate room in us. We should not receive the word of Christ and then confine it to a small area of our being; rather, every fiber of our being needs to be occupied by the word of Christ. All our inward parts—our mind, emotion, will, heart, and spirit—must be empty and available to be filled with the word of Christ.

The word of Christ should be given a free course to operate in us and to minister the riches of Christ into our being. We need to allow the word of Christ to move, act, and have its being in us, letting our whole being be permeated and saturated with the word of Christ.

We should be willing to set aside our concepts and opinions and give place to the word of Christ. It is crucial for us to let the word of Christ enter into us, dwell in us, prevail in us, and replace our concepts, opinions, and philosophies.

In order for the word of Christ to dwell in us richly for the new man, we need to let the peace of Christ arbitrate in our hearts. A basic principle revealed in the Bible is that God’s speaking requires oneness. Division causes God’s speaking to diminish, even to stop altogether. Since oneness is a necessary condition for God’s speaking, we need to let the peace of Christ arbitrate in our hearts. The peace of Christ arbitrates in us and keeps us in a proper condition to receive God’s word. When the peace of Christ arbitrates in us and keeps us in a situation full of oneness and harmony, we become the place of God’s speaking, His oracle. If we would live Christ as the constituent of the one new man, the peace of Christ must be the arbitrator in our heart, and the word of Christ must be the content of our inner being. If we allow the peace of Christ to arbitrate in us and if we allow the word of Christ to dwell in us, we will have the new man in a practical way, and we will live Christ in the one new man.

We need to live the life of the new man as the reality is in Jesus. The living of the one new man should be exactly the same as the living of Jesus (v. 20). The way the Lord Jesus lived on earth is the way the new man should live today (Matt. 11:28-30; John 6:57; 4:34; 5:17, 19, 30; 6:38; 17:4). Our standard of living must be according to

the reality in Jesus, the reality lived out by the Lord Jesus when He was on earth (Eph. 4:20-21). He was one with God, and He lived a life in which He did everything in God, with God, and for God. Jesus lived in a way that always corresponded to God's righteousness and holiness (v. 24). In the life of Jesus the righteousness and holiness of the reality were always exhibited. The human living of Jesus was according to the reality, that is, according to God Himself, full of righteousness and holiness. It was in the righteousness and holiness of this reality—God glorified and expressed—that the new man was created.

We need to learn Christ and be taught in Him to live a life of reality (v. 20; 2 John 1; John 4:23-24). As a corporate person, the new man should live a life of reality, as the reality is in Jesus—a life of expressing God. If we live according to the spirit of our mind, we shall have the daily living of the corporate new man—a living that corresponds to the reality in Jesus.

In order to live the life of the new man as the reality is in Jesus, we must put off the community life of the old man and put on the community life of the new man (Eph. 4:22, 24). The former manner of life includes everything related to us. We need to put off whatever we are, whatever we do, and whatever we have. To put off, regarding the "former manner of life, the old man" is to put off our way of living. To put on the church life as the one new man is to put on a corporate entity produced by the mingling of the divine Spirit with the regenerated human spirit; in this marvelous entity there is only Christ as the all-inclusive life-giving Spirit mingled with our spirit (1 Cor. 15:45; 6:17). The church life is the daily walk of the corporate new man, a walk that is absolutely new in nature and in manner; everything related to the one new man is new (Eph. 4:17-32).

Since the one new man is according to God Himself, with God's life and nature, the new man must have a life that is divine; such a life will be corporate, not individualistic. Since we are part of the new man, who is the aggregate of all the God-men, our decisions and living should be the decisions and living of the corporate God-man, the one new man.

We need to practice the church life in the consciousness of the one new man. The Lord intends to raise up His

believers throughout all the world to seek Him, and when we seek Him, we will see that what He wants is the one new man expressed in the local churches (Phil. 3:7-14; Eph. 4:24).

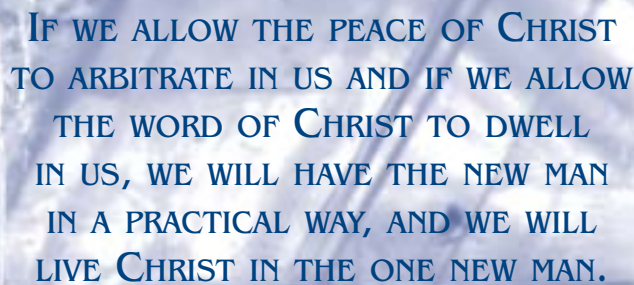
We need to see that all the genuine local churches in the different countries are one new man (vv. 21-22). All the churches are not merely individual local churches but are the one new man (Col. 4:15-16). We cannot say that each local church is a new man; rather, all the local churches on earth are the one new man. The one new man is a matter not merely of individual localities and individual churches but of all the churches on earth corporately. The one new man is neither individual nor local—it is universal.

When the one new man has been brought into full existence, we will not speak of the differences between the churches or of the jurisdiction and autonomy of the local churches (1 Cor. 1:2; 4:17; Rev. 2:1, 7; 22:16). At that time we all will be taking Christ as our person and living Christ; thus, only Christ will be among us, and only Christ will be manifested (Phil. 1:20-21). All the believers throughout the world will speak "the same thing"—the unique Christ (1 Cor. 1:10). If we take Christ

as our person and as our life, spontaneously we will all speak the same thing; then in a practical way we will be the one new man. The church is the one new man with only one person, and this person controls our speaking; thus, whatever He speaks is surely "the same thing."

Today is the day to have a new man constituted of all the local churches, including all the saints as one in Christ, who is all and in all. What the church is as the new man is nothing but Christ, and this Christ is all and in all. This vision will rescue us from all things other than Christ, and this will be the ultimate church life—a universal new man living out Christ; this will conclude this age, usher in the kingdom, and bring the Lord back (Eph. 4:24; Phil. 1:20-21; Rev. 11:15).

Among the local churches there should be no "nations" (Matt. 16:18; 1 Thes. 1:1; Rom. 16:16; 3 John 9-10). The local churches are not "nations"—they are one new man. We do not care to have a little "nation," an empire, in which we can be a little king; rather, we care to be in the



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one new man as expressed in the local church life (Matt. 20:25-26).

We need to practice our church life in the consciousness of the one new man. For this, we need to be church-conscious, having the consciousness of the Body of Christ. The record in the book of Acts regarding the church reveals that the believers were church-conscious (5:11; 8:1, 3; 9:31; 11:22, 26; 12:1, 5; 13:1; 14:23, 27; 15:3-4, 22, 41; 16:5; 18:22; 20:17, 28). In their concept there was nothing of individualism; they did everything with a consciousness of the church (2:44; 4:23, 31). Based upon the record in Acts, we have the principle that whatever we do and whenever and wherever we meet, we must be church-conscious.

We also need to have the consciousness of the Body, a Body-consciousness (1 Cor. 12:26-27; Rom. 12:15; Eph. 4:16; 2:21-22). In order to live and move with other members of the Body, we need to have the consciousness of the Body. In the church life we should learn to have the consciousness of the Body. Wherever there is Body-consciousness, individual thought and action are ruled out; seeing the Body results in deliverance from individualism (Acts 9:1-19). For the Lord's move both locally and universally, we all need to be Body-conscious in one accord (1:14; 2:46; 4:24; 15:25; Rom. 15:6). If we experience and enjoy the all-inclusive Christ revealed in Colossians, we will realize that the Christ whom we enjoy is the Head of the Body, and this realization will make us conscious of the Body and cause us to love all the members of the Body (1:18; 2:19; 3:12-14). The more we are conscious of the Body, the more we will care for the feeling of the Body and for the peace of the Body (Rom. 12:4-5, 15; 1 Cor. 12:26; Eph. 2:14-16; 4:3; Col. 3:15). Since we are members of the Body of Christ, we should have a feeling for the Body (1 Cor. 12:27). In order for us to have the Body life, we need to be full of feeling for the Body. The feeling for the Body is very precious, and it is closely related to one's frame of mind, that is, to one's perception of things (Rom. 12:3). We need to realize that whatever we do involves the Body, and we should not do anything without taking care of the Body. If we are conscious of the Body in this way, we will have the consciousness of the one new man.

With Paul there was a consciousness of the universal one new man, and in our Christian life and church life today, we also need to have the consciousness of the one new man (Eph. 4:24; Col. 3:10-11). Colossians 4:7-17 is a practical illustration of the revelation of the one new man and of the consciousness of the one new man. Both the saints in Colossae and Paul, including those with him, were members of the one new man in actuality and had the consciousness of the one new man. Paul's word

regarding the reading of letters proves that there was no difference between the church in Laodicea and the church in Colossae; his word implies fellowship, oneness, harmony, and intimate contact (v. 16). In spite of all the differences among nationalities, races, and classes, there was on earth in a practical way the one new man created in Christ Jesus; there were not merely local churches in various cities—there was the one new man in a real and practical way. And as the Epistle to Philemon illustrates, in this new man all the believers, regardless of social class, enjoyed an equal status and lived an intimate new-man church life in the inward parts of Christ Jesus.

As a prerequisite for His coming back, the Lord needs to recover the reality and practicality of the church as the one new man. What was divided and scattered in the old man is fully recovered in the new man (Gen. 11:5-9; Acts 2:5-12; Col. 3:10-11). In the old man, man was divided and scattered, but in the new man, man is gathered and made one. In the world the more different and individualistic a person is, the better; this is contrary to God's economy, which is to gather, to unite, and to make one. To put off the old man is to put off the divided and scattered man; to put on the new man is to put on the gathered and one new man (Eph. 4:22, 24).

In the one new man all of us are one man; the requirement that everyone be only one man is exceedingly high. For the existence of the one new man, we need to rise up together to take Christ as our person (Gal. 2:20; Eph. 3:17). Those who are gifted should take this as their goal and be a pattern to the believers in taking Christ as their person for the church as the one new man.

Now is the time for God to accomplish His purpose to cause the church as the one new man to come into full existence on earth (4:24). The world situation has been raised up for the goal of the one new man, and everything that the Lord is doing in the present age is to usher in the practical existence of the one new man. The advances of civilization and technology are not merely for the world but are for the one new man. Now there is the possibility that the believers in all their environmental circumstances will express the one new man. In the last days of this age, before the Lord is able to return, He must see the expression of the reality and practicality of the church as the one new man (1 Cor. 12:12; Eph. 4:4, 24). When the one new man has reached maturity and is lived out in genuine local churches, that will be the time of the Lord's coming, and the matured new man will be His bride (Rev. 19:7). **AC**

Works Cited

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