

# CHRIST AS EVERYTHING IN COLOSSIANS

*by Witness Lee*

**A**lthough Colossians is a short book of only four chapters, there are many main points that we need to see. Almost every matter in this book is a main point.

## **Knowing Christ as the Will of God**

Colossians is a book concerning God's will. In the first chapter Paul says, "We also, since the day we heard of it, do not cease praying and asking on your behalf that you may be filled with the full knowledge of His will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding" (v. 9). Wisdom is in our spirit for us to realize, sense, and perceive the spiritual things, and understanding is in our mind to interpret what we perceive. We need all spiritual wisdom and understanding in order to have the full knowledge of the will of God. The will of God mentioned here is not His will in small matters. It is not merely for us to know what school to go to, what house to buy, or whether or not to marry. These things are too minor. The will of God mentioned here is the eternal will of God, the great will of God. It is related not to the things in our daily life but to God's purpose, God's intention. To know this will requires that we have full knowledge and all spiritual wisdom and understanding.

What is the will of God according to His desire, His intention, in the whole universe, in creation, in redemption, in the coming age, and in eternity? The entire book of Colossians is the answer to this question. If we read this book, we will realize that the answer is Christ Himself. The will of God is in Christ, concentrated in Christ, and for Christ. Christ is everything in the will of God. We must know this and realize this with spiritual wisdom and with our understanding in a clear, renewed mind.

The last chapter of this book tells us, "Epaphras, who is one of you, a slave of Christ Jesus, greets you, always struggling on your behalf in his prayers that you may stand mature and fully assured in all the will of God" (4:12). In the first chapter the apostle Paul and his co-workers prayed that the Colossians would know the will of God, and in the last chapter Epaphras as a slave of Christ struggled fervently in prayer on behalf of the church concerning the same thing. Therefore, this is a book that reveals the eternal will of God in the universe.

## **God Being a Mystery**

In writing Colossians, the apostle was much in the spirit, expressing from the spirit of prayer what was on his heart and in his spirit. As a result, it is difficult to divide this book into sections. The best way to know this book, therefore, is to see not the sections but the main points. There are at least fourteen main points revealed in this book.

Colossians  
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First, Colossians speaks of the mystery of God in relation to the will of God. In order to speak about a person's will, we must know what is in his heart. We must know him, understand him, and know what type of person he is. God has a mystery, and He is a mystery. We know that God exists, but apparently, it is difficult for anyone to know Him. Not only God Himself is a mystery, but what He desires and intends to do also is a mystery.

The term *the mystery of God* is found in Colossians 2:2. This verse says, "Unto all the riches of the full assurance of understanding, unto the full knowledge of the mystery of God, Christ." Here the apostle uses such spiritual terms as *all the riches*, *full assurance of understanding*, and *full knowledge*. The mystery of God is too mysterious, too profound, and too great. It needs all the riches of the full assurance of understanding. What is the mystery of God? By ourselves we cannot thoroughly explain what God is and what God intends to do; the answer is in the book of Colossians.

### Christ Being the Mystery of God

The King James Version renders the last part of 2:2 as "the mystery of God, and of the Father, and of Christ." This requires an evaluation of the different Greek manuscripts of the New Testament. Many manuscripts differ in their renderings. The King James Version was translated in 1611, and John Nelson Darby published his New Translation in the second half of the nineteenth century. Some of the best and most trustworthy manuscripts were discovered in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. By 1901 the translators of the American Standard Version had many good manuscripts in their hands, so we trust more in their decision of which term to use. The American Standard Version renders this verse, "The mystery of God, even Christ," but the word *even* is not in the Greek text; it is supplied by the translators. Therefore, the best rendering of verse 2 is "the mystery of God, Christ."

### The Image of the Invisible God

The mystery of God is Christ Himself. This is a very significant word. God and His intention are great, profound, and mysterious, yet Christ is this mystery. This is far beyond our understanding. Nevertheless, according to the record of this book, we can point out three items related to Christ being the mystery of God. First, Christ is the very image of the invisible God (1:15). God Himself is invisible, so He is a mystery. We cannot see Him; neither can we understand this mystery. Moreover, what He intends to do also is a mystery. However, Colossians tells us that Christ is the image of the invisible God. An image is an expression; that Christ is the image of God means that He is the expression, the explanation, of what God is. As such, He is the Word of God. John 1:1 says, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God," and verse 18 says, "No one has ever seen God; the only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, He has declared Him." As the Word of God, Christ declares, defines, and expresses God.

### The Fullness of the Godhead

Second, Colossians 2:9 says, "In Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily." God is embodied in Christ; all that God is and has within Himself, that is, all the fullness of the Godhead, dwells in Christ bodily. Therefore, Christ is not only the expression, the image, of God but also the reality of God, the very embodiment of God. To find the meaning of *fullness*, we should not use our imagination but rather trace the usage of this word in the divine record. This takes us to John 1, where verse 14 says, "The Word became flesh and tabernacled among us...full of grace and reality," and verse 16 says, "Of His fullness we have all received, and grace upon grace." *His fullness* is the fullness of God. Since the fullness of the Godhead dwells in Christ, we have all received of His fullness.



When the Son of God was incarnated as a man, with Him there was the fullness of God, and of this fullness we have all received. In order to know the items that we have received, we must further trace through the Gospel of John. John tells us that we receive life, light, the way, truth, food, and drink. All of these are only a few of the items of the fullness of God. All the fullness of God dwells in Christ, who is the very embodiment of God. He is the life, the light, the way, the reality, the food, and the drink. He is everything because the fullness of God is embodied in Him. He is the very embodiment of all the elements of God. What God is and what God has are embodied in Christ.

### ***The Center of God's Will***

Christ is also the center of God's will. All that God planned is related to Christ. Christ as the mystery of God includes these three matters—the image of God, the embodiment of God, and the very center of God's will.

### ***Christ as the Creator, the Firstborn of Creation, the Firstborn from the Dead, and the Head of the Body***

The third major point in Colossians is that God intends to make Christ everything. In the universe the first item is God. Then there is God's creation, including humanity. In addition, there is redemption, which includes the church. These five items—God, God's creation with humanity as the center, and God's redemption with the church as the center—include all the items in the universe. The first chapter of Colossians reveals that Christ is God (vv. 15, 19), Christ is part of the creation (v. 15), and Christ accomplished redemption (vv. 20-22). Verses 15 through 18 say,

Who is the image of the invisible God, the Firstborn of all creation, because in Him all things were created, in the heavens and on the earth, the visible and the invisible, whether thrones or lordships or rulers or authorities; all things have been created through Him and unto Him. And He is before all things, and all things cohere in Him; and He is the Head of the Body, the church; He is the beginning, the Firstborn from the dead, that He Himself might have the first place in all things.

Christ Himself is both the Creator and the Firstborn of all creation. The creation came out of Him and was made by Him. Without Him there is no creation, but at the same time He is the first item of all created things. *The Firstborn of all creation* refers to God's old creation, and *the Firstborn from the dead* refers to God's redemption. Both in God's creation and in God's redemption Christ is the Firstborn.

In these few verses there are several items of what Christ is. Christ is the very Creator; He is the first item, the Firstborn, in creation; and He is the Firstborn in God's redemption; therefore, He is the Head of the church. Christ is everything. He became a genuine man in God's creation. This corresponds with the record in the first chapter of John's Gospel, which says, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God...All things came into being through Him, and apart from Him not one thing came into being which has come into being" (vv. 1, 3). Then verse 14 says that the Word became flesh, incarnated to become a man, in order to accomplish redemption. He is also the Head of the church, and He is the church, the Body itself (1 Cor. 12:12). Therefore, He is everything.

### ***As the Reality of All Things***

Verses 16 and 17 of Colossians 2 say, "Let no one therefore judge you in eating and in drinking or in respect of a feast or of a new moon or of the Sabbath, which are a shadow of the things to come, but the body is of Christ." These two verses indicate that the reality

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of all that we need is Christ. We need food, drink, and the feasts. A new moon indicates a new start, and the Sabbath is for rest. However, all of these are simply a shadow; they are not the real things. Christ Himself is the reality of all these things.

When a person stands in the light, he casts a shadow, but the shadow is not the real person. The real person is the body of that shadow. All things in the entire universe are only a shadow; Christ Himself is the reality. The clothes that we wear are not the real clothes; they are shadows. Christ is our real clothing. If we do not have Christ to clothe us, we are still naked before God. The light we see is not the real light. Christ is the reality of the light. Even if we have the best light, without Christ we are still in darkness. The sun is not the real sun; it is a type. The reality of the sun is Christ, the Sun of righteousness (Mal. 4:2). Even the house in which we dwell is not our real dwelling place. Our real dwelling place is Christ. Everything we need is a shadow; the reality of all things is Christ. To be sure, Christ is not the reality of the negative things in the universe, such as sin, the world, self, Satan, and the evil spirits. Rather, all the positive things in the universe are shadows of Christ.

All the trees are shadows of Christ. In the Scriptures many trees are types of Christ, such as the tree of life (Gen. 2:9), the apple tree (S. S. 2:3), the cedar tree (5:15), and the fir tree (Hosea 14:8). The most significant tree is the vine tree mentioned in John 15. Christ is also the Root of David (Rev. 5:5) and the branch of Jesse (Isa. 11:1). A tree gives us fruit and shade. If we take the time to study how trees are used to illustrate Christ, we will see that Christ is everything. Many items of clothing also typify Christ. The garments of the high priest with their many details are a type of Christ. The many items of food also typify Christ. All the items on Solomon's feasting table and the items in his storage typify Christ (1 Kings 4:22-23). We should read the Scriptures in the way of seeing all the types and shadows of Christ.

**C**olossians shows that God has made Christ to be everything. He is God Himself, and He is man. He is the Creator, and He is a creature. He accomplished redemption, and He is the Firstborn from the dead. He is the Head of the church, and He is even the Body. Christ is everything! In order to see this, we need Colossians. If we remove this book from the Bible, no one could understand Christ in such a profound way.

### **Christ Having the First Place in All Things**

The fourth main point in Colossians is that Christ has the first place, the preeminence, in all things (1:18). That Christ would be the first in everything is according to God's plan.

### **Christ Our Portion**

The fifth main point is that Christ is our portion. Colossians 1:12 says, "Giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified you for a share of the allotted portion of the saints in the light." Christ is the allotted portion given to us by God. Strictly speaking, God has given only Christ to us. All other things are simply shadows. No doubt God gives us food, sunshine, air, breath, and many good things, but all these things are merely shadows of Christ; the reality is Christ Himself. Christ is our portion.

In the entire universe what else is our portion? If we do not have Christ, we have nothing. Although we do have the shadows, they are vanity, because it is easy for shadows to depart. Even if we had a palace, in only one night it could burn up in a fire or be brought down by an earthquake. Everything soon fades away because it is all a shadow. Only Christ is the reality. Only He exists forever without change.

If you do not have Christ, you are a person of vanity, but if you have Christ, you are a person of reality; you have Him, and He is everything. I hope that we all would learn to realize Him and love Him. Simply love Him, and do not seek anything else. Everything else is merely a shadow. Of course, while we are still on this earth, we need many things. However, we must use these things in the way of realizing Christ as our reality. The only portion that God gives to us is this wonderful Christ. We must learn to know Him, to live Him, to take Him, to experience Him, and to realize Him. He is not a religion, a doctrine, a set of teachings, or even Christianity but an all-inclusive, real, and living Christ. It is worthwhile for us to have Him, and we can never regret having Him.

### Christ Our Life

Sixth, this very Christ is life to us (3:4). He is very intimate, tender, subjective, and near. Nothing is as dear, precious, and available to us as our life, yet even our own life, the very life that we received from our parents, is not the real life. It is only a shadow. Therefore, he who does not have Christ does not have the life (1 John 5:12). He is not only our portion for us to enjoy but also our life for us to live.

Even though I have been teaching and ministering for more than thirty years, I still do not have the adequate words to explain what it means that Christ is our life. This is something beyond human expression and human utterance. I can simply say that this wonderful Christ today is life to us. How precious and how wonderful this is! Christ is everything, He is our portion, and, even more, He is our life. In all the sixty-six books of the Bible, Colossians 3:4 is the clearest word about Christ being our life.

### Christ as Our Everything

The seventh main point concerns Christ being everything to us. Christ is not only everything, but He is everything to us. We must learn how to experience Christ as everything to us. Christ to us is our food and drink, and He is also our patience. Many times we are short of patience. When we are short of patience, we should realize that we are actually short of Christ. Christ is our patience. Do we desire humility? Christ Himself is our humility. Do we want to honor our father and our mother? The honor that we render to our father and mother must be Christ. Christ is even the way for us to honor our parents. There is no need for teaching concerning the way. If we love Christ and fellowship with Him, we will have Christ as the living way. We will know how to honor our parents, and Christ will become the strength for us to honor our parents. Christ is everything to us.

I believe that in these last days the Lord will recover His people to know Him not merely in doctrine but in a very experiential way. When we write a letter to a friend, our letter must be Christ. We must learn to experience Christ in such a way. Before we write the letter, we should fellowship with the Lord and be one with Him. We must tell Him, "Lord, You Yourself must be my words. I will not write anything besides Yourself to my friend. What I am going to write must be You." We must try to experience the Lord in this way, applying Him as everything in our daily life. He must be everything to us. When we minister the word, that word must be Christ. Our message and ministry must be Christ, and the way to minister and our strength to minister must be Christ.

The book of Colossians was written because many of those believers did not know how to experience Christ in such a way. They were distracted from Christ to pay attention to other things. Colossians was written to tell them that they must realize Christ as their everything. We also must learn to experience Christ in such a real and living way. Even from our youth, we should begin to experience Christ. I thank the Lord that I was saved as a young man. However, I did not receive the proper help. I received great help in studying

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the Bible according to the letter, but I was not helped to know the Lord in a living way, to experience Him as my life and everything. After about seven or eight years had passed, I began to receive help in knowing Christ in a living way. Praise the Lord that many of you who are still in your teenage years can receive this help now! You should not take this in a light way. You should appreciate that you are being shown the way to take Christ, experience Him, and apply Him as everything. I hope that the younger generation will pay their full attention to this matter. Then they will be the living witnesses, the living testimonies, of how dear, how real, how precious, how rich, and how living Christ is. Let us learn to experience Him in this way.

### **Receiving Christ**

The eighth main point is that we receive Christ. Colossians 2:6 begins, "As therefore you have received the Christ, Jesus the Lord." *Received* is a very meaningful and important word. Only two books, the Gospel of John and Colossians, speak of receiving Christ in this way. John 1:12 says, "As many as received Him." When I was young, I did not properly understand the meaning of believing in the Lord Jesus. However, after many years I realized that to believe in the Lord Jesus simply means to receive the Lord Jesus, like a radio receives the radio waves in the air and people receive breath into their bodies. Colossians stresses that we have received Christ.

### **Walking in Christ**

The ninth main point in Colossians is that we walk in Christ. Colossians 2:6 concludes by saying, "Walk in Him." This verse tells us to walk not according to Him but in Him. *In Him* means that Christ is a sphere, a realm, in which we walk, signified by the good land of Canaan. *In Him* also includes the meaning of walking by Him, just as traveling in a car means that we travel by the car.

### **Needing to Reject Human Philosophies and Distracting Teachings**

In the early days of the church the Colossian believers were confused and carried away from the knowledge of Christ. According to church history, they were distracted by Gnosticism, a philosophy composed of Jewish, Egyptian, Persian, and Greek teachings. Those teachings appeared to be good, in the same way that the teachings of Confucius appear to be good. The word *Gnosticism* itself indicates the word of knowledge and wisdom. Verse 8 speaks of philosophy; in writing this, Paul had in mind Gnosticism, the teaching and thoughts of human wisdom. He also speaks of the elements of the world, the rudimentary teachings of the world. This also is related to the teaching of the Gnostics. This Gnostic philosophy was brought into the church and caused confusion regarding the proper knowledge of Christ. Hence, many believers were distracted from experiencing Christ. This was the reason that Paul wrote Colossians.

**T**he principle of this portion of the Word is that throughout all the centuries there have always been good teachings invented and taught by man that distract Christians from the real knowledge and experience of Christ. In China, for example, many Christians are distracted by the ethical teachings of Confucius from the real and living experience of Christ. When we were regenerated, we received Christ as our life and our everything, so Christ has become the sphere, the realm, and the means for us to live on the earth and walk in the presence of God. Therefore, we must reject and abandon not only the bad things but even the good things, the best teachings invented by man.

The best thing invented by man in human culture and civilization is not science. Many times science has produced awful things, such as machines to kill many people. The best human invention is philosophy. However, we must never be distracted by human

philosophy; it is a subtle substitute for Christ. Satan uses philosophy in a subtle way to distract people from the real experience of Christ, but many times we do not realize that we have been distracted. We may consider that philosophy is good because it helps us to be better persons, to have a better living, which is a glory to God. This is wrong. We have received Christ as our life and as our everything, and now we must learn not to know any good thing other than Christ. We should abandon all the other good things and learn to live and walk in Christ. I would caution the young brothers and sisters about studying books of philosophy. I do not like to see that a young person would major in philosophy at a university. To do this is to put yourself into the mouth of a tiger; at any time the enemy, Satan, can swallow you. Human philosophy is very deceiving for Christians.

### ***Our Need for a Detailed Experience of Christ in Our Daily Life***

The basic principle in Colossians is that God has given Christ to us. According to Colossians, the will of God is to make Christ everything to us, to give us Christ as our portion, our life, and our everything. By the mercy and grace of God, we have received Christ as the all-inclusive One. Therefore, after we receive Him, we must walk in Him as our sphere and by Him as our means. We must learn to know Christ in this way. Now we must learn these things through our daily experience. I am saddened by the fact that not many Christians have learned how to experience Christ in a detailed way in their daily life. I have heard certain teachings about this, but I have not met many Christians who practice the real experience of Christ in their daily life. Today what we need is not more good teachings but to learn to live by Him in a practical way. All the good teachings other than Christ should be put aside. We must spend more time to know Christ, not merely by our understanding but by the wisdom in our spirit.

### ***Knowing Christ in All Spiritual Wisdom and Understanding***

The apostle Paul gives us the secret and the way to walk in Christ in 1:9-11. Verse 9 says, "We also, since the day we heard of it, do not cease praying and asking on your behalf that you may be filled with the full knowledge of His will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding." In order to experience Christ and walk in Christ, we must have all spiritual wisdom and understanding. We need the wisdom in our spirit to realize Christ. First of all, we must realize that in God's purpose, His will is to make Christ everything to us. We must have a clear understanding of this. In order to experience Christ, we have to know Him. The more we know and realize Him, the more we sense that we need Him, and the more we are willing to experience Him. Therefore, we need spiritual wisdom and understanding, that is, the revelation and vision concerning Christ. Hence, we need to read the Scriptures to gain the knowledge of Christ. However, we should not read merely in the way of mental understanding in letter. Rather, whenever we read the things concerning Christ in the record of the Scriptures, we must pray much.

### ***Knowing Christ by Exercising Our Spirit in the Word***

We should not merely exercise our mentality to understand the Bible in its black and white letters. We must know the words and understand them with our mind. However, this is not all. After we understand the words, we must immediately exercise our spirit. This requires much prayer. We may illustrate this by eating. When we eat, it is important to thoroughly chew our food. The more time we spend to chew the food, the more we get the nourishment and the easier it is to digest it. Chewing food illustrates the way to read the Word with the exercise of the spirit. After we see the words, read the words, and understand them, we need to "chew" them. This is done not by our understanding but by our prayer.

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For this reason we need to exercise our spirit. When we read, we need to exercise our mind to understand the words, and we may even need to go to a dictionary. However, after we understand the words, we need to exercise our spirit and pray from the spirit, "Lord, I open my mouth. I wish to sense Your word from the depths of my spirit." In this way the secrets of the Word will be opened to us. We will pass through the surface of the black and white letters and find the depths. Then we will see something different and living. At this time we will know Christ not merely according to the letter but according to spiritual understanding and realization. We will receive the vision and revelation of Christ from the Word. We all need to read the Word in this way.

### ***Walking according to the Revelation of Christ***

Colossians 1:10 says, "To walk worthily of the Lord to please Him in all things, bearing fruit in every good work and growing by the full knowledge of God." To walk worthily of the Lord and grow by the full knowledge of God is to live and walk according to spiritual wisdom and understanding. After we receive the revelation and vision concerning Christ, we have to walk according to it. Then we will walk worthily of the Lord and partake of the Lord more and more. In this way we grow by Christ being increased in us. The way for Christ to increase in us is by our receiving spiritual wisdom, understanding, and revelation concerning Christ and by our walking according to the spiritual revelation of Christ that we have received. This is to gain the real, subjective, and experiential knowledge of God, by which we grow with the increase of Christ.

### ***Being Empowered with All Power***

Verse 11 says, "Being empowered with all power, according to the might of His glory, unto all endurance and long-suffering with joy." We need the inner empowering according to the might of His glory. This is not only to have revelation in our understanding; it is something more. It is that the Holy Spirit within us strengthens us, energizes us, and imparts the might of God's glory into us. First, we have revelation and vision in our spiritual understanding. Then, we make the decision to walk according to that vision. Third, we look to the Lord that He may strengthen us with His power. This is the proper way to walk in Christ.

### ***Rooted and Built Up in Christ***

The tenth main point in Colossians is found in 2:7, which says, "Having been rooted and being built up in Him." *Having been rooted* and *being built up* are different verb tenses. Our being rooted is already accomplished, but our being built up is a process. We have been rooted in Christ. There is no need for us to be rooted again, because this has already been accomplished. What we need now is to be built up.

**T**o be built up has two meanings. On the one hand, we need to be built up with Christ just as a little child needs to be built up into an adult. Although we have been rooted in Christ, the measure of Christ within us may be small; we may not have an adequate measure of Christ. If we are built up with Christ, we will have a proper measure of Christ within us. On the other hand, we need to be built up with others. Colossians emphasizes Christ as the Head of the Body. All the members themselves must be built up, and they must also be built together as the Body.

The second aspect of building depends on the first. If we ourselves have not been built up, how can we be built together with others? To be built together with others depends on our being built up. Our growing in Christ is a matter not only of receiving Christ and walking in Him but of being built up ourselves and being built up with others. These are very important matters with many details. To be rooted in Christ means that we are plants who have been put in Christ as our soil. Therefore, we must enjoy Christ, experience Him,



and be built up in Him. In order to build, we need materials. As plants, Christ is the soil to us, and as the building, He is the very material with which we are built. An American child is built up by eating the produce of America, such as beef, chicken, fish, and fruit. In the same way, our spiritual measure is built up by feeding on Christ. At present we may have a small spiritual measure. We need to grow to a greater measure of Christ, and the way to grow in measure is by feeding on Christ, taking Him in, and digesting Him. Then He will be added to us more and more. We will have Christ increased within us, and our measure will grow. Christ is the material for the building up of our spiritual measure. For us to be rooted, Christ is the soil, and for us to be built up, Christ is the material. Christ is the very substance, element, and material for us to grow and be built up.

**W**e have received Christ. Now we need to walk in Him and by Him. In order to walk in Him, we need to know Him in revelation and vision, and after we receive the revelation, we have to walk according to what we see. Then we open to Him and allow the Holy Spirit to strengthen us into our spirit, imparting the might of His glory into us that we might be empowered to walk in Christ. Then we must realize that we have been rooted in Christ. Christ is the very source of our supply, and as the soil, He is our entire supply. From Christ as the soil we absorb all the supply that we need to grow. He is the very material, substance, and element with which we can have a greater measure in spirit. All of this in total is the growth of Christ. I hope that you will spend time to bring these matters to the Lord, to pray about them, and to learn to practice them. We must realize all these matters and put them into practice. Then we will have the real experience of Christ. We will then be able to help others, not merely to teach them about Christ but to minister to them the living knowledge and experience of Christ.

### Identified with Christ to Be the New Man

The eleventh main point in Colossians is our identification with Christ. We are identified with Christ in four things—in His death, in His burial, in His resurrection, and in His ascension (2:11-12; 3:1, 3). We died with Christ, we were buried with Him, we were raised with Him, and we ascended with Him. Therefore, we are no longer the old man but the new man (vv. 9-10). In our daily walk we must always reject the old man and everything of the old man as that which is dead and buried and has nothing to do with us anymore. We are now resurrected and ascended with Christ in the heavens, and we are the members of the new man. Within this new man there is nothing old. There cannot be Greek and Jew, circumcision and uncircumcision, barbarian, Scythian, slave, or free man (v. 11). All of these are the old things. In the new man everything is Christ. Christ is all and in all.

We are now in the new man, so we must put on the new man in our experience. We realize that we have been united and identified with Christ; we are dead, buried, resurrected, and ascended in Him and with Him. All the things of the old man have nothing to do with us; we put them off and reckon them as buried. Then we live in the new man and walk as the new man. In this way we enjoy Christ not only by ourselves but by and in the corporate Body, which is the church, the new man.

### Christ in Us, the Hope of Glory

The twelfth main point in Colossians is found in 1:27. Christ in us is the hope of glory. He is not only our life but also our hope, which is the hope of glory. *Hope of glory* indicates that when Christ comes, He will bring us into glory; that is, He will glorify us. Today this glory is concealed by our physical body, but one day, when He comes, our physical body will be changed in nature by being transfigured. The glory that is Christ Himself as life will shine out through our body to bring our entire body and our entire

*We have  
received Christ.  
Now we need  
to walk in Him  
and by Him.  
In order to  
walk in Him,  
we need to know  
Him in revelation  
and vision,  
and after we  
receive the  
revelation,  
we have to walk  
according to  
what we see.*

*The main goal  
of this book  
is to tell us  
how to apply  
Christ and  
appropriate Him.*

*This entire  
book is a book  
of application,  
telling us how  
to appropriate  
Christ in  
our daily life  
in order to  
meet our  
every need.*

person into glory. We should not think that glory is something objective that will come upon us some day. Rather, this glory is subjectively within us today, and one day it will spread out through our body. The divine life will swallow up the death within us, and we will be in glory.

**T**hrough transfiguration our body will become transparent, like the shade of an electric lamp. One day the Lord will come to transfigure the “lampshade” and make it transparent. Then the glory within will shine out, and the “lampshade” will be in glory. This will transpire on the day of our glorification, but today the glory is already within us. Christ in us is the hope of glory.

### **The Way to Apply Christ**

The thirteenth main point in Colossians is the way to apply Christ. The main goal of this book is to tell us how to apply Christ and appropriate Him. This entire book is a book of application, telling us how to appropriate Christ in our daily life in order to meet our every need. Colossians 1:12 tells us that Christ is the portion of the saints, but we must know how to enjoy and apply Him. In the early days of the church some of the Christians in Colossae had a Jewish background. They regarded special foods and drinks and observed the Old Testament feasts, the new moon, and the Sabbath. The apostle Paul told them that these items are only a shadow and that they must give them up. Christ is the very body of the shadow (2:16-17). They needed to apply Christ as the real food, drink, days of feast, new moons, and Sabbath. By this passage alone we can realize that the intention of this book is to show us our need to appropriate Christ in a practical way, even in our eating and drinking.

### **The Increase of God for the Growth and Building Up of the Body**

The last main point is found in 2:19, which is an important verse. This verse says, “Holding the Head, out from whom all the Body, being richly supplied and knit together by means of the joints and sinews, grows with the growth of God.” Joints are for supplying the nourishment needed by the Body, and sinews are for knitting the members of the Body together. Among the believers some are joints that nourish and supply, and others are sinews that join, unite, and knit the members together. By this nourishment and knitting, the Body receives the supply from the Head, and it grows with the growth of God. This means that God increases within us, because what we receive from Christ the Head is something of God, even the fullness of the Godhead. On the one hand, the growth of the Body is the increase of the element of Christ within us, and on the other hand, it is the increase of God Himself. In this way the Body grows.

We may compare this to the growth of a tree. A tree grows by the fertilizer. As we put fertilizer into the soil, the tree absorbs more riches from the soil. Because the tree has more elements and more nourishment, it grows by this element and nourishment. As members of the Body, what we receive from Christ the Head is the very fullness and essence of God. The more we receive Christ, the more we have the increase of God, and it is by this increase that the Body grows and is built up.

These fourteen main points cover the entire book of Colossians. By such a book we can know Christ in a full way, and we can know who Christ is. We can know the Head of the universal man, and we can know how to appropriate Him in our daily lives. We can know how to receive, enjoy, and experience Christ so that the essence of God will constantly increase, and we will have more and more of God. In this way the Body will grow and be built up. We need to “chew” and digest all the important points of this book. Then they will become our experience. **AFC**