

The
LOGOS:
Jesus
Christ

By David A. DePra

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Part 1

The Living Word

The Gospel of John is a revelation given of God of the Person of His Son, Jesus Christ. The apostle John writes of the identity of Christ and of the purpose for which He came. But all of this is given for the purpose that the readers might know who Jesus is TODAY – that people might know who Jesus is TO them and IN them.

That purpose is why Jesus, in the gospel of John, says nine times, “I AM...” He says, “I AM,” -- and then gives a description of Himself. And each of those descriptions refers to who Jesus is to be IN US and TO US today as believers.

We do not have to read far before John begins to reveal Christ using one of the many names of Christ:

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. (John 1:1)

The word, “logos,” is the Greek word that is translated, “The WORD” –i.e., John is here calling Jesus, “The Word;” in Greek, “The LOGOS.”

Before talking about this word, “logos,” can we see that John is saying that not only was Jesus Christ GOD -- in other words, Divine -- but that He is separate and distinct from the Father? Sure. He writes, “In the beginning was the Word and the Word was WITH God.” How many see that there have got to be two personalities there -- two individual persons? And then John says, “And the Word WAS God”. So, in this verse John points out two distinct Persons: The Father and the Son -- and both are divine in nature.

Now, let’s talk about this Greek word, “logos” -- and discover why God chose that particular word

to describe His Son, Jesus Christ. What does the word, "logos," mean in the New Testament Greek?

Now, of course, as is the case with so many of the names used to describe Christ, we need to realize that they are figurative. Jesus is obviously not a spoken WORD any more than He is a literal DOOR. Yet He said, "I AM the Door." But those figures open up vistas of understanding. Jesus Christ is the LOGOS or WORD of God. There is a ton of Truth conveyed to us through the use of that term LOGOS.

At the root, LOGOS means, "a spoken word." But it is vital to see that LOGOS also includes the entire thought, concept, and intent BEHIND that spoken word. So, "logos," is NOT merely what is spoken -- but it includes the thought and intent that is in the mind of God when He speaks. This brings us to an amazing conclusion: Jesus, who IS the LOGOS, is the full thought and mind of God spoken forth in a PERSON. Jesus is, if you will, the full personification of the heart and mind of God Himself.

Any Greek reference will tell you that the root word, "logos," comes from a root group that means, "to pick and gather up." But since LOGOS refers to the spoken word and the thoughts behind it, this would mean that, "logos," is a gathering together of the entire thought and mind of God in His LOGOS.

Now take it to the next level. The LOGOS is a PERSON. Thus, the LOGOS, Jesus Christ, is the gathering up of the entire, "thought and mind of God," revealed in a PERSON. In short, God is speaking Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ IS the revelation of God. He is not one revelation among many. No. He IS the LOGOS -- the FULLNESS of all that is in the mind of God -- which He wants to reveal to us.

Once we realize what John meant when He said that Jesus Christ IS the LOGOS of God, it ought to change our thinking on a great number of things. For example, this means that the revelation of God --

while it is expressed in what Jesus taught and in what the written word says – is actually fully expressed in a Person. Jesus Christ IS the revelation of God. He IS the LIVING WORD of God.

It is because Jesus Christ is the LOGOS of God – is the Word that God is speaking to humanity – that Jesus was able to make such statements about Himself as, “I AM the Truth.” He is the personification of all Truth – which is exactly what God always speaks. That is what is wrapped up in the incredible, all-encompassing term, “LOGOS.”

Logos and Rhema

There is something that needs to be mentioned at this point regarding this word LOGOS. It has to be discussed to clear up a widespread error having to do with God speaking His Word to us.

As we have seen, this Greek term LOGOS – while it refers to Jesus Christ as the Living Word that God reveals as His Son -- is otherwise a commonly used term. It is often used to simply refer to a word that someone speaks. But there is also another Greek word which is often translated, “word,” in the New Testament. That Greek term is, “rhema.” “Rhema,” likewise means, “spoken word” -- but the meaning is not as deep as LOGOS. LOGOS, as we have seen, also includes in its meaning the entire thought, mind and intent behind that spoken word. RHEMA does not.

In the Charismatic movement, starting in about the 1960's and 1970's, a teaching was propagated which said that LOGOS was, “the general word of God,” and that RHEMA was a PERSONAL word that God sort of, “quickened and applied to you personally.” Well, that is nonsense. There is no basis for this whatsoever in the NT. If you examine the usage of both terms in the New Testament there is NO such distinction drawn like that between LOGOS and RHEMA. But unfortunately, many folks nevertheless elevated RHEMA to a level

higher than LOGOS because they were taught that RHEMA is used when God speaks to you personally.

Well aside from the fact that God can quicken a personal word on a given occasion -- the fact remains that ALL of the word of God is ALWAYS applicable to us personally. In addition, scripture never once indicates that when the term LOGOS is used in the original text that it is a, "general word," but that when RHEMA is used, that it is a personal word. Never.

But all of that being said, what term --LOGOS or RHEMA-- does God use to refer to His Son? LOGOS. Not once is the word RHEMA used to refer to Jesus. So which word, in the eyes of God, seems more important -- and which carries with it a deeper meaning? LOGOS. God is speaking to us IN the Person named LOGOS -- The Living Word of God. Thus, the notion that RHEMA is the personal word of God is nonsense. God is today speaking, not only TO us personally in His Son, THE LOGOS, but He is speaking to us IN HIS Son. And as noted, Jesus Christ is never said to be the RHEMA. God chooses the names of His Son for a reason. LOGOS is the full mind and heart behind the word spoken. RHEMA is not.

The Logos is the Living Revelation of God

Now, back to the subject at hand: The LOGOS. God is speaking the LOGOS to humanity -- He is revealing Himself -- His mind and His full thought -- not by merely giving Jesus things to say, but by revealing the Person of Christ Himself IN HIS PEOPLE.

Many times, in the ministry of Jesus, He said that He was the revelation of the Father. For example, when Jesus kept saying that He was going to go to the Father, Philip said to Him, "Show us the Father and that will be enough for us." Jesus responded and said, "Philip, don't you know that whoever sees Me sees the Father?" This is exactly the Truth

behind Jesus as the LOGOS of God. Jesus is the embodiment of all that God is -- the entire thought, mind and reason of God wrapped up in a Person -- the Logos; the Truth.

We also have the testimony of the inspired epistles. For example, Colossians 1:15 -- referring to Christ -- Paul says:

Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature.

This description carries a significance that is easy to miss. Jesus is the very image; the very representation of God. The word there for image is actually the word, "icon" -- and we know what an icon is. It is a representation of something -- and this is what Paul is saying here about Jesus Christ. He is saying that Jesus is the image or representation of the invisible God. He was certainly that as a man. But He was also that before He became a man -- because as we have in John 1:1, the LOGOS was with God in the beginning. In other words, Jesus was the LOGOS of God before he became a man.

This is amazing. Jesus is said to be the LOGOS before He became a man. In fact, it says in John 14, "And the LOGOS became flesh." Well, in order for the LOGOS to become flesh, He had to be the LOGOS before He became a human being.

All Things Became by Him

John writes, "In the beginning was the Logos, and the Logos was with God, and the Logos was God." (Jn. 1:1) John goes on to say in verse 3,

All things were made by Him and without Him was not anything made that was made. (Jn. 1:3)

If we continue on in Colossians 1 we read a similar declaration by Paul:

By (Christ) were all things created which are in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones or dominions, principalities or powers, all things were created by Him and for Him. And He, [Jesus Christ], is before all things and by Him all things stand or hold together.

If we link up this passage from Colossians 1 to John 1:1, things become clear. Jesus Christ was the LOGOS – the Living Word of God – and He was with God, “in the beginning.” The beginning is before anything else existed in this realm. But the LOGOS – Jesus Christ -- created all else; all else was created by Him. So these epistles that Paul wrote agree 100% with John 1:1.

God is Speaking Son-Wise

Now, back to the term LOGOS. We have seen that LOGOS, in reference to Jesus, means The Son is the full thought and mind of God manifested in a Person. Hebrews 1:1-2 is another place that states this fantastic Truth. The first part of that passage says:

God, who at sundry times and in different manners, spoke in time past unto the fathers by the prophets...

This is significant. It says that IN THE PAST (i.e., the past of the time Hebrews was written) God USED to speak through prophets. But verse 2 says:

(God in these last days) has spoken unto us IN A SON.

A literal translation of this verse is, “God has spoken to us SON-WISE.” In other words, Jesus Christ -- the Person; the Living Word; the Living Logos -- is that which God is right now speaking. If I can say it this way, Jesus is, “the language,” by which God speaks in His people. God is primarily today speaking to His people through an on-going and inward revelation of the Person of Jesus Christ.

This brings us back to the core reality of Christianity: Christ in you. (Col. 1:27) If you are saved, you are joined to the Lord and one spirit with Him -- and Jesus Christ dwells in you. But the purpose of God from that point, is "to form Christ in you" (Gal. 4:19) -- to bring you into an inward discovery and realization of the Christ with whom you are one in spirit -- and Who dwells in you. This is how, "God speaks to us SON-WISE – it is through an on-going revelation of the Person who dwells in us – the One Who IS the Logos.

You start to read these things and you begin to discover how wonderfully they all tie together. Think about it: If there is a Logos -- which means the spoken word and the entire thought behind it -- if there is a Person called the LOGOS -- then there has to be a God who SPOKE that Logos -- and who is NOW speaking Him. You cannot just have a LOGOS - - because the term itself demands that there be one who speaks the LOGOS. So, Jesus IS God's word; God's Logos. He IS God's revelation to us -- the One who is the expression of His full mind and thought.

Now I recognize that when we begin to talk about Jesus as the Logos, as the revelation of God, and that God spoke Jesus, people can misunderstand this and think that you are suggesting that Jesus really isn't a Person, or really isn't God. Well, of course that is nonsense. We just read John 1:1, "In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God and the Word was God." Jesus Christ is God; He is the only begotten Son of God. The name LOGOS is used to capture the fullness of Who Christ is -- not only to humanity, but to all of creation.

Back to Hebrews 1:1-2. We again see that Jesus Christ is God -- but as God, He is the Logos -- and the Father has spoken His full mind in that Person who is the Logos -- and given and revealed Him IN His people. Jesus Christ is the way and the means by which God speaks to us today: "God has in these

last days spoken unto us by His Son” – God is speaking to us in a Son; Son-wise; in the Logos -- the full revelation of Himself in a Person.

The Full Expression of God

Now notice what else it says in Heb. 1:1-2. It says the same things about Jesus Christ that we read in John 1 and in Colossian 1. God inspired to be written of the Son:

Whom God has appointed heir of all things, by Whom He made the worlds, whose being is the brightness of His glory and the express image of His Person and upholding all things by the word of His power such that when He had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high. (Heb. 1:3)

Notice that first part of Heb. 1:3, which says that Jesus Christ is, “the brightness of God’s glory and the express image of His Person.” This affirms that the Person of Jesus Christ is IN Himself in every way, the full expression of God -- not only in what He did, and what He said, but in His very being -- He IS the Logos, the full thought, mind and intent of God.

So, if we are indwelt by Christ through His Spirit then right now we have Jesus Christ -- Who is the fullness of God -- in us. And if that is the case, then God is speaking to us Son-wise. He is revealing in us Jesus Christ – He is bringing His people into an inward realization of Jesus. He is revealing to us His will and His purpose– but not as items separate from Christ -- but rather – all things are carried from God to us through this on-going unfolding of Jesus Christ in us.

We could go on with this. For example, Jesus said in John, chapters 14 through 16, that the purpose of God’s spirit would be to reveal Christ to us, in us, and through us -- to testify of Him and to guide us into all Truth. How many see, right there, that this is how

God speaks to us SON-WISE? It is an inward realization of Jesus Christ in the believer? This is the work of the Holy Spirit; it is what the spirit of God was given to do. This is another way of saying that God, through His spirit is, “speaking Jesus.” He is revealing Jesus Christ TO us and IN us.

Confessing by the Spirit of God

Another passage, found in I John 4, is worth mentioning at this point. There John gives a warning --this is the same John who wrote the Gospel. He says:

Beloved, believe not every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are of God, because many false prophets are gone out into the world. Hereby, we know the Spirit of God: Every spirit which confesses that Jesus Christ having come in the flesh is of God. And every spirit that confesses not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is that [spirit] of antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world. (I John 4:1-3)

Note something here: John is affirming exactly what is recorded in his gospel -- in John 14, 15, and 16 – that the work of the Spirit of God is to confess Jesus. How many see that, “confessing Jesus having come in the flesh” – as John stated in I John 4 -- is simply another way of saying that the work of the spirit of God is to speak Jesus; reveal Jesus; unfold Jesus in the believer? Sure. God, by His spirit, can be said to be, “speaking forth” the Logos.

The work of the Spirit of God is to reveal Christ in us. This is more than information. It is the spiritual revelation of a PERSON. This is what the spirit of God will always do IN US – and it is what anyone who is speaking by the spirit of God will do. So, in other words, when 1 John 4 says that the Spirit of God will

always confess, “Jesus having come in the flesh,” this is simply another way of saying that the work of the Spirit of God will always be to speak Jesus, to unfold Him, and reveal Him, in flesh and blood human beings.

Do not narrow John’s words down to an affirmation that the spirit of God will always teach that Jesus Christ became a flesh and blood human being. This is, of course, included – without that we have nothing. But John is getting at what, “the Word became flesh,” means for us NOW. He is saying that the spirit of God will always be in the process of confessing Christ – i.e., speaking Christ; revealing Christ – INTO flesh and blood human beings. In short, “Christ in us, the hope of glory,” (Col. 1:27) is Christianity – and the work of the spirit in Christians is the continuing inward unfolding of Christ IN Christians. In other words, the spirit of God will always speak to believer SON-WISE; Christ will always be God’s LOGOS to believers; the spirit of God will always CONFESS the Person of Jesus Christ within the flesh and blood human beings who are born IN HIM.

This is so foundational to the purpose of God that I John 4 says that it is a test for Truth. Indeed, John even goes so far as to say in verse 3 that:

Every spirit that does NOT confess that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh, is not of God. It is the spirit of antichrist.

John does not need to list various heresies and errors that the spirit of antichrist will confess. Rather, all he needs to do is state what the spirit of antichrist will NOT confess: The spirit of antichrist will omit, redefine, distort, depersonalize, or misapply the reality of Jesus Christ within His people.

If you read this passage, you can see that the core Truth behind John’s warning is the fact that Christianity IS, “Christ IN US, the hope of glory.” Christianity is the, “treasure in an earthen

(flesh and blood) vessel.” (I Cor. 4:7) The Spirit of God will always confess and reveal Christianity to be Christ in an earthen vessel -- but more importantly -- God by His Spirit is going to reveal the Christ who dwells in flesh and blood believers TO those believers. In short, God will continue to confess or speak to us Son-wise. This is the purpose of God to by His spirit.

Separation of Soul and Spirit

One other passage -- Hebrews 4:12-13:

The Word of God is quick and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight: but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do. (Heb. 4:12-13)

In looking at this passage, the first thing we can learn is that the Greek term translated WORD in this passage – i.e., “Word of God” – is NOT rhema, but is LOGOS. Thus, this one verse completely dismantles the false teaching we discussed earlier that states that, “rhema,” is God’s Word to you personally, while LOGOS is a more general term. Read the passage. The writer of Hebrews is describing something that happens to an individual personally. And he uses LOGOS. If that teaching about “rhema,” were the Truth then RHEMA would certainly be used in this passage to describe what that false teaching says that a RHEMA is supposed to do. But no. The term translated in this verse, “WORD,” is LOGOS.

One of the dangers of such teachings is that it separates a, “word,” God might speak to a person from the Person Who is THE WORD Himself. Indeed, many of the modern movements in the church have committed this mistake over and over. Instead of God speaking to us SON-WISE, people have turned

Christianity into a series of experiences, messages from God, leadings of God, and signs and wonders – and have turned these into THINGS that God does TO us or FOR us – and have pushed Christ aside. Jesus Christ is no longer the LOGOS that God is speaking. God is made to be speaking almost anything BUT His Son.

Today, if you begin to speak of, “Christ in you,” and the fact that the purpose of God is to bring us into an inward realization of His Son, you will either be met with a blank stare, or you will be considered delusional. That is not a criticism. It is a sobering fact. If, “Christ in you,” is mentioned at all – if the Truth about Jesus Christ as the LOGOS is even discussed – these are either redefined, distorted, or minimized. But they are the very core of Christianity and what God is doing in His people. This ought to give us a clear warning as to the progress that Satan has made in the church of blinding people to the Person of Christ, and of closing our ears to the LOGOS of God.

There is no question that God CAN and sometimes DOES lead His people in specific ways. But if God is able to speak to us His Son – progressively reveal Christ IN US – then why would there be a continual need for God to lead us here and there; to tell us to do this and that. For if we KNOW Jesus Christ we will grow to know His will.

There is a big difference between God speaking to us INFORMATION as opposed to God speaking to us REVELATION in His Son. Anyone cantake orders from God and claim to know His will. But God wants us to know HIMSELF in Christ – which is exactly what He is speaking.

Now, in Hebrews 4:12 there is a principle that we need to understand -- having to do with the Logos. We’ve already read that God is speaking to us that Logos, His Son. We might even say that He is speaking His Son INTO us in the sense of continuing

to reveal Christ in us. This is actually what is being referred to in Hebrews 4:12. If we paraphrase this verse, it can read, "For the on-going revelation of Jesus Christ to you and His quick and powerful and sharper than any two-edged sword piercing even to the dividing of soul and spirit." That is in full keeping with the meaning of the verse.

How many understand that what is being described here is what happens when we begin to HEAR the LOGOS -- Jesus Christ -- Who God is speaking in us? The revelation of Christ in us is going to eventually bring a clear distinction to us between our soul and the spirit of God.

To clarify, note that I mentioned earlier that when you are saved, it is because you are joined to the Lord in spirit. "He that is joined to the Lord is one spirit with Him." (1 Corinthians 6:17) You are one spirit with Christ's spirit -- your human spirit is united to Jesus Christ by His Holy Spirit -- and you are one with Him in spirit.

But even though we are united in SPIRIT with Christ, we are not, in this age, united with Christ in body or in soul -- not in our natural man. Thus, when we are united with Christ in spirit at salvation, there is immediately created in each believer a separation between soul and spirit -- a separation between that which IS united with Christ (our spirit) and that which is NOT united with Christ (our natural man). This separation will become more and more apparent as God continues to speak to us in His Son -- as we grow to know Christ we will also recognize what is NOT of Him, i.e., what is of us; our natural man.

Therefore, you and I have these two natures in ourselves -- if we are believers -- and thus we have the conflict. "The flesh wars against the spirit and the spirit against the flesh, so that you cannot do what you want to do." (Gal. 5:17) We could also bring in the entire Romans 7 narrative that Paul gives -- about nothing good dwelling in Himself, that is to say,

in his flesh -- and how he can't do what he wants to do and he can't stop doing what he hates -- and so forth. This is the Truth behind those verses: You and I have two natures in ourselves. We have to contend with them.

Because in this age we will always have an earthly nature – body and soul – we need to understand their place. The number one thing to know is that our earthly nature is NEVER the source of anything that is of Jesus Christ. Ever. No. All things of the new creation are OUT FROM GOD – out from the Christ who dwells in us. Nothing of God is out from US. This is vital to see because as believers our body and soul will be vehicles through which we will live in Christ. God does not BYPASS us in order to live through us. That would be silly. But all that is of God never comes out of, or originates in US. It is all out from God. May God give us understanding on this matter!

Now, there is much that we could say about the Truth of soul and spirit in the believer. But it is sufficient for the present to say that as God continues to unfold Christ in the believer – speak to us Son-wise – that we will more and more learn Christ and more and more unlearn error. The Word of God is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart – all things are exposed when God speaks Christ, for He is the Truth and the Light.

People talk about self-examination. You can examine yourself, and if you are honest, you may come up with some things that are correct. But in the final analysis, if you are examining yourself, you are using the same self to examine self. In the end, that will not get you very far. And I really believe that if you go too far with it, it can do damage and make you self-preoccupied. The only way for you and me to have our thoughts exposed is by a knowledge and realization of Jesus Christ. That is what the Bible calls the conviction of the Holy Spirit of God.

And so, the Word or the Logos of God is quick and powerful. How many know that the presence of Jesus Christ in us ought to act and have the impact in us of all which is described in Hebrews 4:12?

Jesus Christ is the Fullness of God for Us

There are a couple of other scriptures I want to read now, which show that Jesus Christ is the full revelation of God to us -- and that this is why He is called the Logos. I read out of Colossians before, and now I want to read a couple of other verses from that same epistle. In Colossians 2:19, it says:

For it pleased the Father, that in Christ should all the fullness dwell.

Link this verse up with another from Romans, which states that God has freely given us ALL things in His Son. (Romans 8:32) Thus, we are being told that not only is Jesus Christ ALL – but that solely IN Christ God has given humanity ALL. In short, everything that God has for humanity is given IN Jesus Christ -- and only IN Jesus Christ. There is nothing God has to give outside of His Son.

But that also means that Jesus is THE ONE WORD that God is speaking. Can we see that? In the beginning was not, “A logos” – NO – “In the beginning was THE Logos.” There is only ONE WORD that God has to speak to us -- one Person in Whom God has given ALL; one revelation that God speaks to humanity. It is Jesus Christ.

You cannot receive the things of God -- you can't be in God's purpose -- apart from THE Way. And THE Way is a Person, Jesus Christ. There are NOT two ways; there are NOT two words. Therefore, when Jesus is called, “The Logos of God” -- we can see that this name alone – not to mention so many others -- excludes any other source of Life, Truth, or revelation. It excludes any other person as the source of what God has for man. Jesus Christ, the

only begotten Son of God, IS the Logos -- the Word -- and God has given us ALL things freely in Him.

This Truth cannot be overemphasized – although there are many who might not think that it needs to be emphasized at all. For despite the continual admonishment in the epistles that Jesus Christ is ALL, and that God has freely given humanity ALL that He has to give IN HIM – despite this fact – today Christianity is filled with teachings and movements that offer believers the things of God through OTHER means and methods. Rather than point believers to the Person of Jesus Christ for ALL, today people are offered some religious gimmick that will supposedly enable them to get from God what they want or need.

How many realize that Jesus Christ is THE LIFE? Indeed, Paul tells us He is OUR LIFE? (Col. 3:4) But if that is the case then Jesus Christ is our ALL – and in Him is ALL – for what can there be that is outside of His eternal life? Indeed, Jesus Christ is the WORD OF LIFE. These Truths are ultimate and eternal.

And so there does not need to be any conjecture, argument or debate about it: It is Christ or nothing. There is no other person whom you and I can receive in Whom we receive all the things of God. We cannot have a relationship with God, or worship God, or to plug into a belief system about God -- it is Jesus or nothing. He is the LIVING word – the Alpha and the Omega.

So, Paul says in Colossians 2:19, “It pleased the Father that in Christ should all the fullness dwell.” No wonder God is speaking to us the Person of Jesus Christ!

Note also that in Colossians 1 and 2 we find continually repeated the phrases, “by Him,” “in Him,” “through Him.” Ephesians 1 has the same emphasis. You cannot get away from the fact that Jesus Christ and Jesus Christ alone is the one Word of God -- the Logos. He is the ONLY begotten Son –

in Greek this means UNIQUELY begotten. Christ is ALL. There is none other like Him.

In Colossians 2:9 Paul writes:

***For in Christ dwells all the fullness of Deity
bodily.***

What does that mean? Well, first of all, KJV says, "All the fullness of the godhead bodily" -- and that is a wrong translation. "Godhead," is not the Greek word -- but it is, "divinity." Rather than incorrectly translate it as, "godhead," we could rightly translate it, "Godhood." In Christ dwells all the fullness of Godhood, or divinity, bodily. This means that in the Person of Jesus Christ dwells everything that God is, and everything that God has.

This verifies John 1:1, where it says, "And the Word was God" -- but it also shows that because The Word became flesh that Jesus was God the Son become man -- DIVINE in every way.

When the Word became a human being His Incarnation could be said to be a, "language," that humanity could understand. The Word became flesh and dwelt among us -- this was God speaking the LOGOS. He then died, was raised, ascended, and was given to dwell in believers through the spirit of God -- that is again God speaking the LOGOS. And as God unfolds Jesus Christ to us in an inward way -- this is God continuing to speak to us SON-WISE.

God is speaking Christ -- Christ is the only LOGOS or Word that God has to give. But in Christ is ALL -- and there is nothing outside of Him. He is a full word: a complete word; God's eternal Word. He is a Word in which dwells all the fullness of God. In fact, Paul is not only able to say here that all the fullness or Deity of God dwells in Jesus Christ, but he is also able to say in verse 10, that because Christ dwells IN the believer, that, "you are complete in Him."

God has not given SOME of what He has to give in Christ at salvation, only to point us to a subsequent source or experience for the rest of what He has to give. No. You cannot add to Christ. In HIM is the fullness of God. God is speaking His full mind and heart in His Son. If Jesus Christ is in you, and you are complete in Him, and in Him dwells all the fullness of God, do you lack anything that God has for you? Is Christ insufficient? Of course not. As quoted earlier, God has given us ALL things freely IN HIS SON. (Rom. 8:32)

All of this ought to tell us something. It ought to tell us that if ALL that God has to give is freely given in Christ, that if we are IN Christ, we already have in Him all that God has to give. Thus, rather than seek God for MORE we ought to ask God to reveal to us His Son. The Christianity life is supposed to be a growing discovery of the Christ we have already received – and by extension – all that is in Him. We are united with Christ in spirit. Now God wants to form Christ in us – bring us into an inward realization of His Son. (Gal. 4:19)

The Logos of LIFE

John, the same one who wrote the gospel, begins his first epistle with these words:

That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon and our hands have touched of the Word of LIFE.

There it is again. Jesus is not only THE LOGOS but He is the LOGOS of LIFE. John goes on:

For The Life was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness, and show unto you that Eternal Life which was with the Father, and was manifested to us, even the Word of Life.

We might suppose that this, “Word of Life,” is an IT -- because we tend to think that way. But not so—the Word of Life is a Person. Jesus Christ is not only The Word, and not only The Life, but He is the Word of Life. And as mentioned earlier, there is nothing outside of LIFE – except death. Jesus Christ is the personification of all that God is, and all that God has – embodied in a Person – and all of that adds up to LIFE.

I noted that the purpose of the Gospel of John was to reveal the Person, Jesus Christ, and to bring us back to the One who said, “I AM the life.” Isn’t it amazing how in one verse, John gathers together the entire purpose of God in wanting to reveal Jesus Christ in us, to us, and through us? He simply does it by calling Jesus the Logos. Jesus IS what God is speaking. Jesus IS the revelation of God, yes, TO us -- but also IN His people. Christianity is indeed, “Christ IN you, the hope of glory.” (Col. 1:27)

Part 2

The Inward Revelation of the Living Word

When Jesus came into the coasts of Caesarea Philippi, He asked his disciples, saying, "Who do men say that I the Son of man am?" And they said, "Some say that You are John the Baptist; some, Elias; and others, Jeremiah, or one of the prophets." He said unto them, "But who do YOU say that I am?" And Simon Peter answered and said, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God." And Jesus answered and said unto him, "Blessed are you, Simon Barjona, for flesh and blood has not revealed this unto you, but My Father which is in heaven. And I say also unto you, that you are Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.

We live in a day where spiritual deception of every kind is running rampant through the Body of Christ. The Word of God and the Person of Jesus Christ have been forsaken in favor of signs and wonders. Faith has been replaced with gimmicks, rituals, and formulas as to how to get God moving. And the knowledge of Jesus Christ has been pushed aside to make room for the knowledge and exaltation of self. Thus, it should be no surprise that the power of God through Jesus Christ should be virtually absent from the church – although this too has been replaced – replaced with the power of soul and the psychic realm. None of these things are a surprise to God. He prophesied that these things would come to pass within churches that profess Christ over two thousand years ago.

If God is today speaking to His people IN HIS SON, then the question ought to be asked: What are His people speaking? God is speaking and unfolding a Person – Who is the ONE LOGOS. Are His people,

yes, preaching Christ – but do His people have lives that confess and speak Jesus Christ?

This passage from Matthew 16 shows that the key to everything in the Christian life, once a person is saved, is an inward revelation of Jesus Christ. The gates of hell – which includes all of the old man in Adam and Satan's power in it -- cannot prevail against the Rock – against the revelation of Jesus Christ IN God's people. Or, if you will, if God is speaking Christ, and His people are listening, there are no other words or voices that will prevail in their lives. This passage clearly reveals this Truth.

If you read the above passage you are reading an account that shows that the Father had revealed to the disciples the identity of Jesus Christ – and the result was that now they were confessing Him. This was a HUGE turning point in both the ministry of Jesus, and in the lives of His disciples. Of course, at this point in time they were not yet born from above. Jesus Christ was not yet IN them through the spirit. But this was an awakening and a beginning. God had spoken by revelation the LOGOS into the understanding of these disciples.

A Personal Revelation

God has freely given us all things in His Son. All that God has for humanity is given ONLY in Christ, and there is nothing that God will ever give except it be given in His Son. Jesus is THE LOGOS of God; the great I AM to us – He is the Alpha and Omega – Thus, everything depends upon the revelation IN US of Jesus Christ. This is the starting point for freedom, and it is the starting point for walking with God. It was for the disciples -- and it is for us.

The above passage quoted from Matthew 16 is a clear statement to the effect that the inward revelation of Jesus Christ to the believer is the foundation to all that God will build in the believer from that point. Indeed, the revelation of Jesus – the

Living Word in us -- is the very power against which the gates of hell shall NOT prevail -- but in fact will be demolished.

Initially, Jesus pro-actively approached His disciples and asked them, "Who do men say that I am?" The disciples gave a number of answers, all of which, of course, were incorrect. But then Jesus asked them, "Who do YOU say that I am?"

Now, right there in that question we have unfolded a great Truth: It does not matter what other people say about Jesus Christ. No. For us personally, it matters only what WE believe. I cannot have faith in the faith of others. I have to have personal faith in Christ.

In asking, "Who do YOU say that I am?" -- can we see that Jesus is asking about a personal revelation? He may as well have asked, "Have you received a revelation from the Father of Myself? Have you heard what God is speaking?" A personal faith in Christ must be based upon a personal revelation. Otherwise faith is not real.

There are many professing Christians who simply believe what others tell them is the Truth. Their faith is based upon peer-pressure, although they would not call it that. Many have faith in leaders. They cannot imagine that so many could be deceived. So they follow the crowd. Millions just accept false teaching because they are afraid to not accept it. But few professing Christians have realized that their personal faith is to be based on a personal revelation of Jesus Christ TO them – and then ultimately -- IN them. Again we must face the question: "Who do YOU say that I am?"

Paul, the apostle, wrote to the Galatians, "I travail until Christ be formed in you." (Gal. 4:19) That translation is a little awkward in English. In NT Greek, it reads, "I travail until you be brought into an inward realization of Christ." Note

that an INWARD realization of Christ, or an inward expression of Christ to us – that is personal and individual. It cannot happen by proxy.

Paul also said, “Christ in YOU, the hope of glory.” (Col. 1:27) He did not say, “Christ is only realized through a group.” No. He said, “Christ in YOU.” We can EACH receive a personal and individual revelation of Jesus Christ -- because we each receive Jesus Christ by being made one with Him in spirit. (I Cor. 6:17) As he did with Paul, God wants to reveal Christ IN YOU. (Gal. 1:16)

So, we see the great significance of Jesus’ question: “Who do YOU say that I am?” Not, who do OTHERS say that I am – that is not the question upon which everything hinges – but, “Who do YOU say that I am?”

Note also that Jesus did not ask what they thought about this or that doctrine. He did not inquire about their beliefs regarding prophecy, an obscure Bible verse, or how church ought to be operated. He asked them what they believed about HIMSELF. If we do not have a personal, inward revelation of Jesus Christ then all of those other things won’t matter – in fact, they will likely be dead at best, and grave error at worst. God must speak into us Jesus Christ. He is the Living Word upon which all else that God reveals is based.

It certainly was the question upon which everything depended for the disciples at this point in time. Jesus obviously knew that they had begun to see the Truth about Him – He knew that they had received revelation from the Father – that is why HE asked them. And it was from that point that He was free to reveal to them the purpose for which He came: To die and be raised. But more about that later.

A Revelation from God

Peter confessed, "You are the Christ, the Son of the Living God." Jesus responded, "Blessed are you, Simon Barjona, for flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but My Father in heaven (has revealed this to you)."

Can we grasp what Jesus is saying? He is saying that this revelation of Jesus as the Christ did not come from any, "flesh and blood," source. It did not come to the disciples from other people. Neither did it come from the disciple's own, "flesh and blood," that is, it was not something that they mustered up out of themselves. No. This revelation came from the OUTSIDE of the disciples INTO them FROM the outside – from the Father.

This is how God speaks to us the LOGOS, Jesus Christ. It is not merely INFORMATION or facts. It is spiritual revelation. We know, yes, in our intellect, but we know far beyond that by the spirit of God.

Unless this is how we receive Christ – from the Father -- unless this is how we receive all revelation – from the Father through Christ -- then the only alternative is that we have received it from flesh and blood. Either revelation is OF God or it is OF man – and if it is of man it is not the Truth. Either it is birthed by God via the spirit, or it is birthed by the flesh and natural. Of course, Satan is involved in that which is of the flesh -- but spirit or flesh are the only two sources.

Jesus said that Peter and the others had NOT received this revelation of Himself through the means of flesh and blood. They had not fabricated a Jesus from out of their religious tradition – at least not on that day. And they had not mustered up this revelation from out of themselves. Sure, they would continue to have problems after this day -- but THIS revelation was of the Father. They had received personal, individual, one-on-one revelation from the

Father Himself. And because they had, Jesus was able to say, "Blessed are you!"

God uses ministry, and fellowship, to help us along in the Body of Christ. But in the final analysis, regardless of the vehicle God may use, it must result in this personal revelation of Jesus Christ. Otherwise it is not real. It will, in the end, be proven to be of the flesh.

The Rock

Now, all of this is actually background. It is background that ought to bring us to the focal point of this passage. And that focal point is this: The revelation of Jesus Christ to us in an INWARD way – that PERSONAL and INDIVIDUAL revelation that only God can give – is THE ROCK upon which the church is built, and in fact, it is THE ROCK upon which the individuals who comprise the church is built. Jesus Christ is the Rock -- and the revelation of Christ in us is the foundation of all that God is going to do and build in our lives from that point forward.

Jesus stated this directly, although it is one of those passages that has often been misapplied. He said, "Blessed are you, Simon Barjona, for flesh and blood has not revealed Me to you – but My Father in heaven has revealed Me to you. And it is upon THIS ROCK – the solid foundation of this revelation of Myself IN YOU -- that I will build my people."

You cannot escape the conclusion here: Christ Himself IN US – He is our Rock. Christ, and the progressive revelation of Christ in us – this is the ROCK upon which God builds His people. He is the Rock because He is our life. He is the Rock because He is our Truth. He is the LOGOS of God. In short, Christ is ALL.

Now can we see why unless we are at least beginning to know Jesus – and are beginning to come into an inward realization of Him – can we see why

we are not going to get far? Without this ROCK there is no foundation upon which God can build.

All through the epistles the necessity of having Christ in us is emphasized -- but then the necessity of knowing Jesus Christ in an inward way is stressed. Indeed, Paul prayed:

I cease not to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers; that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Himself: The eyes of your understanding being enlightened...” (Eph. 1:16-18)

How else could we walk in the Truth? How else could we live in Christ? God must unfold Christ in us. That revelation is the foundation because He is the Rock.

The Gates of Hell

There were many things that Jesus could have told His disciples would be the outcome of this revelation which they had received. But Jesus did mention a few things. He said, “And I say also to you that thou art Peter, and upon this Rock – upon the revelation of Myself in you -- I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it -- and I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.”

There are some interesting words used in this passage – the most interesting being in that phrase, “gates of hell.” Most people would understand this to be talking about THE HELL – as in, “eternal hell fire.” But it is not – for every time in the gospels that Jesus talked about hell fire He used the Greek word, “ghenna.” He does not use that term here. Indeed, “ghenna,” was a literal place outside of Jerusalem. It

was, in fact, the city garbage dump – and was forever on fire. But leaving that aside, the word translated, “hell,” in this Matthew 16 passage, is NOT, “ghenna,” but HADES. The word, “hades,” in NT Greek actually means, “the unseen.” But it was used to refer to the unseen realm of the dead. Thus, when Jesus said, “the gates of hell,” He was actually talking about, “the power and authority of death.”

So, Jesus was actually promising that, “The power of death will not prevail against the revelation of Myself in people.” Of course, Satan is behind that realm of death – it is his domain. In fact, “the realm of death,” is really the entire old creation. Everything that came under the dominion of Satan through the fall of Adam constitutes, “the gates of hades.”

Can we see that our old man in Adam is a primary, “gate or power of death,” that dwells within the believer? Thus, what Jesus said about the gates of hell has just as much of an individual and personal application as does the revelation of Himself. If I am a believer, I am joined to the Lord and one spirit with Him. That is CHRIST IN ME – it carries the revelation of Jesus that is THE ROCK; the LOGOS. But everything that is outside of that union in spirit with Christ remains natural – it is subject to the realm of death. Thus, Jesus is promising that against the revelation of Himself in us, the realm of death – including our old nature -- cannot prevail. This must, of course, be worked out through the personal Cross and the life of Christ in us.

You will also notice that the picture that Jesus gives is NOT one of the forces of evil invading the kingdom of God and failing. No. The picture is one of the revelation of Himself invading the territory of the enemy and toppling the gates of hell. Sure. The place we start in Adam is fully within the realm of death. But that is territory that Jesus won, and which, through the ongoing revelation of Himself in us, must be taken back. Thus, the gates of hell are being invaded by Jesus Christ and those gates

cannot stand or prevail against the ongoing revelation of Himself in His people.

The Key to Spiritual Power

If Jesus Christ has promised to build the people who constitute His church upon the inward life and revelation of Himself – upon Himself as the ROCK – then obviously where that is lacking people will not be built up in Christ. In addition, since the life and revelation of Christ in His people is the power against which the gates of hell cannot stand, then where that is lacking the gates of hell WILL stand. The enemy will actually gain ground. This leads us to a rather sobering conclusion: The church today has little power because the inward realization of Jesus Christ IS lacking.

The revelation of Jesus Christ in His people is today a virtually unknown Truth. That is shocking since, “Christ in you,” is the essence of Christianity. But Christ has been pushed aside in favor of many other THINGS. Even if the reality of Christ within is discussed it is usually wrongly defined, misapplied, or is reduced to mere teaching. Indeed, some today are even teaching that the purpose of Christ within is to bring us into a full realization of, “our true selves.” What terrible error.

Most believers today, if you mention that God is speaking to us in the spiritual language of His Son, most will not know what you are talking about. Or they will think you are saying that God teaches us FACTS about Christ. But no. When God speaks Christ – when God speaks His LOGOS – it is more than facts. It is Truth and revelation. It is a Person in Whom is given all that God has to give.

Part 3

The Necessity of the Cross

If we return to Matthew 16 and continue with the narrative, it is highly significant that immediately after this watershed moment wherein the disciples confessed that Jesus was the Christ – immediately Jesus takes them into new territory:

From THAT TIME forth began Jesus to show to his disciples that he must go to Jerusalem and suffer many things of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised again the third day. (Matt. 16:21)

Matthew specifically says, “From that time forth...” From WHAT time forth? From the time they confessed what the Father had revealed to them: Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the Living God. Now that the disciples had confessed the Truth about Jesus, He could open up to them the purpose for which He had come.

There is an application in this for the Christian walk. It is often when we begin to realize more of Jesus Christ that God will reveal to us – with Christ as the foundation – His greater purposes. For example, read from Ephesians 1:

Cease not to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers; That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him: The eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of his calling... (Eph. 1:16-18)

This is Paul’s prayer for believers – and since it is part of God’s inspired written Word, we can be sure it represents God’s own desire. You will note that the entire passage is based upon Paul’s desire that believers might receive, “the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Jesus Christ.” That is

the foundation for all that follows – it is the ROCK, if you will, of everything else that Paul prayed that Christian would see. He says, “I pray that God would give you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Himself – that you might KNOW.”

Paul says elsewhere that, “ALL of the treasures of wisdom and knowledge are hid in Christ.” (Col. 2:3) This is the same Truth: It is only as Jesus Christ is unfolded to a person that the person can truly come to see all that is in Christ. It is only then that they can grasp in Truth what God is doing in Christ.

For the disciples at that time, and certainly for us today, it is necessary to receive a foundational revelation of Jesus Christ before God can take us on into much else. It is certainly necessary for the foundation of the Rock to be laid before God can begin to reveal much to us about the necessity of the personal Cross. This is why it says, “From that time forth” – they had confessed that Jesus was the Christ, the Son of the Living God. Thus, even though their initial reaction to the necessity of the Cross was negative, there was now a basis established in them that would eventually bear fruit.

Of course, at this point in time the disciples had no clue about the meaning or necessity of the Cross of Jesus Christ. They were expecting Jesus to reign and rule from the temple in Jerusalem, which themselves by His side. Thus, when He said He was going to be crucified it stunned them. This could not be! Not only did such a thought disagree with their religious tradition, but it was contrary to their personal ambitions.

Peter could not contain himself. He said to Christ, “Far be it from You, Lord, that such a thing would happen!” But the reply of Jesus is revealing, “Get behind Me, Satan! You are an offense to Me because you desire not the things of God, but the things of man.” What a turnaround from the blessing Jesus

had pronounced upon them only minutes before! And yet it was completely appropriate.

Herein we find an issue that stands at the center of God's purpose. That issue is the old creation in Adam vs. the new creation in Christ. Upon which creation – upon which MAN – would the plan and purpose of God be founded? Peter and the disciples had no frame of reference for the death of the Adam race on the Cross and the birth of a new creation in Christ through His resurrection. To them, the Adam race – even though they would not have called it that – had to be the basis. But Satan knew God's plan. And so he foolishly tried to get at Jesus through Peter.

Satan was suggesting that the plan and purpose of God could be based upon the old creation in Adam. He was demanding that it was not necessary for Jesus to suffer and die on the Cross. No. Jesus could have the kingdom of God NOW – all the pieces were in place NOW. The temple was there. The nation of Israel was there. They were there, by His side. "Jesus, you don't need to die to accomplish the plan of God," was the claim. "You can do God's will by taking your place as the Messiah right now."

In this we find what can be called, "The Gospel of Satan." The Gospel of Satan is essentially Christianity, indeed, Christ Himself as Messiah, without the Cross. It is an earthly Christianity, based upon Adam.

Now, this is not to suggest that the Cross of Jesus Christ is not generally preached today. No. Most do preach that Jesus Christ died on His Cross. Satan could not get far denying that fact. But what does that mean? What are the ramifications for believers? It is here that The Gospel of Satan has taken root.

You will note that Jesus did not stop His rebuke of Peter by simply explaining the essential of His own death on His Cross. Rather, He addressed the

meaning and ramifications for all who would follow Him. Christ not only knew the essential of the Cross in the experience of believers, but He knew that it would be there that Satan would work His greatest deception.

Jesus said:

If any man will come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me. For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: and whosoever will lose his life for My sake shall find it. (Matt. 16:24-25)

Herein we see the ramifications of the death of Christ on the Cross for believers. Yes, Jesus would die FOR us all. He was the Lamb of God and did die as our substitute. Without that we have nothing. But when Jesus died on the Cross, the Adam race died on the Cross IN HIM. What was raised in Him was not, “the Adam race fixed up.” No. In Christ, there was raised a NEW creation.

Jesus was telling them that, yes, He would die FOR them. But this was going to make it possible for them to DIE IN HIM. His death and resurrection would make it possible for them to be united with Him – to be planted together with Him – in His death and resurrection. That alone would make His death and resurrection a real experience IN THEM. But in order for it to happen, they would need to pick up their personal cross. Only if they lost into His hands all that belongs to Adam could they come into a realization of the life that is found in Him.

Salvation is not a process. But once we are saved – once for all and forever – salvation must be worked out. This is what Jesus is describing.

As noted, the issue here is what MAN will form the foundation of our Christianity: Adam or Christ. Will our Christianity be earthly – of the earthly man – or heavenly – of the heavenly Man. Satan has always

desired to establish a false Christianity, not upon the Rock, but upon Adam. But through the Cross of Christ, Adam has been cut off through death – and God is today working through His Son unto a new creation.

This is what is behind this exchange between Christ and Peter. It is really an ultimate issue. Examine the times when Satan tempted Christ. This issue is always front and center.

Crucified With Christ

A continual theme of the apostle Paul throughout his letters is the necessity of being crucified WITH Christ. Paul knew that Christ had died FOR him. But Paul also realized that he needed to die IN CHRIST -- if he were to experience the fullness of God in Christ. That is why he wrote:

I am crucified WITH Christ: nevertheless, I live; yet not I, but Christ lives in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.
(Gal. 2:20)

Note Paul's emphasis upon the spiritual UNITY with Christ. He doesn't say that Christ was crucified FOR him – although He was; this was the basis of everything Paul does say – but Paul says that he was crucified WITH Christ.

Herein once again we see that the core of Christianity is CHRIST IN YOU. The believer is joined to the Lord and one spirit with Him – and what that means is that we are united with Christ in both His death and resurrection. Yes, as a finished FACT – but also as an ongoing outworking. The believer CANNOT walk with Christ without being crucified WITH Christ. We CANNOT walk with Christ without His life becoming our life. Any other experience is NOT the Truth. It is not Christianity.

Christ, Our Life

Jesus states directly that not only must He go to HIS Cross, but because He is going to His Cross, this will open up the possibility of believers going to their cross in UNION with Him. If we read this passage with an open heart, and really want to know the Truth, we will not be able to escape the phrase, "IF ANY MAN WILL COME AFTER ME." Do we want to follow Christ? If so, the ONLY way to do so is by picking up OUR Cross so that the results of HIS Cross may be worked out in us.

Now, what will be the result of the believer picking up their cross? The result will be the LOSS of ourselves; we will be relinquishing ourselves to Christ. But we will find HIM as our life. Paul writes:

Always bearing about in our body the dying of the Lord Jesus, so that the life also of the Lord Jesus might be made manifest in our bodies. (II Cor. 4:10)

This is what happens when we pick up our personal cross and experience union with Christ in His death – we will realize a greater release of His life in us; a greater knowledge of Him.

This bring us full circle in this Matthew 16 passage. The disciples received a great revelation of Jesus Christ as the Son of the Living God. But then Jesus told them that this was only the beginning – that if they were to go on with Him they would have to become one with Him in His death and resurrection. The result would be death to everything about themselves – but that they would discover HIM. They would come into an inward realization of Him – He would grow to become their very life.

This is how God builds upon the ROCK. He reveals Christ in us and then builds upon Christ – not with, "other things," but with an expansion of growth in the life and Truth of that same Christ.

“I will build my people who are the church.” How? He will build us up in Christ.

Do we wonder why there is so little of the power of God today? The answer is here. It is because there is so little of Jesus Christ manifested. He is not manifested through God’s people because He is not revealed IN God’s people. And He is not revealed IN God’s people, because we have side-stepped the personal Cross. Instead of losing our lives to Christ in order to find Him as our life, we usually seek to save our lives for ourselves – and are being taught as to how to get God to help us. What utter deception – completely contrary to the Truth.

Again – why did Jesus, immediately after the disciples confessed that they had received a personal revelation of Him, bring in the necessity of the personal Cross? Because the Cross is the power by which the old man – and all of the power of death inherent in him – is destroyed. And if that is happening, then the life of Christ will be manifested – and all the power that is inherent IN Christ. ALL of this is one experience – it is a matter of coming out of the old into the new through on ongoing revelation and experiencing of Jesus Christ.

The Gates of Hell

“The gates of hell,” which, as noted, is the power or authority of death – behind which is Satan. Those gates of hell have no power over the new creation in Christ Jesus. Indeed, Jesus has already defeated the gates of hell through His Redemption. That is why if we are IN CHRIST – it is why if we are united with Him in spirit – we are completely delivered through resurrection from that old creation over which Satan has power.

But note: If the power of hell and death cannot stand against the new creation in Christ, then what if believers sidestep the Cross, and live in an earthly

Christianity – the type of which was suggested by Satan through Peter? Then those believers will not only have NO power over hell and death, but they will be living on the very ground of the power of hell and death. What deception! And yet this is exactly the case everywhere today. Satan will deceive people into thinking they are on God's ground. But they are on his ground. The difference is the personal CROSS. Refuse the personal Cross and you will be on Satan's ground – it is the default.

Treasure In Earthen Vessels

Here we must repeat a Truth discussed earlier -- in I Corinthians 6:17 – “he that is joined to the Lord is one spirit with Him.” This is a description as to HOW Christ is in us, and how we are in Him. We are joined to Him IN SPIRIT.

In order to understand what God is doing in believers through Christ, and how He is doing it, it is necessary to grasp with the Truth means – and what it does NOT mean. Humanity is comprised of body, soul, and spirit. The body is that part of natural man that we can see. The soul is that part of natural man that we cannot see. Neither is ever joined to the Lord in this age. But we are joined to the Lord in our spirit – this is the spiritual union that constitutes the NEW CREATION. This is why Paul is able to say:

We have this Treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God and not of us. (II Cor. 4:7)

All that is of value – all that is eternal – is brought to this spiritual union between God and humanity in Christ. NONE is brought by us. We are recipients of God's Son, and all that He is.

Paul affirms that the new creation is the union of our human spirit with that of Christ – and that nothing

of the natural is joined to Christ in his words to the Corinthians:

If any man be in Christ he is a new creature. Old things are passed away. (the Greek says, "old things are passed OVER") Behold, all things have become new. And all things are of God. (II Cor. 5:17-18)

Here we see that nothing of the old creation – of natural man – is incorporated into the NEW creation in Christ Jesus. Not in this age. Rather, we see that all things are new in Christ – and that all of those new things are OUT FROM GOD. (Again, this is what it says in Greek.)

So we must see the clear distinction between soul and spirit in each believer. The new creation is our union with Christ in His spirit. The old creation is all that remains outside of that in this age – our soul and our body. But in addition to seeing the distinction between the two, we must realize that the work of the Cross is intended to break the power of our earthly old man. What God is building is the new man -- Christ in us.

I must repeat that: The old earthly man – the soul and the body – is NOT what God is building or fixing in this age. In fact, our earthly nature is precisely what is under the Cross. God is building in us Jesus Christ. He is to be our life and our all.

One of the biggest errors of the Christian age is that because many are blind to Christ – blind to the Truth that Christ is in us – we continue to think that God is fixing up our earthly nature; the earthen vessel. We think He wants us to, "look like Jesus." No. God is crucifying in Christ the earthly. He wants to manifest the Christ – the Treasure -- who is in us.

Everywhere today we see this error. People are being given gimmicks and laws to follow to make their flesh behave. They are being taught as to how to

discover, "the real self." People are teaching that freedom is the result of discovering YOURSELF. Of course, all of these errors are part of a greater error – that of being blind to the fact that CHRIST in us is to be our life, and that our earthly life is to be crucified.

One of the most common errors along this line has to do with POWER in the Christian life. We are being told that God wants to give us power, and that we ought to pray for power. But these notions presuppose that POWER is a "thing," or a "force," or an "ability," that God gives to us. This is error. According to the Bible, power is a PERSON.

For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God....but unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God. (I Cor. 1:18-24)

Christ is the power of God. But how is Christ as the power of God made manifest? Only one way: If we are WEAK. Paul knew this fact in His own experience:

And lest I should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I should be exalted above measure. For this thing I besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me. And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake: for when I am weak, then am I strong. (II Cor. 12:7-10)

How utterly contrary this is to human thinking? We think it is the will of God to make us strong. But God

will never make us strong. Rather, He will expose our weakness so that we will rely upon Christ. Likewise, God will never give us power. Rather, He gives us Christ – Who IS the power of God. It is only to the extent that our faith and dependence is upon the One Who IS the power of God that the Person who is power will be manifested – and only then according to the will and purpose of God.

This brings us to a big question: If Christ is manifested TO us, IN us, and THROUGH us, only if we are made weak, then how are we made weak? Through the work of the Cross. God brings out the fact that we have always been weak by bringing into our lives the personal cross.

Here we see again the necessity of understanding the distinction between Christ in us and our earthly nature. God wants to show us as empty and weak in our earthly nature – He wants to break its power through the Cross. Only then will Christ be manifested – and Christ is the power of God. But if we are blind to Christ, and are blind to the necessity of the Cross, we are going to try to live before God under the power of the earthly, religious nature. That will be the big default.

Again, Jesus said, “Upon this ROCK – upon Myself – I will build my people who constitute the church.” He made it clear that this is not possible without the work of the Cross crucifying our earthly nature and self-ownership. But if we are blind to this Truth we will naturally revert to our earthly religious nature – and expect to find the promises of God fulfilled and worked out in our earthly nature – in our soul and body.

This is why confusion abounds today. People are preoccupied with SELF – religiously. We are looking to ourselves for evidence that we are Christians. We continue to circle around ourselves thinking that this will lead into the purposes of God. No. We have to come to the place where we say, with Paul:

***I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ lives in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.
(Gal. 2:20)***

We must allow God to crucify us WITH Christ – tear down our old nature – if He is to build in us Jesus Christ. But then, rather than become self-occupied, we will be set free from occupation with ourselves. Our lives will shout, “Yet NOT I, but Christ.” That is freedom and the outcome of God’s purpose.

Whatever It Takes

To bring us to this point where Christ is our life – to where our lives say, “Yet not I, but Christ” – this is what God is doing in every trial of faith. A trial of faith is not to punish you. A trial of faith is not because God's mad at us, or hates us, or because we are horrible, ugly people, and God is trying to fix us. No. A trial of faith -- the work of the cross -- is DELIVERANCE. It is 100% positive, and FOR us. It's a matter of God chastising us to get us on the basis of Jesus Christ as our life; to set us free from the confines of the old creation; to set us free from the bondages that hinder life in Christ.

This is why Peter said, “the trial of your faith, more precious than gold.” God wants to establish us and make it possible for us to walk with Christ as our life - - to live from out of Christ as our life. We can't do that on our own. God must do that, and break the old life, so that if will respond to what He's doing, we can then will come and walk with Christ as our life.

If there's nothing else that we can do in a trial, we can tell GOD, “to do whatever it takes to bring us into this reality (of Jesus Christ.)” This is, of itself, a commitment – it is, of itself, is a losing of your

life. Now there is still a lot of work to do. We must follow up on our commitment when God DOES do, "whatever it takes." We have to obey Him, and follow Him, pick up the cross and lose our life in practical ways. But the commitment starts with an unconditional surrender of ourselves to God for, "whatever it takes," to bring us into the fullness of life in Christ. Jesus said this in Matthew 16. He said, "You must lose yourself -- your right to yourself -- in order to find Me," Jesus was saying, "as your life."

Part 4 Christ in You

God is speaking to His people IN His Son. Thus, if you want to hear God you must come into an inward realization of Jesus Christ. “Christ in you;” “Christ being revealed IN US,” is how God is speaking in His Son.

If we come into the knowledge of Jesus Christ, it will be the key to all else – for in Him are all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. (Col. 2:3) Most of us spend much time trying to get messages from God; “to hear His voice.” But even though God sometimes does speak to people that way, it is not the norm. God is today speaking to us SON-WISE. It is only as Jesus Christ is unfolded to us that we can know the mind of God on all else – for Christ is the LOGOS. In the final analysis, there are no other word God has for us – all must come out from HIM.

As noted, “Christ in us,” is how God is speaking – He is bringing us into an inward realization of His Son. Do you want to hear God? Grow to know Christ.

Turn to Colossians 1:27. Colossians 1:27 makes the following statement:

Christ in you, the hope of glory.

How is Christ in us? Again -- “He that is joined to the Lord is ONE spirit with Him.” (I Cor. 6:17) God is speaking to us through the revelation of Jesus Christ by His spirit. Everything else – including our practical understanding of God through Christ – is the outcome.

Christ In You Fulfills the Word of God

If Jesus Christ is the Living Word, or Logos of God, and as Paul writes, Christ dwells IN US (Col. 1:27),

then obviously the LOGOS or Living Word dwells in us. Indeed, we are made one in spirit with the Person God is speaking. This brings us to a wonderful conclusion: Christ in us – the presence of Christ in us – is the fulfilling IN US of the LOGOS. “Christ in us,” is the fulfillment of all that God is speaking to us in His Son.

Now, of course, once we receive Christ the work of the spirit of God has just begun. But we do not need MORE of Jesus – no, for we have all of Him if we are joined to Him in spirit. Neither do we need another experience. What we need is to discover the LOGOS that God has fully given us. This will take a lifetime and more. But none of this negates the fact that, “Christ in us,” is the fulfillment of God’s Word. The fact of Christ in us not only fulfills all the promises of God, but Christ in us is the embodiment of all of those promises.

The Magnitude of Christ in Us

“Christ in us,” is the core of Christianity. But today you rarely hear it mentioned. Thus, I want to look at this passage in a little more detail. I want to back up a bit to verse 25 where Paul begins to talk about his ministry. He says that he...

...was made a minister, according to the dispensation of God which was given to him.

That word, "dispensation," means, "distribution of property." That's what the word comes from in the New Testament Greek. And so, Paul is talking about a ministry wherein he is assigned by God the task of receiving the Truth, and then distributing it to other people, through Jesus Christ. And he says, I was made a minister in this way...

...according to the dispensation of God which is given to me for you TO FULFILL THE WORD OF GOD.

Now that's a big statement. Paul is saying that his ministry that was given to him by God was to FULFILL THE WORD OF GOD. So there's something about this ministry that brings to fullness the Word of God -- fulfills everything that God intended -- going all the way back to the book of Genesis. Paul's ministry -- and he wasn't alone in this ministry -- but it was a ministry, that by God, was intended to bring to a fullness the Word of God; the revelation of God; the purpose and plan of God.

Now in verse 26, he begins to talk about this purpose or Word of God as a MYSTERY. In those days the word, "mystery," meant, "something that was hidden," but it carried with it the fact that what WAS hidden was NOW being revealed. All of that is what is meant by the word, "mystery," in the New Testament. And Paul is going to say exactly that about this great mystery of, "Christ in you, the hope of glory." He's going to say that he was given this ministry, "according to the dispensation of God, to fulfill the word of God" -- a MYSTERY which, "had been hidden from ages and from generations, but now (in Paul's time) is made manifest to his saints."

Now take note of exactly what Paul is saying: The truth of, "Christ in you, the hope of glory" -- Paul is telling us that that Truth -- that reality -- fulfills the Word of God. And if you think about it, what else would? Everything God has ever said -- everything God has revealed through his written Word, or any other way, was all unto the plan and purpose of this tremendous mystery that HAD been hidden, but NOW is revealed of, "Christ in you." And Paul is saying that this incredible reality of CHRIST IN YOU was a MYSTERY that was hidden from ages past and generations past, but now -- in Paul's time -- is revealed.

The Old Covenant

We need to understand that all through the Old Covenant -- even though all of it is about Christ -- it is nevertheless about Christ in type and shadow. No one under the Old Covenant was ever indwelt by Jesus Christ by the means of the Spirit of God. No one was. (The spirit of God was not IN them, but only WITH them.) There are people today who are ignorant of this fact and deny it -- teachers and preachers demand that people were saved under the Old Testament Covenant and had Christ in them -- just like we are today. No. Now they WERE saved -- they were saved by the SAME Jesus, and they were saved by that same Jesus, "by grace through faith." But they were saved under the Old Covenant -- they had a pointing forward to the Passover lamb who would eventually be Jesus Christ -- and they put their faith in that Christ in anticipation of the day He would come and do a redemptive work.

And so those who believed under the OT were saved by the same Christ -- by grace through faith. But the experience that they had in this life of Christ was not the same. They did not experience, "Christ in them, the hope of glory." The experience in this life, under the Old Covenant, was that the Holy Spirit was WITH them -- but never IN them.

This is very important to distinguish. Why in the world do we think there were two covenants if we think that everything that happened under the Old Covenant was the same as it was under the New? No. In reality, the New Covenant IS, "Christ in you, the hope of glory." The old wasn't -- it was Christ in type and shadow.

We must see this. The OLD Covenant was Christ -- but in type and shadow. The NEW Covenant is CHRIST HIMSELF in His people. Christ is the, "more sure word of prophecy." (II Peter 1:19) -- because He

is the reality of all that God is -- and is all that God has to say.

And so, people under the Old Covenant had the spirit of God WITH them -- but never IN them. This is again emphasized throughout the New Testament. Jesus Christ, in the Gospel of John, told His very disciples -- at a point that was days before His crucifixion and resurrection -- He said to them:

The Spirit of God has been WITH you but will be IN you." (John 14:16-17)

He also continually talked about the fact that unless He ascended to heaven, that He could not return -- could not return by the means of His spirit dwelling IN people. It's the entire theme of those discourses in John 14, 15, and 16. He continually says, "The spirit of God cannot be IN YOU until I go -- the spirit cannot be given until I go away." (John 16:7) And we have seen what He MEANT by that: He said the spirit of God was WITH them but shall be IN them. (THAT is what Jesus meant when He said the spirit could not be given until He went away -- He meant, "given to be IN them.")

So, all through the Old Testament -- you can even take it all the way back to the book of Genesis if you want to -- the spirit of God was WITH people. But that is not a light thing; that's not a little thing. God did tremendous things through His Spirit that was WITH people -- but the Spirit of God was never IN people. Jesus Christ dwelt in NO ONE until the day of Pentecost was fulfilled -- no one was born again until that day -- the church and did not begin until that day.

This is why -- once that day happened -- that Peter was able to get up and preach a sermon. That's why for the first time -- after the ascension -- that the disciples were free to go out in the ministry. Remember, Jesus said, "You are not to go out until that day comes -- you are to tarry in

Jerusalem until that day comes.” They had to have an inward life and revelation which they did not have before. What they did have before was the spirit WITH them -- and the beginnings of light and Truth about Jesus.

We saw that the disciples had received a foundational revelation of Jesus Christ during His ministry – recorded in Matt. 16. But Jesus Christ was not yet IN THEM by the spirit of God. It was only after they were given His spirit that the fullness of revelation would come, and they were free to minister in His name.

The Revealed Mystery: Christ In You

In this passage in Colossians 1, Paul is alluding to the fact that the spirit of God had been WITH people prior to Acts 2 but had not been IN people. He says that the mystery of, “Christ in you,” had been hidden from ages and generations past -- but now (after Acts 2) had been made manifest to His saints – saints to whom God, “would make known what are the riches of this mystery even among the Gentiles.”

Our Bibles are divided into two sections: The OT and the NT. But really, the OT could extend through Acts 1. Or, if you prefer 3 sections, the OT could end as it does with Malachi, the middle section could be Matthew through Acts 1, and the NT could be the remainder of the Bible.

Remember that under the OT -- in ages past -- it was thought that whatever God was doing was only for the Jews. But even among the Jews, it was not fully understood what God was doing – “Christ in you,” was revealed only in type and shadow. Paul is saying in Colossians, “But now this mystery is revealed” – it had NOT been fully revealed before-- but NOW it is made known to apply and be possible for ALL people: Jews, Greeks, Gentiles, or anybody else. Sure. In Galatians 3 we read Paul stating,

“There is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus.” So he says that God is now making this mystery known -- not just among the Jews -- but among the Gentiles.

Paul then tells us, point blank, what he is talking about – what is this mystery; this great Truth; this great reality, that had been hidden from ages and from generations past, but now is made manifest to the saints -- this great mystery that Paul says fulfills completely the word and revelation of God; the purpose of God: This great mystery is, “Christ in you, the hope of glory.” (Col. 1:27)

Now notice the wording here: Not -- Christ out there somewhere floating around. Not -- Christ in a group of people, sort of, in an indefinable way. No. Christ in YOU. That speaks of the individual. Jesus Christ has joined individual, personal people to Himself, and they have a personal experience of Him; a personal joining to Him. This is about you and I personally coming into Jesus Christ.

Paul says, “Christ in you, the hope of glory” -- and of course, other places, he says it another way -- he says that we are IN Christ. And when he says it both ways we get a picture there of a joining -- we are joined to the Lord (I Cor. 6:17) – and we become one spirit with Him at the point of our new birth.

The Eternal Purpose of God

So, the meaning of Christianity begins with the reality of Jesus Christ in us. We are joined to Him and made one spirit with Him -- everything that Jesus Christ is doing is built on this reality. Jesus said, “I will build My church -- upon the Rock.” What is the Rock? The Rock is the revelation to us, and in us, of who Jesus Christ is -- the foundation of that -- the rock of that; the reality of that; is Christ in us, the hope of glory. We have nothing if we don't have Him

in us. So that's the first point: Christ in you, personally and individually, the hope of glory.

Now, that's not an end unto itself. God has a purpose for which He has joined us to His Son in spirit. It's a purpose, yes, that does begin in this age -- but will find its fullness and completeness in the next age. In this age, we are talking about, "Christ in you, the hope of glory." We are talking about full and complete redemption for the person in whom Christ dwells -- in this age -- the redemption of the spirit. In the next age -- it is THEN that the body and the soul man is also redeemed.

But it's all unto an even greater purpose of God: He has redeemed us in Christ so that we may be part of the great purpose of Jesus as Lord -- not only over the entire Earth, but over all of creation. What God is doing in us through Christ in this age is not JUST for this age -- it is to take us on into the next age -- on the BASIS of what He is doing in this age -- that we may live with Him, and move with Him, and reign and rule with Him forever.

Part 5 The Son of Man

It is a fact that unless Jesus Christ was the Son of God we have no salvation in Him. But it is just as much a fact that unless Jesus Christ, the Son of God, actually BECAME a man we have no salvation in Him. It is because the Word became flesh – it is because the LOGOS became a human being – that human beings are now able to be united with Him in spirit and live forever.

Jesus referred to Himself as, “The Son of Man,” more often than He did using any other term. Why? Some unbelievers, and unfortunately, some professing Christians, claim that He called Himself, “The Son of Man,” because He was merely a man – and that this proves He was NOT God. Of course, in order to arrive at such an absurd conclusion you have to ignore the rest of the Bible. But that aside, the name, “The Son of Man,” does not mean Jesus was only a man. Rather, it proves all them more than He was the Son of the Living God become human.

First of all, if Jesus were merely a man – a good man, or the greatest prophet of God – then why bother to refer to Himself as, “The Son of Man?” Almost no one thought otherwise during His ministry. Even His disciples, despite confessing that Jesus was, “The Son of the Living God,” in Matthew 16, really did not grasp what their confession meant.

Jesus referred to Himself as, “The Son of Man,” because in that name is carried the entire Truth of the Redemption. Jesus was the Son of God who became a member of the human race so that He could bear the entire human race in His sinless humanity on the Cross. He became a human being so that human beings could be united with Him in His death and resurrection. He became a human being so that through that spiritual union human beings could be born from above as new creations IN HIM. None of

that could be possible unless the Word became flesh and AS a human being finished the Redemption.

The Last Adam

There is another name inspired by God which is used in the NT that is equal to the name, "Son of Man." That term is, "The Last Adam." Thus, whatever we discover about one of these names will apply to the other.

But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the first fruits of them that slept. For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive...The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening spirit. (1 Cor. 15:20-22, 45)

We see in this passage a great contrast between being IN ADAM and being IN CHRIST. The difference is that of life and death.

All through the Bible we are continually presented with this same contrast. There are TWO men; TWO races; TWO types of humanity. There is Adam and all who are IN HIM – in other words, there is the ADAM RACE. But then there is Jesus Christ, the Son of Man or the Last Adam – and all who are IN HIM.

It cannot be overemphasized that God is talking about two types of humanity. Every human being ever born has been born IN ADAM. All of us were born as products of the Adam race. But the Adam race is dead spiritually. There is no life, no Truth, and no light in the Adam race. The Adam race is corrupt – and fully in bondage to the earthly realm of which Satan is god.

But then there is the NEW MAN – the new collective man – in Christ Jesus. So, the question becomes: How is a person who is born as a member

of the Adam race come to be a person who is a member of Christ? There is only ONE way: We must DIE and be RAISED. We must die to the Adam race and be raised a member of Jesus Christ.

This is exactly what Jesus made possible by becoming a human being. When Jesus died on the Cross He bore in His body – yes, all of our sins – but likewise He bore in His body the Adam race. Jesus bore in His body the entire, “old man in Adam.” This would be impossible unless He actually was a human being. And because He died, the Adam race died in Him. Thus, the entire Adam race was united with Jesus Christ in His death. But it is only those who believe and by faith embrace His death as their own that are united with Him in His resurrection. In other words, if we are united with Christ in His death, then we are united with Him in His resurrection.

Paul teaches this exact Truth in Romans 6:

Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection: Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin. For he that is dead is freed from sin. Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him: Knowing that Christ being raised from the dead dies no more; death hath no more dominion over him. For in that he died, he died unto sin once: but in that he lives, he lives unto God. Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord. (Rom. 6:3-11)

The Son of God had to become a human being and live a sinless life in order to, “qualify,” to bear humanity on the Cross as the Lamb of God without blemish. He had to be born, live, and die AS a human being BEARING the Adam race in order for the Adam race to be united with Him. Thus, it is just as vital that Jesus was THE SON OF MAN; the Last Adam, as it is that He was the Son of God.

The Meaning of the Last Adam

We read from I Corinthians that Paul calls Jesus, “The Last Adam.” Aside from the fact that his refers to the humanity of Christ, as does the name, “The Son of Man,” there are several other Truths in this name, “The Last Adam.”

First of all, the name, “The Last Adam,” is a clear statement of FINALITY. In other words, if Jesus is the LAST Adam it means that there are none after Him. This is of utmost importance to understand if we are to understand the Redemption and the plan of God.

We have alluded to it already: When Jesus died on the Cross He essentially bore in Himself the entire Adam race. If you will, Jesus BECAME – by spiritual identification and substitution – “THE ADAM,” who must die. There was no other destiny for Adam and all who were born in Him. The Adam race was corrupt and in bondage to the realm of darkness. God had said to Adam, “In the day that you eat therefore, you shall surely die.” Adam did eat and Adam did die – and now Christ was to become that Adam who must die. Gathered up in Christ was the entire Adam race – when Christ died the Adam race died in Him.

Now, what we must see here is that in Christ, Adam is DEAD. (I did not say Adam has ceased to exist – although that will eventually be the case.) Adam is dead. In Christ, the death of the Adam race is FINAL – once and for all and forever. This means that God

is no longer working out a purpose for the Adam race. No. All of His purpose is being worked out through Christ unto those who are members of the NEW race – of the new creation in Christ Jesus.

If we could grasp this it would revolutionize our Christian thinking. It would set us free from much error. For one thing, we would realize that God has no intention of FIXING our old man in Adam. Redemption is NOT a repair job. Resurrection in Christ is not a, “reversal,” of death. No. It is a passing through death IN CHRIST and a resurrection unto NEWNESS of life.

Paul states (edited for the Greek meaning):

Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed OVER; behold, all things are become new. And all (of those new things) are OUT FROM God. (II Cor. 5:17-18)

We saw this Truth earlier: God has left all that belongs to the old creation in death. He is not salvaging it or fixing it. Rather, He is passing OVER it. Thus, even though, in this age, we continue to carry along an earthly nature; a flesh nature – we are nevertheless united in spirit with Christ. It is OUT FROM Christ that God is working. NOT out from our earthly nature.

Salvation is not a matter of God lifting the death penalty from off of the Adam race – because Jesus died. No. Salvation IS the death of the Adam race – fulfilled in Christ – so that if we believe we can then be delivered from the Adam race and raised as new creations in Christ.

The ramifications of this Truth are immense. It means that we can STOP trying to find value in ourselves. We can STOP trying to fix up our earthly nature so that it, “looks like Jesus.” We can STOP being preoccupied with ourselves. Rather, we can do the ONLY thing possible if we are to walk in this

Truth: We can lose ourselves to Jesus Christ so that we might discover the reality of Christ in us. If we will embark on this journey in the Truth, our lives will eventually proclaim it – our lives will proclaim, “Yet not I, but Christ.”

God has drawn a line of death and resurrection between the Adam race and the new creation in Christ. We can be delivered from out of Adam only through the death of Christ, and become members of the new creation only through the resurrection of Christ. There is NO other way except by being united with Him in spirit. And that is final.

Besides being a clear statement of finality, the name, “The Last Adam,” is a clear statement of consummation. Jesus was, “The Last Adam,” because through his sinless life He became the full consummation of God’s original design for the first Adam. God has going to have His perfect, “Adam.” Christ was that MAN – He was THE Son of Man; the LAST, or consummate ADAM.

Now, Jesus did not become the fullness of what God wanted in humanity to simply leave us a good example of how to live. Neither was it to simply glorify the Father -- He did not merely live a sinless life to reveal the Father. Those are all awesome purposes of course – and included in the purpose of God. But there was an even greater purpose for which He lived a sinless life: So that He could present Himself as the Lamb of God without blemish able to bear and take away the sin of the world.

In order to redeem the human race, Jesus had to be born as a human being – and then live a sinless life AS a human being – so that He could then bear the rest of the human race in Himself down into a final and complete death. But all unto a resurrection unto NEWNESS of life; unto a resurrection unto a new type of humanity – that which is united with Jesus Christ Himself.

The Virgin Birth

The Truth about Jesus Christ as the Son of Man – as the, “God-man” -- is the reason why the virgin birth is a foundational Christian doctrine. For if Jesus Christ was NOT born of a virgin, then the only alternative is that He was born of two parents. And if that were true then He was not God become man – He did not pre-exist. He could not have lived a sinless life. Thus, His death on the Cross could not have saved anyone because He could not have been the Lamb of God able to bear and take away the sin of the world.

Of course, there is the theory that Jesus was not born at all. The Gnostics during the time of John taught that Jesus wasn't really a man – wasn't really flesh and blood – but just appeared to be. This undermined, not only the humanity of Christ, but the redemption itself. This is why John was so adamant in writing, “The Word was made flesh and dwelt among us.”

The reality of, “Christ in us, the hope of glory,” depends fully on the Truth that the Logos became flesh – that Jesus was the Son of Man. For it is only if Jesus became a human that humans are now able to be united with Him.

Part 6

Hearing the LOGOS

In times past, God spoke through many vehicles, including prophets. But today God is speaking to us in Christ. But are we hearing what God is speaking?

Many today have been taught to listen for what they are told is the, “voice,” of God. This, “voice,” is often said to be thoughts that come into your head, or a so-called impression you have. Many have been taught to follow their FEELINGS – and to assume that feelings are the spirit of God. Much of the problem in this matter comes back to a blindness to Jesus Christ, and as a result, a blindness to the distinction between soul and spirit.

Our soul man – which includes our feelings – is going to react to life. That is normal and is not something that is going to stop. Our soul will react even if we know how it reacts isn't reflective of the Truth in Christ. But we are never going to be able to recognize this unless we know Jesus Christ. We will never know the difference between when God is speaking Christ and our natural man is speaking and reacting unless we know Christ. Therefore, the key here is not so much to figure out a, “how to hear the voice of God.” Nor it is a crash course on how to know the soul verses the spirit. No. Rather, it is to grow to learn Christ. All discernment in the Christian life is the outcome of knowing HIM.

Can we now see a bit more why it is important for us to realize that in Christ the Adam nature is put aside through death? All things are now OUT FROM GOD. We will experience them in our earthly nature. Our earthly nature will react. But that which is of God is not OUT FROM the earthly nature. It is OUT FROM Jesus Christ if He is in us.

Fortunately, Jesus Himself has already promised that He will, by the spirit, guide us into all Truth. But

you see, we usually think that this means the Jesus will teach us doctrine or the meaning of Bible verses. That is fine but there is something deeper. Jesus is really promising to guide us to where we, in our relationship with Him, are MADE TRUE. It is only if we are progressively MADE TRUE unto God through Christ that we will be able to HEAR God speaking to us in His Son.

What does it mean to be MADE TRUE unto God? It means that I have an open heart, without an agenda – other than to know Him and allow Him to have His way with me. I can have many flaws. I will sin every day. But if I am true to God my faith will nevertheless rest in Jesus Christ and I will not want to settle for less than God's Highest will and glory.

Where does the Bible fit in? The Bible is the inspired, written Word of God. Jesus Christ is the Living Word of God. And since there is only ONE Truth – only ONE Word – the two will always agree. As God brings people into an inward realization of His Son, this will always completely agree with His written Word.

Faith vs. Unbelief

An open heart of faith is what it means to BE TRUE to God. But the opposite is a heart that is hardened and closed to God. And it is possible to be very religious – but hardened.

The Pharisees were extremely religious but hardened towards God. They were so closed to God that when His Son stood in their midst they called Him the Devil.

Herein we find a principle. If a person is not open to God then they are not in the light. They are in darkness. They are in darkness towards God no matter how religious they act, and no matter how many doctrines they preach. And because they are in

the darkness toward God then they CANNOT see the Truth. They CANNOT hear God. And that will affect their entire walk – they will have little discernment. Indeed, they may begin to be led astray by their own soul and desires – thinking that these are the voice of God.

Can we see the root of the problem? It is not a lack of brains. Neither is it necessarily a lack of theology or doctrine – although these will be impacted. The problem is between them and God. They are not open to Him. And where that is the case, everything else will be in darkness.

Jesus taught His disciples this very principle:

Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal: For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also. The light of the body is the eye: if therefore thine eye be single; thy whole body shall be full of light. But if thine eye be evil, thy whole body shall be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in thee be darkness, how great [is] that darkness! No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon. (Matt. 6:19-24)

He was teaching them that our heart will tend to follow what we value. This points out the necessity of coming to see the Truth in Christ – you will then begin to value Him. But the way in which this is made possible is through what Jesus calls, “a single eye.” The Greek here is revealing – the word translated, “single,” means, “free of folds,” and can also mean, “pure.” In other words, our EYE – which speaks of our motivation – must be exposed fully to The Light,

that is, free of folds that create shadow. Hold a piece of paper up to a light. You will see how it works – if there are any folds or creases there will be a certain amount of light that does not hit the paper. Jesus is saying that we are to completely unfold ourselves to Him – be completely open to Him.

Now, you will note that this does not, at this point, require anything else but faith. He is NOT asking us to make Him promises. Rather, He is telling us to believe and trust in HIS promises. We are to open ourselves to God and say, “Lord I give myself to You. I want the Truth no matter what. Do whatever it takes to bring me into the fullness of Your purpose in Christ.”

That is a single eye. And because I am opening myself up and exposing myself to The Light, my entire, “body” – my entire self – becomes filled with light. Now I can hear God. Now I can grow to know Jesus Christ.

Jesus also tells us what will happen if we have, “an evil eye.” Our entire self will be filled with darkness. We will not be able to discern. We will actually walk in that darkness.

How may see that the issue of light vs. darkness does not begin with situations and circumstances in life over which we are seeking God’s will? No. It begins with our relationship with God – with faith or unbelief. If my eye is, “single to God,” that will, in turn, affect everything else. If my eye is, “evil,” then that will affect everything else. In short, if I am TRUE TO GOD then I will be able to receive Truth from God. If I am UNTRUE TO GOD then not only will I be unable to receive Truth from God, but I my entire life will be in the dark.

The writer of Hebrews, after telling us that God is today speaking to us, “Son-wise,” goes on to show that Jesus Christ – as the Son of God – is eternally

superior to any of the other means by which God had spoken. Then He states the essential of an open heart, that we may hear what God is speaking in Christ. This is exactly the same principle:

Today if ye will hear his voice, Harden not your hearts, as in the provocation, in the day of temptation in the wilderness: When your fathers tempted me, proved me, and saw my works forty years. Wherefore I was grieved with that generation, and said, They do always err in heart; and they have not known my ways. So I swore in my wrath, They shall not enter into my rest.) Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God. (Heb. 3:7-12)

What we see again is that rather than try to figure out, “what is of God and what is of me,” we ought to seek God for Himself with an open heart of faith – and we will develop ears to hear.

Part 7 The Word and the Testimony

Who bare record of the Word of God, and of the testimony of Jesus Christ, and of all things that he saw. (Rev. 1:2)

I John, who also am your brother, and companion in tribulation, and in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ, was in the isle that is called Patmos, for the Word of God, and for the testimony of Jesus Christ. (Rev. 1:9)

And when he had opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the Word of God, and for the testimony which they held: (Rev. 6:9)

And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death. (Rev. 12:11)

In each of these passages from Revelation, John mentions, “the Word of God,” and, “the Testimony of Jesus Christ.” In each case, the word translated WORD is LOGOS, and the word translated TESTIMONY means, “evidence.” The saints are said to possess, bare record of, be slain for, and to overcome, “by the Word of God and the Testimony of Jesus Christ.”

Why are these two terms so closely linked? It is because The Word of God which the saints possess is more than just the Bible. The Word of God is CHRIST WITHIN – the saints are united, in spirit, with The Living Word of God -- the LOGOS, Jesus Christ. And the result of Christ living in them is that they are living evidence of the Risen Christ. In short, Jesus Christ, the Living Word, IS THE WORD of TESTIMONY of believers. He is the evidence of God within.

The Promise of Jesus

When Jesus stood on the Mount of Olives shortly before His ascension, He gathered together all that He has said about, “the promise of the Father” – the promise that He would send His spirit – He gathered it all up in one statement. He said:

And, being assembled together with [them], commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father, which, [saith he], ye have heard of me. For John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence. When they therefore were come together, they asked of him, saying, Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel? And he said unto them, It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power. But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth. (Acts 1:4-8)

This promise of the spirit was not one that was to be ADDED to them in addition to salvation. No. It WAS the promise of salvation in Jesus Christ. Jesus was promising them that they were going to be baptized INTO Him – united with Him in spirit. The result would be that they, “would receive power because the Holy Spirit had come upon them.” They would therefore, “BE His witnesses...unto the uttermost parts of the earth.” The word here for, “witness,” is the same word as those used in our four passages from Revelation. It could easily be translated EVIDENCE.

This brings us back to some of the things discussed earlier. When we are saved, we are baptized into Christ; we are joined to the Lord and made one spirit with Him. At that point, He is our life – we receive IN CHRIST and IN CHRIST alone all that

God has to give humanity. But even though, “It is finished,” for us as far as salvation, and as far as receiving all in Christ, we have only BEGUN to experience and discover what is finished and only BEGUN to discover the Christ in whom God has freely given all things. It is the nature of the spirit of Christ that we have fully received to continually seek to reveal Christ in us – to bring us into an inward realization of Christ. As we do discover Christ, our minds will be renewed according to the Truth. And to the extent that Christ lives in us and through us we will be living evidence of Him.

What this tells us is that Jesus Christ in us is the Living Word of God, or LOGOS, in us. A Christian is not a person who has merely memorized and parrots Bible verses. Christianity is not a list of doctrines. Rather, everything that is in the Bible finds it’s living fulfillment in the Person to Whom it points – and that Person lives in believers. Again – the result is that we are supposed to become living evidence of HIM.

What does it mean to be living evidence of Jesus Christ? Well, first of all, it does NOT mean that we strive to prove to others or impress them with the fact that we are good Christians. No. We are not evidence of ourselves – we are evidence of HIM. In other words, we ought to be DEFINED by who Christ is, and what He has done. We ought to be the definition of what Christ can do IN and through a human being. We ought to be, as it were, a sign post to Him. Our lives ought to cry out, “Yet not I, but Christ!”

The fact is, the evidence of Jesus Christ ought to be manifested in a believer with very little outward effort by that believer. Those who evidence Christ the most will be the least aware of it – in the sense that they are not always trying to put on a show, but in the sense that they are occupied with HIM, rather than themselves.

A branch needs to do nothing to bear the fruit of the Vine -- except abide in the Vine. But note: The fruit that grows belongs to the Vine. It is evidence of the Vine; the fruit is the product of the life of the Vine. The branch is merely the vehicle whereby the fruit comes to be. The branch has NO life in itself.

A believer is to become evidence of Jesus Christ – evidence of His grace. It is a simple fact that the more we grow to know Christ, the more we will decrease, and more He will increase. And in this we will rejoice.

The Evidence of God

The evidence of God is a Person, Jesus Christ. Christ is the evidence that God speaks; Christ is the testimony that God gives of Himself. And to the extent that Christ is revealed in and through God's people, then THEY manifest the evidence of God.

John writes:

If we receive the witness of men, the witness of God is greater: for this is the witness of God which he hath testified of his Son. He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself: he that believeth not God hath made him a liar; because he believeth not the record that God gave of his Son. And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He that hath the Son hath life; [and] he that hath not the Son of God hath not life. These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God. (1 John 5:9-13)

The English words, “witness,” and, “testimony; testified,” and, “record,” in this passage, are all that same Greek word that means EVIDENCE. If you read this passage you can see that the EVIDENCE of God

is the Person, Jesus Christ. And believers have this EVIDENCE, this LOGOS, within.

It is because believers have the Living Evidence or Testimony of God within – it is because of Christ in us – that we can become evidence of Him. Paul describes believers as, “living epistles:”

Ye are our epistle written in our hearts, known and read of all men: Forasmuch as ye are manifestly declared to be the epistle of Christ ministered by us, written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God; not in tables of stone, but in fleshy tables of the heart. (II Cor. 3:2-3)

No human being is the Truth. But we can be MADE TRUE unto God by the Truth in Christ. We can be living evidence of the Truth, Jesus Christ, if He has His way with us. Jesus Christ is the spoken and revealed Truth of God – the one LOGOS. God is speaking in His Son.

The Eternal Purpose of God

The Truth of Jesus Christ as the LOGOS is an all-encompassing Truth. In one sense it is the Truth of Christianity from start to finish: “*In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God...the Word became flesh and dwelt among us...you shall be My evidence...*” God has, from the beginning of His purpose, had ONE WORD for humanity, and that ONE WORD is His Son, Jesus Christ. The Son of God is the TRUTH – He is, in His very Person, all that God has to say, all that God has to give, and the One by Whom God will accomplish His eternal purpose.

That eternal purpose of God begins exactly where we saw Jesus said it must begin: Within believers. Jesus Christ must be revealed within those who constitute the church. For it is upon that ROCK alone that everything is built. And as God builds up His

people in Christ, they will become living evidence of Him. This will not only fulfill the purpose of God for this age – but it will continue on throughout the eternal ages.

Inheritance and Sonship

If you gather up the entire purpose of God, it can be boiled down to one goal: Sonship. In fact, we might state the purpose of God as follows:

The Father The Only Begotten Son Sons and daughters of God IN The Son

That is God's, "family," if you will – it is His plan of eternal inheritance in Christ.

Now, one of the most important things to notice about God's inheritance plan is that there is NO sonship unless it is IN THE SON. Therefore, there is NO inheritance unless it is IN THE SON. God doesn't make, "little sons and daughters in addition to Christ." No. Neither does He hand out a, "little portion of inheritance," to His people – while Jesus gets the big portion. No. God has freely given ALL THINGS IN HIS SON. ALL that God has is given in Christ, and NOTHING God has is given outside of Christ. Therefore, it is only as we partake of Christ and discover Him that we partake of, and discover, all that God has given IN HIM.

We must think in terms of spiritual reality and value. For example, many of us ask God for wisdom. Or we expect God to, "act upon us by His spirit," and make us, "to look like Jesus." Or we ask God to, "build character in us." All of these requests, while they may be sincere, are based in a blindness to Christ. Notice what Paul said:

But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption: That, according as

it is written, He that glories, let him glory in the Lord. (1 Cor. 1:30)

Note that CHRIST IN US is the only wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption. He IS those values IN US. In other words, God does not give us these as THINGS. No. Rather, God gives us Christ – Who is the personification of these values.

This gets back to the fact that it is never the purpose of God to make us LOOK like Jesus. No. It is the purpose of God to crucify us so that Christ might be made manifest TO US and then THROUGH us. These are not small points of clarification. They are the core Truths of Christianity. Christ in us is ALL – and in Him is all that God has to give. In short, Jesus is THE WORD that God is speaking.

As it pertains to inheritance, Jesus Christ IS our inheritance. HE is what God has given us. We will spend eternity experiencing Him – and yes – discovering and experiencing all that is in Him. Jesus is the Son of God. But if we are joined to the Lord and one spirit with Him – if we are IN CHRIST – then we are sons and daughters IN THE SON. We are coheirs in Him.

In the beginning was the LOGOS. And that Person who was the LOGOS was also the Son. He was always God's Living Word to humanity. He is what God is continually speaking. God is speaking salvation and sonship in the SON.

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