

Christ Our Life

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My greatest joy is to be gathered with those who have one purpose – the learning of **CHRIST** – not about Him, or about Spiritual things, but learning HIM.

We today are in a great “information” age. We have all this technology – our computers with all these translations of the Bible, and books, but that is not what I am talking about. I think sadly there is an adequate description of the Church today in 2 Timothy 3:7 – “*Ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of **THE TRUTH**.*” And to God it is always THE Truth, and that Truth is the Person of Christ. We in the Church today are busy learning true things: but the learning of those things separates us.

It is interesting: ask a Muslim or a Buddhist what faith or religion are you, and they will tell you, ‘I am a Muslim, or I am a Buddhist. And that is it. But ask a Christian that question, and they answer with other things – I am a Baptist, a Seventh Day Adventist, a Pentecostal etc. This is all according to “our Church” and “our doctrines”, and this separates us one from another. But coming to the knowledge of THE Truth (Christ) unites us. We must be learning HIM – not things, even Spiritual things.

An example: I recently spoke at a ladies group whose Pastor, a psychologist was preaching something “new” – ‘Emotional Intelligence’, and supposedly he was teaching this from the Bible. I came preaching **CHRIST AND HIM CRUCIFIED**, and when I knew about this, I didn’t know how I was going to be received. I shared that The Spirit of God is here to make what was hidden known to us – not man’s teaching, but The Spirit teaching the Truth as it is in Jesus. The lady in charge afterwards said, “Este es carne! Es la verdad!” “This is meat. This is the Truth.” The Spirit witnessed to them that we don’t have to learn man’s new teaching – we have to know HIM.

And this Truth works in us HIS LIFE; so that we walk in TRUTH. 2 John 1,2,4, “*To the lady and children I love in THE truth, For the TRUTH’S sake, which dwells in us, and shall be with us for ever. I rejoiced that I found thy children WALKING IN TRUTH.* 3 John 3,4 – “*Testified of the TRUTH that is in thee, even as you walk in the truth. I have no greater joy than to hear that my children WALK IN TRUTH.*” And as we know CHRIST as The Truth, and live in Him, we know ourselves in TRUTH and live in TRUTH.

There has been a real dealing of the Lord in my heart in this regard. 1 Corinthians 13:12 – “*For now we see through a glass darkly; but then face*

to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known.” So it is not just “knowing” things, even Spiritual things, but knowing **AS GOD KNOWS**; that we have Spiritual understanding: the understanding of the Spirit in all things, who is The Spirit of Truth. And we know that the Spirit reveals Christ, so by the knowing of Him, we should know even as we are known: in the same understanding. And God knows us IN CHRIST by The Finished Work of The Cross.

Paul says a similar thing in Philippians 3:12 – this was his desire: *“That I may apprehend (eagerly seize, possess, comprehend) that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus.”* And this must be our desire also.

The “darkly” and “in part” in Colossians 13:12 speaks of Old Covenant understanding –of natural things, of a day to come, of a Work that still must be finished. And as long as we stay in that understanding we don’t see clearly; we don’t know as God knows, we function as children, and we are not changed. Only beholding HIM face to face are we changed.

This has been a very serious dealing to me. Why? Because of **THE CROSS**. It has happened: it has FINISHED the Work; it has been made known and it has been revealed. God desires to reveal His Son, but we are refusing The Cross and denying what has been done. Just a thought regarding the veil in the Temple. When Jesus died we know it was rent in two from top to bottom (Matthew 27:51) but did the Temple worship cease? No, but in order to do that, the religious leaders had to have sewn back up that veil, or made another one. By Christ’s death God had made the Way open to the Holy of Holies for us, but MAN closed up that way, and kept the things of God hidden again – denying The Work of The Cross! But God would have us know as we are known – in Christ – with no veil, but The Finished Work of The Cross.

I want to focus on a phrase the Lord has dealt with me about. In the transcribing work that I do every word is very important, and this forces me into the scripture: to make sure what is said is correct according to the written Word, but also according to the Living Word that Christ is. In Paul’s letter to the Colossians in chapter 3 he is setting forth what IS – *“If ye be...”* That really means *“Because you be risen with Christ...”* To Paul that is the Truth; it is the reality of being in Christ. Most Christians are “waiting for that day”, but that is Old Covenant understanding, and not the truth as it is in Jesus. Verse 4, *“When Christ who is **OUR** life shall appear...”* And the

word to focus on here is “OUR”. We often quote this and say, “When Christ who is MY life...” Now it is true that He is “my” life, but there is a bigger picture, a greater comprehension. Christ who is “my” life is Christ who is “OUR” life, because to God the focus is NOT on individuals, but on the Corporate Body – Christ the Church, the Body of the Person, the manifesting of OUR life who He is.

Christianity today focuses on individualism – “my” Salvation, “my” religion, “my” faith, “my” church; how I can get all I desire from God – all for ME. But this is NOT how God sees us. God sees us AS ONE, IN ONE, with ONE Life – OUR Life which is Christ. This understanding of “my” has tainted all of our ideas about Salvation, and even heaven. We think it is a place for ME to live, with MY family – living MY life for a very long time. And since we think this is so in the heavens, we live that way here on the earth – everything for me, my and mine.

But God sets forth HIS view of this “OUR” Life in the Testimony, Just one brief example: Genesis 7:21-23 – By the flood all flesh was destroyed from the earth, and “Noah *only* remained alive, and they that were *with him in the ark*.” The type here is only ONE lives, and THOSE WITH HIM. They went through the judgment in the ark with him, and are raised up out of death. But they are all of ONE life. God establishes His Covenant there with Noah, and those who were with him, but the Covenant was with THE ONE who found grace in the eyes of God. The earth was now to be filled with those of this life – of this one. It is important that we understand God’s view of Covenant. We think that God makes many covenants with the many of us. But the Bible sets forth that God makes Covenant with One, and those who are with that One. We see this also with Abraham and Isaac. Genesis 17:19,21, “*And God said, Sarah, thy wife shall bear thee a son indeed; and thou shalt call his name Isaac: and I will establish my covenant with him for an everlasting covenant, and with his seed after him...But my covenant will I establish with Isaac, which Sarah shall bear unto thee at this set time in the next year.*”

Another example is Israel. God saw Israel as ONE. Exodus 4:22, “*Israel is my son, even my firstborn.*” The firstborn was His strength, His Life, and God saw them not as many Israelites, but as One; who as that Son were redeemed unto God and functioned in the earth with God in their midst. He gave them Life, and they live by Him and unto Him as One. God gave Israel one system of worship and one place to worship: first the Tabernacle in the wilderness, and then the Temple in Jerusalem, and they were to live as One.

It was a big “OUR” life – every part had its place. Even the tribes around the Tabernacle represented One Life.

But Israel didn’t live as One. They wanted God as “my” life, but not God as “our” life. It is recorded in Numbers 32 that when it came to entering into the land, Reuben, Gad and half the tribe of Manasseh decided THEY didn’t want to go it. They liked it on the other side of Jordan. They said we’ll help YOU go in, but I’ll have “my” life over here on this side. This was NOT God’s idea. So because of them wanting “my” life, not in the place God would bring them to, they decided to build another altar on “their” side. This is totally contrary to God’s thought, contrary to the Cross, and contrary to what is in Christ. And isn’t that what we have in Christianity today? Everybody has “my” altar; “my” church. And we are comfortable with “bodies of believers” rather than The Body of Christ; and aren’t really concerned about our divisions. We try to make “my” church better than yours, and we see this evident in the Church today. This is why the “my” life concept must give way to the greater comprehension of “our” life. And everything then is for “our” sake – not “my” interests.

So God would have us to come to, and live in and by the knowledge that Christ is “OUR” life, not just “my” life; and this is the Truth as it is in Jesus. This comes in the learning of HIM.

During the past months, Brother JW Luman has been sharing about the Appearing of The Lord as set forth not just as the order of the New Covenant, but also in the order of the New Testament – the books in the Bible.

In the gospels, THE PERSON appears – The I AM.

In the epistles, THE PERSON IN HIS BODY appears – in the Church, unto full Salvation, bringing them to HIS understanding of “our” Life. This is why He is revealed, appearing in us, that we as His Body would be the manifesting of this One Life – in many, but as One in the earth.

In the Revelation, THE PERSON ON THE THRONE appears.

But now I would like us to look briefly at the order that is set forth in the epistles of our coming to “know as we are known”, and specifically how this order will bring us to the Colossians comprehension of **CHRIST OUR LIFE**.

In **ROMANS** we have a setting forth of the gospel of Christ, the power of God unto Salvation, and that righteousness is by faith in Christ. Romans 6 talks about a “knowing” – to be aware, to see, be sure, understand. **Romans 6:3,4,6,9-11**- “ ***Knowing*** this, as many as were baptized into Christ were baptized into His death.” We are baptized into Christ individually, and as individuals, but then “as **Christ** was raised up from the dead (God raised One, and those who are one with Him, having His Life, out from the dead)... we should walk in **newness of life**.” CHRIST is the newness of Life, and we now walk with Christ as Life. For us to walk in “newness of life” we must **know** “that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed...” Now because of what Christ has done: “Knowing that Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more: death hath no more dominion over him.... Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead unto sin, but alive unto God **through Jesus Christ our Lord**.” Notice “Our” Lord – not just “my”; living now as His Body, in newness of Life.

Now the next books in the New Testament order are the letters to the **CORINTHIANS**. Since you ARE in union with Christ crucified and have New Life, the mixing of the old life and the New Life must be dealt with. The Corinthian Church is seen as earthy, self centered, flesh; and there are all kinds of problems in the flesh. They are even struggling with Christ being “my” life, and are still allowing self and “me” to dictate, even in Spiritual matters!

1 Corinthians 1:10 – “I beseech you, by the name of **OUR** Lord Jesus Christ (Paul always spoke out of the understanding of “our”) *speaking the same thing... no divisions, be perfectly joined together in the same mind and judgment.*” **Vs. 12,13** – “ You say I am of Paul: and I am of Apollos; and I of Cephas; and I of Christ. Is Christ divided?” We can see Christ is “my” life, in “my” church, by “my” faith, and that divides us, rather than uniting us.

1 Corinthians 3:1-4 – “And I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual but as unto carnal, even as unto babes in Christ (with no Spiritual understanding), I have fed you with milk, and not with meat: for hitherto ye were not able to bear it... For ye are carnal: for whereas there is among you envying and strife, and divisions, are ye not carnal, and walk as men?” Isn’t that sadly true today? Many Christians today can not be fed meat because they remain as men; maybe trying to find Christ as “my” life, but not as “our” life, so divisions and carnality remains.

1 Corinthians 12 – Paul talks to them about One Body, One Spirit, all members of One Body – Christ. Vs. 12,13 – *“For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: so also is Christ. For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit*

Many Christians today are still on this “ground”, and are probably still being fed this “milk” – they are self centered and earthy. It is “my” church, “my” ministry, “my” gift, “my” life. We may think it is all “for the Lord”, but there is no manifestation of Christ OUR Life this way. It is interesting that the name “Corinthian” became synonymous with the practice of fornication – flesh indulgence, and in this comprehension the flesh still rules.

But Paul had an answer for this: 1 Corinthians 2:2 – *“For I determined not to know any thing among you, save JESUS CHRIST AND HIM CRUCIFIED.”* This is the order – Christ has to appear in us to take away the first, the flesh, the earthy continually, and show us the New Creation we are IN CHRIST. 2 Corinthians 5:17 – *“Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, the new is come.”* He is the New! And if we REFUSE the working of this appearing in us, we remain as the Corinthian Church with all the problems of the flesh – as mere men. And this is serious, because by denying this Work, we are denying The Finished Work of The Cross!

Next in the order of the books is GALATIANS. Here we have Christians living still in the earthly realm, and this deals with the legal and religious things they are glorying in. Galatians 1:6,7 – *“I marvel that ye are so soon removed from HIM that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel: Which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of CHRIST.”* There is only ONE Gospel – Christ! We think “we” can preach different “gospels”, but that perverts the gospel of CHRIST. They were being brought back unto the Law – circumcision, turning again to the weak and beggarly elements that had them in bondage. Galatians 4:9,10 – *“But now, after that ye have known God, or rather are known of God, how turn ye again to the weak and beggarly elements, whereunto ye desire again to be in bondage? Ye observe days, and months, and times, and years.”* All of this is frustrating the grace of God, and this is serious because *“...if righteousness come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain.”* (Galatians 2:21) God sees righteousness IN CHRIST, and we must

too. The Law spoke of that righteousness that God demanded, but was unable to bring it about. Paul's letter to the Galatians wants them to see the promise by faith of Jesus Christ. Galatians 3:22-25 – *“But the scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe. But before faith came, we were kept under the law, shut up unto the faith which should afterwards be revealed. Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto CHRIST, that we might be justified by faith. But after faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster. Verse 26-29 – Now by faith in Christ, “as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ (I am crucified; now I live, but not I, CHRIST lives in me – Galatians 2:20) There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all **ONE in Christ Jesus**.”*

Now there is no glorying in anything BUT The Cross. Galatians 6:14,15 – *“But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of **OUR** Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world. For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature.”* That is ONE New Man. Christ as to appear in “my” religion, and “my” legal doctrines as the fulfillment of all of that. And when He appears in that, He devastates and destroys the types and the shadows, and we see that there is no substance in them. The only thing that matters now is The New Creation – One. But if we refuse His appearing to take away “my” religious doctrines, we live as bodies – as individual believers, and also as “bodies of believers” – “my” church, with everybody doing their own religious thing, but not functioning as One – The Body of Christ.

Next in the order of these epistles is EPHESIANS, and immediately we are taken into the heavens. And the Church is set forth NOT as an earthly thing, but a heavenly body: not bodies (many), but **ONE BODY – HIS BODY**. Ephesians 1:22,23 - *“And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, Which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all.”* The beginning of chapter 1 tells us what God has purposed, and all that we have IN CHRIST. Ephesians 1:3 – *“Blessed be the God and Father of **OUR** Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed **us** with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ.”* This heavenly view brings us into God's corporate view, the “us”, but in Christ there is ONE. We must come to this understanding, which is greater than individuals living “for Jesus”. This is seeing The One that God has raised: HIS Body with HIS Life.

Ephesians 2:5,6 – “*Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us (reanimated conjointly) together (as one, in union) with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;)*” We are made alive in Christ, but there is something interesting in the original text of verse 6. “*He hath raised up together, and made sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus.*” The “us” has been added from the original text, but in God’s understanding He has NOT raised up many – many of “us”, but He has raised up as One, in One – **ONE!** He has given His Life to many, who function as One. “We” were given Life, but what is raised is NOT individual bodies with individual lives, but a Corporate Body, and Christ is **OUR** Life – we all live by ONE.

And I’ll say again that this understanding challenges most Christian’s concept of “heaven”. We think it is filled up with many of “us”; but God’s view of “heaven” is ONE raised and seated, and who function as One. And that is all seen as God in His Son by His Resurrection. And this is very important, because our view of heaven dictates how we live here on the earth.

In the book of Ephesians **ONE** is emphasized. Ephesians 4:4-6 – “*There is ONE body, and ONE spirit, even as ye are called in ONE hope of your calling: ONE Lord, ONE faith, ONE baptism, ONE God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.*” This is the heavenly view. Ephesians 4:13-15 – Ministry is given to the Church for God’s purpose. “*Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man (One Man) unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of CHRIST: That we henceforth be no more children (with in part knowledge, no understanding), tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; But speaking the TRUTH in love, may grow up into HIM in all things, which is the head, even CHRIST.*” Ephesians talks of fulness – not for individuals, but THE Body – the fulness of HIM.

There was a song some years ago we used to sing in the Church – “Make us one, Lord.” But we have to know we don’t accomplish that in the flesh. CHRIST has made both Jew and Gentile ONE at the Cross (Ephesians 2:15,16) and brought them both to a death. And now in and by His Resurrection He has brought forth ONE NEW MAN, and Christ is **OUR** Life. May God show us HIS view in the heavens, in Christ, that we may

walk in the Truth of what Christ has done by His Cross. This is His appearing in His Body, to bring us to know OUR Life.

Then we have the book of **PHILIPPIANS**, and in this letter Paul is sharing that One Life with the Church. Even though he is writing from a prison, the letter is full of rejoicing and encouragement for the Body. He realizes he will remain for the sake of the Body. Philippians 1:24-26 – *“Nevertheless to abide in the flesh is more needful for you. And having this confidence, I know that I shall abide and continue with you all for your furtherance and joy of faith; That your rejoicing may be more abundant in Jesus Christ for me by my coming to you again.”*

Paul also is determined to not find his life in circumstances, but IN CHRIST. Philippians 3:7-14 – *“But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ. Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ, And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith: That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death; If by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead. Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect: but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus. Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.”* Paul counts his old religion as loss for CHRIST, and we must to. He desires to win Christ, to be found in Him – and no where else, to know Him: to comprehend as he is comprehended of God, to press for the end of what God has purposed in Christ.

But Paul doesn't see this individually – for himself; but he sees “OUR”. Philippians 3:20,21 – *“For **OUR** conversation is in heaven; from whence we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall change **OUR** vile body (the Old Covenant religion and understanding he has been talking about) that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious **body** according to his working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself.”* Notice this says “body” and not “bodies”. God sees ONE – One Body, the

Resurrected Body of Christ. And He is working in us to subdue all things to Himself.

Then we come to the letter of **COLOSSIANS**, which is a companion letter with Ephesians, and Paul is speaking in the knowledge of the Church in the heavenlies with Christ as The Head. Now man has no place, and all things are focused upon Christ. Colossians 1:16-19 – “*For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: And he is before all things, and by him all things consist. And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things HE might have the preeminence. For it pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell.*” And this is where our hearts have to come – knowing that everything in God’s Plan is all about HIM and not us, but by Him we are brought into this plan and into His fulness. Colossians 2:9,10 – “*For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily. And ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power.*”

And because this is all the Truth, the reality of what God has done by the Work of The Cross, Paul says in Colossians 2: 8, - *Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ.*” We are not to let man spoil us with his understanding; and unfortunately this is what we have in the Church today. Paul admonishes them not to be judged by the shadows of the Old Covenant Law. Colossians 2:16,17 – “*Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holyday, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath days: Which are a shadow of things to come; but the body is of Christ.*” And yet still today we are teaching these “shadows” and judging each other by these “things”, rather than seeing that they were all speaking of Christ, and are fulfilled in HIM. And as I said before, these “things” separate the Body rather than bringing us into Oneness, and we find our “Life” in the doing of those things, rather than in HIM.

Paul further warns against the fleshly mind of man. Colossians 2:18-23 – “*Let no man beguile you of your reward in a voluntary humility and worshipping of angels, intruding into those things which he hath not seen, vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind, and not holding the Head, from which all the body by joints and bands having nourishment ministered, and knit together, increaseth with the increase of God. Wherefore if ye be dead with*

Christ (this is the TRUTH we are to come to) from the rudiments of the world, why, as though living in the world, are ye subject to ordinances, (Touch not; taste not; handle not; Which all are to perish with the using;) after the commandments and doctrines of men? Which things have indeed a shew of wisdom in will worship and humility, and neglecting of the body; not in any honour to the satisfying of the flesh.”

Paul here is bringing them to a greater understanding that will establish them in their Salvation – not man’s doctrine, but the TRUTH as it is in Jesus. Here is the Colossian understanding: Colossians 3:1 – *“If ye then **BE** risen with Christ...”* This is not a question: to Paul it is the emphatic statement of the Truth of our Salvation, But with most Christians, they have not come to this understanding. Their “knowing” is still on a “Corinthian” level – living on the earth, living by the flesh, with in-part knowledge. They are waiting to “go be with Jesus”, waiting for a “day to come” when “The King will come”. Is it any wonder that we live as men, live as children, and are still under the condemnation of the Law of sin and death?

But Paul is declaring The TRUTH of God’s view of the Finished Work. Colossians 3:1-4 – *“If ye then be risen with Christ (as One with Him), seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth. For **ye are DEAD**, and **YOUR** life is hid with Christ in God. When **CHRIST**, who is **OUR** life shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory.”* By The Cross you died, and now the only Life there is, is Christ. And He is NOW appearing in His Body, not just as “my” life, but “OUR” life, for there is only One Life in the Body that is raised in His Resurrection. This is so that WE would be the manifesting, the presencing of HIM in the earth – Not I, but CHRIST. I can’t do it as an individual; it is His Body that does that.

The Church, the Body of Christ, the fulness of Him filling all of it, should be the most powerful force in the earth today. Why isn’t it? It is because we don’t know as we are known; we have not comprehended fully that for which we are comprehended of Christ Jesus. But as He appears in His Body, and we behold Him, and allow Him to work in us all that He has done, we will be the manifestation of Jesus’ prayer to the Father in John 17:21-23 – *“That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me. And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one: I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect*

*in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me.” That they may be **ONE**. He has made us ONE – with ONE Life. Why? That the world may know that the Father sent Him.*

May we come to know Christ as “OUR” Life, and manifest that One Life in the earth that the Lord may be glorified. Amen.