



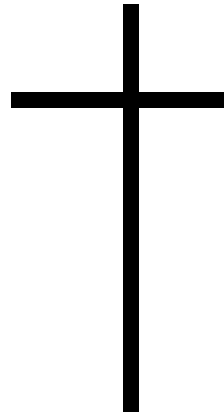
**God's  
Eternal  
Plan**

*The Cross Of Christ*

*Barbara Samuel*

**Covenant Ministries International**

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Eternal  
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*The Cross Of Christ*

**A Bible Study**

***Barbara Samuel***

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## Lesson 1

Objectives: Defining Fellowship, Ministry, the Gospel

I come to you not as a woman to women, not as an American to Costa Ricans, but as one in Christ to others in Christ; as those who are joined to the Lord by One Spirit, having One Life. And I thank God for this time of gathering: may it be in Him, of Him, and for Him; and if it is, it will be time well spent.

We talk of a “time of fellowship” – for meetings, teachings, for worship and praise, but this must not be the fellowship of women – in the flesh. For that fellowship will not last. We will have our meetings and then I will go away, but the fellowship that I am talking about is eternal, and is ever abounding, for it is the fellowship of THE SON.

I used to be afraid of people – mostly woman. And I was so concerned of what they thought of me and how they dealt with me, and the thought of me standing up before a group of women was terrifying! But when I came to the Lord, I remember a night that I was supposed to go to a church service with my husband, and we would have been asked to sit on the platform. And I went to my closet, and as I looked at my clothes, the thought came to me, “What should I look like tonight? What would people expect me to look like?” And the Spirit of God spoke to my heart and said, ‘From now on, you don’t have to please anybody anymore! From now on please ME!’

So it is out from my fellowship with Christ that I am able to stand before you now, not worrying what you think of me, but only concerned that you are seeing Christ in me, and that our fellowship be the fellowship of the Son.

Let us look at 1 Corinthians 1:2-9. “*Unto the church of God which is at Corinth, to them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints, with all that in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, both their’s and our’s; Grace be unto you, and peace, from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ. I thank my God always on your behalf, for the grace of God which is given you by Jesus Christ: That in every thing ye are enriched **by him**, in all utterance, and in all knowledge; Even as the testimony **of Christ** was confirmed **in you**: So that ye come behind in no gift; waiting for the coming **(the revelation, the unveiling)** of our Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall also confirm you unto the end, that ye may be blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. God is faithful, by whom ye were called unto the fellowship of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord.*”

We are NOT called unto the fellowship of women, but the fellowship of God's Son. Now that word "fellowship" means 'a participation, a partnership, being a partaker, having communion.'" But we are called not only into fellowship **WITH** Christ, where we partake of Him and His Life and can commune with Him, but we are called unto the fellowship **OF** the Son! Who is HE in partnership with? Who does HE have communion with? His Father! We are called to participate in **HIS** relationship with **HIS** Father: into the communion they have – as One. (Didn't Jesus say in John 17: 21, "*That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us...*") And in this Oneness He shares with us HIS Life, HIS inheritance, HIS riches – all that is HIS. **By Christ** we come to the Father, and become partakers of HIS Oneness with the Father. And that fellowship does NOT end: it is Eternal, and takes place wherever we are.

And God is faithful to this. He has called us unto this. Now the call is out: out of the world, out of sin, out of death – into Life, into place, a **RELATIONSHIP** we have never had before – **IN CHRIST**, in union with the Father, in continual communion with Him. And this is where we've never been, and of ourselves we could never reach. Thank God Jesus said, "*I AM the way, the truth and the Life; no man cometh unto the Father, but by ME.*" (John 14:6)

So this is why I come. As one who is in fellowship with Christ, sharing that fellowship with others who are joined to Him in Spirit, so that we would all grow in Him, in this union, in the knowledge of this fellowship; and become a manifestation of this fellowship in the earth. Not just in this room, but to the world. Jesus said, "*that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me.*" (John 17:23) WE are to make HIM known throughout the earth, and for this cause ministry is given to the Church.

Paul spoke of ministry in Ephesians 4:7, "*But unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ.*" We all have CHRIST, and ministry is the measure of CHRIST that we share with others. Ministry comes out from HIM, and out from Himself (vs. 11) "*He gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ.*" \*\* The Body of Christ has to be built up in the knowledge of HIM before we can truly minister to those without. So our hearts have got to be set upon knowing HIM – not "things" and getting "gifts" and "doing great works for God"; but in knowing HIM.

Verse 13, “ *Till we all come **IN** the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of **the Son of God...**” This does not say come “to” the unity, but “in” the unity. We try to bring about unity in the flesh, and it doesn’t work. CHRIST is our unity, and if we are ONE with Him, in fellowship continually with Him, we can be at one with each other. And notice it is “the faith” – not many faiths (that man has developed): but One Faith – the knowledge and belief in The Son of God. “... *unto a perfect man...*” Not a woman! We think we can change that scripture and say since we are “women” we want to come to be a “perfect woman”, and preach things that we can do to become better. But that is not correct. In Christ there is only **ONE MAN**, and that is Christ – raised up out from the dead in Newness of Life where there is no male nor female, no bond nor free, but it is **CHRIST ALL AND IN ALL.** (Colossians 3:11, Galatians 3:28) “ *...till we all come...unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the **fulness of CHRIST.***” This perfect man – come to completion, to the goal intended by God, is the measure of the stature of the fulness of CHRIST – not me and you, but HIM!  
This is the Body, the Body of CHRIST – the Church.*

And this is how we must see ourselves: not as women, not as many bodies, either as individual people or even ‘bodies of believers, or churches’, but members of **HIS Body**, which is the fulness of HIM – not us, and HE is filling that Body with **HIMSELF**. We try to fill our groups or churches with more bodies, and all we get is division and confusion. But His Body is ONE, and the fellowship of The Son is the communion of Oneness.

So ministry is unto the fulness of CHRIST in the Body. Verse 14, “ *That we henceforth be no more children, 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.***” Now it is not “us” growing up, but growing up into HIM – to be finished, to be fulfilled by HIM. Speaking THE TRUTH – what is that? The Truth is **A PERSON!** The Person of CHRIST! This is why we must know Him and preach HIM. Colossians 2:10 says, “ *And ye are complete **IN HIM**, which is the head of all principality and power.*” HE is the Head of the Body, and we as The Body are to learn Him in all things and to manifest the Head and make HIM known. This is all coming from HIM: (verse 16) “*From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love.*”

There is a measure of **CHRIST** that is working in every part of HIS Body, and this is ministry – the working of HIM working in us so that the whole Body will be built up in the knowledge of Him. And as there is hunger in one part of the Body to be fed with the Word of God and to grow in Him, the Lord is faithful to send ministry to feed that hunger and give understanding, but may we never forget that it is **HIS** working that is working in us mightily. (Colossians 1:29) This is NOT “us working for Jesus”, but the measure of **CHRIST** in us, bringing forth a greater measure of HIM in His Body. So don’t look at man’s measurement – the number of people, but look for the increase of **CHRIST** in the Body, that we all may come to the fulness of HIM.

So how will this happen? What do we minister one to another? I come to you as the Apostle Paul did. 1 Corinthians 2:1-5 – “*And I, brethren, when I came to you, came not with excellency of speech or of wisdom, declaring unto you the testimony of God. For I determined not to know any thing among you, save **JESUS CHRIST, AND HIM CRUCIFIED**. And I was with you in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling. And my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man’s wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power: That your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God.*” Jesus Christ and Him Crucified – and we must understand that we cannot separate Jesus from the Cross – they are One.

The power of God is the Gospel of Christ. Romans 1:16 – “*For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.*” The Gospel is His death, burial and resurrection; but it is not just ABOUT Him – that He died, was buried and rose. But the Gospel is that very Christ and His Cross being revealed in you, and you participating in that death, burial and resurrection, and that power working IN YOU. It is **CHRIST IN YOU**. Many preach Christ, but how many preach Christ dwelling in you. Paul said this is “...*the mystery which hath been hid from ages and generations, but now is made manifest to his saints: To whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is **CHRIST IN YOU, the hope of glory.***” (Colossians 1:26-27) **CHRIST** is the glory that was expected... and that glory is NOW IN YOU!

This was the gospel that Paul preached – “The good news”. It didn’t have a season: (we as Christians say at Christmas that ‘Jesus is the reason for the season’) and it didn’t change for men or women, or American or Spanish, or black or white, or young or old. There is only ONE gospel – the gospel of **CHRIST** – that Christ revealed in you. And we are not to be ashamed of that gospel. The preaching of

this gospel might cause problems and divisions in “religion”, but this gospel – Christ crucified, now revealed in you is what brings us into true fellowship with the Father, and true fellowship one with another, for now it is “Not I, but Christ” – and we live as ONE.

May we be determined to know nothing else but that. There is always a threat that we will be moved from that. Galatians 1:6-16, *“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. But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. As we said before, so say I now again, If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed. For do I now persuade men, or God? Or do I seek to please men? For if I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ. But I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is **NOT** after man. For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of JESUS CHRIST. For ye have heard of my conversation in time past in the Jews’ religion, how that beyond measure I persecuted the church of God, and wasted it: And profited in the Jews’ religion above many my equals in mine own nation, being more exceedingly zealous of the traditions of my fathers. But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother’s womb, and called me by his grace, to reveal HIS SON IN ME, that I might preach him among the heathen; immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood.”*

That must be our prayer: ‘Father, reveal Thy Son in me that I might preach **HIM**, and know nothing else save Jesus Christ and Him crucified. That’s why I have come to be with you, and I know that if that is our hearts’ desire, God will be faithful to us in that endeavor.

## Lesson 2

Objectives: Our greatest need is to know the Lord. Under the Old Covenant things were hidden, but are now made known in Christ. Paul's gospel – Christ revealed in you. The Church is to make Him known.

I want to start this sharing in Jeremiah 9:23,24, “ *Thus saith the Lord, Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty man glory in his might, let not the rich man glory in his riches; But let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me, that I am the Lord which exercise lovingkindness, judgment, and righteousness in the earth: for in these things I delight, saith the Lord.*”

Contrast that with Revelation 3:17-19, “ *Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked: I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see. As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent.*”

Sadly in the Church world today there are many that preach a message of “prosperity” and gaining worldly goods as a measure of their walk with God, but our greatest need and our greatest joy and glory is to understand and know THE LORD – THAT I AM THE LORD. Nothing compares to this, and this must be our heart's cry. It is the desire of the Father to make Himself known to us, and that we would come to know HIM!

The Apostle Paul wrote, “ *That I may know **HIM**... and be found in **HIM**.*” (Philippians 3:9, 10) And Paul prayed for the Church “*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**: (not things – but HIM!) The eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what **IS**...*” (Ephesians 1:17,18) The Father delights in having us understand and know Him – THE I AM, and this knowledge is especially for those of us today IN CHRIST. Many people preach that we can't know the things of God, but that is not so. There was a time – under the Old Covenant that the things of God were hidden, and they could not be understood, and God could not truly be known. But that is NOT so under the New Covenant. I want us to consider this: that **IN CHRIST** we can understand and know what had been hidden: we can understand and know THE I AM.

John 1:18 – “ No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, **HE hath declared Him.**” THE SON has brought the full revelation of God forth; and by HIM we can understand and know The I AM.

Paul declared this knowledge. Colossians 1:25-29, “ Whereof I am made a minister, according to the dispensation of God which is given to me for you, to fulfil the word of God; Even the mystery which hath been hid from ages and from generations, but **NOW is made manifest** to his saints: To whom God would make known what is the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is **Christ in you, the hope of glory**: Whom we preach, warning every man, and teaching every man in all wisdom; that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus; Whereunto I also labour, striving according to his working, which worketh in me mightily.” This is the gospel Paul preached – CHRIST – what was hidden, made known. Christ IN YOU – not just about Christ, but this Christ – dwelling in you, living His Life in you, so that every man would come to full development; to the nature of Christ. And this is all NOT according to OUR working, but according to **HIS** working which worketh mightily in us.

This knowing is an inward working, an inward knowing by this Christ being revealed IN US – not just to us, but IN us, and we are experiencing HIM as He is – as Life, as Resurrection, as all things to me. This is the essence of our Salvation – **KNOWING HIM**, because CHRIST is the center and essence of God’s Plan of Salvation. You and I are NOT the center of God’s Plan of Salvation – but His Son is. And knowing Christ causes us to know our Salvation.

1 Corinthians 2:9 tells us of a time that man could not know. “ *But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him.*” That’s a quote from Isaiah 64:4. But verse 10 tells us “*But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit...*” This is the essence of the NEW Covenant. “ *...for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea the deep things of God.*” These are the things that were hidden, but are now made known. Verse 12, “ **NOW** we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might **KNOW** the things that are freely given to us of God.” Don’t let anybody tell you that we can’t “know”, but that we will ‘someday in the sweet by-and-by, when we get to heaven’. We can NOT know by the natural understanding, but the Spirit of God IS COME to bring us to understanding, that we may know HIM. Verse 14, “ *But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritual discerned.*”

John 16:12-15. At the time that Jesus was speaking this, before He went to the Cross, He could not tell them many things. “ *I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now. Howbeit, when he, the Spirit of truth is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself: but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you (reveal to you, take the cover off) things to come (the sure things that were prepared). He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you. All things that the Father hath are mine: therefore said I, that he shall take of mine, and shall shew it unto you.* ” THE SPIRIT WILL GLORIFY THE SON. The Spirit will reveal the Son in you, and thereby you will KNOW all things, for IN CHRIST you will know the ‘all things’ of the Mind of God, you will know the ‘all things’ of the Testimony, you will know the ‘all things’ that pertain to Life and Godliness. You will see the ‘all things’ of God IN HIS SON.

Well, The Spirit of Truth **IS COME!** He was released by The Work of The Cross. Jesus said He would send Him when He left this earth, and He did! But the Holy Spirit has not come to just give us gifts and make us scream and jump up and down. The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of **TRUTH**, and He has come to show us – to reveal IN US (for He dwells IN us) what Christ has done, and bring us to understand and know The Lord.

This is the gospel that Paul preached. Remember we read that the gospel Paul preached was NOT of man, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ. This is the source of so much erroneous teaching in the Church today: it is man’s gospel; it is centered around man, and for man, interpreted by man. And we are seeking revelationS (plural) of something spiritual, rather than the only revelation God has – of **HIS SON JESUS CHRIST**. And until He is revealed in you, you will preach man’s ideas and thoughts about Jesus, but you won’t know and preach HIM. But once He is revealed in you – He is the only thing you will preach, and you will see HIM throughout your Bible, and you will be looking for nothing but HIM.

Now we probably all know the background of the Apostle Paul. As Saul he was a Jew – raised up and prospered in the Jewish religion, but he didn’t understand and know God. He was very religious, and went about persecuting the Church and putting Christians in jail thinking that he was doing the will of God. But one day near Damascus something happened. Acts 9:3-6, “*And as he journeyed, he came near Damascus; and suddenly there shined round about him a light from heaven: And he fell to the earth, and heard a voice saying unto him, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? And he said, Who art thou, Lord? And the Lord said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest: it is hard for thee to kick against the pricks. And he*

*trembling and astonished said, Lord, what wilt thou have me to do? And the Lord said unto him, Arise, and go into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do.” It was THIS ONE – this CHRIST who was revealed in Paul, and by the revelation of The I AM, Paul had his eyes opened, and he saw the mystery that had been hidden under the Law. This was the gospel that Paul declared.*

Paul speaks of this in Ephesians 3:3-5, “ *How that by revelation he made known unto me the mystery: (as I wrote afore in few words, Whereby, when ye read, ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery **of Christ**) Which in other ages was NOT made known unto the sons of men, as it **IS NOW MADE KNOWN** unto the sons of men, as it is **NOW** revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit.” What brought Paul from the hidden mystery to the knowledge of what God had planned? The Revelation of His Son! And this is so for the Church today. Christ must be revealed in us, otherwise all that God has planned remains hidden to us.*

Verses 7-9, “ *Whereof I was made a minister, according to the gift of the grace of God given unto me by the effectual working of his power (not by our power and diligence, but by His Spirit working in us). Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles, the unsearchable riches **OF CHRIST**.*” Many in the Church today preach “riches” – getting things, money, cars, jobs etc. but they are poor in Christ. The Gospel is NOT you getting things: the Gospel is the fulness and riches of CHRIST, and you becoming a partaker of HIM and all that He is by the Work of The Cross. Paul’s ministry was to make men see this. “ *And to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ.*”

But those things are NOT hidden now. Paul was used by God to declare this mystery made known; verse 10,11, “ *To the intent that **NOW** unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God, According to the ETERNAL PURPOSE WHICH HE PURPOSED IN CHRIST JESUS OUR LORD.*” THE CHURCH is the vessel on the earth to make known the wisdom of God. That’s why WE have to come to know it! How shall the earth be filled with the glory of God? BY THE CHURCH – His Body, the fulness of HIM that filleth all in all. (Ephesians 1:22,23) That’s why we are here: God has made Himself known to a people so that they can make HIM known in the earth. The Church should NOT be waiting to go someplace to be with Jesus and know Him, but by the revelation of Him, we should be knowing Him now, and making HIM known in all the earth. Not Me, My church, My doctrine –

but **HIM!** Those of us who are in Christ are members of His Church, His Body, and we are to make HIM known in all the earth – not ourselves, but HIM.

1 Peter 2:9,10 – “ *But ye ARE a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that (here’s the purpose; that=purpose) ye should shew forth the praises of HIM who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light: Which in time past were not a people, but are NOW the people of God: which had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy.* ”

This is the manifold wisdom of God, and this is why we are IN CHRIST here on the earth. And God does everything according to His Eternal Purpose which He purposed in Christ Jesus. And in our next lesson we will look at that Purpose.

### Lesson 3

Objectives: Establishing us in the knowledge of Christ. God works according to His Eternal Purpose in Christ. The Plan was hidden in the Testimony, but is revealed in Christ. The scriptures testify of Him.

My prayer for the Church is that we would be rooted and grounded IN CHRIST - that the Truth as it is in Jesus (not in man's truths); but the Truth that HE IS would establish us and keep us in the knowledge of Christ.

Romans 16:25-27 – *Now to him that is of power to stablish you according to my gospel, and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret since the world began, But NOW is made manifest, and by the scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandment of the everlasting God, made known to all nations for the obedience of faith: To God only wise, be glory through Jesus Christ for ever. Amen.*” Paul’s gospel was Christ crucified – now revealed in you. And this is to be seen to be what it is; worked out and made plain here on the earth.

When was this mystery made manifest? We know it was **BY** Jesus Christ; through Him – but WHEN? When He walked the shores of Galilee and healed the sick and fed the hungry? No, even His own disciples didn’t really know who He was during that time. The Mystery was made manifest by The CROSS! By The Cross – by His death, burial and resurrection what was hidden was made known. It is the Cross that is the wisdom and power of God. 1 Corinthians 1:17-24 – *“For Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the gospel: NOT with wisdom of words, lest **the cross of Christ** should be made of none effect. For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God. For it is written, I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent. Where is the wise? Where is the scribe? Hath not God made foolish the wisdom of the world? For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe. For the Jews require a sign, and the Greeks seek after wisdom: But we preach **CHRIST CRUCIFIED**, unto the Jews a stumblingblock, and unto the Greeks foolishness: But unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, **CHRIST** the power of God, and the wisdom of God.”* This is what the early Church was raised up on; and my question to us is – what are we preaching today? The Church is looking for power and wisdom – we can only have that by **THE CROSS OF CHRIST**.

Paul says this is all according: according to his gospel, according to the mystery. And in our last lesson we saw in Ephesians 3 that THE CHURCH is to make known the manifold wisdom of God according to something. Verse 11 – “According to **THE** eternal purpose which he purposed **IN CHRIST JESUS OUR LORD**.” Notice this is **THE** Eternal Purpose. “The” is something exclusive: it is not a purpose among many others, but THE – as of the ONLY. And we must come to understand that all of God’s dealings and desires all come to be summed up and fulfilled in THE ETERNAL PURPOSE IN CHRIST JESUS. He doesn’t have other purposes outside of Christ. “Eternal” brings us out of time and space and circumstances; and HIS Purpose in Christ superceded everything of this earthly realm. The Gospel of Christ does NOT change because of the time we live in, our nationalities or our culture. And when we come into Christ we are brought into eternity – in The Eternal One! “*And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou has sent.*” (John 17:3) So when do we gain Eternal Life; when do we enter Eternity? When we receive Christ and come to Know HIM. Not when we “die” our natural death, but when we come to know Him by the Work of The Cross.

Now God’s Eternal Purpose is what HE purposed in Christ Jesus, and God always works in this understanding. Ephesians 1:11 – “(we as His Body, the Church)...*being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will.*” Can we even begin to comprehend that – all things? Verse 8-11 - “*Wherein he hath abounded toward us in all wisdom and prudence (mental activity); Having made known unto us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure which he hath purposed in himself: That in the dispensation (an orderly administration, working out) of the fulness of times he might gather together (sums up and comprehends) in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are in earth; even in him; In whom we have obtained an inheritance....*” God planned and now comprehends all things IN CHRIST. This is God’s will and pleasure – to have everything understood in Christ, and He works according to that.

Ephesians 1:3,4 – “*Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places **in Christ**: According as he hath chosen us **in him** before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love.*” God’s choosing is IN CHRIST, and all His Spiritual blessings are IN HIM.

2 Timothy 1:9,10 – “ *God has saved us not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us **in Christ Jesus** before the world began, But is **NOW made manifest** by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ.* ”

God’s Plan is **IN CHRIST**, His Purpose is **IN CHRIST**. If you want to find God’s plan for YOU, or God’s will for YOU, you have to find it **IN CHRIST**. We think that God has plans “for me” and that He’s working towards that. We love to quote Romans 8:28 – “ *We know that all things work together for good to them that love God...* ” And we think that everything works for MY good, but that is NOT what the scripture is saying. It is for HIS GOOD, for HIS Plan, for this is “*to them who are the called according to HIS purpose.*” This is His Purpose **IN CHRIST**. So what does everything work for? Verse 29 – “*For whom he did foreknow he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of **HIS SON**, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren.*” We must understand – “we” are NOT the end of God’s plan – HIS SON IS!

The problem today is so much of Christianity is that we have made ME – MAN, the center of the Gospel: what **I** can get; what **I** can do; what **I** may be; where **I** will go. But we are NOT the center of God’s Eternal Plan – His Son is, and everything God does is according to that Eternal Plan.

Now we have read that the mystery, God’s Plan had been hidden. So the question is: where was it hidden? Now this is important, because God is the One who had this hidden, and He is the One who reveals all things, but it must be revealed where it was hidden. Another word we can use that the Bible uses is “veiled”. This mystery was covered up: it was there, but it could not be seen clearly because of a veil. And God’s Plan was hidden in the Testimony – in the scriptures, in the types and shadows of the Old Covenant. Now this is important because the Revelation of Christ must come out from the scripture, and the scripture will confirm the Truth. Many in the Christian world today are bringing prophecies or revelations, but they are not coming from the scriptures, and we need to be cautious about that. **ALL SCRIPTURE SPEAKS OF CHRIST**: Who is the Plan and Purpose of God, and only as **HE** is revealed in the scripture will you truly know the Father. He is THE WORD – making the mind and heart of the Father known. The Testimony, the Old Covenant scriptures speak of **HIM**.

John 5:39 – “ *Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of Me.*” How many scriptures? ALL scripture! Verse 46,47 – “*For had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed me: for he wrote of me. But if ye believe not his writings, how shall ye believe my words?*” Some

Christians say they don't have to read the Old Testament because we are New Covenant Christians, but we can only truly see the greatness of Christ by seeing all that God promised in the Old Covenant, and that it was ALL fulfilled in HIM!

Hebrews 3:5 – “*And Moses verily was faithful in all his house, as a servant, for a **testimony of those things which were to be spoken after.***” The Old Covenant was the testimony of what Christ would bring forth AFTER those days. What days? The days before The Cross. Hebrews 1:1,2 - “*God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, Hath in these last days (at the END of those days) spoken unto us by **HIS SON...***”

Matthew 5:17 – “*Think not that I am come to destroy the law or prophets: I come not to destroy, but to **fulfil.***” Christ is the fulfillment of all the scripture.

Matthew 11:27 – “*All things (all things of the Old Covenant, all the types and shadows, God's Plan and Will) are delivered to me of My Father: and no man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him.*” The Son will make the Father known as He makes known the “all things” of the Father's Plan.

It is in the seeing of HIM that we clearly see the “all things” of God.

Luke 24:25-27 – This is after the Cross when the disciples were forlorn. They thought Jesus was the One who would have redeemed Israel, but now with His death they thought that hope was gone. But HE appears and speaks to them. “*Then he said unto them, O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken: Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory? And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in ALL the scriptures the things concerning himself.*” Verse 31,32 – *And their eyes were opened, and they knew him; and he vanished out of their sight. And they said one to another, Did not our heart burn within us, while he talked with us by the way, and while he opened to us the scriptures?”*

Notice that this is all AFTER the Cross – He appears, but He appears to them in the scripture, in the Testimony, and they see HIM. They have seen the Witness of the Testimony in the very Person of **CHRIST CRUCIFIED!** And now they can go and declare He is alive! Verse 35 – “*And they told what things were done in the way, and how he was known of them in breaking of bread.*” That symbolized His death, and the New Covenant that He has brought in by His sacrifice for them.

So, we must read the scripture **to see HIM**; for the scripture testifies of HIM – not man, but of HIM, and He will make Himself known to us there by the Work of The Cross. This is all according to God’s Eternal Plan and Purpose – **IN CHRIST**.

## Lesson 4

Objectives: We gather to see Christ. The mystery hidden is now known. Dealing with two Covenants – the old is veiled. Truth – uncovering of what was hidden comes at the Cross. Christ must be revealed.

I want to begin this lesson with an admonition to us. We come to search the scriptures, and that is good. But we come not to learn facts or new things I can use to get money or fight the devil, but to see **HIM**. And at the end of our time together if you have not learned anything new, but if you have seen HIM, then our time together was worthwhile. So may our prayer be: ‘FATHER, SHOW US YOUR SON!’

May we not be like those in 2 Timothy 3:6,7 – “*For of this sort are they which creep into houses, and lead captive silly women laden with sins, led away with divers lusts, Ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth.*” Many today are learning TRUE things from the Bible, from true ministers in the Church, but are they coming to the knowledge of THE TRUTH? Notice this says “THE” Truth, and in order to understand this, we have to bring it into the PERSON Who says “*I am THE way, THE truth, and THE life...*” (John 14:6) Our learning must bring us to the knowledge of HIM; other wise it is all in vain.

Timothy cautioned against deceivers, and we must be also. But what will protect us against deception? Vs. 15-17 – “*And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation (not so I can get rich) through faith which is **IN CHRIST JESUS**. All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.*” The scripture was given to us of God to bring us to completion – unto the fulness of the measure of CHRIST working in us. And a true knowledge of THE TRUTH (Christ) by the scripture does not puff you up: only Christ is exalted, and you are found to be living in Him, by Him and for Him – Not I, but CHRIST.

But now let us look at **THE TRUTH**. First of all we must come to understand things according to how God sees things, not as we do. And God doesn’t have many truthS (plural); He has THE TRUTH, and The Truth is HIS Son. This is all according to what God’s Eternal Plan and Purpose is. And The Truth of it is ALL and ONLY in His Son, who is THE Truth. This is the Bible definition of Truth: THE (and it is always “the”, not “a” – exclusively) unveiled REALITY lying at the

basis of, and agreeing with an appearance. It is the manifested true essence of matter. It is the reality clearly before our eyes, and not a type or shadow.

We have been speaking about the Mystery of God; His Plan and Purpose that was hidden, but is now made known, made manifest. And in order to understand this, we have to deal with two understandings, with two COVENANTS. The word “covenant” means an understanding, an agreement. And the Bible speaks of these as the Old and the New, as the first and the second. And in each of these Covenants, God is dealing, but in one His things are hidden, and in the other they are made known. And although there are many aspects to the Old understanding, it comes to be summed up in Moses and the Old Covenant, and here we have types and shadows of God’s plan. Hebrews 3:5 – “ *And Moses verily was faithful in all his house, as a servant, for a TESTIMONY of those things which were to be spoken after.*” And we must understand this: the things of the Old Covenant, although they were of God, and were true things, they only spoke of what would come after. They were only a PATTERN of the true. And the words that are associated with the Old Covenant are “VEILED, COVERED UP.”

Remember when Moses went up into the Mount to talk to God? Exodus 34:29-35 – “ *And it came to pass, when Moses came down from the mount Sinai with the two tables of testimony in Moses’ hands, when he came down from the mount, that Moses wist not that the skin of his face shone while he talked with him. And when Aaron and all the children of Israel saw Moses, behold, the skin of his face shone; and they were afraid to come nigh him. And Moses called unto them; and Aaron and all the rulers of the congregation returned unto him; and Moses talked with them. And afterward all the children of Israel came nigh: and he gave them in commandment all that the Lord had spoken with him in mount Sinai. And till Moses had done speaking with them, he put a vail on his face. But when Moses went in before the Lord to speak with him, he took the vail off, until he came out. And he came out, and spake unto the children of Israel that which he was commanded. And the children of Israel saw the face of Moses, that the skin of Moses’ face shone: and Moses put the vail upon his face again, until he went in to speak with him.*”

At that time the people couldn’t go to God. He was far off, but Moses went and spoke to God and came back to the people. But the people were afraid of Moses, so he put a veil on his face when he talked to them. The people could not see things clearly, but everything was spoken through a veil. And in the Tabernacle there was an actual veil that was constructed between the Holy Place and the Holy of Holies and the very Ark of the Covenant and the presence of God were covered up with

skins and cloths. The people could not see there, or go there, and when they moved, everything was covered. These were all types of God's Salvation and Redemption, but the reality of it was not made known to them. God's people had to honor this pattern and worship God using these types and shadows, but these were only true things, and not THE TRUTH.

So when did The Truth come? Or are we still waiting for The Truth to come? Many will preach that is so, but the Apostle Paul and others proclaimed that the Truth has NOW come. John 1:17 – “*For the law was given by Moses, but grace and TRUTH **came by Jesus Christ.***” He came as THE TRUTH, the reality, the true essence and substance of everything of the Father. Now everything that God had set forth in the Old Covenant would find its definition and fulfillment IN HIM! Jesus came as the manifested REALITY of God's Eternal Plan – He would make it known!

But how did He do that, and when did He do that? When He was born in a manger? When He fed the hungry and healed the sick? No, even while Jesus did that He was not known unto them. Even His disciples didn't see the reality of who He was, even though He told them.

THE TRUTH WAS MANIFESTED AT THE CROSS! What was it that happened when He died on the Cross? Matthew 27:50,51 – “*Jesus, when he had cried again with a loud voice, yielded up the ghost. And, behold, the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom; and the earth did quake and the rocks rent.*” It was **HIS DEATH ON THE CROSS** that removed the veil, and NOW in Him, Who is the reality lying behind everything, the things of God can be seen, and the Old comes to its end. Why? Because what they all spoke of has now come! Now we don't deal with true things – waiting for what they speak of to come, but with the very Person of TRUTH HIMSELF Who has come! And we now are to live in and by that Truth.

2 Corinthians 3:6-18 contrasts the Old and New Covenants. He calls one the ministration of death, and the other the ministration of the Spirit: one is a ministration of condemnation, and the other is the ministration of righteousness: one is glory, but the other exceeds in glory: one was to be done away, but the other was to remain.

Vs. 12-18 – “*Seeing then that we have such hope, we use great plainness of speech. And not as Moses, which put a vail over his face, that the children of Israel could not stedfastly look to the end of that which is abolished: But their minds were blinded: for until this day remaineth the same vail untaken away in the reading of*

*the old testament; which vail is done away in Christ. But even unto this day, when Moses is read, the veil is upon their heart. Nevertheless, when it shall turn to the Lord, the veil shall be taken away. Now the Lord is that Spirit: and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty. But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.*” Israel at that time couldn’t look to the end (the completion, the goal reached) of what was taken away. That veil IS DONE AWAY IN CHRIST. And the Cross is what separates the Old from the New. But that veil can still be on our hearts, and we will not see the Truth and find the reality of everything in Christ with that veil of flesh remaining. But when the HEART turns to the Lord, the veil shall be taken away, and we can see clearly. What will we see? Many things... many ways? No – we will see only One – **CHRIST** – Him crucified and now in the power of His resurrection.

Until He is revealed by His Cross as The Truth of all of God’s Plan, the veil remains in my heart and I can’t see clearly, and then I will guess what I see and interpret what I see according to my own mind. But there is only ONE who gives us clear vision of THE Vision of God. Revelation 5 – The book was sealed with seven seals. Who is worthy to open the book? NO MAN! This is our problem: we let MAN teach us the Bible, give us his thoughts, and doctrines; but man is NOT The Truth of God’s Word, and there is no real life in that learning. Vs. 5-7 – The Lion of the tribe of Judah opens the book and looses the seals. He is The Lamb as it had been slain right in the midst of everything!

Until this Christ, as The Lamb of God is revealed in us as The Truth of all God’s Eternal Plan and Purpose, the Bible is a closed book to us. But when He is revealed, we see Him to be the substance of all things, and that all things find their definition and fulness in Him. And then we will no longer walk in the shadows, but in The Light – The TRUTH that He is.

By the Cross He has already DONE AWAY with the veil. May we now turn our hearts to know Him, to see Him face to face, and by Him being revealed in us, have that veil TAKEN AWAY from us. Then – with an open face, beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, we will be changed; from the glory of the old, the first, what fades, the types and shadows – to the glory of the New, the Second, CHRIST – Him who never changes, but is **THE TRUTH OF GOD!**

Father – reveal YOUR SON in us!

## Lesson 5

Objectives: God's Plan is fulfilled at Calvary. The Cross is an ever-present reality. The Cross is a Finished Work, and that Finished Work must work in us.

In our lessons we are seeing that God's Eternal Plan - all that He planned and purposed in Christ was made known IN and BY The Cross of Christ.

There is a song we sing in our fellowship called "At Calvary", and one of the verses will help us to see this.

" Oh, the love that drew Salvation's plan,  
Oh, the grace that brought it down to man,  
Oh, the mighty gulf that God did span – AT CALVARY.

Mercy there was great, and grace was free,  
Pardon there was multiplied to me,  
There my burdened soul found liberty – AT CALVARY."

So let's just consider this:

God's love – Everything of Salvation comes out of God's love, but where was that love manifested? John 3:16 – "*For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.*" But where did He give Him? How did He give Him? Vs. 14 – "*And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up.*" (See this in Numbers 21:5-9) This is speaking of THE CROSS. God manifested (made known) His love at The Cross, and you can only truly know God's love by The Cross and by Christ's death. The Cross was God's Plan to manifest His love.

The Grace – This Plan, conceived in the heart of God in the beginning had to be brought to man, and Christ did for us what we could not do for ourselves. This is God's GRACE. Ephesians 2 – "*And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins.*" Vs. 4-9 – "*But GOD (don't focus on us... BUT GOD), who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;) And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus: That in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus. For by grace are ye saved through faith: and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should*

*boast.*” God showed us His grace at THE CROSS. He not only gave us Life, but brought us to Himself through Christ, through the Work of The Cross.

The Gulf – This is the separation between man and God. Adam had fallen, and all mankind was separated from God. Romans 3:23 – “*For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God.*” Ephesians 2:12 “*That at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world. BUT NOW IN CHRIST JESUS ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ.*” That’s The Cross! Hebrews 4:16 – “*Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.*” This is what Christ has done – NOW we can come to God – in Christ.

Mercy was shown there – at THE CROSS. Jesus suffered the judgment of mankind, and NOW God can show His mercy to us in Christ. At the Cross is where we find pardon and the liberty for our burdened soul. It is all AT CALVARY. We must look for all things in The Cross!

So I want us to see that The Cross is essential and central to God’s Eternal Plan. It was NOT an afterthought, or a change of plan with God; it was always His idea. 1 Peter 1:18-20 – “*Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; (that’s the Old Covenant religion of Judaism) But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot: Who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you.*” And we have said where it was manifest; where it was made known – AT THE CROSS.

So The Cross is an ever present reality to God, and The Truth of that Cross should be an ever present reality to us and in us. And that Cross should be continually working in us God’s Eternal Will; which is the only way that God’s Will is going to be working in us. You can’t relegate The Cross to “Easter Time”. Paul determined to know NOTHING but Christ and Him crucified. Jesus said in John 6:53, “*Except you eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you.*” That is partaking of His death, partaking of The Cross, and we are to do that continually. 1 Corinthians 1:24 – “*But unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God.*” Christ crucified is the power of God and the wisdom of God, and we can never know God’s power and wisdom outside of THE CROSS. It is at The Cross where He will show you all things.

But I want us to add another word to our understanding of The Cross. And that word is **FINISHED**. The Cross is a FINISHED WORK. And this is important, because we need to understand that when we come to Christ, we come to a Finished Work. God planned a Finished Work in The Cross. That would take care of everything that God desired. And we don't have to finish anything or work to get it: it has been FINISHED!

Hebrews 4:3 – *“For we which have believed do enter into rest, as he said, As I have sworn in my wrath, if they shall enter into my rest: although the works were finished from the foundation of the world.”*

This is important for us to understand because so many Christians have NOT entered into rest. We are distressed, perplexed, working ourselves to the bones for Jesus: trying to make sure we “make it in”. And many are even fearful that they will be “left behind”. They are waiting for a day to come when the Lord will come and do something, and then things will be finished. But I want to declare to you **The Finished Work of The Cross**.

Now we know that God had a Plan, and that Plan was all in His Son, and that Son came to earth to bring this Plan and execute it. Look at Jesus' own words:

John 4:34 – *“Jesus saith unto them, My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work.”*

John 5:36 – *“But I have greater witness than that of John: for the works which the Father hath given me to finish, the same works that I do, bear witness of me, that the Father hath sent me.”*

John 17:4 – *“I have glorified thee on the earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do.”*

And what was “The Work”? Was it feeding the hungry and healing the sick? No – The Work that He would finish was THE CROSS! And Jesus came to earth to go to The Cross and die to bring forth God's Plan of Salvation. That was God's Plan. And by “The Cross” we mean the death, burial and resurrection of The Lord Jesus Christ. These are NOT three different things or events, but ONE WORK. God sees The Cross as that, and we must also. Jesus didn't do part of the Work, and now we're waiting for it ‘to be finished’. **THE CROSS IS A FINISHED WORK**.

John 12 – Jesus came into Jerusalem. The crowds were calling Him King, but He knew why He came to Jerusalem at that time. It was to DIE. Vs. 27 – *“Now is my*

*soul troubled; and what shall I say? Father, save me from this hour: but for this cause came I unto this hour.* He knew the Plan! Vs. 32,33 – “*And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me. This he said, signifying what death he should die.*” When He was lifted up on The Cross, in His death He would draw all men into Himself, into the judgment He would bear, and they would all die and be buried with Him – put away. But for those who believed in Him, in His death, He would raise them up out from among the dead and give them Life – Newness of Life, and He would bring forth a New Creation in His Resurrection that would be reconciled unto God.

This was the mystery that had been hidden, and God used the very enemies of Christ to bring this to pass. 1 Corinthians 2:6-8 – “*Howbeit we speak wisdom among them that are perfect (maturing): yet not the wisdom of this world, nor of the princes of this world, that come to nought: But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world unto our glory: Which none of the princes of this world knew: for had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory.*” By crucifying The Lord, the whole Plan of God went into full effect! Who but God could have planned that? Even Pilate wanted to let Jesus go, but The Cross had already been determined of The Father. (See Matthew 27)

So Jesus came to The Cross, and embraced The Cross as The Eternal Plan of His Father.

Matthew 26:39 – “*And he went a little farther, and fell on his face, and prayed, saying, O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt.*” And look at what is said when Jesus is on The Cross. John 19:28 – “*After this, Jesus knowing that all things were NOW accomplished, that the scripture might be fulfilled, saith, I thirst.*” Where were all things accomplished that the scripture spoke of? AT THE CROSS! Vs. 30 – “*When Jesus therefore had received the vinegar, he said, **IT IS FINISHED**: and he bowed his head, and gave up the ghost.*”

JESUS DECLARED THE WORK IS FINISHED – BY HIS CROSS! He is The One who finished something there, and brought the “all things” of the Old Covenant to their fulfillment and substance. We are going to look at what was finished at The Cross, and if this Finished Work is working its finishing in our hearts. And I want to challenge you: is your life making Christ out to be a liar? He said “It is finished.” Are you resting in that Finished Work? This is so important, because of THE CROSS. My prayer is that our lives are not causing the Cross of Christ to be of none effect. May we not turn back to the types and shadows of the

Law, but see all things finished in Christ. Galatians 5:4 – “*Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law: ye are fallen from grace.*” May we not be like that, but may we stand in the grace which is ours in Christ Jesus by the Finished Work of The Cross.

## Lesson 6

Objectives: Being in Christ – a state of rest. God’s choosing is in Christ. Finding Christ as Life in The Finished Work of the Cross. We must know Him. The Spirit has come to teach us the Finished Work of Christ.

Through these lessons we are looking at The Finished Work of The Cross of Christ. Our Salvation is by that Finished Work; and aren’t you glad for that? I don’t have to finish it, but I have to receive by faith all that Christ has finished by the Cross. Can’t we rest in that? Jesus said in Matthew 11:28, “*Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.*” This is the greatness of our Salvation – what He has done.

So let us continue to look at what was “finished” by The Cross. We’ll look at 2 Corinthians 5:17, a very familiar passage. “*Therefore if any man **be IN CHRIST**, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.*” Another translation says, Behold, the new is come. But this scripture qualifies something: it doesn’t say ‘any man’; it says if any man be IN CHRIST. This is talking about a state of being. This doesn’t change; it is not some place we go to, but we now BE IN CHRIST. For example: I “be” a woman. I am “being” that whether I am in Costa Rica or in the Virgin Islands; the circumstances do not change what I “be”. But this is not like we are “in” a building... and then we will leave the building and not be in it any more. This “in” means that we are the same substance, so we “be IN Christ.” HE now is where we be, and He is our very being. (Acts 17:28 - "For in him we live, and move, and have our being...") And that word “in” primarily denotes an idea of REST and being in a FIXED position. That’s God’s idea of Salvation. We don’t move “in and out” of Christ, but we now BE IN HIM.

But how did we get to BE in Christ? By The Cross! 2 Corinthians 5:14,15 – “*For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead: And that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again.*” That is the Work of the Cross. In His Resurrection He brings forth a New Creation – those who BE of God, reconciled to Him by Jesus Christ.

So I would like us to look at “being in Christ”. We have already said that God works everything according to His Eternal Plan in Christ Jesus. And the wonder of this plan is that it included man: that God planned a people to BE IN CHRIST.

Ephesians 1:3,4 – *“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ: According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love.”* Notice what God **HAS DONE**. So many Christians are waiting for what God is “going to do”, but how many of us know what God HAS DONE? This is why the Apostle Paul prayed for the Church the way he did. Paul didn’t pray for wealth or material things, but he prayed in Ephesians 1:17,18, *“ 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**...”* We worry and debate over what is going to be: but we need to know what IS. And what IS according to God’s Plan is IN CHRIST. God has put all spiritual blessings in the Spirit realm IN CHRIST. Many people preach that God’s plan is to “get us to heaven” – as a place, when we die. But I declare to you that God’s concept of heaven is IN CHRIST, and it is there – IN HIM where God has planned a people to be. God chose a people to be in Christ before the world. Now we must understand that God didn’t choose “me” to be in Christ, or “you” not to be. But God’s choosing is in Christ, and I can either obey or disobey that call.

And when we be in Christ and are resting in The Finished Work of the Cross – we are in heaven, in the heavenlies, experiencing a union with Him – NOW – while we are living on this earth. For our “being IN Christ” is not achieved by MY physical death, but by HIS death – the death of The Cross. Remember we have said that The Cross is essential and central to God’s Eternal Plan, and it is here that God’s Plan is made known.

1 Corinthians 15:22 says, *“For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive.”* That doesn’t say that everybody who dies shall live again – in heaven. It says that IN CHRIST you shall be made alive – with HIS Life. Why? Because Life is IN CHRIST! 1 John 5:11,12, *“ 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.”* If we BE in Him, and He BE in us – we have Eternal Life. Jesus said in John 10: 10, *“...I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly.”*

Eternal Life is NOT me living again for a very long time after I die, but it is the very Person of Life living in me, and me being in Him, resting in Him, and having no life of my own. Jesus said *“ I am the way, the truth and the life; no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.”* (John 14:6) And *“I am the resurrection and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live.”* (John 11:25)

Notice “I AM” – ALL THINGS COME TO THEIR FULFILLMENT IN CHRIST – the I AM. Eternal Life is NOT I, but Christ, and if we be in Christ, we have Eternal Life NOW. And my friends, we should be daily living in that reality, and allowing that Life to be made manifest in us and through us. Remember, the Church is to make God’s wisdom known here in the earth.

Look at what else we have when we “BE in Christ”. Ephesians 1:5-7. *“Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will.”* This is our relationship now with the Father that we have being in Christ. God recognizes His Son in us, and we experience the fulness of Oneness with Him. *“To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved.”* My God! In Christ we are made acceptable to the Father. This is not what WE do, but what HE HAS DONE. We think we can make ourselves acceptable to God by our good works, or our clothes, or our food, etc. But none of that makes us accepted. The only One acceptable to the Father is HIS SON. *“This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.”* (Matthew 3:17) And since we are in Him, *“He is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption.”* (1 Corinthians 1:30) Do you want anything better than that? But this is not something He gives to us apart from Himself: this is Who Christ is, and as we understand our union with Him, HE becomes all these things to us. *“In whom we have redemption through his blood (The Cross), the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace.”*

This is all what it means to “BE IN CHRIST”. This is the “new” that we read about in 2 Corinthians 5:17. This is what we did not have, and could not have in Adam, in the old. But this is what it means – being IN CHRIST. This is all according to God’s Eternal Plan. And we must ask the Lord to show us the reality of this – not according to man’s religious doctrines, but according to the TRUTH AS IT IS IN JESUS.

Colossians 2:8-10 – *“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 CHRST. For IN HIM dwelleth all the fulness of the God head bodily. And ye are complete IN HIM, which is the head of all principality and power.”* Being IN CHRIST we have the “all things” of God – what more could we want? This is what the soul of man is seeking for, and will never find true contentment and peace until the soul finds the peace and rest of BEING IN CHRIST.

This is what God has done by The Finished Work of The Cross.

2 Peter 1:2,3. This is what we need to know. “ *Grace and peace be multiplied unto you through the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord, According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of HIM that hath called us to glory and virtue.*” This is ALL IN CHRIST, and can only be known by KNOWING HIM.

We spoke earlier about the Old Covenant and it was there that God had all the promises of what He would do... someday... somehow... but there was no real knowledge of Him. Jesus told His disciples before He went to the Cross that it would be better for them if He went away, because then He would send the Comforter, and the Holy Spirit would shew them what they did not know then. John 16:7,12-14 “*Nevertheless I tell you the truth; It is expedient that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you...I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now (that was BEFORE The Cross; before THE TRUTH was made manifest). Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth is come, he will guide you into ALL truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come. He shall glorify ME: for he shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you.*”

John 14:20 - “*At that day ye shall KNOW that I am in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you.*”

**THIS DAY IS NOW COME!!!** That is The Finished Work of The Cross! May we come to know that Finished Work, and walk daily in the reality of what Christ has done.

## Lesson 7

Objectives: To see the Dividing Factor of the Cross. Taking away all of the old and establishing the New. Understanding first and second, old and New relating to Covenant, man, and heaven and earth.

In our last lesson we looked at 2 Corinthians 5:17, “ *Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.*” And in this lesson I want to look at the Dividing Factor of The Cross.

When we get saved, we usually ask God to take away the “bad” things in us – we might smoke, drink or gamble, and we think that if I don’t do those things any more, I am a New Creature. But The Cross does NOT divide the bad from the good and keep the good in you. The Cross works much deeper, and does away with the old and all things of the old, and in Christ ALL things are New, and in Christ there is ONLY New!

We have to see things as God sees them. The scripture declares an old and a new: an Old Covenant and a New Covenant; an old man and a New Man; an old heaven and earth, and a New heaven and earth. These are two different realms, two different understandings, and we must ask God to show us the difference. Two points to keep in mind: 1) The old never gets New, and is NOT Eternal, but temporal - for a time. The New never gets old, and is Eternal and will never end. 2) The scriptures only declare an old and a New, a first and a second. The scripture does NOT declare a third! This is essential to our understanding of the Bible, and to our understanding of Christ and The Finished Work of The Cross.

We now in Christ are where all things are become New, because the New has come, but we have an OLD understanding, an Old Covenant mentality. To us the “old things” have not passed away, so we are not living in the Newness that is NOW come in Christ.

Let’s look at some scriptures comparing the Old and the New; the first and the second.

Re: Covenant – COVENANT is an understanding by which two parties function, and God set forth TWO Covenants. Now there are many aspects to the first Covenant: with Noah, with Abraham, with Jacob, with Israel, with Moses, but they all must be seen as the FIRST. And they are all summed up under THE LAW.

Hebrews 8:7-11 – “ *For if that first covenant had been faultless, then should no place have been sought for the second. For finding fault with them, he saith, Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, when I will make a NEW covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah: NOT according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt; because they continued not in my covenant, and I regarded them not, saith the Lord. For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people; And they shall not teach every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest.*” The first Covenant was outside of them – written on a stone, on paper, but it didn’t change them, and they didn’t really know God. And sadly today, this is how many Christians try to have a relationship with God. They read the Bible as a set of rules – “do this, don’t do that.” They try their best to keep all the rules, but they can’t, and they really don’t know God. This is NOT the New Covenant we now have in Christ. The Word now is IN US – by the Spirit of God dwelling in our very hearts, ministering to us The Word, The Life, the very nature of Christ and our union with Him.

This is all because of Christ. Verse 6, “ *But now hath he (Christ) obtained a more excellent ministry (better than Moses, the Law), by how much also he is the mediator of a better covenant, which was established upon better promises.*” We always see the word “BETTER” relating to Christ! The Law, the first was good, it was of God, but the second, CHRIST is better!

But what about the old? Verse 13, “*In that he saith, A new covenant, he hath made the first old. Now that which decayeth and waxeth old is ready to vanish away.*” Even when Jeremiah was receiving this prophecy (you can read it in Jeremiah 31:31-34), God was making the first old since He had the New in view. God was always seeing the fulfillment of the “all things” of the Old Covenant fulfilled in Christ. The old is getting ready to vanish away. So the question for us is – when did that happen? Are we waiting for that to happen, or has it already happened?

Remember when Jesus had his last supper with His disciples? What were they having at that time? They were celebrating the Jewish Passover under the Old Covenant Law. He has come into Jerusalem and presented Himself to them as King, and it was at the time of the Passover feast that all of Israel must observe – the killing of the Lamb for their redemption. Matthew 26:17-19 – “*Now the first day of the feast of unleavened bread the disciples came to Jesus, saying unto him,*

*Where wilt thou that we prepare for thee to eat the passover? And he said, Go into the city to such a man, and say unto him, The Master saith, My time is at hand; (He would now fulfill this feast and sum everything up in His death, burial and resurrection. He would do this as THE LAMB OF GOD who would die.) I will keep the passover at thy house with my disciples. And the disciples did as Jesus had appointed them; and they made ready the passover.” Verses 26-29 – “And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, blessed it, and brake it, and gave it to the disciples, and said, Take, eat; this is my body. And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it: For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins. But I say unto you, I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it NEW with you in my Father’s kingdom.” This is all leading up to THE CROSS, and Jesus sums up all of the aspects of the Old Covenant in Himself, and by the Work of The Cross, HE divides the old from the New. This is why He came.*

Hebrews 10:9 – “ *Then said he, Lo, I come to do thy will, O God. He taketh away the first, that he may ESTABLISH the second.*” It is by His death at The Cross that the old is done away – the first, the Old Covenant, the old man, the old heaven and earth: ALL of the first. And what does He do? In His resurrection He brings forth and establishes the New, the second, the New Covenant, the New Man, the New heaven and New earth. And it’s important to note that the word “resurrection” has with it the thought of “raise to stand”. That which is raised by and in His Resurrection (In Him) is raised up out from the dead and will stand – it is established, and it shall not fade or perish. CHRIST is the second, and He established all that is raised up IN HIM.

Re: The First and Second Man. 1 Corinthians 15:45-47 – “ *And so it is written, The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening spirit. Howbeit that was NOT first which is spiritual, but that which is natural; and AFTERWARD that which is spiritual. The first man is of the earth, earthy; the second man is **THE LORD FROM HEAVEN.***” These are the two men in God’s understanding – Adam and Christ, and they are not the same! The first is natural, and only after the first is passed away, then comes the spiritual. We think we can make Adam part spiritual – by going to Church and doing nice things, but we can’t. He is just Adam trying to be religious. The first man is of the earth and is dictated by that realm. But the second man is THE LORD from heaven. The second man is NOT me being spiritual and doing better. The second man is CHRIST.

We read that the first is taken away: the first man is taken away. Where? At THE CROSS! 2 Corinthians 5:14,15 – “*For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead. And that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again.*” By His death, He takes away the first man, and now the second, which is Christ is established as Life – and those who live, live only by Him, and He is established in them as all things. We are to function as this reality in the earth: Christ as Head, and the Church which is His Body.

Colossians talks about the old and New Man. Colossians 3:1 – “*If ye then **BE** risen with Christ, 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.*” This is what we BE and where we BE by the Work of The Cross. Why should we do that? Because, verse 3 – “*For ye are **DEAD**, and your life is hid with Christ in God.*” This is all because of the Cross – not your natural death, but by your identification with Christ in HIS death on the Cross. But Christ will appear as LIFE – in you, and bring you to an understanding of your union with Him, and that you live now only in Him, by Him and for Him. Now you mortify (bring to a death) your members which are on the earth: all of the old, first man and his deeds – before you came to Christ. (verses 5-8) And Verse 9-11 – “*Lie not one to another, seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds: and have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him: Where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, Barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free: but **CHRIST IS ALL, AND IN ALL.**”*

We now have put on the New Man: the New Creation that is created of God in Christ Jesus. The first, the old is many: but the New, the second is ONE – Christ ALL; only Christ – in many, but it is only Christ. And our Salvation is putting HIM on, and the Work of the Spirit in His appearing is to put away all of the old, and to establish all of the New – Christ Himself as Life – in us, so we can function on the earth not as many, but as One – as the Body of Christ.

Re: Heaven and Earth – We mentioned that the scriptures speak of an old heaven and earth, and a NEW heaven and earth. John spoke of this in the book of the Revelation of Jesus Christ. And please notice that Revelation 1:1 says this is “*The revelation of Jesus Christ...*” Many preach that this book predicts future events, with horrible beasts and catastrophes, but it is the unveiling, the manifestation of a Person – JESUS CHRIST OUR LORD. It is HIS appearing, HIS disclosure, HIS manifesting, and there are dramatic consequences to that, but we must read that

book looking for HIM, for the Kingdom of our Lord has come; and it has come by the Finished Work of The Cross.

Revelation 21:1-3 – “ *And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away: and there was no more sea. And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God.*” Notice here we see the same term we read before – “passed away”. Everything of the old was ordained of God to “pass away.” John sees a NEW Jerusalem – not the old and first. This is a people in spiritual union with the Lord. Notice the city is “coming **DOWN** from God out of heaven.” Most Christians are “waiting to go TO heaven”, but John sees the Truth of The Finished Work of The Cross being made manifest – out from heaven on the earth. Now God doesn’t dwell in a tabernacle made with hands, but He dwells with men – IN their hearts. He will be with them, and they will be His people, and He will be their God.

I submit to you that the ‘old heaven and earth’ are NOT the natural planets and environment, but the Old Covenant religious system of Judaism. The book of Hebrews calls them the “ *patterns of things in the heavens, the shadow of heavenly things.*” (Hebrews 9:23; 8:5) And these were all given of God as a pattern of what Christ would do, and they were necessary and good **UNTIL** Christ came. Remember He said He would take away the first and establish the second. At the Cross the old religious system of an earthly tabernacle, earthly priests, etc. was taken away. Jesus spoke of this in Matthew 23. He presented Himself to the Jews, but they would not receive Him as their Messiah. So He says in Verses 37,38, “ *O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her children under her wings, and ye would not! Behold, your house is left unto you desolate.*” Because they refused HIM, He left that whole system. Matthew 24:1,2 – “ *And Jesus went out, and departed from the temple: and his disciples came to him for to shew him the buildings of the temple. And Jesus said unto them, See ye not all these things? Verily, I say unto you, There shall not be left here one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down.*” He departed from that whole Old Covenant system – NEVER to return to it again! This temple represented their whole heaven and earth, and the disciples equated that with the end of the world. That word is not meaning the physical earth, but the word means “age, and specifically a Jewish period.” And at the Cross, that whole Jewish system came to its END! Christ fulfilled it ALL and He brings forth in His

Resurrection an everlasting Kingdom that has no end! Now in 70 A.D. this physical Temple was actually torn down, and everything removed, even as the prophets had said, but Christ took it all away at The Cross.

This is the Dividing Factor of The Cross. The Finished Work of Christ on the Cross takes away the old – all of it, and brings forth and established The New. And this understanding must be working IN US – taking away all of the old out of our hearts, and establishing all of the NEW in us. May the Lord open our eyes to see what He has done – not waiting for a day in the future, but finding this all NOW – **IN CHRIST.**

## Lesson 8

Objectives: God speaks now IN SON. The Testimony spoke of One to come. Christ has NOW come and is the Witness of all God has spoken. “Not” and “But” in scripture. Christ is the better. Old must be done away so we can walk in the New.

In our study we are going to continue to contrast the Old and the New, the first and the second, and I pray the Lord will make these divisions clear. Make no mistake about it – God has moved from the Old to the New, and we must make this transition also.

Hebrews 1:1,2 – “*God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds.*” God spoke in many parts and in many ways in time past to the fathers. This was the Testimony, and this is all what was before The Cross. We have said that The Cross divides, and we see here the term “time past”; which summarizes all of the Old, first. God spoke in many – by many then, but at the end of those days, which were the last of those days, He has spoken unto us **IN SON**. That time of speaking in many is past. God’s speaking and knowing NOW is **IN ONE – HIS SON**, because He appointed HIM heir of all things. This is an Eternal Now, a never ending day. This is the day that we are living in – IN CHRIST.

The Testimony – containing many parts and ways was speaking of One to Come – not so much “things” to come, but a PERSON to come, and in this Person God’s thought would become fully known. Jesus said in John 5:39 “*Search the scriptures (the Old Testament, the Old Covenant); for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of ME.*” And I pray that we can come to see that. It’s a GREAT Testimony because it testifies of a great ONE, and CHRIST fulfills all of it. None of God’s plan is fulfilled in the first creation or the Old Covenant. All of that is a type and shadow of THE ONE Who would come.

Go back to Adam. All of the whole Adamic creation is NOT God’s full plan, but sets forth in type what God would have in a New Creation in Christ. We read in Genesis 1 that God created the world and living things, and everything would bring forth after its own kind, and then He created man. Genesis 1:26 – “*And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth.*” But the words

“image” and “likeness” do NOT mean the exactness. It means an illusion, a resemblance, a representative figure, a vain shew, having NO substance. This is the first man – representing God, but just a shadow, an illusion, without substance. Romans 5:14 says, “*Nevertheless death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam’s transgression, who is the figure of him that was to come.*” That One is CHRIST – who is not a representation of God, but His express image, having all the fulness and substance of God, and He is the Head of God’s NEW Creation.

This is typical of all of the Old Creation and the Old Covenant. The parts there were of God and spoke of Him, but there was no substance and truth to them. Colossians 2:16,17 - “*Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holy day, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath days: which are a shadow of things to come; but the body is CHRIST.” This is speaking of the religious restrictions of eating and observing holy days under the Law, the Old Covenant. Paul says they are a SHADOW of things to come, but the substance is of Christ. All of that is speaking of Him, and only IN CHRIST do all the shadows come to find their fulfillment.*

Jesus says this in Matthew 5:17,18 – “*Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to **FULFIL**. For verily, I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall no wise pass from the law, till **ALL** be fulfilled.*” And Christ fulfilled them in Himself – as the very substance and Truth of all of God’s Testimony. He is the Witness of God: He is the I AM – I am Door, I am Way, I am Truth, I am Life, I am true vine, I am the shepherd, I am Resurrection, I am peace – I AM all things of the Father, and IN HIM you have all things. 1 Corinthians 1:30 – “*But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption.*” So – we must KNOW HIM!

There are so many parts of the Testimony, but we have to bring them all into Christ for their fulfillment, and by this we see how GREAT Christ is! And He has fulfilled everything by The Cross – by His death, burial and resurrection. Think about the Tabernacle and Temple, and the whole order of the sanctuary and the sacrifices, priests, etc. Hebrews 9:23,24 (speaking of the blood of the testament) – “*It was therefore necessary that the patterns of things in the heavens should be purified with these; but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these. For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true: but into heaven itself, NOW to appear in the presence of*

*God for us.*” The whole of the first order was only patterns of the heavenlies, the figures of the true, but not the TRUTH.

And it is Christ in His coming that brings us from the types and shadows into the substance and Truth of the New Covenant. HE brings us from the “what is to come” to the “what is NOW in Christ”. He brings us from the natural worship in the flesh to TRUE worship. John 4:21-24 (This is Jesus speaking to the Samaritan woman who talks about worshipping in this mountain or in Jerusalem) – “*Jesus saith unto her, Woman, believe me, the hour cometh, when ye shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father. Ye worship ye know not what: we know what we worship: for salvation is of the Jews. But the hour cometh, **AND NOW IS**, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him. God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.*” He tells her, NOW you won’t worship in a natural place, but in Spirit and Truth. Why? Because Jesus CAME! And in our hearts this has to take place. Until He has “come” in you, and has revealed Himself in you as God’s Temple, as the place where you worship God, you will continue to “go to a place” to find God. Remember Jesus told the Jews of His day in John 2:19, “*Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.*” He became that Temple, and in His death, burial and resurrection, He did away with the first, and raised up and established the second. Now worship is IN HIM – in Spirit and Truth! The “all things” of the Father were delivered to Him, and He is the fulfillment of them. IN HIM we come from the first to the second.

There are two words we need to see in this transition: NOT – BUT, and these signify the old and new, first and second. Hebrews 12:18,22-24 – “*For ye are **NOT** come unto the mount that might be touched, and that burned with fire, nor unto blackness, and darkness, and tempest...**BUT** ye are come unto mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, To the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect. And to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel.*” This is what we have NOW come to IN CHRIST.

The “not-but” comparative scriptures are very enlightening as to God’s mind concerning our Salvation. Just a few scriptures are:

Titus 3:5 – “**NOT** by works of righteousness which we have done, **BUT** according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost.”

Hebrews 9:12 – “**Neither** by the blood of goats and calves, **BUT** by his own blood he entered in once in the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us.

Hebrews 10:4,12 – “ For it is **NOT** possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins... **BUT THIS MAN**, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God.”

It is by THE CROSS that God puts a big “NOT” over all of the first, the old: the old man, old covenant, old heaven, and now deals with “BUT” – **CHRIST**. And we now must be found in Him, and find all things for us **NOT** in the old, **BUT** in Christ.

Another word that will help us to see this is a word used often in the book of Hebrews – **BETTER**. That book was written to bring them from the good things of Judaism to the **BETTER** things of Christ!

Hebrews 1:4 – “ Being made (Christ) so much **better** than the angels, as he hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they,” Verse 8 – “ But unto the Son he saith, Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever: a scepter of righteousness is the sceptre of thy kingdom.” Christ, the Son is better than any messengers, either angelic beings, or the messengers of the Old Covenant.

Hebrews 3:1-6 “ Wherefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus; Who was faithful to him that appointed him, as also Moses was faithful in all his house. For this man was counted worthy of more glory (better) than Moses, inasmuch as he who hath builded the house hath more honour than the house. For every house is builded by some man; but he that built all things is God. And Moses verily was faithful in all his house, as a servant, for a testimony of those things which were to be spoken after; But Christ as a son over his own house; whose house are we, if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end.” Christ is better than Moses, since He built the house that we now are.

Hebrews 7:19,22 – “ For the law made nothing perfect, but the bringing in of a **better** hope did (Christ); by the which we draw nigh unto God...By so much was Jesus made a surety of a **better** testament.” The law never perfected what God wanted and brought a people into true fellowship with Him, but Christ did, and by

God's oath that He is a priest, He is the guarantee of a better testament. That is the covenant that we are now under – IN CHRIST.

Hebrews 8:6 – *“But now hath he obtained a more excellent ministry, by how much also he is the mediator of a **better** covenant, which was established upon **better** promises.”* And there is nothing BETTER than HIM! By The Cross He has obtained this ministry.

Hebrews 11 – This chapter is speaking of the Old Covenant saints who lived by faith. Vs. 16 – *“But now they desire a **better** country, that is, an heavenly: wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God: for he hath prepared for them a city.”* Vs. 35 – *“Women received their dead raised to life again: and others were tortured, not accepting deliverance; that they might obtain a **better** resurrection.”* Vs. 39,40 – *“And these all, having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise. God having provided some **better** thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect.”* The Old Covenant saints of faith died – looking for the promises to come: believing, but they didn't receive them until Christ came, and now *“All the promises of God IN HIM (Christ) are yea, and in him Amen, unto the glory of God by us.”* (2 Corinthians 1:20) And we NOW – with them – **IN CHRIST** receive all that God promised – not looking for a day or a thing, or a person to come, but receiving the Salvation God planned IN CHRIST. It is by **CHRIST COMING** – and by His death, burial and resurrection that we NOW have the glory and Life that was promised and hoped for under the Old Covenant.

Paul says the mystery is NOW revealed. Colossians 1:26-28 – *“Even the mystery which hath been hid from ages and from generations, but now is made manifest to his saints: To whom God would make known what is the riches of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is **CHRIST IN YOU**, the hope of glory: Whom we preach, warning every man, and teaching every man in all wisdom; that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus.”* Christ in you is the glory that Old Covenant Israel expected and looked for. This is The One that we now preach, that we may present every man fully matured in Christ Jesus, and nothing else but the preaching of Him will.

He brings us from the first to the second; from the old to the New, but let me close with a principle that we must take to heart. Hebrews 9:8-10 – This is speaking of the two parts of the sanctuary of the Tabernacle. *“The Holy Ghost thus signifying that the way into the holiest was not made manifest, while as the first tabernacle was yet standing; Which was a figure for the time then present (that time is past),*

*in which were offered both gifts and sacrifices, that could NOT make him that did the service perfect, as pertaining to the conscience; Which stood only in meats and drinks, and divers washings, and carnal ordinances, imposed on them until the time of reformation.”* As long as we are living in the first, the old, the types and shadows: living by the flesh, the way into God’s fulness is closed to us. Jesus came, and by His death He did away with all of the first as He fulfilled it, and opened the way into the very presence of God. May we come to know Christ and Him crucified – **HE HAS COME**, and by The Finished Work of The Cross, we can **NOW** come boldly to the throne of God's grace! It is by His appearing - IN US – that all of the old is taken away, that He may establish the second – Not I, but Christ!

This is the Finished Work of The Cross – Christ crucified, God’s Eternal Plan. May our hearts be turned to Him, that He may reveal His Son in us that this Finished Work may be worked in us, the Church, that He would be glorified on the earth.

In Jesus’ Name. Amen.