WEEK 2

The Vision of Christ

Scripture Reading: Col. 2:16-18a, 19; John 14:6; 5:39-40; 16:13; 1 John 5:6; Eph. 3:8, 18

OUTLINE

DAY 1

I. "Let no one therefore judge you in eating and in drinking or in respect of a feast or of a new moon or of the Sabbath, which are a shadow of the things to come, but the body is of Christ. Let no one defraud you by judging you unworthy of your prize" (Col. 2:16-18a):

A. As with a man's physical body, the body in Colossians 2:17 is the substance, and like the shadow of a man's body, the rituals in the law are a shadow of Christ, who is the substance and reality of the gospel; Colossians unveils such an all-inclusive Christ as the focus of God's economy (1:17a, 18a; 3:11).

B. Daily, weekly, monthly, and yearly Christ is the reality of every positive thing, implying the universal extensiveness of the all-inclusive Christ:

1. Daily Christ is our food and drink for our satisfaction and strengthening (1 Cor. 10:3-4).
2. Weekly Christ is our Sabbath for our completion and rest in Him (Matt. 11:28-29).
3. Monthly Christ is our new moon as a new beginning with light in darkness (John 1:5; 8:12).
4. Yearly Christ is our feast for our joy and enjoyment (1 Cor. 5:8).

DAY 2

C. The extensive Christ, who is full of attractiveness and rich in magnetism, is the essence of the Bible (Luke 24:44; John 5:39-40; Matt. 1:1; cf. Rev. 22:21).

D. According to the context, the "prize" in Colossians 2:18 is the enjoyment of Christ as the body of the shadows; to be defrauded of our prize is to be defrauded of the subjective enjoyment of Christ (cf. Gen. 15:1; Phil. 3:8).

E. Our need is for the subjective Christ to become our enjoyment to complete the divine revelation within us; if we are short in the experience and enjoyment of Christ, we are also short concerning God's revelation (Col. 1:25-28).

F. Whatever we do day by day should remind us of Christ as the reality of

that thing; if we follow the practice of taking Christ as the reality of all the material things in our daily life, our daily walk will be revolutionized and transformed, and we will be full of Christ (2 Cor. 4:16; Phil. 1:19-21a).

DAY 3

G. We need to enjoy Christ day by day as the reality of all our necessities:

1. Christ is our breath (John 20:22).
2. Christ is our drink (4:10, 14; 7:37-39a).
3. Christ is our food (6:35, 57).
4. Christ is our light (1:4; 8:12).
5. Christ is our clothing (Gal. 3:27).
6. Christ is our dwelling place (John 15:5, 7a; Psa. 90:1; 91:1).

DAY 4

II. The all-inclusive Christ is the reality of all the positive things in the universe (cf. Rom. 1:20; Eph. 3:18; Hymns, #496):

A. Because the universe with the billions of things and persons in it was created for the purpose of describing Christ, He, in revealing Himself to His disciples, could easily find in any environment something or someone to serve as an illustration of Himself (Col. 1:15-17; John 1:51; 10:9-11; 12:24; Matt. 12:41-42).

B. The Old Testament uses six major categories of things as types to describe Christ—human beings, animals, plants, minerals, offerings, and foods:

1. Human beings typify Christ, such as Adam (Rom. 5:14), Melchizedek (Heb. 7:1), Isaac (Matt. 1:1), Jonah (12:41), and Solomon (v. 42).
2. Animals typify Christ, such as a lamb (John 1:29), a lion, an ox, an eagle (Ezek. 1:10), and a gazelle (S.S. 2:9).
3. Plants typify Christ (who is the tree of life—Gen. 2:9), such as the vine tree (John 15:1), the apple tree (S.S. 2:3), the fig tree, the pomegranate tree, and the olive tree (Deut. 8:8); the different parts of a tree are also types of Christ, such as the root, the stump, the sprout, the shoot, the branch, and the fruit (Isa. 11:1, 10; 4:2; Luke 1:42; Rev. 5:5).
4. Minerals typify Christ, such as gold, silver, copper, and iron (Deut. 8:9, 13), and different kinds of stone: the living stone (1 Pet. 2:4), the rock (1 Cor. 10:4), the cornerstone (Matt. 21:42), the topstone (Zech. 4:7), the foundation stone (1 Cor. 3:11), and precious stone (v. 12).
5. Offerings typify Christ, such as the burnt offering, meal offering, peace offering, sin offering, trespass offering, wave offering, heave offering, and drink offering (Lev. 1—7; Exo. 29:26-28; Num. 28:7-10; cf. John 4:24).

6. Foods typify Christ, such as bread, wheat, barley, grapes, figs, pomegranates, olives, milk, and honey (6:35; Deut. 8:8-9; 26:9).

C. In the New Testament Christ is the Spirit of reality who makes the untraceable riches of all that He is real to us, guiding us into Himself as the divine reality (John 14:6; 1 John 5:6; John 14:17; 16:13).

D. The elements of the reality of all the types are in the Spirit, and the Spirit transfuses and dispenses all these riches into us through the Lord's words (Phil. 1:19; John 6:63; Col. 3:16; Eph. 6:17-18; Rev. 2:7).

DAY 5

III. The very Christ who is the reality of all positive things is the One who is the Head of the Body; thus, to hold the Head is simply to enjoy Christ as the reality of all positive things (Col. 2:19):

A. Since the Christ we enjoy as our everything is the Head of the Body, the more we enjoy Him, the more we become Body-conscious:

1. This indicates that the enjoyment of Christ is not an individualistic matter but a Body matter (cf. Eph. 3:8; 4:15-16).
2. The more we enjoy Christ, the more we love the other members of the Body (Col. 1:4, 8).

B. Because Christ's headship is in resurrection (v. 18), the enjoyment of Christ spontaneously brings us into resurrection and saves us from our natural being.

DAY 6

C. The enjoyment of Christ brings us into the heavenlies in ascension; we can be experientially in the heavens only by enjoying Christ, the Head, as the life-giving Spirit in our spirit (3:1-2; 2 Cor. 3:17; 2 Tim. 4:22; Rom. 8:10, 34).

D. As we enjoy Christ and hold Him as the Head, we absorb the riches of the extensive, all-inclusive Christ; these riches become in us the increase of God by which the Body grows for its building up (Col. 2:19, 6-7; Eph. 4:16).

WEEK 2 — DAY 1

Morning Nourishment

Col. 2:16-17 Let no one therefore judge you in eating and in drinking or in respect of a feast or of a new moon or of the Sabbath, which are a shadow of the things to come, but the body is of Christ.

Many things in our environment of daily living are also shadows of Christ. For example, the food we eat is a shadow, not the real food. The real food is Christ. Christ is also the real drink. The clothing we wear to cover us, to beautify us, and to keep us warm is also a shadow of Christ. Christ is the One who truly covers our nakedness, who keeps us warm, and who imparts beauty to us. Christ is also our true dwelling place and real rest. The houses in which we live are a shadow of Christ as our dwelling place. The rest we enjoy at night is also a figure of Christ as our rest. Even the satisfaction we enjoy after a good meal is not the real satisfaction but a shadow of Christ as the reality of satisfaction. (Life-study of Colossians, p. 198)

Today's Reading

In Colossians 2:16 Paul covers matters related to daily life, weekly life, monthly life, and yearly life....Eating and drinking are daily, the Sabbaths weekly, the new moons monthly, and the feasts yearly. All the aspects of our living are shadows of Christ. Eating and drinking signify daily satisfaction and strengthening, and the Sabbath signifies weekly completion and rest. Without completion, we cannot enjoy rest. Rest always comes from completion and satisfaction. When you have finished a certain matter and are satisfied with it, you are then able to be at rest. After God completed His work of creation on the sixth day, He enjoyed rest on the seventh day. I can testify that I can enjoy rest only when my work has been completed and I am satisfied with it.

A new moon signifies a monthly new beginning with light in darkness. Just as the new moon marked a new beginning in Old Testament times, so Christ affords us a new beginning with light in darkness today. Recently I heard the testimony of a Jewish brother who was saved a few months ago. Before he came to the Lord, he was in darkness, like all unbelieving Jews today. But now Christ is his new moon with light in darkness.

The feasts signify yearly enjoyment and joy. Three times a year, God's chosen people came together for the annual feasts, which were times of enjoyment, of rejoicing together before the Lord. Although the feasts were enjoyable, they were simply shadows of Christ. He is the real food, drink, completion, rest, new moon, and feast. Daily we eat and drink Him, weekly we have completion and rest in Him, monthly we experience a new beginning in Him, and throughout the year He is our joy and enjoyment.

The items covered by Paul in 2:16 are related either to the rotation of the earth on its axis, or to the revolution of the earth in its orbit around the sun. Without this rotation and revolution, we would have no way to maintain our physical life. Because of the earth's rotation and revolution, we have days, weeks, months, and years. As we have pointed out again and again, the reality of all these daily, weekly, monthly, and yearly things is Christ.

In verse 17 Paul says that Christ is the body of all the shadows. This means that He is the reality of our food and drink, of our completion and rest, of our new beginning with light in darkness, and of our enjoyment and joy. Every day, week, month, and year we need Christ. All the positive things in our daily life, weekly life, monthly life, and yearly life must be Christ. Christ must become everything to us not merely in a doctrinal way, but in the way of experience. I can testify that Christ is my completion, my rest, my new beginning, my enjoyment, my joy, my food, my drink, and my satisfaction. Although Christ is universally vast, He is also all the detailed aspects of our practical daily living. Day by day, He is our breath and everything to us. (Life-study of Colossians, pp. 198-200)

Further Reading: Life-study of Colossians, msgs. 15, 24-25; A General Sketch of the New Testament in the Light of Christ and the Church, Part 2: Romans through Philemon, ch. 19; CWWL, 1965, vol. 1, "The Experience of Christ in Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, and Colossians," ch. 1

WEEK 2 — DAY 2

Morning Nourishment

John 5:39-40 You search the Scriptures, because you think that in them you have eternal life; and it is these that testify concerning Me. Yet you are not willing to come to Me that you may have life.

Col. 2:18 Let no one defraud you by judging you unworthy of your prize, in self-chosen lowliness and the worship of the angels, dwelling on the things which he has seen, vainly puffed up by his mind set on the flesh.

We love something not because we are capable of loving; rather, it is because a certain thing is lovable and we are drawn to love it. We are very reluctant to love something that is not lovable, but it is difficult for us to refrain from loving something that is lovable. Likewise, we love the Lord because we are attracted by His loveliness. He is very attractive. In the past two thousand years, innumerable people have been attracted and charmed by Him, and we are among them....This Christ who is full of attractiveness and rich in magnetism is the essence of the Bible. The Bible covers thousands of items and deals with a great number of doctrines, but it has only one center—Christ Himself. (The Four Crucial Elements of the Bible—Christ, the Spirit, Life, and the Church, pp. 51-52)

Today's Reading

We need to apply the matter of experiencing Christ as the reality of every positive thing to every part of our daily life. As we eat our meals, we should take Christ as the real food. Instead of saying a word of grace in a traditional way, we should speak something higher according to the revelation in Colossians: "Lord Jesus, I do not simply thank You for this food and take it into me. Lord, I take You as the reality of this food." We who believe in Christ should consider all things and evaluate all things according to Christ, who is everything to us in a practical way. If we consider all things according to Christ, our daily living will be changed.

It is significant that after speaking of Christ as the body of the shadows, Paul goes on to say, "Let no one defraud you by judging you unworthy of your prize" (Col. 2:18). According to the context, the prize is the enjoyment of Christ as the body of the shadows. The enjoyment of Christ is truly a prize.

According to 1:26, the word of God completed through the ministry of Paul was "the mystery which has been hidden from the ages and from the generations but now has been manifested to His saints." This mystery is Christ in us, the hope of glory (v. 27). Although we may have considerable knowledge of the Bible, we do not have the completion of the divine revelation unless we adequately experience Christ daily, weekly, monthly, and yearly....If we are short in the experience and enjoyment of Christ, we are also short concerning God's revelation. His revelation needs the experiential Christ as its completion.

In Paul's word about shadows we have a hint as to how we may enjoy Christ in a practical way. Since such things as eating and drinking are shadows of which Christ is the substance and reality, we need to be reminded whenever we eat and drink that the real food and the real drink are Christ. When you eat your food, you should simultaneously eat Christ. When you drink some beverage, you should also drink Christ. As you put on your clothing, you should be reminded that Christ is the real clothing, and you should experience Him as such. As you put on your material clothing, you should also put on Christ. It is easy to enjoy Christ in this way. Whatever we do day by day should remind us of Christ as the reality of that thing. Even our breathing should remind us of the necessity of breathing Christ spiritually.

If we follow the practice of taking Christ as the reality of all the material things in our daily life, our daily walk will be revolutionized and transformed. It will be full of Christ....Everything we do will remind us to contact Christ, to enjoy Christ, to experience Christ, and to have Christ as our everything. To practice this day by day is truly to enjoy Christ. (Life-study of Colossians, pp. 296-297, 481, 483-485)

Further Reading: Life-study of Colossians, msgs. 35, 55; The Mystery of God and the Mystery of Christ, ch. 2; The Heavenly Vision, ch. 1

WEEK 2 — DAY 3

Morning Nourishment

John 20:22 And when He had said this, He breathed into them and said to them, Receive the Holy Spirit.

6:57 As the living Father has sent Me and I live because of the Father, so he who eats Me, he also shall live because of Me.

Christ is every necessity and all the enjoyment....Christ is our light....Christ is also our food. In John 6 He told us that He is the living bread and that if we eat Him, we shall live because of Him (vv. 51, 57b)....According to 1 Corinthians 10:4, Christ is our spiritual drink. In the Christian race, we should not drink anything other than the all-inclusive Christ as our all-inclusive drink.

Christ is our very breath. John 20:22 shows that Christ breathed Himself into the disciples. We need to breathe Him in moment by moment by calling on His name....Christ is even our clothing. Galatians 3:27 says, "For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ." To put on Christ is to wear Christ as our clothing....Christ is also our dwelling place, our abode (John 15:7a). (Messages to the Trainees in Fall 1990, pp. 139-140)

Today's Reading

In the Gospel of John, there are six major items of the enjoyment of Christ in the spirit. These include life (1:4; 10:10), which is the first and most basic matter; the food supply (6:35); the living water for drinking (4:14; 7:37); the breath of life (20:22); the light of life (8:12); and the dwelling place (15:4-5).

The first item to maintain life is light. The second item to maintain life is air or breathing. The more we remain in the soul, the more we will be choked, the more we will sense the shortage of air. On the other hand, when we turn ourselves to the spirit, right away we sense the freshness of air. Through my experiences I have learned one vital lesson: to turn to the spirit. Instead of caring for so many outward things, we must learn to turn to the spirit all the time. We need to forget about our environment. When we are in spirit, we often have the sense that we are not on earth. Everything is so fresh and new in our spirit. This freshness and newness is Christ as our air. We Christians think, consider, and worry too much. Many times we will not turn to the spirit until we are forced to. If our business runs well, we do not turn to the Lord. Therefore, we often need troubles, trials, and painful sufferings, things we cannot get through, to force us to give up and turn back to the Lord. We must learn to be willing to turn to our spirit. Even if we could get through in some area outside of the spirit, we should still come back to the spirit. When we turn to our spirit, we sense the fresh air within us; we are refreshed, strengthened, and uplifted....To pray is the best way to exercise our spirit. In the morning while we are dressing or washing, we can say something to the Lord from our spirit. We must learn to turn ourselves to the Lord at all times.

The fourth item of the enjoyment of Christ is the matter of food. As we turn to our spirit, we sense enlightenment, refreshment, and nourishment. While we are reading the Word, we must learn not to exercise our mind too much. If we exercise our mind too much when we read, we will be exhausted instead of being satisfied. We must learn to exercise our spirit to contact the Lord, praying more than we read. As we do this, we will sense that we are being nourished, satisfied, and strengthened, having something of Christ ministered into us. If we would practice this, I cannot tell you what kind of sweetness, preciousness, and richness we would enjoy! Many Christians do not have a time with the Lord, and many of those who desire to be with the Lord, do so in a wrong way. Many of these brothers and sisters study the Word and read it by exercising their mind too much. They do not know how to turn themselves to the spirit in order to touch the Lord and meet with Him. Learn to turn to the spirit. This is the only way to enjoy Christ as light, air, water, and food. If we learn to turn to our spirit, the whole church will be turned, and there will be a great change in the church life. (Christ Our Portion, pp. 25, 29, 31)

Further Reading: Messages to the Trainees in Fall 1990, ch. 18; CWWL, 1966, vol. 1, "Christ Our Portion," ch. 3

WEEK 2 — DAY 4

Morning Nourishment

John 14:6 Jesus said to him, I am the way and the reality and the life; no one comes to the Father except through Me.

6:63 It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh profits nothing; the words which I have spoken to you are spirit and are life.

There are six major categories of types in the Old Testament. The first category is human beings; the second, animals; the third, plants; the fourth, minerals; the fifth, offerings; and the sixth, foods. All these six major categories contain types of Christ.

Some examples from the category of human beings are Adam, typifying Christ as the Head of the human race; Isaac, typifying Christ as the seed of Abraham; and Solomon, the son of David, typifying Christ as the seed of David. Christ is not only the Head of the human race but also the seed of man and the seed of woman. He is the King, the Priest, and the Prophet. As the King, He is typified by Judah and David; as the Priest, He is typified by Melchizedek and Aaron; and as the Prophet, He is typified by Isaiah and Jonah. Hence, to understand all the portrayals of Christ in the aspect of human beings, we have to study Adam, Abraham, David, Solomon, Melchizedek, Aaron, Isaiah, Jonah, and others. (The Four Crucial Elements of the Bible—Christ, the Spirit, Life, and the Church, pp. 52-53)

Today's Reading

Now we come to the category of animals....As a lamb, [Christ] became an offering to deal with our sins for our redemption. As an ox, He was not only made an offering but also became lowly to bear our burdens as a slave of God for us. As a lion, He is the victorious One overcoming Satan on our behalf. As an eagle, He is the transcendent and heavenly One who carries us that we may rise above everything. As a dove, He is beautiful and guileless, and as a turtledove, He is lowly and poor.

Among the plants, there are even more types concerning Christ. The Lord said that He is the true vine (John 15:1). There is only one vine in the universe that is true, and this true vine is Christ. Song of Songs 2:3 says that He is the apple tree. Moreover, the Old Testament tells us that the different parts of a tree are also types of Christ: Christ is the root (Isa. 11:10; Rev. 5:5), the stem, and the stump; He is also the branch (Isa. 11:1) and the fruit (4:2; Rev. 22:2). Furthermore, the New Testament tells us that He is the fruit of Mary's womb (Luke 1:42). The most mysterious thing is that Christ is the tree itself. He is the unique tree of life in the universe. He is also the acacia wood, which signifies that His humanity is noble and strong in quality and lofty and superior in standard.

Whenever we come to the Lord's word, we should open up our entire being and exercise our spirit to draw from the riches of the Spirit in the Bible. If we pray-read the word of God in this way, every word of the Bible becomes spirit and life to us. Then we can realize that the Spirit is definitely speaking in us. The speaking Spirit who dwells in us will lead us through every circumstance to encounter every person, event, and matter and deal with every problem....Today this speaking Spirit is Christ. To know Christ, we need to earnestly study the six major categories of types in the Old Testament—human beings, animals, plants, minerals, offerings, and foods. These types are very rich. How blessed we are today!...The elements of the reality of all the types are in the Spirit, and the Spirit transfuses and dispenses all these riches into us through the Lord's words. Therefore, day by day we need to eat the Lord's words and receive the Spirit's dispensing. This is like breathing, drinking, and eating, which are things that we do, not once for all but day by day and moment by moment. Furthermore, we also need to exercise our spirit and release our spirit before the Lord regularly for our cooperation with the Lord. Thus, our spiritual life will be healthy and will continually grow in a normal way. (The Four Crucial Elements of the Bible—Christ, the Spirit, Life, and the Church, pp. 53-54, 67-68)

Further Reading: The Four Crucial Elements of the Bible—Christ, the Spirit, Life, and the Church, ch. 4; The Conclusion of the New Testament, msgs. 48-49

WEEK 2 — DAY 5

Morning Nourishment

Col. 2:19 ...Holding the Head, out from whom all the Body, being richly supplied and knit together by means of the joints and sinews, grows with the growth of God.

1:4 Because we have heard of your faith in Christ Jesus and the love which you have unto all the saints.

In Colossians 2:17 Paul says that the body is of Christ, but in verse 19 he speaks not of Christ, but of holding the Head. The reason for the change in terminology from Christ to the Head is that our enjoyment of the Lord causes us to become conscious of the Body. If we are those who enjoy Christ continually, we shall not continue to be individualistic. The saints who are individualistic are those who do not consistently enjoy the Lord....We should touch the Lord in the morning, but in the evening we should come to the church meetings. It is not normal to enjoy the Lord during the day and neglect the meetings of the church, which is His Body. Even if your environment does not allow you to attend all the meetings, inwardly you should have the sense that your whole inner being is with the saints in the church meeting. This consciousness of the Body comes from the enjoyment of Christ. (Life-study of Colossians, p. 491)

Today's Reading

What we enjoy of Christ day by day is actually something of Him as the Head. This is the reason that when we enjoy Christ, He causes us to become conscious of the Body. According to our experience, we know that the more we enjoy Christ, the more intense is our desire for the Body. However, if we fail to contact the Lord for a period of time, we shall automatically neglect the church life or lose interest in the meetings. The less we contact the Lord, the more critical we become of the church or of the saints....This shortage of the enjoyment of Christ opens the door for the enemy, Satan, to come in to make us critical of other members of the Body. But if we begin again to enjoy the Lord, the door will gradually close. Eventually, if we are constant in our enjoyment of Christ, the door will be completely shut. Then, instead of criticizing the church, we shall praise the Lord for the church life, and we shall testify how much we love it. What brings about such a change is not admonition or correction, but the recovery of the enjoyment of Christ.

The dear, precious One whom we enjoy as our food, drink, and breath is the Head of the Body. Because Paul had a thorough realization of this, he could leap from Christ as the reality of all positive things for our enjoyment to the matter of Christ as the Head. Since the Christ we enjoy as our everything is the Head of the Body, the more we enjoy Him, the more we become Body-conscious. This indicates that the enjoyment of Christ is not an individualistic matter. It is a Body matter. We need to enjoy Christ as members of the Body in a corporate way.

In Colossians 2:19 Paul speaks of "all the Body." The enjoyment of Christ keeps us one as members of the Body. The more we enjoy Christ, the more we love the other members of the Body. The enjoyment of Christ causes us to love everyone in the church life. Even those whom we find it difficult to love become dear and precious to us....Actually, the church and the saints remain the same; it is our attitude that changes. But if the supply of Christ is ministered to us and we begin to enjoy Him again, all the members of the Body will once again become lovable to us. We shall have the pleasant realization that, as members of the Body, we love all the other members.

Because Christ's headship is in resurrection, the enjoyment of Christ spontaneously brings us into resurrection and saves us from our natural being. We all are natural. If we are not brought into resurrection through the enjoyment of Christ, we shall remain in our natural person. Praise the Lord that the enjoyment of Christ brings us into resurrection! The more we enjoy Him, the less natural we are. Once again, this is not a mere doctrine but a fact of Christian experience. (Life-study of Colossians, pp. 491-493)

Further Reading: Life-study of Colossians, msgs. 56-57

WEEK 2 — DAY 6

Morning Nourishment

Col. 3:1-2 If therefore you were raised together with Christ, seek the things which are above, where Christ is, sitting at the right hand of God. Set your mind on the things which are above, not on the things which are on the earth.

2:7 Having been rooted and being built up in Him, and being established in the faith even as you were taught, abounding in thanksgiving.

The enjoyment of Christ also brings us into the ascension. The more we enjoy Him, the more we are in the heavenlies experientially. This means that through the enjoyment of Christ, we become heavenly. Not only are we no longer natural, but we are no longer earthly. The enjoyment of Christ causes us to be both in resurrection and in ascension. The more we enjoy Christ, the more we are in the heavens. Therefore, to hold Christ as the Head is to be in the heavens in our experience. It is also true to say that to be in the heavens is to hold the Head. Experientially, holding the Head and being in the heavens are one and the same.

If in our experience we temporarily abandon Christ and do not continue holding Him as the Head, we shall sense that we are earthly. For example, suppose a sister does not hold Christ as the Head in the matter of shopping. Then at least temporarily, during the time she is shopping, she has given up the Head. (Life-study of Colossians, pp. 493-494)

Today's Reading

When a husband and wife are exchanging words, they certainly are not in the heavenlies in their experience. To say the least, they are earthly, for when they are arguing, they are not holding Christ as the Head. Whenever we are earthly, we are not holding the Head. But if in our married life we consistently enjoy Christ, we shall hold Him as the Head and be in the heavens in our experience. Then we shall be a heavenly people. Nothing will be able to pull us down from the heavens to the earth. Unfortunately, in our experience we quickly make this descent. Even a single word or unpleasant look can cause us to fall from the heavens to the earth. How quickly in our daily living we may cease from holding the Head!

According to Colossians 3:1-4, our living should be in the heavens, where God's throne is. On the one hand, Christ as our Head is in our spirit; on the other hand, He is in the heavens, not on earth. Only when we are in the heavens do we hold Him as the Head. To enjoy Christ is to hold the Head, and to hold the Head is to be in the heavens.

We can be experientially in the heavens only by enjoying Christ, the Head, as the life-giving Spirit in our spirit. Second Corinthians 3:17 says, "And the Lord is the Spirit." If Christ were only the Head and not the Spirit, there would be no way for us to contact Him or hold Him experientially. But although Christ's position is that of the Head, in our experience He is the life-giving Spirit....Therefore, to hold Christ as the Head is not only to enjoy Him and to be in the heavens, but it is also to be in our spirit.

As we enjoy Christ and hold Him as the Head, we absorb His riches. According to Colossians 2:19, something proceeds out from the Head which causes the Body to grow with the growth of God. When we enjoy Christ in the heavens and in our spirit, we hold the Head and absorb His riches. Then out from the Head something will proceed to produce the growth of God in us. This means that more of the element of God is added into our being and thereby into the Body. This causes the Body to grow with the growth, the increase, of God.

Through holding Christ as the Head, we become conscious of the Body. Experiencing the Body life, we absorb the riches out from the Head. These riches are the very elements of God which become in the members of the Body the increase of God by which the whole Body grows. Therefore, the growth of the Body is the product of enjoying Christ, holding Him as the Head, and absorbing His riches. (Life-study of Colossians, pp. 494-496)

Further Reading: Life-study of Colossians, msg. 55

WEEK 2 — HYMN

Hymns, #496

1

Christ is the one reality of all,

Of Godhead and of man and all things else;

No man without Him ever findeth God,

Without Him man and everything is false.

2

All types and figures of the ancient time,

All things we ever need, both great and small,

Only are shadows of the Christ of God,

Showing that He must be our all in all.

3

All things are vanity of vanities,

Christ, the reality all things to fill;

Though everything we may enjoy and own,

If we're devoid of Christ we're empty still.

4

Christ is our real God, our real Lord,

Christ is our real life, our real light;

Christ is our real food, our real drink,

Our real clothing, and our real might.

5

Christ also is the one reality

Of all our doctrine and theology;

And all our scriptural knowledge without Him

Is just in letter and is vanity.

6

Christ, the reality of time and space,

Christ, the reality of every stage;

Christ is the one reality of all

Thru all eternity from age to age.

WEEK 2 — PROPHECY

Composition for the prophecy with main points and sub-points: