

Message Three

**The All-inclusive Christ as the Mystery of God**

Scripture Reading: Col. 1:9, 12, 15-27; 2:2, 9, 16-17; 3:4, 10-11, 15-16

**I. Colossians reveals the all-inclusive Christ, the One who is both God and man—2:9:**

- A. For Christ to be the Firstborn of both the original creation and the new creation means that He is all-inclusive—1:15, 18.
- B. The all-inclusive Christ is the reality of every positive thing—2:16-17:
  - 1. We need to enjoy Christ as the reality of all our necessities: our breath (John 20:22), drink (4:10, 14; 7:37-39a), food (6:35, 57), light (1:4; 8:12), clothing (Gal. 3:27), and dwelling place (John 15:5, 7a).
  - 2. If we follow the practice of taking Christ as the reality of all the material things in our daily life, we will be full of Christ—Col. 3:4, 10-11, 15-16.
- C. The all-inclusive Christ is the preeminent One, the One who has the first place in everything; both in the old creation and in the new creation, both in the universe and in the church, Christ occupies the place of preeminence—1:18.
- D. The all-inclusive Christ is the centrality and universality, the center and circumference, of God's economy—vv. 12, 15-27; Eph. 1:10:
  - 1. In God's economy Christ is everything; God wants Christ and Christ alone—the wonderful, preeminent, all-inclusive Christ, who is all and in all—Matt. 17:5; Col. 3:10-11.
  - 2. God's intention in His economy is to work the all-inclusive Christ into our being as our life and our everything that we may become the corporate expression of the Triune God—1:27; 3:4, 10-11.
- E. The all-inclusive Christ dwells in us as our hope of glory—1:27:
  - 1. We worship the enthroned Christ in the heavens, but we experience, enjoy, and partake of the indwelling Christ in our spirit; we are one with Him in a very subjective way—3:1; 1:27; 1 Cor. 6:17.
  - 2. The Christ who indwells us is the all-inclusive Christ—the One who is the image of the invisible God, the Firstborn of all creation, the Head of the Body, and the embodiment of the fullness of God—Col. 1:15-16, 18-19.
- F. The all-inclusive Christ is our life—3:4:
  - 1. The expression *our life* is a strong indication that we are to experience the all-inclusive Christ.
  - 2. Because Christ is our life, all He has and all He has attained and obtained become subjective to us—Rom. 8:34, 10.
- G. The all-inclusive Christ is the unique constituent of the one new man—Col. 3:10-11:
  - 1. The content of the church as the new man is Christ alone; in the new man there is room only for Christ.
  - 2. In the church as the new man we are in Christ, through Christ, and unto Christ, and we subsist in Christ to be God's expression in Christ—1:16-17.
- H. We should estimate and evaluate everything according to the all-inclusive Christ—2:8:

1. Christ is the governing principle of all genuine wisdom and knowledge, the reality of all genuine teaching, and the only measure of all concepts acceptable to God.
2. Only when we have a clear view of the place of the all-inclusive Christ in God's economy will we be able to see through delusion and deception.
- I. The will of God is that the all-inclusive Christ be our portion; God's will is that we know Christ, experience Christ, enjoy Christ, be saturated with Christ, and have Christ become our life and person—1:9; 3:4.
- J. We need to be infused, saturated, and permeated with the all-inclusive Christ until in our experience He is everything to us—1:27; 2:16-17; 3:4, 10-11:
  1. The all-inclusive Christ is in us, but we need to see Him, know Him, be filled with Him, be saturated with Him, and be absolutely one with Him.
  2. We should allow the all-inclusive Christ to fill our whole being and to replace our culture with Himself—Eph. 3:17a; Col. 3:10-11:
    - a. The more Christ replaces our natural life and culture with Himself, the more we will be able to declare, "To live is Christ"; to us, to live will be the Christ who takes full possession of us, occupies us, and fills us with Himself—Phil. 1:21a.
    - b. The all-inclusive Christ desires to replace every element of our natural life and culture with Himself so that we may be the one new man as His corporate expression—Col. 3:10-11.

## **II. The all-inclusive Christ is the mystery of God—2:2:**

- A. The mystery of God preached by the apostle Paul (1 Cor. 2:1) is the mystery hidden in the depths of God; this mystery is the intrinsic reality of the complete gospel of God (Eph. 6:19).
- B. The mystery of God—the all-inclusive Christ—is the definition, explanation, and expression of God—the Word of God; embodied in and expressed through Christ is all that God is and has—John 1:1; Rev. 19:13; Col. 2:2-3.
- C. The word *mystery* in Colossians 2:2 may be interpreted as meaning "story":
  1. As the mystery of God, the all-inclusive Christ is the history of God; the whole "story" of God is in Christ and is Christ, and all that God intends to do is related to Christ—John 1:14; 1 Cor. 15:45b; Rev. 4:5.
  2. Christ is not only God Himself—He is also God's history; God's history refers to the process through which He has passed so that He may dispense Himself into His chosen people—John 1:14; 1 Cor. 15:45b; Eph. 3:16-17a.
  3. As the embodiment of God, the effulgence of God's glory, and the impress of God's substance, Christ, the mystery of God, His story, defines, explains, and expresses God—Heb. 1:1-3; Col. 2:2.
  4. Since Christ is the mystery of God, if we know Christ, we know God; however, if we do not know Christ, we do not have the way to know God.
  5. Only those who have seen Christ as the mystery of God can know God and the eternal purpose of God—v. 2; Eph. 3:9, 11.