

The Study of Truth as it is in Jesus

By R.T. Nusbaum

Chapter One

Jesus is the Master Key

“But ye have not so learned Christ; If so be that ye have heard him, and have been taught by him, as the truth is in Jesus: That ye put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts; And be renewed in the spirit of your mind; And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.” (Ephesians 4:20-24)

I run into people who have such a desire to stand up for truth. Some stand up for the truth of pre-destination, others stand up for the truth of correct water baptism. In reality, thousands of people could be standing up for the truth and yet none of them standing up for the same thing. But if one is to truly stand for the truth, he must make a concerted stand for Jesus AS THE TRUTH. To be a little more specific, let me say that I do not just wish to stand up for the truth of Jesus or even Jesus as the Truth in a general sense. Instead, I would like us to do a study of the truth as it is in Jesus (see Eph. 4:21). This involves the fact that Jesus is the Truth as well as the fact that nothing is truly considered “truth” if it is not found in Christ.

When Jesus is considered as the Truth, He stands out from all other truths. The Ark of the Covenant was not the same as all the other items in the Tabernacle. Those articles represented different truths, but the Ark was THE ACTUAL presence and reality of God rather than simply a foreshadowing of it. That is why the Ark did not bow down to the various gods of the Philistines, but all bowed to the Ark (see I Sam. 5:1-9).

The purpose of this book is to set forth a distinction between the shadow of the truth and the Truth itself. I also want to make a distinction between Truth and truths. The Old Testament example mentioned above was the Tabernacle, which foreshadowed many truths. Those who looked at the table of showbread were awakened to certain realities pertaining to Christ. Again, the different sacrifices that took place on the altar helped us to see different aspects of Christ’s death on the Cross. All of these things speak to us of wonderful truths pertaining to the Lord Jesus, and yet they are all only shadows of the truth and not the very truth itself. It would be the equivalent of looking at the shadow of a hand and thinking it more valuable than the hand itself. However, entering into the Holy of Holies brought the high priest face to face with the presence of the Lord Himself. It was no shadow; it was actually Him. I use this illustration to help us focus our minds on the fact that God uses many ways to communicate the truth, but Christ Himself is the greatest expression of the truth for He is the TRUTH. Even so, there are many wonderful truths in the Bible, but the Person of Christ is preeminent over all other truths. He is THE TRUTH.

There are certain truths that fit different areas of Scripture and unlock them, and we are thankful for all truths that God has opened to the Church. From time to time, a man will discover some new key of truth that unlocks whole new areas for us, but Jesus is the Master Key that unlocks all areas. When we speak of Jesus being the key to all, we are not talking about His Life on this earth or His teaching, nor are we talking about His authority in earth in terms of expressing Lordship. Instead, we are referring to His nature. Every area of truth has a “spirit” to it, for without it all would just be dead letter.

God does not just want us to know the Truth by grasping many truths, for by grasping the Truth we find how all other truths line up. Christ is the Truth, and God wants Truth “in the inward parts” (Ps. 51:6) and not just in doctrine. Ultimately, the issue is not whether we recognize truth in a Bible book but whether God looks within us and recognizes His Son, the Truth. This is the truth that will make you free (see Jn. 8:32).

Jesus Is the True

Jesus is the True. That is a funny way to put it. We are so used to saying that He is the TRUTH, and certainly He is. But when we think of truth, we think of a multiplicity of subjects that have been organized into doctrines of what is right and true. In other words, to most Christians, truth is the gathering of those ideas that are unchangeable and right. Therefore when we call Jesus “the Truth”, our mind still quickly slips towards the thought that He is the One Who has ordained and set in order right truths and has delivered them to us for us to obey. Our mind grasps more keenly the idea of Him as the Truth-giver than as the One who is the sum total of all Truth. But when we say that Jesus is the TRUE, it disconcerts us and causes us to rethink our understanding of Him.

An artist may paint a sunset of the ocean with the best ability that his talent has to offer, and yet the real scene forever remains apart from canvas. A picture, no matter how clear and close, is not the actual and is therefore a shadow. No matter how exact a likeness the landscape appears to be, it is still not the reality. Likewise, we can be deceived by greater clarity and skill in the forming of doctrines unless we know the True Himself. If this earth plane and its reality are what you consider “the real”, then you are blind to higher realities. Our task is to leave the shadows no matter how exact a replica they seem (like the clear picture of the sunset) to the True. A shadow or a painting is nothing more than an illusion, no matter how many compliments an artist receives on how real it looks or how much it makes us feel we are by the ocean.

Types and Shadows

In the Bible, God uses types and shadows to explain the Truth to us. They are not meant to just foreshadow the Truth but to ultimately bring us to the Truth. In some cases the word “true” is added to help us grasp the greater reality. Jesus is the “True”. For example, Jesus said, “I am the True Vine” (Jn. 15:1). Of all the vines that have ever existed, Jesus is the True One while all others are only types and shadows. No matter how real they are or how much substance they hold as an actual vine, only Jesus is the True. No one can deny that a vine plant is an actual vine, but it is still not the True Vine. Now, if we can

grasp this idea concerning the Vine, let us grasp it with all other subjects. Let us embrace Christ as the True and move away from trying to base our reality on things that were only meant to point to the One and the True.

For a believer to acknowledge Jesus as the True Vine over all other vines is an easy leap, and most believers do not stumble at making Christ the true of this subject area. However, we find it more difficult to do this with subjects with which we are more intimately involved — subjects such as Sonship or the fivefold ministry. Those who have a vested interest in these areas are not readily prepared to proclaim what they have emphasized to be but a mere shadow of something that explodes forth and fills that subject area with being the True. There seems to be so much substance in what we are doing and we have attributed so much honor to it, that even the declaring of Christ as the True feels as if something holy and godly is being trampled. If a person has neither really seen Christ as the True Vine nor ever been convinced beyond a doubt that all other vines only exist as a declaration that we all should find the One and True, then that person will draw from and be refreshed by shadow vines. How can such a one put more emphasis upon Christ? He would be completely unable to do so. Who, then, could condemn a person who does this?

Every ministry title and each shadow of any subject exists because there was first a True that came before it. “For of him, and through him, and to him are all things” (Rom. 11:36). No matter how much these areas have become a vital point of our ministry and belief system, they are still only shadows who, with darkened fingers, beckon us to look beyond them and find the True Himself. However, the coming of the True will signal the end of the shadow. Only the True puts to death the need for the shadow. Even as a shadow may resist the coming of the True that has allowed it to exist but is now slowly being replaced with the rising of the True, so we may find that our doctrines, titles, and positions, seem threatened as we find ourselves resisting the coming of the Lord as the fulfillment.

Israel’s Blunder

Moses is an excellent example to us of letting the old pass away by Christ being the fulfillment. He was THE lawgiver, BUT he was also a prophet. More specifically, Moses gave us every stitch of the law that was to be obeyed, but he also spoke prophetically of what was to come. In Deuteronomy 18:15, he tells Israel of One who is coming. He would be out from the brethren, like unto Moses, and HE IS THE ONE UNTO WHOM THEY ARE TO HEARKEN. In other words, Moses was telling them that they were no longer to hearken to the Law, to obeying all of its ordinances and honoring the lawgiver when the fulfillment of all things appeared. Moses and the Law had their place in being right and true for the time, but Jesus was the True from which all else was only a representation. The shadow becomes useless when the real appears.

One reason we protect our pet subjects so much is because they appear to be the holy oracles of the Eternal God, which have been committed to our faithful oversight. In our minds, there is God and then there is a great variety of “the things of God” that must be

treated as holy also. This is exactly where Israel stumbled. The Jews lived in the dark land of types and shadows, all of which were meant to point them to the coming One. But before Jesus was born, the Jews had made their Law, including fastings, washings, and even their own traditions, to be the fulfillment in and of themselves. So when the Light and True of all those things finally arrived that He might be honored by those unto whom He had faithfully committed these shadows, they rose up and sought to put out the destroying Light. Why? He showed all of their holy things to be foolish and have no substance in light of Him.

Of course, we all can see this blunder in relation to Israel, but we fail to see that many in the churches have fallen into that same ditch. Like God with Israel, so is Christ with the Church. He delivers to us certain truths, offices, titles, and subjects, but with time we may elevate them to the stature of “god”. Therefore when someone claims that Christ alone is the actual and True of those things, we may find that “holy resistance” begins to arise within us. We may be willing to take on that which would tear down our “temple” and raise it up in three days (see Jn. 2:19). So the cycle starts over.

The Scribes and Pharisees Offended

“In the beginning”, there was only God (see Jn. 1:1). Then ALL THINGS came out from Him. But when the end is come by the appearing of Christ, all those things are brought back into Him and summed up in Him. That is God’s plan. However, man gets enamoured with the “things”. He enjoys them, works them, and elevates them to such a place that even God come in the flesh is resisted, attacked, and put away because of His insinuation that only He is the I AM.

The scribes and Pharisees of Jesus’ day had worked themselves into just such a position. These “holy men” who resisted Jesus the most held the power by titles and had the honor by virtue of ministries. They had the most to lose. It would not be uncommon to hear such men speak of their desire for God to get all the glory. They were willing for Christ to be lifted up to a certain degree, but if He was going to fulfill all things, then that was a little higher than they wanted Him to be exalted.

Would the man who held the office of high priest accept that there had never been any true high priest in Israel until Jesus arrived? Would he take off his foolish garments that seemed so holy and direct all honor toward being clothed with Christ alone? And would he gather the people together and bring them to the feet of the only True and worship Him alone? Sadly, the answer is no. Instead, the earthly high priest sewed up the rent veil, set his things in order, and took upon himself the honor that belongs only to the One.

For Jesus to suggest that His physical body is the true temple of which the great holy temple was only a shadow relegated the priests’ ministry to be mere foolishness. How could such an elevation of Christ TO THIS DEGREE be tolerated? So for the scribes and Pharisees, it was not enough just to continue to serve some vague shadow. They also had to use whatever power they possessed to extinguish the TRUE Light, for the existence of the True, if they were to receive it, would do away with their positions, titles, and

subjects, and Christ would take their place and become all. There was no other choice for them but to put all effort toward the refuting of Jesus.

Even what the Jewish religious system did to Him could not take away the fact that HE was, and always would be, the True. By crucifying Him, they facilitated manifestation of the True sacrifice, and every action of any man thereafter was only a “fair show in the flesh” (Gal. 6:12) and “will-worship” (Col. 2:23). Though the Pharisees themselves may have never given in and acknowledged that the True had come, still the True had come. Though Judaism would never accept its Messiah, its Messiah had still come.

Pointing to Christ as the True

To allow Christ to take His rightful place in all areas will require a death on our part. Instead of functioning by title, God wants us to function by Life — His Life. Instead of taking honor to ourselves, we should be continually pointing the people to Christ. And we should trust that as they lay hold of Christ as the True of all things, then maybe they will see this same Christ living through us. They will not have to be told how to relate to us by rule and precept because they will relate with Christ and not man.

Many Christians live in the earth and honor the shadows set up in the Old Testament as if they still had validity. We call Sunday the Lord’s Day while never entering the Day who is the Lord. In other words, we still honor earth institutions while remaining in darkness pertaining to the finished work of the Cross. The Judaizers wanted to keep the circumcision, but Paul said that nothing in the earth, neither circumcision nor uncircumcision, avails anything but only what is found in the New Creation (see Gal. 6:15).

There is no ordinance in the earth that can make a person righteous. What God did in His Son is what makes us accepted (in the Beloved; see Eph. 1:6). To attempt to bring a method of relating to the Lord out of the old, rejected system of the Law is to keep His people separated from Him instead of bringing them close to Him.

Who can adequately explain these things? Certainly not I. But the basic principle is this: Christ alone is the True. All other truths have no real meaning in themselves except as they point toward the One and the True. We are not to point to the True to help explain and give measured meaning to the shadow. All our efforts are to open people’s eyes to Christ, and as they see Him, they will find true substantive relationship based on what will not pass away.

The End of All Things

Jesus said, “It is done” (Rev. 16:17), and, “I am Alpha and Omega” (Rev. 1:8). The finished work relates to what Jesus has already accomplished and what is settled in God’s mind. But these verses also speak of the great work of the Spirit, who shows that all things from beginning to end are swallowed up of Christ and found to have their reality by the Life of Christ. Such a work of the Spirit is not complete until the beginning and

the end — including all in between — is seen to be Christ. This includes more than just the understanding of all truths, for each of these truths must be found not as individual and unconnected realities, but as that which finds its fulfillment and meaning by His Life.

Take, for example, the truth of our right standing before God. We must move past the awareness that Christ has made us righteous to knowing that Christ IS our righteousness. Instead of trying to live for God, we must know that Christ is our only Life. All that we know of Christ must be swallowed up in Him so that with Paul we can say of Christ, “who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption” (I Cor. 1:30). Instead of knowing all of these terms as truths to be understood and taught, we must see that Christ IS all of these things!

Night rules in darkness. Shadows are all that remain of the night when the sun is come. The proximity of the Son in your life determines how much darkness is in your view and therefore how many shadows are in your life, and where. If to you, Christ is far above and directly in the center, then there will be no shadows. If in your understanding He is barely raised (meaning, you do not see Him in His fullness), then there will be many shadows in your thinking. He is the first and the Last. As the First, He was before shadows of the Old Testament. He is the Last. He removes all that is not Him, and He is the Last of all things.

Subdued or Summed Up

All areas of truth and doctrine can fall into two categories: each area of truth is either subdued or summed up. They are either swallowed up of Christ, or they are under our feet, yet to be revealed. If a truth is going to remain an “earth truth” and will not be summed up in Him, as Him, then it must be subdued, ever to remain in the earth, not as a part of Him but as under Him. It will not motivate, control, or move me, for it has been subdued. It does not lord its doctrine over me and cause me to bow to it. Whatever areas of truth I have not yet seen summed up in Christ are immediately subdued and relegated to the earth. I do not want to honor it in any way, for all my honor goes to Christ. If He is not seen in it, then it deserves no honor. It cannot be exalted above the earth but must remain in the earth as just a part of the earth. It has no life to me for Christ is the Life of all things, — that which is in Him.

Chapter Two

Jesus as Fulfiller and Fulfillment

Something that might help us to better understand Jesus as “The True” is to look more closely at the shadows and see how Jesus fulfilled them. We had a glimpse of this by examining the example of earthly vines in contrast to the True Vine in the previous chapter, but there are greater examples from the Old Testament.

The Book of Hebrews is full of examples of shadows from the Old Testament and declarations that the True had come. When the True comes, the shadow is no longer

necessary. Things such as the temple, high priest, the sacrifices, and the articles in the Tabernacle were never the True; they only represented it.

In this chapter I want to show how Jesus was the great “Fulfiller” of all things, meaning, He was the True that was to come and the One that God always intended. Even by many of His acts and sayings during His earthly ministry we find that Jesus fulfilled many passages of Scripture.

I also want to move one step past showing more clearly that Jesus is the True based on Him as “Fulfiller” into presenting in this chapter the idea of Christ as the Fulfillment. However, this second reality will be most fully developed in the last chapter.

What Is the Fulfiller and the Fulfillment?

Jesus is both the Fulfiller and the Fulfillment. There is a great distinction between these two titles. Each title represents a particular aspect of the work of Christ. The former describes that work that He did in the earth during His incarnation, and the other describes what has been accomplished in heavenly places in Christ as a result of His resurrection. Both are important, but it seems that while most Christians understand incarnation, few have laid hold of being found in Him. The ultimate purpose of this booklet is to help clarify the work of the death and resurrection of Jesus, and in so doing, permit Him who is the Fulfillment to flow through His Body, the Church.

Jesus as Fulfiller

Earthly things are the shadows of heavenly realities (see Heb. 10:1). They express in shadowy, insubstantial forms the reality of the invisible God. The Life and reality of all things come from the heavenlies and from Christ. On earth we have figures and shadows of the heavenly truths. For example, He is the true vine, the real life, the real light, and the real bread. He is the real clothing, the real dwelling place, and the real rock.

We have seen previously that when Jesus said, “I am the true Vine,” He was telling us that all the vines of earth are pictures and symbols of Him. He is the divine reality of which they are the created expression. They all point to Him, preach Him, and reveal Him. All things are signs, figures, or pictures of Christ. The purpose for which all of the natural creation was brought into existence was to declare Christ in shadow form. For example, if vines had not been created, the Lord Jesus could not have made reference to a vine in revealing Himself to His disciples.

When Jesus came to earth, He fulfilled Scripture as He walked and fulfilled all things spoken of by the prophets in his death (see Lk. 24:27). He fulfilled the sacrifices, the tabernacle, and the rest of the Law. The central thought of the book of Hebrews is that Christ is the reality, compared to all other things, which are shadows. In fact, this is the testimony of the entire New Testament. But the fact that Jesus came to the earth and fulfilled all Scripture and all types is not the end of the matter. In His resurrected form, which now includes us, He is also the fulfillment.

Jesus as Fulfillment

And He is before ALL THINGS, and by Him ALL THINGS consist. And he is the Head of the Body, the Church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in ALL THINGS He might have the preeminence (Col. 1:17,18).

...According to His good pleasure which He hath PURPOSED in Himself: that in the dispensation of the fullness of times He might gather together in one [sum up] ALL THINGS in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even in Him (Eph. 1:9,10).

And [God] hath put ALL THINGS under His [Christ's] feet, and gave Him to be the Head over ALL THINGS to the Church (Eph. 1:22)

To say that Christ sums up — or is the fullness of — all things explains Him as the Fulfillment. Jesus' preeminence over all things is not based solely on His Lordship but upon the fact that He is the fullness of all things. We say that Jesus is the answer. Just what do we mean by that? If we mean that He is omniscient and has the solutions to all of our problems, then we miss the greater meaning of Him being the Fulfillment. He is the Answer in that no shadow can accomplish what only the True is. As He fills the “thing”, that thing has found true fulfillment, or to put it another way, it has met the qualifications for being valued as the Answer.

When Jesus rose from the dead in the body of His resurrection, He became the Fulfillment. In this resurrection body that includes all believers, He is now the fullness that filleth all in all (see Eph. 1:23). God is not looking for anything outside of His corporate Son. It is not enough that we honor Jesus as the Greater One, for the risen Son is the fulfillment of all things. How, then, can anything else take preeminence? According to Colossians 1:18, He already has the preeminence in all things. Jesus is to be above everything, for nothing else is Him. He is not given this place so all our earth troubles can be dealt with; He is given this place in order to fill all things. Therefore with His coming has come the Answer — or the Fulfiler — of these shadows. How can other truths take the preeminence when no one has fullness except they have Christ? He alone is all in all. This leaves place for nothing else to be either Fulfillment or Answer to the believer.

Comparing the Two

As Fulfiler, Jesus put away the ordinances and sacrifices of the old covenant. But we must come to realize what His purpose was in leaving the earth after He accomplished this particular aspect of His ministry. It was to show us in typical form that all things in the earth were fulfilled and put away and therefore the earth as the sphere in which he had moved up to this point was also put away.

The temple in Jerusalem was a shadow. When Jesus entered the earthly temple, it did not receive Him. That temple would be torn down shortly, and after that a new one would be raised in the heavens (the New Man). Matthew 24:1-2 records Jesus departing from the temple, signifying that that system was gone forever. Any adherence to the earthly temple

would come to an end with that system as well, for the earthly temple was rejected and the heavenly temple of His Body was about to be raised.

As the disciples walked with Jesus, they were still enthralled with the earthly temple, however, for they had not yet seen that God never meant it to be the realization of what He had in mind. Nor did they understand that the earth would never be the place that the true temple was to be established. They gave honor to that present order rather than to the Light from which shadows only received their faint outline.

Jesus told them that not one brick would be left standing in the old temple. But simply removing the earth from before their eyes was not enough; they needed to have the temple of his body raised up before their eyes. This Jesus spoke of his resurrection — the true resurrection of the new man in Him, as Him. The disciples' understanding was so darkened that the destruction of the temple could signal only one thing: the end of time and the end of all things. Little did they know that, according to what was in the Father's heart, Jesus' resurrection would bring the end of all things as well as the beginning of all things with Christ as all and in all. All by itself, Jesus' coming in resurrection brought the judgment upon every shadow, for at that point the True had come. The true Light now shined brightly and chased away all shadows.

In other words, God was not removing the temple just because He decided to do a new thing; all the things of the temple and Israel's worship had always stood as shadows of the True that was yet to come. When Titus, the Roman emperor, descended upon Jerusalem, He not only took away the temple but also destroyed the city and scattered the people of the Jewish nation to the four corners of the earth. The Romans did not just tear everything down, they pried up the foundation stones, sent the pieces to the far reaches of the Roman Empire, and plowed over the ground (see Jer. 26:18). Why did Titus so thoroughly destroy the temple and all that was associated with it? In God's mind, the old was brought to an end, and we needed to find the New.

There is a union that has been annulled. God no longer honors those who serve the shadow. But there is a spiritual union. He does not honor what has been annulled, for now it is nothing but a lifeless exercise in futility. The shadow can never bring forth the reality. Only the reality produces a shadow. However, there is a difference between a shadow and an actual expression in the earth.

In raising up the New Man, God chose to make the place of His involvement in the heavens in Christ. On earth, Jesus was the Fulfiller of types and ordinances, but now, He has become the Fulfillment of all in Himself. This means that God has finally brought into Christ everything that was meant by the old covenant, thus settling for all time where God's fullness would dwell. By doing so, He has declared in Christ that the earth was only the place to show the shadows of what God always intended to be in the heavens.

In Christ is the fulfillment for all God's heart, which is satisfied with His New Creation. All that is found in Christ is a finished work. The reason the work does not appear to be

finished to so many of us is because we look in the earth among the shadows to find what is only fulfilled in Christ.

It is true that He fulfilled many things in the earth, but only so that those things might be put away in order to bring in a whole new creation and order of things. The Cross was the place where the Fulfiler put away the old creation order of things, but the resurrection is where He ever lives as the Fulfillment of what the shadows only represent. Even more importantly, He is the Fulfillment of all that was in the Father's heart.

If we know Christ simply as the Fulfiler, we can only believe the work that was done by Him in the earth and in His death. But as the Fulfillment, He is our life, our light, our reality, and our all. The Fulfillment is not the Person who has done nice things for us but the One who is everything to us and in us. If we seek fulfillment, we will not find it in the earth but in a Person who is risen.

We are not just seeing that He has fulfilled things, we are seeing Him who is the Fulfillment. That particular way of seeing does not just inform us of facts; it transforms us into that same image. Our image of ourselves is no longer as individual earth identities who need God's help; instead He has become the image into which we are transformed.

The Person and Place of Fulfillment

In our minds, proclaiming the New Creation is nothing more than declaring that we are saved, we are changed on the inside, and no longer living the way we did before we met Jesus. But much more than that, the New Creation is Christ in His resurrection form. The True is neither earthly nor in the earth; it is from above.

All things are already fulfilled in Christ. God used to relate to humanity in one place, and now He does so in another. So Jesus in flesh and blood did fulfill things of the Scriptures, but that Jesus is not the Fulfillment; only the raised Jesus is.

This New Creation was not made with hands. Instead, it was created of God, in Christ. The temple of the Lord is now the gathering that is in Christ. The Church which is His body is not to be confused with the group of people that meets in a church building that may or may not know the New Creation. The Church which is His body is the fullness of Him. His resurrection makes us to live, not as many individual Christians, but as one New Man. Since all true fulfillment is in and from the heavens, those who are gathered in churches cannot possibly be the true temple but simply the place where the heavens manifest.

To serve the shadow is bad enough, but what we fail to realize is that to do so, we also reject the Fulfillment. All things must be seen as Him in His resurrection form instead of being made into earthly institutions and doctrines based on the carnal mind's idea of Christ.

No Fulfillment in the Earth

Because all things have already been fulfilled in Christ, our keeping the commandments of God brings us no closer to the Fulfillment than not keeping them. Nothing we can do in the earth can bring about the Fulfillment that is in the heavens. The Cross did not just judge the Adamic earth but the old covenant system of religion in the earth called the Law.

The New Creation is not you or me personally but a “New Him” who is raised corporately. Only in Christ have all old things passed away and all things have become new. If you do not believe this, then you are waiting for it to happen on the earth in the future somehow. This is a mystery of God that is made known in Christ, and it is only made known by Christ. There is only one place all of this is made known and realized, and that is in Him. If you look elsewhere, then you will miss it.

Most Christians think of salvation in this earth-bound way. To so many of us, salvation is God having removed us out of something bad, such as living with the consequences of our sins and going to hell. After we receive the Lord, we continue to view our relationship with the Lord in this light; we want God to deliver us out of negative circumstances, out of the devil’s attacks, out of illnesses, or out of financial difficulty. In this way, we have misunderstood the meaning of salvation.

Jesus Himself had the opportunity to call on His Father for deliverance from the Cross, and refused to do so. Matthew 26:53-54 says, “Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to my Father, and he shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels? But how, then, shall the Scriptures be fulfilled, that thus it must be?” Why did Jesus not ask for deliverance from His bad circumstances? Because to Jesus, this sort of deliverance is neither the gospel nor salvation.

We must come to understand that salvation is not the removal of the Christian out of something distasteful but the bringing of the Christian into a relationship of One. The purpose of salvation is not you but Christ in you and you in Him. “At that day ye shall know... ye in me, and I in you” (Jn. 14:20). This passage of Scripture speaks of knowing the mystery on the day the mystery of the union is revealed. The mystery is not that the church is His body and bride but that Christ and the church are One in resurrection.

Many Christians just want temporal deliverance and care nothing for that which is written to be fulfilled in their lives. How clear this becomes after reading the passage in Matthew 26:53-54 that this mindset is contrary to the mind and nature of Christ! We are not just here to live out our own personal existence but the Life of Him concerning whom the Scriptures must be fulfilled. If we live His Life, then what is written will surely come to pass.

The Role of the Churches

If Christ is the True, then He is the value of everything. His Body has value because He fills it. His Body is not just His possession but the vehicle of His manifestation. If we are His in some sort of organizational way, we have still failed to fulfill our purpose. We are to be inhabited and filled. When Christ begins to live His life through us, THEN all is fulfilled, for He is the Fulfillment. The need in the Church today is for an increase of Christ.

An Increase of Christ

Because we do not know the One into whom we have been brought, we have a misunderstanding of what the increase of Christ is. We think it is having more people who have Christ in them. However, an increase of Christ is not about a quantity of people but an expansion of Christ into our lives as we decrease. John said, “He must increase and I must decrease” (John 3:30). Increase is not many but One. More specifically, increase is Christ LIVING, whether that be in many or in a few, and increase occurs when Christ is permitted a greater expression of Himself through those many or few in whom He dwells. If a true increase of Him takes place, then an actual decrease of us takes place.

Christ is the measure by which God judges increase. Ephesians chapter four bears this out. Notice the repeated emphasis in these verses: “measure of the stature...” (Eph. 4:13), “measure in every part...” (Eph. 4:16), “grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ” (Eph. 4:7). If Christ is the measure of all things, then all must be according to the measure of Him in every part. This does not just apply to the special parts, or important parts, or even ministering parts. Christ is the measure for every part, for He is the measure of the whole.

Christ: the Only Satisfaction of the Father

Only Christ can really satisfy God, for He has chosen Christ to be such (see Matt. 3:16; Eph. 3:1, 7; Col. 1:19). Therefore, only Christ can carry out God’s will. For the Christian, then, the only hope of satisfying the Father is by Christ within. Jesus said, “Without me, you can do nothing.” Now, let’s face it! We are capable of doing many things without Jesus — indeed, we do it all the time. But He is the Fulfillment. If it is not Christ, then nothing is fulfilled, for God has summed up all things in His Son.

All that originates out of us, regardless of how good it is, misses God’s plan. Take, for example, the difference between Christian philanthropy and Christ ministering to the needs of people. The one is people who happen to be Christians doing what they consider to be good things by their own strength, and the other is Christ Himself living through a yielded believer, so that His nature and ability are what touch and affect others. The difference between the two is not a simple matter of submitting to Jesus’ Lordship in our earth affairs; it is a matter of death to self that Christ may live within. Doing good Christian works is commendable, but the surprising thing is that even if we could in our own strength accomplish godly things, God’s plan is for Christ as the fulfillment and not found in the thing done.

We must have the life of Christ first before any sacrifice on our part will be acceptable. It must be “acceptable by Jesus Christ”. We must belong to God ourselves before anything can be offered to Him. Nothing in an unsaved person can satisfy God in the slightest degree. Every act of human sacrifice apart from Christ is an act of human righteousness. It is only after a person has come to Christ irrevocably that God moves him to make that sacrifice of his body through which Jesus Christ is magnified. This means that no act in itself, even if it is sacrificial, has any merit. Only acts that are “by Jesus Christ” have merit because God is seeking a Person in His people and not just certain acts and deeds.

The conclusion of this matter is that we must surrender our bodies to the Lord to use as He determines. As we have discussed, this does not mean us doing things for God. We must each yield our own body to Christ, which entails more than just committing the day to Him. You must surrender your thoughts to Him as you take on the mind of Christ. This is not you thinking His thoughts or you operating your life in service to Him, nor is this you doing what He wants. It is not you at all but Him willing and doing in you. Because Jesus tore open the veil, we can now enter into God’s holy presence by a new AND living way. “I live by faith in the Son of God (the one who lives in me and not me) who loved me and gave Himself for me” (Gal. 2:20).

Chapter Three Shadow Or Reality

We saw in the first chapter how Jesus is the True. That thought was more clearly developed in the second chapter as we equated the term the True with the Fulfiller. As Fulfiller, Jesus became the answer to all types and shadows and all that God intended. As the Fulfiller walked in His earth body, He put away all shadows of the old covenant and old creation.

In the second chapter we also presented a new concept of Jesus as the Fulfillment. There are two aspects to this reality. The first, which we discussed in the previous chapter, is the aspect of the risen Christ now being the fulfillment of what the Old Testament only foreshadowed. This is not so much about Jesus fulfilling things as He walked this earth as it is about Christ in His risen body (which includes us as in Him) being in itself the fulfillment of what God intended all along.

God’s intention is that Christ in us is to be the Christian life, and anything short of that is man’s religious attempt to please God apart from Christ. Before this can be realized, man must make a break with Christianity in earth life and make a major movement toward life in the heavenlies by the risen Christ.

Shadow or Substance?

Before we will ever begin a journey from the earth to heavenly places, we must differentiate between the material and the spiritual. To some, what is spiritual cannot be substantial, for it lacks the solidity of matter. However, in God's mind, faith — not matter — is substance (see Heb. 11:1). Only by faith can we move to the heights of the spiritual. Faith can remove mountains. What does it mean to remove mountains? It means that faith takes you out of the realm of the earth by removing its whole landscape from before your eyes.

No matter how massive the depths of the material realm that has stood before you, it can be obliterated by faith. Therefore the function of faith is to give us victory over the less real by bringing us more clearly into God's reality.

Awake to the Real

When we speak of the "less real" and the "more real", we are referring to the difference between shadow and reality. The very consistency of shadows — what they are made up of — is darkness. The shadow is a vague outline of the real but can of itself never be the real. If this is the case, then we need to shake off the shadows and find the true form behind them. Something that may help us make a break with shadows is to realize that there is no growth among the shadows, no matter what area of truth we explore in Shadow Land. The earth is where the shadows are cast, but the heavens are where all reality comes from.

The coming of the kingdom of heaven in earth is not simply an eschatological event but an awakening from shadow to substance, confusion to order, and from death to Life. Before this, we think as children and see only shadowy realities, as if looking in a glass darkly (see I Cor. 13:12). When we awaken, the scales fall from our eyes, and we no longer see religion or the right way but Jesus Himself as was the case in Acts 9:18. Indeed, an awakening of this sort is exactly what we need.

A seed experiences an awakening, as well, for it awakens to a whole new world of growth, light, and fruit once it has grown out from the earth. But for this to take place requires more than an awakening for the seed; it requires a death to the natural world as its primary reality.

The Place of Death to Self

If these things concerning Christ as the Fullfillment are so, then what must take place in the life of the believer is that he move out of the realm of earth and shadows and into the realm of God's reality concerning His resurrected Son. I am not just speaking here of believing that Jesus was raised from the dead two thousand years ago. I am talking about a whole new world of relationship with God based on the power of His resurrection.

The best example I can think of that illustrates this process is the planting of a seed. Notice that I said the planting of a seed. Most Christians have received the right Seed,

which seed is Christ (see Gal. 3:16). They received Him when they were born again (I Peter 1:23).

But a seed is not just what is seen with the natural eye. It has an outer shell and an inner germ, which is where the life is contained. The germ inside the seed is Christ. We are the husk, and the earth is the material world in which we live.

It is at the point of receiving the Seed that many Christians have ceased to grow. Simply receiving the Seed seems to be enough. For these, to fulfill the plan of God in the earth only requires the receiving of the Seed, which is accomplished by the work of evangelism. But that seed must go through a transformation and make a journey through the shrouding of earth, into the glorious light of the resurrected Christ.

A Seed in the Ground

As I said, being the right Seed (receiving Christ as Savior) is only the beginning though many think that it is the end. The right Seed will have the right life inside, just as Christians do, but a husk having the right Life within is not the end. The Life that has been received within must press on to resurrection.

God reveals this truth by the very course that nature takes. A seed is placed in the ground. It is hidden in the earth so that the inner Life may come forth from the earth, which, of course, is the whole purpose for planting a seed in the first place. While in earth hibernation, it does not matter how many times the Lord delivers the husk from its trials, for it has yet to awaken in His likeness because in truth, it is yet asleep to the resurrection. This believer is still a seed pushed down into, and surrounded by, dirt.

The life of such a believer is involved with struggling with the less real. This carnal struggle results in unnecessary suffering and has as its primary accomplishment the adjusting of dirt in order to make the husk a little more comfortable. However, the seed is not placed in the ground to get blessed and comfortable in the dirt but to die to being in the earth. When being buried in the earth is its present state, the seed cannot see the sun even though it is a true seed. It must come through the darkness of matter.

That breakthrough is the result of inherent activity by the life deep within the Seed. The sun has no power without the inward impulse that pushes past the earth and moves upward. The life of Christ within is ever pushing us to grow out of the dirt and enter a whole new realm of growth and fruitfulness from above. This happens only to that Seed that will one day yield fruit.

The seed that seeks true fruitfulness will leave the underworld of darkness and dirt and move into the world of sun and light. The shadow will be replaced with the substance. THIS place of reality replaces doctrinal stances and belief systems and moves into relating by Life. Suddenly the old concepts of a future heaven are replaced with a new heaven and a new earth. Old “things” have passed away and all to the believer is now found in Christ.

For the husk, the guarantee of the fulfillment for which it exists is found in the germ within. All hope and possibilities lie with the germ and not with the husk. Man has attempted to alter conditions on the material plane while ignoring what he already possesses. However, improving the dirt that surrounds the husk is not the primary task of the Husbandman (see Jn. 15:2) but to tend the Vine that there might be increase. All outward movements by God are temporal and accomplish no eternal work if we ourselves (the husk) remain unconquered and inert. For the seed to be successful, it must leave the realm of the earth as its primary existence.

Another example that may help us see the contrast of remaining in the earth or living from above is found in the physical circumstances of resurrection. The resurrection of Jesus was His coming out of an earth tomb that was meant to hold Him within the realm of earth. But Jesus' resurrection was Him literally bursting forth from the bonds of earth. What, then, might a definition of resurrection be? Freedom from earth — that is resurrection! Have you experienced the resurrection in THIS MANNER?

Certainly, we comprehend the physical implications of resurrection, and we may comprehend the future implications. But do we truly understand the spiritual meaning for us right now? Even if we simply discern the historical facts of Jesus' resurrection, surely we can see how this should be applied to our lives at this time! For example, Jesus went into the lowest hell for the captives. He did not go there to make them comfortable in that place; He brought them forth from it. They cast off the earth. Just like a seed bursting forth from the captivity of the earth, they left with Him and were no longer blocked by the earth and made separate from Him by the earth. Christ's work is to proclaim liberty to the captives and opening dungeon doors to the bound. Spiritually this is true also and is ongoing in you while at the same moment being a finished work in Christ.

To continue the allegory, like the seed placed in the soil, we are on an upward path. To fall is simply being drawn back to the earth again. We may consider that to fall is to sin and to not fall is to live victoriously in the earth. However, this is not God's definition. The soul that seeks to be nourished by the earth instead of living by steadfastly abiding in Him who is above has fallen (see Col. 3:1-4). These realities must be active in our lives. The doctrine of the Vine and branches has no true effect; only its reality does. True victory is not the avoidance of sin but the steadfast upward movement into all that Christ has become in resurrection. This is our destiny, for it is the One with whom we have been made one.

The Key to Victory

To find the true key to victory is to learn to live from above. Psalm 18:9 says that darkness is under His feet. We are now Jesus' body, and we were raised up with Him. This means that for us, the shadows are below, and we are one with the Son who is above.

What are these shadows that are now under His feet? As we learned in the first two chapters, they are shadows of the Old Testament that are not THE TRUE but are meant to

point to the True. Since the Son has shined, we no longer live in the earth and honor the shadows set up in the Old Testament as if they still had validity. In Chapter One there was reference made to Galatians 6:15, which says, "For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature." When Paul said that law and grace do not mix, he meant the laws for one creation (the old covenant) do not mix with the laws of the new creation. In other words, the two realms cannot be mingled. We cannot bring elements of the old creation into the new, be it circumcision, animal sacrifice, or any other religious truth.

Once we have found the True, shadows are never allowed to override Him. So even though we worship on Sunday and call it the Lord's Day, we understand that Christ is the Day that we have entered and that He is the Sabbath rest. We cease to honor earth institutions and religious views above the Fulfillment and are finally able to leave behind earthly ordinances that we had formerly believed would make us righteous. We become settled in the Beloved, Who is our only basis for favor with God.

Abraham looked for a city, and that is the one to which we have already come. Zion is that city. From the Psalms we find that Zion is the way of ascent. The problem is that men are looking on the earth and not to Jerusalem which is above, His completed Bride. If this continues, before long we will be looking for the sacrifice of the red heifer to signal the year of jubilee, instead of looking to the sacrifice of Jesus as the day of freedom.

The second area of darkness and shadow from which we have been delivered is the area of the five senses and earthly circumstances. The answer for this is to dwell in Christ from above. We need to learn the blessed secret for the earth-bound is to "come up here" (see Rev. 4:1). Those words were spoken to John as events grew worse in the earth. The key is not found in fixing the earth but in leaving it spiritually and dwelling in Christ. The call to "come up here" is not meant to frustrate earth-dwellers but to liberate them.

To remain as a seed that has not broken through the hold of matter is to remain in darkness, for "darkness is under His feet". Light dispels darkness. Even so, Christ dispels shadows, but light is only found above. This is clearly seen in the natural example that all light to the earth comes from above. If you still live by shadows, you still live in darkness, and the light has not yet come.

Sense Realm Living or Spiritual Life?

Our senses, which are a part of the abovementioned husk, are our greatest enemy that would hinder us on our upward path of resurrection. Our five senses can immerse us with information about the world around us, and this information can cause us to believe that we are earthy ourselves, instead of being those who live by the life of Christ which is not bound by earth.

I know many whose lives are shadowed rather than "Son-shined". Their movements and countenance have a shadow hanging over it. Where is the shining light of the Son of

God? In the multitude of our anxious thoughts there is only one hope: to turn from these thoughts and this realm and enter in to a door opened in heaven. As we permit ourselves to fall in the ground and die, our husk — what so many believers considered to be “themselves” — begins to decay, making room for the Life of the germ within to expand and grow. That Life, which is Christ, does not live by our senses, and as we learn to let Him live, we find ourselves free from their dominion.

Death and fear are conquered by the sacrifice of the senses in order to live above. As we let self melt away so that Christ may possess what is His, things will suddenly become clear: He alone is all in all, He is the Great I Am.

Clarity purifies. In some cases it washes, and in other cases it is a refiner’s fire. The effect of refiner’s fire is good though it may seem uncomfortable. We may feel that the washing of water is preferable and would avoid refiner’s fire, but both accomplish the purpose of purification. You are purified from living by earth motivations and circumstances to live based on the spiritual principles of the life of Christ. From this place above, the senses do not rule but simply offer suggestions from their domain, which will never be heeded.

Living the Above Life in Light

What do you see when you look at Jesus? Do you see the Father (Jn. 14:9), or do you see a great ministry that blesses people (Jn. 6:24-26)? How you see Jesus will say a lot about whether or not you have entered into His death and resurrection. Your view of the Jesus you are presently involved with will show what sort of identity concerning Him that you have embraced.

The Jesus who is to now be glorified is the one who was raised from above. In other words, we do not just want Jesus glorified but the Jesus who is above to be glorified. To glorify the resurrected Jesus in our lives, we must press through an earth understanding of things and find the True Life. We should be seeking conformity to what is above. God’s goal is to change us into another nature so that we are only moved by His economy. So many Christians have been trying to get answers from outside of themselves, but no outward change can ultimately change who you are. This reality must take possession of our way of viewing and proceeding. A higher knowledge of God must move beyond our earth-container, which is caught in time. However, most Christians have been trapped in time and space and live out their lives in the underworld. But the goal is to attain to the highest call, not just to obtain some ministry goal in this earth. We need to be translated from the personal to the all-encompassing, which is only found in Christ (see Col. 1:12-13).

Identity with the Risen Christ

The disciples had to lose the earth-identity they had built up around Jesus of Nazareth. This loss of identity was a loss of Jesus of Nazareth in exchange for the resurrected New Man. While Jesus walked the earth, He had a “good man” identity and a “vessel” identity that revealed the Father. Eventually, Jesus said He had to go away because the Jesus that

the disciples had understood was not in their greatest interest (see Jn. 14). It had been a good identity, maybe even better than anything that had come before, but it was not the full thought of God concerning His Son. Jesus' departure was a withdrawing of Himself from His disciples as a personality so that He could send the Spirit who would reveal Him as ALL in all. In this way, He would be revealed within so that He would no longer be external and separate from them. Jesus' act of going away was only to separate them from what could be separated so that we could be joined with Him forever. This loss of the personality of Jesus will end in great gain of Jesus for us.

In what form do we gain from identifying in the risen Christ? Upon His resurrection, Jesus became the fulfillment of all things, or THE TRUE. The disciples did not know this Jesus while He walked with them. This resurrected Christ who is the fulfillment is the one we all need to know, even at the loss of Jesus' earth-identity.

If it is true that we are now one with the risen Christ and if it is also true that we must let the Jesus of Nazareth relationship "go away", then it would also be true that we ourselves must also take on a new identity. In other words, we must view ourselves as from above drawing from all the resources of the Vine. The loss of our individual identity is only that the True might gain True identity, eternal identity.

The Limitations of Our Life

Our personal identity and earth life is full of limitations. We are only able to draw from the resources that we ourselves possess naturally. We function by the five senses and because of this, we are regularly cast down by appearances. Our ability to function is limited by time and distance, so we are constantly confronted with our limitations. We are blind and deaf to God's realm and all the resources available through Him. Our eyes are not opened to a Life from above. It is the difference between truly seeing and not seeing at all.

Our blindness and our feelings are always trying to seek out "a sense" of God's immediate presence. But in His realm, such things are not needed because of a constant union with Him, so we are not limited by what we feel at the moment. Too many want a temporary result instead of having that which is settled in the heavens. We are divided from God's best because of reliance upon our senses. To seek God by the senses is futile, even if we gain the sense realm confidence we were looking for because what God has for us is not GAINED by senses. It is DONE in Christ, but our cooperation of faith is needed.

As I said, our personal identity is full of limitations, but His is not. For example, to gain peace based on one's own identity is simply to find temporary peace in a particular circumstance. But consider the peace that is ours through union with the risen Christ. As the risen One, Jesus is now the Prince of Peace. Why should our comprehension of Jesus as Prince of Peace be primarily based on some outward, faraway concept? If we are joined with Him, then living from above allows THAT PEACE to reign right NOW over the souls of those who are His people. But for Christians living in the earth, Jesus as Prince of Peace has very little effect on them except as they seek temporary peace from a

far-off Benevolence. Many do not think of their interior life as being joined to an infinite supply, but we see clearly from Scripture that the healing river flows from the midst of the throne and of the Lamb OUT OF THE BRIDE OF CHRIST.

The negative side to this is that if we live by the earth and its motivations, we are susceptible to the wiles of the prince of darkness, for he rules in darkness. Man can make an imitation light called a flashlight. Its light is not from above; it is an imitation. When its shining is compared to the light of the sun, the flashlight looks foolish. But someone who is living in a world of shadow and earth with no deep understanding of Christ as the TRUE could be impressed with an imitation light. Satan appears as an angel of light (II Cor.11:14). An angel of light simply imitates. It imitates reality. Its light looks real to us because our senses can be deceived, but it is darkness. Our greatest hope for remaining free from deception is not found in knowing all doctrine and truth but in the Light of Life filling our view.

Earth's Pull

Another danger that threatens our Life-connection to the Lord is the pull of the earth. Men find it hard to pull away from an earth existence and enter into the heavens in much the same way as they do when trying to overcome the law of gravity.

The highest aspirations of the child of God should not be affixed to earth, space, and ministry. The child of God should want what Jesus wants. But what Jesus wants is not ultimately fulfilled by earth. The problem is that many have settled into an earth existence in much the same way as so many of the Jews got comfortable in Babylon and would not return with Ezra and Nehemiah to Israel. The motivation that kept them there was the desire for comfort and the putting of their lives in the earth before God's purposes in the Promised Land. The armament that Christians regularly use to withstand God is self. But we must become disarmed, or "un-selfed". Unselfish Life sees something bigger than what is found within its own walls of earth involvements, for Jesus' view is wider than self-interest.

The Scriptures talk about being deceived by the devil, but they also have much to say about self-deception. There is a deception involving good, clean, Christian living. Most Christians live reverently before God but do so on an earthly plane. Too many love the earth and are attempting to lift it to a higher plane for God. But God wants us to walk away from our earth existence and enter a whole new way of relating.

The Need for Death

Jesus said, "Follow me" but He also said, "Deny yourself". He did not tell us to sanctify OUR LIVES but to deny them. Renunciation is the complete and deliberate stand of abandonment and withdrawal from submission and obedience to the senses. It is the act of renouncing all their rights over oneself. Are you a new creation in doctrine only? For many Christians this is the case as is evidenced by their lives, which are marked by

constant failure and limitations. The earth hinders them, but they do not know what to do about it.

The Walls of the Flesh

The problem lies in the fact that they want to break the pull of earth's gravity without ever leaving the planet. The heart that desires God is right, but the place so many well-meaning Christians are trying to live it is wrong. For example, we try to overcome division while still living in the earth. Earth-life is full of walls, and the walls of earth-life divide us from the Lord and from others. In the earth realm, we are surrounded by walls. My flesh walls me in as an entity and yours does, too. Your church walls divide you from other churches, and the church as a whole is walled from the world. The key to remedying earth divisions is not through earth methods.

We see an example of walls coming down at Jericho. Jericho was the first city that Israel encountered upon entering the Land that God had prepared for them. It is a picture of leaving the wilderness of this earth and entering all God has for us in Christ. In Him is no darkness whatsoever, and all walls easily fall before Him. There, Rahab is no longer bound by her Canaanite walls that separate her from becoming one of God's people. They were broken down and she became accepted. But the very same walls that God easily brought down will seem strong, fortified, and immovable as long as we remain in the earth. We become hedged in by our earth concepts. But Rahab left the confines of Jericho and became part of the line that brought forth Christ (see Matt. 1:5). She did this by a leap of faith that took her out of her earth identities by believing into God's identity for us in Christ. If we are ever going to leave our personal limitations, there is a need for the personal possession of our new identity. One key is to banish the idea of separation. Most fail to do this because they are ignorant of how complete the work in Christ really is.

Passing from Shadow to Substance

In order to help us reach His intended end, God will sometimes initiate discipline to correct our views and actions that carry us in a direction that is contrary to His reality. We should work with Him to discipline ourselves, to only agree with the Word of God and disavow all suggestions that we are still separate. But when we continue to walk in the darkness of earth understanding, we are not just violating truth as law-breakers; we violate reality because we live in false and shadowy conditions. We must understand that we are not just trying to overcome false conditions but to awake to reality. We must be "alive unto God" (see Rom. 6:11) and not just aware of His existence. The God we are alive unto is the One in Whom we live, move, and have our being (Acts 17:28). This is the center of Life. A bad past or an unsure future has no power in Christ. You are not just living in the moment or the present at every given moment, but you live in the reality of another Life. In Him is no sense of lack, only fullness.

The Jesus we are to be involved with is the one that is from above. Jesus told us to take no thought for earth life but to set our affections on the ABOVE (Col. 3:1-4). This same passage goes on to say, "For ye are dead..." What the dead need to do in order to get free

from the stench and corruption of death is bury the dead. We are the dead, who are reacting to our own stench and trying to find the right formula that will keep us from appearing and smelling as though we were dead. We need to bury the dead (ourselves) with Christ. Then we need to allow another Life, that of Christ, to stand as our fragrance before God. He becomes a sweet savor. This is the answer. The heavens become greater over the earth when you let the heavens rule. Until that time, the gravity of the earth will be too strong.

How do we make Jesus the Head? The answer is to discover that the mind is in the Head. When His mind sweeps through every part of the Body, then He is Head. If we allow perceptions, circumstances, or reasonings to gain the supremacy, then Jesus is our Redeemer but not our Head. When this happens, you have fallen under the dominion of the senses.

God's great goal is to get us to pass from this earth plane into the heavenly sphere. This is not just a future goal but how Christians should order their lives now. The victory that makes it possible to do this truly is like a death, where you become dead to the world (see Gal. 6:14). A new dawning comes where that which is in part shall be done away (see I Cor. 13:8-12). The application of God reaches into the earth and consumes our earth lives but brings forth the ascended Christ that pleases the Father. In other words, the fire descends to burn up so that a sweet savor of Christ is all that remains — and all that ascends.***