

**THE ONE NEW MAN
FULFILLING GOD'S PURPOSE IN CREATING MAN**

(Thursday—Evening Session)

Message Three

The Creation and Bringing Forth of the One New Man

Scripture Reading: Eph. 1:9, 11; 3:9; 2:15-16; 4:22-24

- I. “The co-workers and the elders, who take the lead in the Lord’s recovery, must realize that the Lord’s recovery is resting upon their shoulders. What the recovery will be depends upon what they will be” (*The Collected Works of Witness Lee, 1994–1997*, vol. 4, “The Divine and Mystical Realm,” p. 99):**
- A. “I am quite concerned for all the co-workers and elders. It may be that a good number of them do not have a complete understanding of what the Lord’s recovery is” (p. 92).
 - B. “Regarding the Lord’s present recovery, I hope that none of you would be held back by your old theology or by your old understanding of the recovery” (p. 93).
 - C. In the last days of this age, before the Lord will be able to return, we must see the vision of the one Body and the one new man—1 Cor. 12:12; Eph. 4:4; 2:15-16; 4:24.
 - D. The church, the Body of Christ, is the one new man to accomplish God’s eternal purpose—1:9, 11; 3:9; Rom. 8:29; 2 Tim. 1:9; Eph. 2:15-16; 4:22-24:
 - 1. The emphasis on the church being the Body of Christ is on life, whereas the emphasis on the church being the one new man is on the person.
 - 2. As the Body of Christ, the church needs Christ as its life; as the one new man, the church needs Christ as its person.
 - E. The Bible reveals that the one new man is a corporate, universal man—Eph. 2:15; 4:24; Col. 3:10-11:
 - 1. We, the believers in Christ, are all one with Christ to be the new man; thus, we all are parts, components, of the corporate one new man.
 - 2. The one new man is a corporate God-man, the aggregate of all the God-men; when we put all the God-men together, we have the one new man.
- II. The new man as the poem, the masterpiece, of God was created through Christ’s death on the cross—Eph. 2:10, 15-16:**
- A. We need to pay careful attention to two phrases in verse 15: *in His flesh* and *in Himself*:
 - 1. “In His flesh” Christ terminated all the negative things in the universe: Satan, the devil, the enemy of God (Heb. 2:14); sin (Rom. 8:3; John 1:29); the flesh of fallen man (Gal. 5:24); the world, the cosmos, the evil system of Satan (John 12:31); the old creation, represented by the old man (Rom. 6:6); and the separating ordinances of the law (Eph. 2:15).
 - 2. “In Himself” as the sphere, element, and essence, Christ created the Jews and the Gentiles into one new man:

- a. Christ is not only the Creator of the one new man, the church, but also the sphere in which and the element and essence with which the new man was created.
- b. He is the very element and essence of the one new man, making God's divine nature one entity with humanity—cf. Col. 3:10-11.
- B. In the creating of the new man, first our natural man was crucified by Christ, and then through the crossing out of the old man, Christ imparted the divine element into us, causing us to become a new entity, a new invention of God—Rom. 6:6; 2 Cor. 5:17.
- C. The one new man created through the creating death of Christ equals the Body formed in Christ's resurrection and ascension; hence, *the one new man* and *the Body* are synonymous terms and may be used interchangeably—Eph. 2:15-16; Col. 2:19; 3:10-11.

III. On the cross Christ created the new man in Himself by abolishing in His flesh the law of the commandments in ordinances, the middle wall of partition—Eph. 2:14-15a:

- A. The law spoken of in 2:15 is not the law of the moral commandments but the law of ritual commandments, such as the ordinances of circumcision, keeping the Sabbath, and eating certain foods.
- B. Ordinances are the forms or ways of living and worship, which create enmity and division:
 - 1. On the cross Christ abolished all the regulations regarding living and worship, regulations that have divided the nations—v. 15; Col. 2:14.
 - 2. From the time of Babel, mankind has been divided by ordinances concerning the ways of living and worship; in God's economy in the church life, we must overcome Babel—Gen. 11:1-9.
 - 3. Due to man's fall there are many ordinances, many customs, habits, ways to live, and ways to worship; all these differences among peoples have divided, scattered, and confused mankind.
 - 4. One of the main elements of ordinances is language; our very language can become an ordinance:
 - a. On the day of Pentecost the divisions caused by language were overcome, and the church as the one new man came into existence—Acts 2:1-11.
 - b. If we can overcome the difficulty presented by language, a great part of our problem with ordinances will be solved—6:1 and footnote 1.

IV. The more we are in the mingled spirit, in the mingling of the divine Spirit with the human spirit, the more we shall be set free from ordinances in order to bring forth the one new man—Eph. 2:18, 22; 4:23-24; 6:18:

- A. The cross abolished the ordinances in order to give place to the Spirit, in whom we have access unto the Father—2:18:
 - 1. If we have ordinances, we do not have the Spirit, but if we have the Spirit, we shall not have ordinances:
 - a. The church life does not consist of ordinances but of the living Spirit.
 - b. The church is the reprint of the Spirit—Zech. 4:2-6.
 - c. "No Spirit, no church. More Spirit, more church"—1 Cor. 12:13; Eph. 4:4.

2. As long as we are not in the Spirit, anything we do is an ordinance—cf. 2 Cor. 3:6.
- B. “Neither is circumcision anything nor uncircumcision, but a new creation is what matters”—Gal. 6:15:
1. The only thing that matters is the new man as the new creation, the masterpiece of life with the divine nature—v. 15; Eph. 2:10.
 2. To be a new creation is to have Christ wrought into our being—3:16-17.
 3. When Christ is realized through the Spirit in our spirit, we become the new creation, the new man—Gal. 6:18; Eph. 4:23-24.
- V. The goal of the Lord’s recovery is to bring forth the one new man—2:15; 4:22-24; Col. 3:10-11:**
- A. What was divided and scattered in the old man is recovered in the new man—Gen. 11:5-9; Acts 2:5-12; Col. 3:10-11:
1. In the old man, man was divided and scattered; in the new man, man is gathered and made one.
 2. In the world the more different and individualistic a person is, the better; this is contrary to God’s economy, which is to gather and to make one.
 3. To put off the old man is to put off the divided and scattered man; to put on the new man is to put on the gathered and one new man—Eph. 4:22, 24.
- B. Christ should be our only source; we should not allow anything of our background, culture, or nationality to be our source—cf. Col. 3:10-11:
1. The worldly people regard cultural differences as a source of prestige, but in Christ we have lost this prestige; now our only prestige is Christ and the genuine oneness.
 2. If we are willing to let go of our cultural pride, it will be possible for the Lord to have the proper church life.
- C. What the Lord has been doing and is now doing in His recovery is bringing forth the one new man with Himself as the life and the person for God’s expression—Eph. 3:17-19; Col. 3:4, 10-11.
- D. The one new man will usher in the kingdom of God and will bring Christ, the King, back to this earth—Rev. 11:15.
- E. Now is the time for God to accomplish His purpose to perfect the one new man, who will come into full existence on earth—Eph. 4:11-13, 24:
1. The world situation has been raised up for the goal of the one new man.
 2. Everything that the Lord is doing in the present age is to usher in the practical existence of the one new man.
 3. Because of the advances in technology, there is now the possibility that the saints in every locality in their environmental circumstances will become the one new man in reality and in practicality.
- F. When the one new man is perfected, that will be the time for the Lord’s coming, and the perfected new man will be the bride—Rev. 19:7.

Excerpts from the Ministry:

THE ABOLISHING OF THE ORDINANCES

When Christ died on the cross, not only did He deal with sins, the old man, Satan, and

the world; He also dealt with the ordinances. On the cross Christ abolished in His flesh the law of the commandments in ordinances. Therefore, by His death on the cross, Christ dealt with five categories of things: sins, the old man, Satan, the world, and the ordinances. It seems that very few Christians today talk about Christ's dealing with the ordinances, and I doubt that any books have been written on this subject. Most Christians think that all our problems concern sins, the old man, Satan, and the world. Many think that we are all right as long as these four things are dealt with. But not all the problems are solved, and we cannot be all right until the ordinances have been dealt with. The ordinances, the different ways of living and worshipping, had to be abolished by Christ on the cross so that He could create in Himself the one new man.

We have heard repeatedly that on the cross Christ accomplished redemption, destroyed the devil, judged the world, and crucified the self. But perhaps you have never heard that Christ's death on the cross was also for the creation of the one new man. In order to create the one new man, it was necessary for Christ to abolish the ordinances. By abolishing in His flesh the separating ordinances and by creating the Jewish and Gentile believers into one new man, Christ has made peace among all believers. The Jews and Gentiles were separated to the uttermost by the ordinances. But both peoples were created in Christ with the divine essence into one new entity, which is a corporate man, the church. Because no other Christians speak about the abolishing of the ordinances and the creating of the new man, we are very burdened to give a word concerning these things.

THE HIGHEST ASPECT OF THE CHURCH

Most believers recognize that the church is the *ekklesia*, the gathering or assembling of God's called people. The Brethren emphasized this aspect of the church and even translated the Greek word *ekklesia* into "assembly," which is an accurate rendering. This, however, is an even less than elementary understanding of the church. A somewhat more advanced concept of the church is that the church is God's household or family. An even higher understanding of the church is to see that the church is the Body of Christ. The highest understanding of the church is that the church is the one new man. These four concepts of the church are like four levels in the educational system: kindergarten, elementary, high school, and college. We need to advance from the kindergarten level of the church, that of the assembly, to the college level, that of the one new man.

The relationship among Christians in an assembly, a gathering, is not very close. It is much closer and more intimate among those in the family, the household. However, we are not only members of God's family but also members of the Body of Christ, where the relationship among the members is still closer. Those in the assembly and the members of a family may be separated from one another, but the members of the Body cannot be separated from the Body unless they are amputated. Wherever the Body goes, the members must go also; they have no choice. However, in the one new man the fellowship is even more intimate than in the Body. The new man is corporate and universal. There are many believers, but there is only one new man in the universe. All the believers are components of this one corporate and universal new man. May the Lord show us more light concerning the new man! We must admit that as yet we have not seen very much of this aspect of the church. The aspect of the church as the new man is a new discovery opened up in recent years. I believe that in the days to come the Lord will reveal more concerning the one new man.

The family is more intimate than the assembly, the Body is much higher than the family, and the new man is higher than the Body. Thus, with the new man we come to the highest aspect of the church. Although Christian teachers have spoken a great deal about the

assembly, the family, and the Body, hardly any have touched the matter of the one new man. This lack is evident in the deplorable translation of Ephesians 4:22 and 24 in the New American Standard Bible. Instead of using the word *man* in these two verses, this version says in verse 22 to “lay aside the old self” and in verse 24 to “put on the new self.” What a serious mistake this is in translation! The Revised Standard Version is also greatly in error by adopting the renderings, “put off your old nature” and “put on the new nature.” These errors came in because the translators responsible for them did not have the proper concept or knowledge. W. E. Vine, however, had some understanding of this matter. In his *Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words*, he says that the new man in 4:24 is the church because it is the very new man mentioned in 2:15. Because the new man is created of two peoples, the Jewish and Gentile believers, it must be a corporate entity.

The Lord has no way to accomplish His purpose until He has this new man on earth. The situation among today’s Christians is far short of God’s goal. Although there is much talk about the Body, not many have a proper understanding of the Body. Furthermore, Christians rarely even speak of the one new man. How crucial it is that this aspect of the church be fully recovered!

GOD’S INTENTION TO HAVE A CORPORATE MAN

In order to see the one new man, we need to have a proper understanding of the old man. Before exhorting us to put on the new man, Paul tells us to put off the old man (4:22). After creating heaven and earth, God created man, not merely as an individual but as a collective entity. Genesis 1:26 speaks of man both in the singular and in the plural: “And God said, Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; and let them have dominion...” This reveals that God’s intention has always been to have one collective man. The corporate man created by God was damaged through the fall, and there is now the need for God to have a new man. In order to produce this new man, Christ had to deal not only with sin, the fallen nature of the old man, Satan, and the world, but as we have pointed out, He also had to abolish the ordinances. What most frustrates God from gaining the new man is ordinances. When Christ was crucified on the cross, our sins, our old man, Satan, and the world were not the only things crucified; all the ordinances were crucified also. The crucifixion of the ordinances was not for forgiveness, holiness, victory over Satan, or the imparting of life; rather, it was absolutely for the creation of the one new man.

We are familiar with such verses as John 1:1 and 3:16, but we are not familiar with Ephesians 2:15. This verse says, “Abolishing in His flesh the law of the commandments in ordinances, that He might create the two in Himself into one new man, so making peace.” When Christ’s flesh was nailed to the cross, He abolished the law of the commandments in ordinances so that He might create the two, the Jews and Gentiles, in Himself into one new man. When verse 15 is read along with verse 16, we see clearly that Christ abolished the ordinances through the cross and slew the enmity by the cross, not for the purpose of accomplishing redemption or of imparting life but for creating the Jews and the Gentiles into one new man.

CHRIST’S DEATH INVOLVING ALL OF CREATION

When Christ was nailed to the cross in the flesh, the entire old creation was involved, for all of creation was related to His flesh. According to Hebrews 10, Christ’s flesh was typified by the veil in the temple on which were embroidered cherubim, signifying the living creatures. Therefore, when Christ was nailed to the cross, the entire creation was nailed there with Him. Furthermore, when the veil in the temple was rent, the cherubim were rent also.

This signifies that when the flesh of Christ was crucified on the cross, all the creatures were crucified. This is the biblical understanding of the crucifixion.

If you ask an unbelieving Jew who it was that was crucified on the cross, he will answer, "The man Jesus of Nazareth." If you asked this question of a new believer, he would probably say that his Savior, Jesus Christ, died there. A more advanced Christian would reply that both he and the Savior were crucified on the cross. An even more advanced Christian would respond that the Savior, he himself, and the devil were all crucified on the cross. Other Christians, those even further advanced than these, would say that on the cross the Savior, the self, the devil, and the world were crucified. If we went on to inquire of a mature and enlightened Christian concerning who died on the cross, he would say that the Savior, the self, Satan, the world, and all the creatures were crucified there. If this question is addressed to us, we should include in our answer not only the five items already mentioned but also the ordinances. Christ's death terminated all of the old creation; every negative thing in the universe was terminated.

THE NEW MAN CREATED IN CHRIST

Christ abolished in His flesh the law of commandments in ordinances; but He did not create the new man in His flesh. No, in the flesh He terminated the negative things so that He might create the two, the Jews and the Gentiles, into one new man in Himself. The negative things were terminated in Christ's flesh, whereas the new man, which, of course, is positive, was germinated in Christ Himself. We need to pay careful attention to two phrases in Ephesians 2:15: *in His flesh* and *in Himself*. If I were to ask you where you are today, you should say, "First, I was in Christ's flesh; now I am in Christ Himself. In His flesh I was terminated on the cross, but in Christ Himself I was created as part of the one new man."

Christ did not stop with the termination of the negative things. As we have pointed out again and again, death is the threshold of resurrection; it ushers us into resurrection. Although Christ in the flesh was crucified on the cross, this death brought Him into resurrection. In resurrection He is no longer in the flesh; rather, He is the wonderful Spirit. It was in His flesh that we, the old man, were terminated, but it is in the wonderful Spirit that we have been created into the one new man. When our old man and our old nature were crucified, the ordinances related to our fallen nature were slain. Then in Christ's resurrection and in His wonderful Spirit, we were created into one new man. It does not seem reasonable to say that we were crucified before we were born. Nevertheless, it is a marvelous fact that we were terminated in the flesh of Christ on the cross. Moreover, before we were born, we were also created in the wonderful Spirit to be the one new man.

CHRIST AS THE ESSENCE OF THE NEW MAN

The phrase *in Himself* is very significant. It indicates that Christ was not only the Creator of the one new man, the church, but also the sphere in which and the essence with which the one new man was created. He is the very element of the new man. After we were terminated, in Him we received the new essence. Christ Himself became this new element to us. Nothing of our old man was good for the creation of the new man, for our former essence was sinful. But in Him there is a wonderful essence, in which the one new man has been created.

Christ created the one new man, the church, with God's nature wrought into humanity. This divine work was something new. In the old creation God did not work His nature into any of His creatures, not even into man. In the creation of the one new man, however, God's nature has been wrought into man to make His divine nature one entity with humanity.

**THE BATTLE FOR THE TRUTH
CONCERNING THE CREATION OF THE NEW MAN**

The demons and evil angels know that the one new man has been created in the divine essence. This fact terrifies them. For this reason, the demonic powers would try to keep Christians from seeing the fact of the creation of the one new man. Hence, we must fight the battle for this truth. We need to pray for a clear and sober mind to perceive that not only have we been terminated on the cross but that by means of this termination we have been transferred into Christ. In Christ, with His divine essence, we have been created into the one new man.

It is essential to believe that before we were born we were created into the one new man and that a new essence has been wrought into our being. If you believe that Christ died on the cross to take away your sins, then you must also believe that through His death you have been put into Him and that in Him you have been created, with His divine essence, into the new man. Have you ever heard before that in His crucifixion Christ terminated you in His flesh and then in His resurrection put you into Himself in order to create you, with the divine essence, into the new man? This concept is beyond our natural understanding. Nevertheless, according to the Word, it is a fact. If we read 2:15 carefully and with prayer, the light will come in. We shall see that we and all the creatures, signified by the cherubim on the veil, were crucified in the flesh of Christ on the cross. Since death ushers us into resurrection, in His resurrection Christ put us into Himself. Then with His divine essence He created us in Himself into the one new man.

Ephesians 2:15 does not say, "That He might create the two into one new man." Do not ignore the phrase *in Himself*. Apart from being in Him, we could not have been created into the new man, because in ourselves we do not have the divine essence, which is the element of the new man. Only in the divine essence and with the divine essence were we created into the new man. It is possible to have this essence only in Christ. In fact, Christ Himself is this essence, this element. Hence, in Himself Christ created the two into one new man. We all need to be profoundly impressed with the fact that we, the believers, have been created into one new man in Christ. (*Life-study of Ephesians*, pp. 205-212)