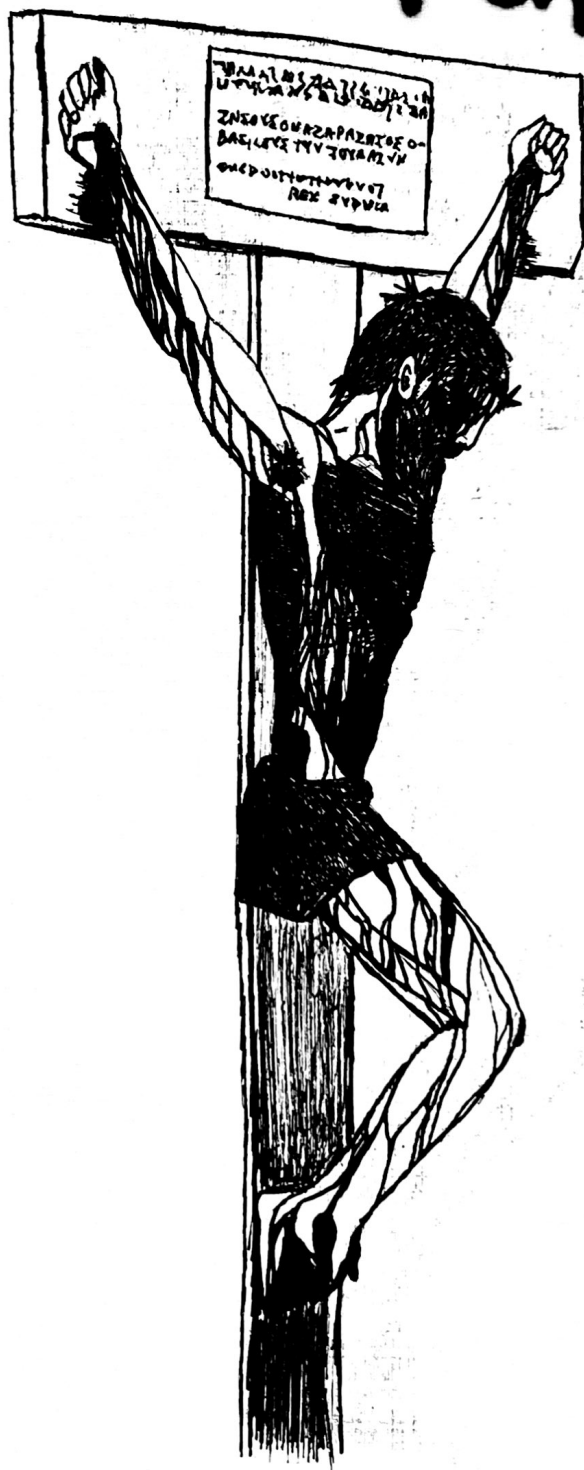


# Christocentricity Papers



... JESUS CHRIST

AND HIM CRUCIFIED! (1 COR. 2:2)

Truly dear brethren,

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and Christ Jesus the Lord.

"Christocentricity Papers" are a collection of written teachings, handed out each Lord's day throughout 1997 and 1998 at Lord Jesus Christ Assembly in Indiana, Pennsylvania, U.S.A. Each week I would write out a brief teaching for the furtherance of a Christ-oriented way of thinking in the hearts of the saints in our church. They are here offered in a hope that a Christ-centered focus will be ministered to an even wider audience, and toward the confirmation of such Christocentricity in the souls who have already read them.

for the glory of the Father through  
Jesus Christ the Son,

Timothy Metcalf  
Timothy Metcalf



## THE TESTIMONY OF JESUS CHRIST

Grace, mercy, peace, and love be multiplied to you from God our Father and from the LORD JESUS CHRIST, our Saviour and Hope, in truth and love. This above grace and peace be multiplied to you all through the knowledge of God and of JESUS our LORD, the Son of the Father (II Pet. 1:2)!

Blessed be the God and Father of our LORD JESUS CHRIST, who is the Father of mercies and God of all comfort (II Cor. 1:3), who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenlies in CHRIST (Eph. 1:3), and who, in accordance with His abundant mercy, has begotten us again to a living hope through the resurrection of JESUS CHRIST from the dead (I Pet. 1:3)!

This is the first of a series of teachings in which we, as an assembly of the CHRIST, will receive doctrine designed to further promote our orientation to the LORD JESUS CHRIST in all things. As an undershepherd of the Arch-Shepherd (I Pet. 5:1-4), I am purposely structuring these instructions to establish you in "LORD JESUS CHRIST doctrine", and "LORD JESUS CHRIST orientation." Because this vein of teaching seeks to promote the primacy of the LORD JESUS CHRIST in every dimension of our lives on earth before His coming, I am titling these writings "Christocentricity Papers." I have prayed that each and every one of you would experience that most blessed state of Christocentricity wherein our great God and saviour JESUS CHRIST (Titus 2:13), the only mediator between God and men, does indeed dwell in our hearts through the faith (Eph. 3:17), and has preeminence in all things (Col. 1:18) in truth and our experience. Because I have desired to emphasize the LORD JESUS CHRIST in these communications, and always, I have also chosen to emphasize Him in the use of capitalization of all the letters of His titles and name ("LORD", "JESUS", and "CHRIST"). This first of the Christocentricity Papers is on "The Testimony of JESUS CHRIST."

In Rev. 1:2, 1:9, and 12:17 we see the gospel of the glory of the blessed God (the good news of the bodily resurrection of the Son of God. ) and the mystery of the faith referred to as "the testimony of JESUS CHRIST."

In the latter two of these references, this witness of the truth in CHRIST is seen to have resulted in persecution. The testimony of our LORD in the good confession of His Messiahship, and the entirety of the faith which is in CHRIST JESUS has always brought about persecution to those who would live Godly in Him.

What exactly is "The Testimony of JESUS CHRIST"? It is a term broad enough to refer to all the truth of God our Saviour, but may be understood in two categories: those of 1) Gospel-material relative to salvation, and 2) The totality of wholesome words- the words of our LORD JESUS CHRIST. The testimony (witness) of JESUS CHRIST thus is the gospel preached to the lost, and doctrine taught to the saved. We can thus refer to the testimony of JESUS CHRIST

## STARTING RIGHT

The volume of the book (Hebrews 10:7) is about MESSIAH. This means that each book of the book is in some manner concerning JESUS also. This paper is about the beginning of one of those books, and thus this brief teaching must, of necessity, also be regarding JESUS CHRIST, to whom belongs both the glory and the dominion into the age of the ages (I Peter 4:11b).

When the apostle Paul wrote to the Corinthian assembly what is now referred to as "First Corinthians", he knew that he was addressing an assembly fraught with spiritual problems. In chapters one and three he spoke of divisions, in chapter five of a man who had his father's wife, and the tolerance of the church in its permitting this sin to continue, in chapter six brothers taking brothers to court, in chapter seven confusion about marriage, divorce, celibacy and singleness, in chapter eight the issue of causing brethren to stumble through abuse of liberty, in chapter eleven irreverence toward the LORD'S table and insulting the poor, not discerning the LORD'S body, and in chapter fifteen some taught that there was no resurrection of the dead.

How would our brother begin to address these dear saints in Corinth? It would be imperative for him to "start right." This he does in I Corinthians 1:1-9. Note the CHRISTOCENTRICITY of the verses in this passage:

- 1:1 Paul tells of what kind of an apostle he was: an apostle of CHRIST!
- 1:2 He reveals the sphere of our sanctification to be the LORD JESUS CHRIST, and teaches that the communion of faith is in CHRIST JESUS.
- 1:3 CHRIST JESUS OUR LORD is the origin of grace and peace, along with God the Father.
- 1:4,5 LORD CHRIST is the source of gifting-grace.
- 1:7 The anticipation of the appearing of LORD MESSIAH
- 1:9 The essence of our summons is to fellowship with the LORD JESUS.

The holy spirit, through Paul, then began to address the situation at Corinth, beginning with the problem of disunity, by reference to "the name of our LORD JESUS CHRIST (v. 10), in other words, "in light of all that is represented by MESSIAH JESUS" or "in accordance with all truth, which is our LORD JESUS CHRIST."

In all our works, thoughts, and endeavors, let us seek to "start right", beginning with the LORD JESUS CHRIST and giving Him first place in everything (Colossians 1:18).

For the sake of the name,  
Timothy

## CHRIST, Our Blessing

Eph. 1:3 says "Blessed is the God and Father of our LORD JESUS CHRIST, who blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenlies with CHRIST"(LITV). Thus, in a real sense, the LORD JESUS CHRIST, Himself is all of these blessings in the heavenlies. "If then, you were raised with CHRIST, seek the things above, where CHRIST is sitting at the right of God"(Col. 3:1 LITV). In accordance with this verse, let us consider some of these blessings that the LORD JESUS CHRIST is.

Our salvation is in the LORD JESUS CHRIST - "But now in CHRIST JESUS you who then were afar off came to be near by the blood of CHRIST"(Eph. 2:13 LITV). Part of all that is involved in our salvation is justification. It is found in the LORD JESUS CHRIST - "Knowing that a man is not justified by works of law, but through faith in JESUS CHRIST - we also believed in CHRIST JESUS, that we may be justified by faith in CHRIST, and not by works of law, because all flesh will not be justified by works of law"(Gal. 2:16 LITV). Another aspect of our salvation, namely, the mercy of regeneration, is in the LORD JESUS CHRIST - "Blessed be the God and Father of our LORD JESUS CHRIST, He according to His great mercy having regenerated us to a living hope through the resurrection of JESUS CHRIST from the dead"(I Peter 1:3 LITV).

Our doctrine is the LORD JESUS CHRIST. See this in the following verses: "I, even your brother John, and co-sharer in the affliction, and in the kingdom and patience of JESUS CHRIST, came to be in the island being called Patmos because of the word of God, and because of the witness of JESUS CHRIST"(Rev. 1:9), "Everyone transgressing and not abiding in the teaching of CHRIST does not have God. The one abiding in the teaching of CHRIST, this one has the Father and the Son"(II Jn.9). I Pet. 1:11 speaks of the Old Testament prophets "searching for what, or what sort of time the Spirit of CHRIST made clear within them; testifying beforehand of the sufferings belonging to CHRIST, and the glories after these"(LITV).

Life is in the LORD JESUS CHRIST, as Paul wrote in II Tim. 1:1 - "Paul, an apostle of JESUS CHRIST by the will of God, according to the promise of life which is in CHRIST JESUS"(LITV).

Paul wrote to the church at Corinth of how our sanctification is in the LORD JESUS CHRIST - "To the church of God existing in Corinth, those having been sanctified in CHRIST JESUS, called-out saints, with all those calling on the name of our LORD JESUS CHRIST in every place, both theirs, and ours"(I Cor. 1:2 LITV).

The blessing of partaking of the body and blood of the LORD JESUS CHRIST, seen in the Lord's supper, is for those in the CHRIST according to I Cor. 10:16 - "The cup of blessing that we bless, is it not a partaking of the blood of CHRIST? The bread which we break, is it not a partaking of the body of CHRIST?"(LITV).

Sufferings which produce good (Rom. 8:28), as well as consolation in those difficulties are in the LORD JESUS CHRIST in II Cor. 1:5 - "Because the sufferings of CHRIST abound in us, so also our comfort abounds through CHRIST"(LITV).

The judgement of the old man (Rom. 6:6), and walking in newness of life (Rom. 6:4) through faith is spoken of as in our LORD JESUS CHRIST in Gal. 2:20 - "I have been crucified with CHRIST; and I live, yet no longer I, but CHRIST lives in me, and that life I now live in the flesh, I live by faith toward the Son of God, the One loving me and giving himself over on my behalf"(LITV).

I encourage and exhort all of us to have the same attitude as Paul when he said,"But nay, rather I count all things to be loss because of the excellency of the knowledge of CHRIST JESUS MY LORD for whose sake I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them to be trash, that I might gain CHRIST"(Phil. 3:8), "so that the name of our LORD JESUS CHRIST may be glorified in you, and you in Him, according to the grace of our God and of the LORD JESUS CHRIST"

(II Thess. 1:12).

The LORD JESUS CHRIST is our hope (I Tim. 1:1).

The LORD JESUS CHRIST is the way, the truth, and the life (Jn. 14:6).

The LORD JESUS CHRIST is our wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption (I Cor. 1:30).

The LORD JESUS CHRIST is our peace (Eph. 14).

Don't grow weary in doing good (Gal. 6:9)," but grow in grace and knowledge of our LORD AND SAVIOR JESUS CHRIST. To Him be the glory, both now and to the day of eternity, Amen"(II Pet. 3:18 LITV).

In CHRIST,  
Timothy

the resurrection of CHRIST was the very subject and essence of the apostolic gospel. Verse 16 reaffirms the conclusion that if the dead are not raised, then the LORD JESUS CHRIST wasn't risen. In verse 17 faith in a dead Jesus is foolish. Verse 18 explains that if the LORD JESUS were not risen, it follows that those who have died in our faith are unsaved. Truly, as verse 19 relates, if we only believe in this life (and that belief a lie) we are the most miserable and pitiable of all humankind.

Praise God! Verse 20 proclaims the gospel of the glory of the blessed God: "But now CHRIST has been raised from the dead; He became the firstfruit of those having fallen asleep." (LITV)

"Now the God of peace, He leading up out of the dead, the great shepherd of the sheep, in the blood of the everlasting covenant, our LORD JESUS, perfect you in every good work, to do His will, doing in you that which is pleasing in His sight, through JESUS CHRIST, to whom be the glory forever and ever. Amen." (Heb. 13:20,21)

"Grace be with you all." (Heb. 13:25)

Timothy

Christocentricity paper #4- 4th Lord's day in January 1997

## CHRISTOCENTRIC QUOTES

Have you ever felt that, as a Christocentric believer, you and your church were the only ones who shared this focus on the centrality of CHRIST? Be honest. As you move about in different Christian circles, and come into contact with saints from other assemblies, haven't you been tempted at times to consider our church to be the last outpost of a dying breed of Christ-centered gatherings? If so, you have seen the reality of the apostacy of these last days. But could you not have been also a partaker of "the Elijah syndrome"? What is "the Elijah syndrome", you may ask. It is expressed in the words "I alone am left" in IKings 19:10 & 14. " But what does the divine answer say to him, 'I reserved to myself seven thousand men who did not bow a knee to Baal'" (Rom. 11:4 LITV referring to IKings 19:18). I assure you that God have His SON-centralized saints out there! Here are some Quotes of disciples for your edification. Some of these brothers you may have heard of before, others may be new names to you. Enjoy!

"The most important doctrine or teaching of the church is none other than 'JESUS CHRIST! So many churches, in the worthy explanation of scripture sometimes begin to place their primary emphasis upon other things, or various aspects of scripture or doctrine. Obviously, every church should teach and proclaim the 'whole council' and the broad scope of God's word- but as it relates to JESUS. You see, JESUS is the focal point of all doctrinal teaching. He is the intersection at which all teachings converge." - Dale A. Robbins from the book What People Ask About the Church.

"First, I believe all the bible is given to reveal CHRIST. The bible is first of all a tree of life to point us to CHRIST. . . - so I plead of Christocentric exegesis. At least I am guilty of striving for it" - James B. Jordan in Apologia on Reading the Bible.



## GOD'S REVELATION

"And the Word became flesh, and tabernacled among us. And we beheld His glory, glory as of an only-begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth" (Jn 1:14 LITV)

Our God and Father is a verbal God- a God who expresses Himself in word. His ultimate Word is a personal Word. The LORD JESUS CHRIST, the personal Word of God Himself is the embodiment of deity, naturally full of veracity and graciousness. He is God's revelation, our recognition of God, and His self-expression, clothed in human flesh. The LORD JESUS CHRIST, being deity, the Son, has become the disclosure of God (Jn. 14:7-9). The LORD JESUS CHRIST is the grand summit of God's revelation (Heb. 1:1,2), God's most precious gift (IICor. 9:15), and our glorious master (IITim. 2:21). The LORD JESUS CHRIST is the "All truth" that the spirit leads us into (Jn. 16:13 cf. Jn. 14:6; Eph. 4:20,21; Gal.3:1).

"The grace of our LORD JESUS CHRIST be with you all.  
Amen."

Timothy

Christocentricity Paper #6 - 2nd Lord's day in February 1997

who will yet believe in our LORD and God JESUS CHRIST and in His Father who raised Him from the dead.

-Polycarp, overseer in Smyrna from his letter to the church in Philippi (about A.D. 110)

"The church, though dispersed throughout the whole world, even to the ends of the earth has received from the apostles and their disciples this faith: in one God, the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven, and earth, and the sea, and all things that are in them; and in one CHRIST JESUS, the Son of God, who became incarnate for our salvation; and in the Holy Spirit, who proclaimed through the prophets the dispensations of God, and the advents, and the birth from a virgin, and the passion, and the resurrection from the dead, and the ascension into heaven in the flesh of the beloved CHRIST JESUS OUR, LORD, and His manifestation from heaven in the glory of the Father to gather all things in one', and to raise up anew all flesh of the whole human race, in order that to CHRIST JESUS, OUR LORD, and God, and Savior, and King, according to the will of the invisible Father, every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth, and that every tongue should confess to Him. . ."

- Irenaeus, overseer in Lyons from his treatise "Against Heresies" (about 200 A.D.)

One value of these quotes to us in the latter times of the last days (I Tim. 4:1), is in relation to a particular objection voiced by the pseudo-intellectual side of the vinfidels of our day. They tell us that the doctrine of the diety of CHRIST was not formulated or believed by the church until the Council of Nicea in 325 A.D. All of the quotations are well before 325, and they all quite clearly set forth the diety of JESUS.

Of course the scriptures are earlier than these writings, but the unbelievers of pseudo-intellectual bent argue that the church never interpreted the scriptures as



## CHRISTIAN WALK

In 2Tim. 2:19 we read, "However, the foundation of God stands firm, having this seal, 'the Lord knew those being His;' also, 'let everyone naming the name of CHRIST depart from unrighteousness.'" (LITV) In 2Tim. 3:12 it says "and, indeed all desiring to live Godly in CHRIST JESUS will be persecuted." (LITV)

In these two verses from the same epistle, we see two sides of the same coin, flipsides of one concept. Positively stated, the holy walk of a believer is "to live Godly in CHRIST JESUS." Negatively stated, it is to "depart from unrighteousness."

Our Christocentricity should result in these two components of the sanctified life. When we name the name of CHRIST it is our "reasonable service" (Rom. 12:1) to leave iniquity behind. We likewise, don't desire to simply stop sinful habits and acts, but are motivated to do good. This is "to live Godly in CHRIST JESUS." Notice that the realm or sphere in which this upright life is made possible is CHRIST JESUS. Because we name the name of CHRIST we want to live Godly in Him.

love in CHRIST,

Timothy

CHRIST JESUS, OUR LORD AND SAVIOR

"Grace, mercy, and peace from God the Father and CHRIST JESUS our Lord." (2Tim 1:25 LITV)

In the Scripture CHRIST JESUS is taught to be our Lord and saviour (2 Pet 3:18).

The resurrection of CHRIST JESUS proved Him to be Lord in that the resurrection was the Father's declaration that JESUS is the Son of God (Rom. 1:4). The word "Lord" is a title for deity, and so is the term "Son of God". In that CHRIST JESUS was declared to be the Son of God by the resurrection from the dead, He was thus also declared to be Lord (Acts 2:36).

CHRIST JESUS OUR LORD is also our saviour. He has saved us from the death of the lake of fire (Rev. 20:14), the death of ignorance of God (Jn 17:3), and the death of being dominated by sin (Rom. 8:13). "For in that He died, He died to sin once for all; but in that He lives, He lives to God. So also you, count yourselves to be truly dead to sin, but alive to God, in CHRIST JESUS OUR LORD." (Rom. 6:10,11 LITV) "For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is everlasting life in CHRIST JESUS OUR LORD." (Rom. 6:23 LITV). "For I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature will be able to separate us from the love of God in CHRIST JESUS OUR LORD", "according to the eternal purpose which He accomplished in CHRIST JESUS OUR LORD." (Eph. 3:11 LITV)

Your elder,

Timothy

## LORD JESUS CHRIST ORIENTATION

LORD JESUS CHRIST orientation is the state of being CHRIST- centered in all things. It is a synonym for "christocentricity."

LORD JESUS CHRIST orientation in teaching of the Scripture results in LORD JESUS CHRIST doctrine. This is teaching from the perspective that all Scripture is, in some way or another, a manifestation of the LORD JESUS CHRIST (Lk. 24:25-27; Lk. 24:44-46; Jn. 1:1; Jn. 1:14; Jn. 5:39; Jn. 14:6; Acts 28:31; Rom. 6:17; I Cor. 1:24; I Cor. 1:30; I Cor. 2:2; II Cor. 2:17; II Cor. 3:18; Gal. 3:1; Eph. 4:20,21; Col. 1:18; Col. 1:24-28; Col. 2:2,3; Col. 2:8; Col. 3:16; I Tim. 3:15-4:1; I Tim. 6:3; Heb. 1:1,2; Heb. 4:12,13; Heb. 13:7-9; I Pet. 1:10,11; I Jn. 1:1-3; II Jn. 9; Rev. 1:2; Rev. 1:9; Rev. 12:17; Rev. 19:10; Rev. 19:13). In the LORD JESUS CHRIST epoch, which is that period of time since the onset of the last days with the incarnation, that God has heightened CHRIST-consciousness in His saints (Jn. 1:14; Jn. 1:18; Heb. 1:1,2), truly sound doctrine is utterly Christocentric!

LORD JESUS CHRIST orientation doesn't only apply to doctrine, however. It is pervasive into all areas of life (Eph. 4:15; Eph. 3:17; Phil. 1:21; Phil. 3:3; Col. 1:18; Col. 2:6,7; Col. 3:1; Col. 3:4; Col. 3:17; Col. 3:23; I Thes. 1:9,10; Titus 2:13; Heb. 9:28; I Jn. 3:3)

The LORD JESUS CHRIST-orientated believer will be christagapic (loving the LORD JESUS CHRIST with agape-dedication)- Eph. 6:24.

The LORD JESUS CHRIST-oriented believer will be christophilic (loving the LORD JESUS CHRIST with phileo-appreciation of affection)- I Cor. 16:22.

Finally, the believer with LORD JESUS CHRIST orientation will be christodoxic (glorifying the LORD JESUS CHRIST)- II Thes. 1:12.

for CHRIST

Timothy

## CHRISTOCENTRICITY OF DAYS GONE BY

As in a past installment of these Christocentricity Papers, I quoted to you the statements of other Christ-centered believers, this week I would like to do the same. This time, however, all of our quotations will be from the writings of overseers of the church of JESUS CHRIST in the earliest eras of this age. Drink in this pure LORD JESUS CHRIST teaching found in these specimens of early Christianity:

"I glorify JESUS CHRIST, the God who made you so wise, for I observed that you are established in an unshakable faith, having been nailed, as it were, to the cross of the LORD JESUS CHRIST in both body and spirit, and firmly established in love by the blood of CHRIST, totally convinced with regard to our Lord that He is truly of the family of David with respect to human descent, Son of God with respect to the divine will and power, truly born of a virgin, baptized by John in order that all righteousness might be fulfilled by Him, truly nailed in the flesh for us under Pontius Pilate and Herod the tetrarch (from it's fruit we derive our existence, that is, from His divinely blessed suffering), in order that He might raise a banner for the ages through His resurrection for His saints and faithful people, whether among Jews or among Gentiles, in the one body of His church."

-Ignatius, overseer in Antioch of Syria in his letter to the church at Smyrna (about 110 A.D.)

"Now may the God and Father of our LORD JESUS CHRIST, and the eternal High Priest himself, the Son of God JESUS CHRIST, build you up in faith and truth and in all gentleness and in all freedom from anger and forbearance and forbearance and steadfastness and patient endurance and purity, and may He give to you a share and a place among His saints, and to us with you, and to all those under heaven

teaching the diety of JESUS before that time. Obviously they did!

The other value of these statements is in the very soul-nourishing Christocentricity of the teaching itself.

With purpose of heart, continue with the LORD!

(See Acts 11:28)

Tim

Christocentricity Paper # 12- 4th Lord's day in March 1997

## CHRIST, THE PREACHING

Grace, mercy, peace from God our Father, and the LORD JESUS CHRIST our Saviour.

While it is acceptable and indeed true to say that the apostles preached the truth, it is more specific to say that they preached the gospel. It is, however even more accurate to say that they preached the LORD JESUS CHRIST! The person of the LORD JESUS CHRIST is the essential crux, the most central reality, the very point of the evangelistic proclamation which the apostles delivered to their unsaved listeners.

Look up the following scripture references: Acts 8:5; Acts 9:20; Acts 19:13; I Cor. 1:23; II Cor. 1:19; II Cor. 4:5; Phil. 1:15; Acts 5:42; Acts 8:35; Acts 11:20; Gal 1:16; Eph. 3:8.

In each of the above verses the scripture reveals that the essence of our good news is the revelation of a person—the LORD JESUS CHRIST.

As we evangelize, it should be very apparent to the hearers that we are not speaking about a religious philosophy or spiritual rhetoric. It should be obvious that our speech concerns the LORD JESUS CHRIST.

It may be, though, that the hearer still does not perceive the "bull's eye" of our message because our gospel remains veiled to their heart because of the blinding program of the god of this age (II Cor. 4:3,4). If our gospel is veiled, let it not be because we have failed to clearly present the person of our gospel, the LORD JESUS CHRIST.

Your brother in CHRIST JESUS,

Timothy

## MIND - RENOVATION ACCORDING TO CHRIST

"And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God."  
(Rom. 12:2 NKJV)

"And be renewed in the spirit of your mind."  
(Eph. 4:23 NKJV)

In both of the above verses the concept of mind-renovation according to CHRIST is taught. When our minds are thinking with the newness of life (Rom. 6:4) that the LORD JESUS CHRIST is, we have life and peace (Rom. 8:6) ministered to our consciousness.

How does a believer obey the above verses? It is rather simple. One merely receives the teaching of Scripture and adjusts the thinking accordingly. The LORD JESUS CHRIST, as the Word become flesh (Jn. 1:14), will always be the substance of our repentance. "Repentance" is defined as a mental adjustment toward CHRIST. (The Greek word translated "repentance" is literally "change of mind.")

It is thus through an internalization of the Word that the new heart of a LORD JESUS CHRIST worldview is activated (Ezek. 36:26). So it is, that, through reflection, contemplation, and consideration of CHRIST (Heb. 3:1; Heb. 12:2,3) we have a heart monopolized by CHRIST, and CHRIST, Who is the Light, shines on us (Eph. 5:14).

It is the LORD JESUS CHRIST, as the Light, Who makes the renovation of the mind possible. Ps. 36:9b says "In Your light we see light." (NKJV) This means that in the LORD JESUS CHRIST we see, not just His Person, but all the individual thoughts that God has spoken on. "Light" is a transferred, communicated manifestation of the LORD JESUS CHRIST to our inner man. Light actuates the renewing of the mind because it is in God's Light (the LORD JESUS CHRIST) that we see more light. In other words, the various areas in which we still need transformation of soul are addressed in God's revelation of the Son. He has given us "the light

## INTERNAL TRUTH

In Ps. 15:2 we read, "He who walks uprightly, and works righteousness, and speaks the truth in his heart." (NKJV) This is part of God's own answer to the question of verse one: "LORD, who may abide in Your tabernacle? Who may dwell in Your holy hill?" (NKJV) Note the focus on "truth", and that, in the heart. Since the LORD JESUS CHRIST is the truth (Jn. 14:6), and all truth is in Him (Eph. 4:20,21), the blessedness of the man permitted abode in God's tabernacle and residence on His holy hill is conferred upon the one who speaks to himself concerning the LORD JESUS CHRIST in his meditation.

In Ps. 51:6 it reads, "Behold, You desire truth in the inward parts, and in the hidden part You will make me to know wisdom." (NKJV) Here, it is internal truth and wisdom that God desires for man. "Truth" here is the same Hebrew word as was found in Ps. 15:2. Wisdom is for the believer the LORD JESUS CHRIST (I Cor. 1:30; I Cor. 1:24; Col. 2:2,3) as well.

A new Testament equivalent thought is found in Gal. 4:19: "My little children, for whom I labor in birth again until Christ is formed in you." Notice where CHRIST is to be formed- "in you."

As we assimilate more and more LORD JESUS CHRIST doctrine (Scripture-teaching from the standpoint of the preeminence of CHRIST), we will receive the grace of a LORD JESUS CHRIST mindset, an active habit of consciously subjecting all thought to the Lordship of JESUS CHRIST. This is the ultimate New Testament application of our above Old Testament verses, and the meaning of the Galatians reference.

"The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all.  
Amen" (Rom. 16:24)

your brother in CHRIST JESUS,

Timothy

Christocentricity Paper # 15- 2nd Lord's day in April 1997



## HE WHO COMES IN THE NAME OF THE LORD

"Blessed is he who comes in the name of the LORD!"  
(Ps. 118:26a NKJV)

Who is this blessed one, coming in Yahweh's name? The LORD JESUS claimed to be this One when He applied this verse about the Messiah to Himself. He said, in Matt. 23:39, to the builders (Ps. 118:22; Matt. 23:13-36) in Jerusalem (Matt. 23:37,38) "for I say to you, you shall see me no more till you say 'Blessed is He who comes in the name of the LORD'" (NKJV).

Though JESUS was and is the Messiah, they rejected His blessedness by not recognizing (Jn. 1:10) or receiving Him (Jn. 1:11), "whom they killed by hanging on a tree" (Acts 10:39).

CHRIST'S words reveal that, in their case, they would realize His identity all too late (Rev. 1:7).

We who acknowledge JESUS to be the crucified Messiah (I Cor. 2:2) can say with joy "Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Yahweh!" as we await His coming to be in His presence, "looking for the blessed hope and glorious appearing of our great God and Saviour Jesus Christ." (Titus 2:13 NKJV)

"Now to Him who able to keep you from stumbling, and to present you faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy, To God our Saviour, who alone is wise, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and forever. Amen." (Jude 24,25)

Grace to you,

Timothy

## CHRIST AND THE CHURCH

"This is a great mystery but I speak concerning Christ and the Church." (Eph. 5: 32 NKJV)

After a discussion of marriage and the different roles and responsibilities of husband and wife, the apostle Paul wrote the words of this verse. He indicated, through the Spirit, that marriage is the visible revealing of a secret. God has couched within this divine institution, hidden, but now revealed truth concerning our LORD JESUS CHRIST. With this principle in mind, let us venture beyond this passage, applying this truth in JESUS (Eph. 4:20,21) to other statements about marriage "noted in the Scripture of Truth" (Dan. 10:21 NKJV).

In Gen. 2:18 God's words are recorded. The New King James Version translates them like this: "And the LORD God said 'It is not good that man should be alone; I will make him a helper comparable to him.'" The Modern King James Version translates thus: "And the LORD God said '[It is] not good that the man should be alone. I will make a suitable helper for him.'"

In I Cor. 11:9 we read these words: "Nor was man created for the woman, but woman for the man." (NKJV)

If we apply these to CHRIST and the Church, as Ephesians has allowed us to do, we see that the church was created in CHRIST JESUS (Eph. 2:10) for "the last Adam" (I Cor. 15:45), "the second Man" (I Cor. 15:47), "the heavenly Man" (I Cor. 15:48,49), "the Lord from heaven" (I Cor. 15:47), - the LORD JESUS CHRIST! The "body, which is the church" (Col. 1:24) was decreed by God the Father, purchased by God the Son, to be a suitable, comparable helper. This is part of our purpose on earth. It is to serve the LORD JESUS CHRIST, as His corresponding helper "of His flesh and of His bones" (Eph. 5:30b NKJV).

I observe that this fact often escapes the church of this era of the age. We often teach and preach as if the Man were made for the woman (that is, as if the greatest

purpose of the incarnation of God was anthropocentric). We talk like we believe that all CHRIST does, He does for us, when the higher truth is that all we do should be done for Him (Col. 3:17 & 23). Humanity has a Theocentric purpose (Isa. 43:7). May we lay hold of that for which CHRIST JESUS has also laid hold of us (Phil. 3:12)!

"Now this is the main point of the things we are saying" (Heb. 8:1 NKJV): We were made for the LORD JESUS CHRIST (See Col. 1:16)!

Your bondservant for JESUS' sake (2Cor.4:5),

Timothy

Christocentricity Paper #17- 4th Lord's day in April, 1997

## THE WORKS OF THE WORD

"<sup>4</sup>For the word of the LORD is right, and all His work is done in truth. <sup>5</sup>He loves righteousness and justice; The earth is full of the goodness of the LORD. <sup>6</sup>By the word of the LORD the heavens were made, and all the host of them by the breath of His mouth." (Ps. 33:4-6 NKJV)

The LORD JESUS CHRIST is the Word of God (Jn. 1:1; Jn. 1:14; Heb. 4:12,13; I Jn. 1:1; Rev. 19:13). Let us look back into the Old Covenant writings with this New Testament teaching and see Him in the above passage from the Psalms.

In verse four, mark how the LORD JESUS CHRIST has work, done in His diety, all in the truth of His own nature and character.

In verse five He is characterized by righteousness, justice, and goodness. He is Yahweh. (Isa. 40:3 cf. Mt. 3:3; Mk. 1:1-3; Lk. 3:4; and Rom. 10:6-13 cf. Joel 2:32)

In verse six we see, set before the eyes of our understanding (Eph. 1:18), the LORD JESUS CHRIST making the heavens and all that is in them. New Testament commentary on this verse is to be found in Jn. 1:1-3 and Col. 1:15,16, as well as Eph. 3:9 which shows that God made all things through His Word, the LORD JESUS CHRIST.

"My love be with you all in Christ Jesus. Amen.  
(I Cor. 16:24 NKJV)

Timothy

Christocentricity Paper #18- 1st Lord's day in May, 1997

## A CHRISTODOXIC PURPOSE

My beloved brethren, my joy and crown, let me pose a question to you all. What changes would take place in our lives individually, and in our assembly corporately, if we would consciously make 2 Thess. 1:12 the purpose for our every decision?

Here is the verse:

"that the name of our Lord Jesus Christ may be glorified in you, and you in Him, according to the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ."

(NKJV)

This verse is the motivation of Paul for a prayer that he prayed always for the church of the Thessalonians in God our Father and the LORD JESUS CHRIST (2 Thess. 1:1). The prayer is found in 2 Thess. 1:11 (the verse immediately preceding). This is a verse that, as a pastor under the Arch-shepherd, I pray for our assembly every day. It becomes increasingly urgent the closer we come to the coming of our LORD JESUS CHRIST and our gathering together to Him (2 Thess. 2:1).

Please spend some time today seriously thinking about our LORD JESUS CHRIST, and the wonderful possibilities of opportunity in Him, if we would indeed be so motivated.

"The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you"  
(I Cor. 16:23 NKJV)

Timothy

Christocentricity Paper #19- 2nd Lord's day in May, 1997

## THE IMMUTABLE CHRIST

"JESUS CHRIST the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever." (Heb. 13:8 KJV)

"Immutable" is a word that means "unchanging and unchangeable." Our verse for today presents the LORD JESUS CHRIST as being immutable.

Immutability is an attribute of God. Diety does not change. The LORD JESUS CHRIST is Diety, and therefore He does not change.

Our verse clearly sets forth CHRIST'S unchangeableness. This relates to His existing in the form of God. (Phil. 2:6) This does not mean, however, that He could not add something to Himself (such as the form of a servant in His humanity - Phil. 2:7). Nor does it mean that He could not do something in time that He hadn't effected before in His dealings with man. It does mean that His essence (diety), and nature (what He is like) are not subject to change.

That our LORD JESUS CHRIST doesn't change should be of great comfort to us. See what I mean in Mal.3:6 - "For I am the LORD, I do not change; Therefore you are not consumed, O sons of Jacob (NKJV). Do you see that the reason that Israel wasn't consumed was because God stays the same? Therein is the consolation. Our LORD JESUS CHRIST is immutably for us! This is why we have "everlasting consolation" as well as "good hope by grace" in 2 Thess. 2:16.

The immutability of CHRIST also affords us assurance of conviction. We never need wonder if the things we have learned about the LORD JESUS CHRIST are still true. Our confession remains intact with all of it's particulars: The LORD JESUS CHRIST is the Son of God! The LORD JESUS CHRIST has come in the flesh! The LORD JESUS CHRIST is God! The LORD JESUS is the CHRIST! The LORD JESUS CHRIST is risen from the dead! Amen.

Grace be with you,

Tim

## CHRIST, OUR SALVATION

Our salvation is "so great a salvation" (Heb. 2:3) precisely because the LORD JESUS CHRIST is our salvation (Ps. 118:21 - note preceding and following context). In it's broadest sense, our salvation is all that the LORD JESUS CHRIST has done for us in making us part of the people of God. Consider with me our salvation - riches in CHRIST JESUS:

We were washed in the LORD JESUS CHRIST, sanctified in the LORD JESUS CHRIST, and justified in the LORD JESUS CHRIST (1 Cor. 6:11).

We are called in the LORD JESUS CHRIST (Rom. 1:6).

We can thank God only through the LORD JESUS CHRIST (Rom. 1:8).

We are called saints in the LORD JESUS CHRIST and have through grace called upon the name of the LORD JESUS CHRIST (1 Cor. 1:2).

Grace was given us by CHRIST JESUS (1 Cor. 1:4).

All utterance and knowledge are given us in the LORD JESUS CHRIST. (1 Cor. 1:5b)

We have a blessed hope of the glorious appearing of our great God and Saviour JESUS CHRIST (Titus 2:13).

The kindness and love of God our Saviour toward us appeared by the LORD JESUS CHRIST (Titus 3:4).

The Holy Spirit has been poured out on us abundantly through the LORD JESUS CHRIST. (Titus 3:6)

The LORD JESUS CHRIST has made us heirs according to the hope of eternal life (Titus 3:7).

The LORD JESUS CHRIST had a purpose for us in grace before time began (2 Tim. 1:9).

Mercy and peace are from the LORD JESUS CHRIST ( 1 Tim. 1:2).

The name of our LORD JESUS CHRIST can be glorified by us according to the grace of our God and LORD JESUS CHRIST (2 Thess. 1:12).

In the name of the LORD JESUS CHRIST we gather with the

power of the LORD JESUS CHRIST (1 Cor. 5:4).

In the Lord's supper the cup of blessing is the communion is the communion of the blood of the LORD JESUS CHRIST and the bread which we break is the communion of the body of the LORD JESUS CHRIST (1 Cor. 10:16).

Being sons of God through faith in the LORD JESUS CHRIST, we have been baptized into the LORD JESUS CHRIST and have put on the LORD JESUS CHRIST, making us all one in the LORD JESUS CHRIST (Gal. 3:26-28).

We have liberty in the LORD JESUS CHRIST (Gal. 5:1).

In short, we have been enriched in every thing by the LORD JESUS CHRIST (1 Cor. 1:5a).

Praise and thank our LORD JESUS CHRIST!

The LORD JESUS CHRIST be with your spirits.

Timothy

Christocentricity Paper #21 - 4th Lord's day in May, 1997



## THE PRINCIPAL THING

"Wisdom is the principal thing; Therefore get wisdom. And in all your getting, get understanding." (Pro.4:7 NKJV)

The LORD JESUS CHRIST is the truth (Jn. 14:6). Wisdom is a manifestation of truth. It is part of all truth. As such, all wisdom is in truth, and since the LORD JESUS CHRIST is the truth, therefore all wisdom must be in Him. This is precisely what the Scripture says (Col. 2:2,3). Since wisdom is truth, and truth is in the LORD JESUS CHRIST (Eph. 4:20,21), we can say that the LORD JESUS CHRIST is wisdom (I Cor. 1:24 & 30).

Because the LORD JESUS CHRIST is the truth, we could do the same thing that we have done with wisdom and do this with all other spiritual things as well. For instance, since peace in the body between Jew and Gentile is a facet of truth, and truth is and is in the LORD JESUS CHRIST, then the LORD JESUS CHRIST is, in essence, our peace (Eph. 2:14). He is our righteousness (Jer. 23:6), sanctification, and redemption (I Cor. 1:30), and He has become our salvation (Ps. 118:14).

Of all of the areas of truth that the LORD JESUS CHRIST is, wisdom is said to be the "principal thing." As we seek God, and try to follow Him in all that He wants us to be, the area of prioritization within CHRIST which we should most intensively pursue is wisdom. We believers should desire to know all that is of the LORD JESUS CHRIST and then to "walk in Him" (Col.2:6), which is to experience the CHRIST in all that He is. But wisdom, as the principal thing, has been given a divine evaluation as most important.

Wisdom is the principal component of all that the person of the LORD JESUS CHRIST revealed to us is, because it is the ability in CHRIST to activate all the others. Wisdom is the ability to appropriate knowledge in application. Wisdom is CHRIST using the knowledge that He is to put to practice God's precepts and testimonies.

We all have wisdom, for all believers have the LORD JESUS CHRIST. The question here is the cultivation of an experiential knowledge of CHRIST through fellowship. We all have wisdom, but not all of us know the wisdom potentially utilized in maturity.

To illustrate, when you first believed (Rom. 13:11) you received wisdom , because you received CHRIST (Jn. 1:12; Col. 2:6), but as a babe in CHRIST (I Cor. 3:1) you were infantile in your understanding of Him. As we grow into Him in all things (Eph. 4:15), one of those things is wisdom, and we begin to "tap into" that which was ours in possession but not in realization.

Develop your perception of the LORD JESUS CHRIST as our wisdom!

Timothy

Christocentricity Paper #22 - 1st Lord's day in June 1997

## CHRISTOCENTRIC HIGHLIGHTS IN EPHESIANS

Note the heightened Christocentricity found in the Ephesian epistle:

Paul's apostleship was of JESUS CHRIST (1:1). The faithfulness and position of the saints is in CHRIST JESUS (1:1). Grace and peace come from the LORD JESUS CHRIST, as well as God our Father (1:2). God is designated as the God and Father of our LORD JESUS CHRIST (1:3). Our spiritual blessings in heavenly places are all in CHRIST (1:3). We were chosen in the LORD JESUS CHRIST (1:4) and we should live holy and without blame before Him (1:4). Our predestination to adoption as sons was by JESUS CHRIST (1:5). We have our acceptance before God in the LORD JESUS CHRIST (1:6). Through the grace of the LORD JESUS CHRIST, we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins (1:7). In the eschatological summation of God, heavenly and earthly things will be gathered together in CHRIST (1:10). Our inheritance is in the LORD JESUS CHRIST (1:11). CHRIST is the sphere of our sealing (1:13), God's power (1:20), and kindness (2:7). Our life, co-risen and co-seated in heavenly position is in CHRIST (2:5,6). The sphere of our re-creation is CHRIST Himself (2:10). It is in CHRIST that we have been made near (2:13), so that He is our peace (2:14). The LORD JESUS CHRIST reconciled Jew and Gentile to God, and preached peace to us afar off (2:16,17), as well as being our access to the Father (2:18). CHRIST is foundation- cornerstone of the church (2:20), in whom we are fitted together and growing into a temple for God's habitation (2:21,22). Paul called himself the prisoner of CHRIST JESUS (3:1; 4:1) as he spoke of CHRIST'S mystery (3:4), CHRIST'S apostles, CHRIST'S prophets (3:5) CHRIST'S unsearchable riches (3:8), CHRIST'S creation (3:9), CHRIST'S accomplishment of god's eternal purpose (3:11), CHRIST'S Father (3:14), CHRIST'S dwelling in our hearts (3:17), CHRIST'S knowledge- surpassing love (3:19), in whom we have boldness, access, and confidence (3:12), having been made partakers of God's promise in Him

(3:6). God gets eternal glory through CHRIST (3:21)!

This is only half of the book of Ephesians, and how heavily dependent on the LORD JESUS CHRIST the entire plan and purposes of God are is seen in bold relief! Truly, the LORD JESUS CHRIST has the Father's wisdom for the ages wrapped up in His person and work.

The entirely undeserved, wholly unmerited, totally unearned favor of our Father for enablement, is with all those who are devotedly committed to our LORD JESUS CHRIST without corruption (6:24).

Grace be with you,

Tim

Christocentricity Paper # 23 - 2nd Lord's day in June, 1997

## CHRISTOCENTRIC HIGHLIGHTS IN EPHESIANS (PART 2)

In our last Christocentricity Paper we looked at the first three chapters of Ephesians from a Christocentric perspective and saw the high level of Christ-centeredness therein. In this installment of our treatises we will finish the book of Ephesians, highlighting the LORD JESUS CHRIST in His relation to all spiritual things.

In 4:1 Paul's imprisonment was seen to be "in CHRIST" (see Phil. 1:13 and Philemon 23). Our unity in the body largely entails the fact that we have "one Lord" (4:5). The LORD JESUS CHRIST is He who gave gifts upon His ascension (4:7), having descended into the lower parts of the earth (4:9,10). He is the source of the mercy of apostles, prophets, evangelists, and pastors in 4:11. It is the knowledge of the LORD JESUS CHRIST and His fullness that entire maturity is measured by (4:13). As we attain this maturity, our advancement in CHRIST is essentially an adjustment to Him point-by-point, as is seen in 4:15. Paul testified in accordance with the LORD JESUS CHRIST (4:21). Our forgiveness is in the sphere of CHRIST in 4:32, as well as our example of love (5:1).

Through chapter five Paul spoke of the kingdom of CHRIST (5:5), illumination of CHRIST (5:14), the will of CHRIST (5:17), the name of CHRIST (5:20) the Headship and Saviourhood of CHRIST (5:23), the love of CHRIST VIEWED IN His self-sacrifice (5:25), the sanctifying motive of CHRIST (5:26), the glorious purpose of CHRIST (5:27), CHRIST's nourishing and cherishing of His church (5:29), and the mystery of CHRIST and His church (5:32).

Chapter six would have us view the subjects of obedience in CHRIST (6:1), working unto CHRIST (6:5), serving CHRIST in details of life (6:6), reward from CHRIST (6:8), CHRIST- awareness in specifics (6:9), strength in the Christoshpere (6:10), and the armor that the LORD JESUS CHRIST is to us (6:11-17).

Finally, Paul's farewell is quite Christocentric:  
"Peace to the brethren, and love with faith, from God the  
Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. Grace be with all those  
who love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity. Amen."  
(Eph. 6:23,24 NKJV).

Grace,

Tim

Christocentricity Paper # 24 - 3rd Lord's day in June, 1997

## **The Apostolic Determination**

“For I determined not to know anything among you except Jesus Christ and Him crucified.” (1 Cor. 2:2 NKJV)

I have titled this written teaching “the Apostolic Determination” because, in the verse under consideration, an apostle tells of his decision - his Christocentric purpose. That determination was to “know” in the sense of “to communicate” only one thing to his audience, namely, the person and work of the LORD JESUS CHRIST.

Paul, after leaving Athens (Acts 17), came to Corinth (Acts 18:1). When he came to Corinth (1 Cor. 2:1) he had arrived at a “gospel decision” - an evangelistic choice - never to neutralize the good news of the LORD JESUS CHRIST through the admixture of a pseudo-excellence of rhetoric via worldly viewpoints. He had chosen to preach a pure message, without trying to court the favor of fleshly estimation. The purity of his proclamation was JESUS CHRIST Himself, and the significance of His crucifixion. Paul elsewhere referred to His announcement of the evangel of Christ as “the word of reconciliation.” (2 Cor. 5:19)

With this singularity of focus in mind, consider what this would mean to one hearing Paul’s evangelism. The hearer would be confronted with CHRIST, and only CHRIST. He would hear of CHRIST’s incarnation, the death of CHRIST, resurrection of CHRIST, and post-resurrection appearances of CHRIST. He could wait in vain to hear of anything but the LORD JESUS CHRIST, and His accomplished redemption. The listener would “get the point” that, to this preacher, salvation was entirely a matter of JESUS CHRIST and Him crucified.

If our gospel is veiled (2 Cor. 4:3), may it not be because the clarity of Christocentricity in evangelism is lacking, or at best, shaded? Our human audience must clearly hear of a divine Savior, who became flesh (Jn. 1:14), died for them, and bodily rose from the dead.

Furthermore, the apostolic determination is also the bedrock of orthodox, sound, evangelical theology. It is the Christian foundation of truly Scriptural teaching in the rest of the revelation of God. When a teacher, church, denomination, or individual departs from the apostolic determination they instantly lose all capacity for healthy doctrine. Solid instruction decays immediately.

Let us hold fast the faithful word according to the teaching (Titus 1:9), wholesome speech, words of the LORD JESUS CHRIST (1 Tim. 6:3).

Grace and Peace,  
Timothy

## Christocentric Highpoints in Galatians

The error that the assemblies of CHRIST in Galatia had fallen into was a personal, rather than conceptual one. Often, in expositions of the book of Galatians, the doctrinal fault is presented as if it were merely philosophical in nature. It wasn't simply a theme that the brethren erred in. It was in their perception of the very person and work of our LORD JESUS CHRIST. The following catalog of references in Galatians will make this point clear.

It is true that the Galatians had fallen from grace (Gal. 5:4) in their desiring to be under the law (4:21), but because these are mutually exclusive concepts, it doesn't follow that the wrong was only conceptual (dealing with doctrinal concepts). It was highly personal (dealing with a person).

Paul said that, in their departure from grace, they were "estranged from CHRIST" (5:4 NKJV). To as many who wanted to receive circumcision, as the beginning of the law-life (5:3), Paul said that CHRIST would profit them nothing (5:2). In saying that those who could be accepted by God had to be circumcised and keep the law they were, in effect, saying that CHRIST had died in vain (2:21). In 3:1 CHRIST'S apostle wrote "O foolish Galatians! Who has bewitched you that you should not obey the truth, before whose eyes Jesus Christ was clearly portrayed as crucified?" Do you see that in abandoning grace-teaching they were, in reality, abandoning the unique Son of the Father who was full of grace (Jn 1:14), the One bringing grace (Jn 1:17).

Other highpoints in Christocentricity found in Galatians are where we find Paul's apostleship being through JESUS CHRIST (1:1), grace coming from God the Father and from JESUS CHRIST (1:3), the revelation of JESUS CHRIST (1:12), Paul's preaching and teaching were to reveal the LORD JESUS CHRIST (1:15,16).

Notice also churches in CHRIST (1:22), liberty in CHRIST (2:4) by which He has made us free (5:1), the gospel of CHRIST (1:7), faith in CHRIST (2:6), justification in CHRIST (2:16,17), co-crucifixion with CHRIST (2:20), the blessing of Abraham in CHRIST JESUS (3:13), confirmation of the first covenant in CHRIST (3:17), baptism into CHRIST JESUS (3:26), unity in CHRIST JESUS (3:28), inheritance through CHRIST (4:7), position in CHRIST JESUS (5:6), the law of CHRIST (6:2), the cross of our LORD JESUS CHRIST (6:12,14), and the marks of the LORD JESUS CHRIST (6:17).

In missing the grace-mark they had truly failed to see how highly personal this was to the LORD JESUS CHRIST. The very law which so fascinated the Galatian churches was to lead them to CHRIST! (3:24).

Grace be with you all,

Tim



## Christocentric Highpoints in Philippians

The centrality of our LORD JESUS CHRIST is evident in the New Testament book of Philippians. It is written by the apostle Paul, who in 1:1 called himself a servant of JESUS CHRIST, and said that, for him, there was nothing else to life but the LORD JESUS CHRIST (1:21). Coming from such a Christocentric pen, it is impossible for this letter to be anything else but radically CHRIST-centered.

In chapter one we are told of the saints in CHRIST JESUS (1:1), both grace and peace coming from the LORD JESUS CHRIST (1:2), the day of JESUS CHRIST (1:6), the affection of JESUS CHRIST (1:8), fruits of righteousness, said to be by JESUS CHRIST (1:11), chains in CHRIST (1:13), preaching CHRIST (1:15-18), the Spirit of JESUS CHRIST (1:19), Paul's desire to be with CHRIST (1:23), abundant rejoicing in JESUS CHRIST (1:26), and the gospel of CHRIST (1:27). Also we see that it has been granted to us to believe and suffer on behalf of CHRIST, and for His sake (1:29), as, whether in life or death, it should be our desire to see the LORD JESUS CHRIST magnified in our bodies (1:20).

In chapter two we are introduced to the consolation in CHRIST (2:1), the things which are of CHRIST JESUS (2:21), the work of CHRIST (2:30) and trusting in the LORD JESUS CHRIST (2:19).

By far, however, the highest of highpoints in Christocentricity is reached in 2:6-11. There is mentioned the deity, incarnation, self-emptying, humiliation, obedience, death, and exaltation of the LORD JESUS CHRIST. Though existing in the form of deity he emptied Himself of all selfish motive in His incarnation to die (Isa. 53:12). He did not selfishly hold on to His recognition and prerogatives as deity, but took to Himself the very essence of what it means to be a servant, as the perfect man. In so doing, He obeyed God the Father to the extent of crucifixion, and has therefore been greatly honored in recognition of His superlative humility through resurrection. In His resurrection God showed JESUS to be LORD and CHRIST (1:11 and Acts 2:36) as well as Son of God (Rom. 1:3-4).

Chapter three sees the LORD JESUS CHRIST as the sphere of rejoicing (3:1-3), the object of faith (3:9). He is worthy of our total abandonment to Him as we "count all things loss for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus" (3:8 NKJV) in order to gain Him. To know Him we desire the experience of His resurrection-power, communion in His sufferings, "being conformed to His death" (3:10).

"Finally, brethren..." (4:8) in chapter four, we can do anything that God calls us to do and bear through CHRIST who strengthens us (4:13), "and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus" (4:7 NKJV).

"The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen." (4:23 NKJV).

Tim

### Adjustment to Christ

"KATARTIZO" is a Greek word found in a number of verses in the Greek New Testament. It has the idea of "adjustment" in its meaning. It is variously translated in the New King James translation of the Bible as "mending" (Mt. 4:21), "perfected" (Rom. 9:22), "become complete" (2 Cor. 13:11), "restore" (Gal. 6:1), "perfect" (1 Thess. 3:10), "have prepared" (Heb. 10:5), "were framed" (Heb. 11:3), "make...complete" (Heb. 13:21), and "perfectly joined together" (1 Cor. 1:10).

Through both usage, and the above translations, you can see that this word conveys the concept of a restoration to something good that was lost, or a bringing to completion of something that hasn't attained to it. It speaks of an adjustment, either to a formerly-achieved state, or to a state or condition never before experienced.

Let us use the English word "adjustment" in some of these verses (or the verb "adjust") to see its significance. In Gal. 6:1, someone has fallen from a position of spirituality in CHRIST. They need to be adjusted by fellow-believers back to the LORD JESUS CHRIST. Why I say "to the LORD JESUS CHRIST" is because in 1 Cor. 1:10 our adjustment is "in the same mind and in the same judgment" (NKJV). That one mind is the mind of CHRIST (1 Cor. 2:16).

Peter wrote of his desire of God's adjustment to His Son in our lives, when he used KATARTIZO in 1 Pet. 5:10 (where it is translated "perfect"). We know that this adjustment is to the LORD JESUS CHRIST as we see Paul speak of growing up "in all things into Him who is the Head—Christ" (Eph. 4:15 NKJV).

Brethren, allow the Holy Spirit to complete your adjustment to CHRIST in all areas of our Life. "Grace be with you all." (Heb. 13:25).

Timothy

Christocentricity Paper #28-2nd Lord's day in July, 1997

### Christocentric Highlights in 1 Peter

Peter opens his letter addressed to the pilgrims of the dispersion by calling himself "an apostle of Jesus Christ." His apostleship was centered around a communication of, and leading to according to JESUS CHRIST. We can therefore expect much in the way of Christocentric approach to the Scripture-word in this epistle. Peter was one of the most Christocentric men ever to live. His appointment to the office of apostle by the LORD JESUS CHRIST proves this. In saying this I do not mean that because of the LORD realizing Peter's heightened perception of Him, He placed into the apostolate. I mean rather, that, after making Peter and apostle The LORD JESUS CHRIST took one who was no better than any of us, and "Christified" him, to qualify him as an apostle. He opened Peter's eyes to comprehend Him in all the sacred writings (Lk. 24:44-46). With all this knowledge let us see the LORD JESUS CHRIST in this address of Simon Peter.

In verse three of chapter one Peter gives witness to the deity and humanity of the LORD JESUS CHRIST by referring to God as both God and Father of our LORD JESUS CHRIST, as well as through reference to the resurrection of the LORD JESUS CHRIST from the dead.

Peter relates information concerning the revelation of the LORD JESUS CHRIST (1:7), the spirit of the LORD JESUS CHRIST (1:11), the blood-redemption of the LORD JESUS CHRIST (1:18,19), divinely-accepted spiritual sacrifices through the LORD JESUS CHRIST (2:5), the example of the LORD JESUS CHRIST (2:21), good conduct in the LORD JESUS CHRIST, (3:16), the resurrection of the LORD JESUS CHRIST (3:21), God's glorification through the LORD JESUS CHRIST (4:11), the reproach for the name of the LORD JESUS CHRIST (4:14), and how the Father called us to His eternal glory by the LORD JESUS CHRIST "The Chief Shepherd".

Peter conceives of the ministry of the prophets as a relating of the LORD JESUS CHRIST to the hearers. He says that (though they personally didn't understand what the Spirit was speaking of when CHRIST was communicated before His incarnation) they prophesied of the grace (1:10) in the sufferings of the LORD JESUS CHRIST (1:11).

The apostle of our LORD JESUS CHRIST also took time to teach about our Christocentric hope-that it should be entirely fixed on the revealing of the LORD JESUS CHRIST at His coming (1:13).

He then says that our regeneration is based on the information about the LORD JESUS CHRIST contained in the gospel (1:23-25).

There is such a high level of CHRIST-consciousness, blatantly portrayed in 1 Peter that we can't cover it all in one of our Lord's day writings. Next week we will see even more of Peter's "CHRIST-wisdom" (1 Cor 1:30; Col. 2:2,3).

"Greet one another with a kiss of love. peace to you all who are in Christ Jesus. Amen." (1 Pet. 5:14 NKJV)

Timothy

Christicentricity paper #29- 3rd Lord's day in July, 1997

## Christocentric Highlights in 1 Peter (part 2)

As we began a viewing of our LORD JESUS CHRIST by means of 1 Peter last week, today's installment of Christ-centered teaching will also utilize this epistle of Peter to instruct in CHRIST JESUS. Last week we saw that Peter's first epistle was riddled with references to the LORD JESUS CHRIST. We made brief statements about many of the things which Peter said about our LORD-things which could be the subjects of weeks of teachings in themselves. This week we will concentrate on themes of CHRIST found in this letter.

As we read through 1 Peter, because of its many references to the sufferings of our LORD JESUS CHRIST it is virtually inescapable realizing that the sufferings of the LORD constitute an emphasis in this book. The sufferings of the LORD JESUS CHRIST are taught on in reference to their predictions by the prophets (1:11), their significance in relation to our salvation (3:18; 2:21), their love-motivated vicarious nature (4:1). Peter tells us that he was a witness of CHRIST'S sufferings (5:1). From these quotations it can be seen that, when Peter considered the death of CHRIST, the thing that dominated his thinking was the "suffering" aspect of His crucifixion. This would make sense, given that he was an eyewitness of CHRIST'S suffering. Peter was forever-impressed with how much pain the Son of God endured for us!

Another theme of the LORD JESUS in 1 Peter is His resurrection. It is referred to as the just, spiritual basis of our regeneration and hope, as well as the ground of our heavenly inheritance in 1:3. Peter also mentioned the resurrection in connection with one's heart-motivation for water baptism in 3:21.

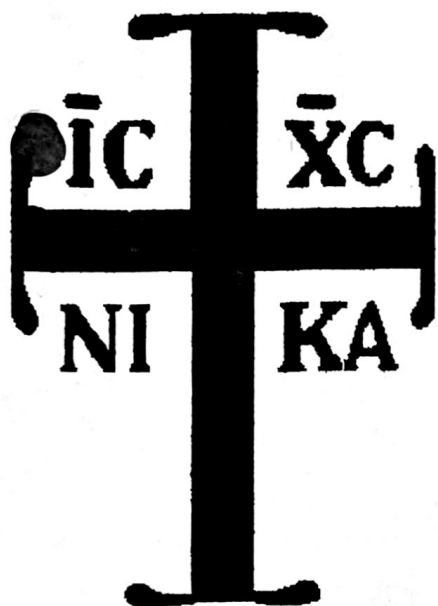
There is an extended portion of chapter two which is related to the resurrection of the LORD JESUS CHRIST (2:4-8). Let's look at it now: we are called "living stones" in 2:5, and since the LORD JESUS CHRIST is called "a living stone" in verse four, the stone refers to His humanity. Though, indeed, He was rejected by men, seen clearly in His crucifixion, He is "chosen by God, precious", indicating His resurrection from the dead. This understanding is then supported by Peter through quotation of the Old Testament Scripture. He cites Ps. 118:22 which speaks of the Lord's rejection of the builders (the leaders of Israel), as He came to His own and His own did not receive Him (Jn. 1:11), as well as His justifying resurrection (1 Tim. 3:16; Rom. 1:3-4) when God the Father vindicated JESUS as to His claims and words (see Acts 4:10,11). Since the builders rejected JESUS' words to the effect of His Messiahship and deity by sentencing Him to death (Mt. 26: 63-66), God showed His approval of His Son, and the veracity of JESUS' statement to be both Lord God, the Son, and Messiah/Christ in raising Him from the dead (Acts 2:36).

The resurrection of the LORD JESUS CHRIST is a running theme throughout all of Peter's preaching and teaching. Peter was truly a resurrection-revolutionized man. The resurrection of the LORD JESUS CHRIST dominated Peter's doctrine as a constant undercurrent in all his instruction.

For the sake of the Truth,

Tim

Christocentricity Paper #30-4th Lord's day in July, 1997



## CHRIST VICTORIOUS

The symbol at the side of the page was used in early Christianity to portray the LORD JESUS CHRIST as Victor, as conquering all foes and opposition as His plan and the purpose of God our Father advances to the eschatological gathering point which He Himself is (Eph.1:10).

The upper left quadrant of the symbol contains the first and last letters in the Greek spelling of "JESUS" with the line above the first letter indicating that it is an abbreviation. The upper right quadrant contains the abbreviation for the title "CHRIST" after the same manner. The lower half (under the crossbar) is a form of the Greek word "nikaō", which means to overcome, be victorious, prevail over." The symbol, therefore, was to relate the concept of CHRIST as the conquering Messiah, who will, in His humanity, receive all the kingdoms of the world.

The New Testament connects this word "nikaō" with the LORD JESUS CHRIST in Rev. 5:5: "But one of the elders said to me 'Do not weep, Behold, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David has prevailed to open the scroll, and to loose its seven seals.'" (NKJV). Nikaō is the Greek underlying our translation "prevailed".

Also in Rev. 17:14 it is translated "overcome" as it speaks of the LORD JESUS CHRIST in victory over the ten kings who give their power and authority to the beast: "These will make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb will overcome them, for He is Lord of lords and King of kings, and those who are with Him are called, chosen, and faithful." (NKJV).

All of history leads to this destiny wherein the LORD JESUS CHRIST becomes the divine summation-point of the universe. We recognize Him as such now (Heb.2:9), but there comes a day when all will admit His Lordship (Phil.2:10). The LORD JESUS CHRIST is the personal end to which the all things converge. (Eph.1:10). Are all things and thoughts in our lives now attracted to the center of life, the LORD JESUS CHRIST ?

love,

Timothy

## Christocentric

Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary defines the word "Christocentric" thus: "centering theologically on CHRIST." Consider what this definition will mean if we look closely at one word within the definition, namely, "theologically." "Theology" comes from the Greek words for "God" (Theos), and "word" (Logos). Theology, if it is true theology, is a study of the word of God. Place this understanding into the definition. We get "centering Word-of-God-wise on CHRIST."

The LORD JESUS CHRIST is Himself the Word of God (Jn. 1:1,14; Heb. 4:12,13; 1 Jn. 1:1-3; Rev. 19:13). When we see all of the Scripture to be a revelation of CHRIST, and CHRIST to be the personal, explanatory, revelatory enfleshment of God's communication in Scripture, our perception of truth ("Word-of-God-wise") is our LORD JESUS CHRIST.

In that we are to live by every word of God (Dt. 8:3; Mt. 4:4; Lk. 4:4) this Christocentric approach to the Scripture isn't merely conceptual, but practical. As we learn of CHRIST, we should live as CHRIST (Col. 2:6; 1 Jn. 2:4,6).

I encourage each of you to cultivate Christocentricity in your lives. I exhort you to grow in the LORD JESUS CHRIST in all points (Eph. 4:15). Ever consider (Heb. 3:1; Heb. 12:3) our great God and Savior JESUS CHRIST, manifested in the flesh, risen from the dead, of the seed of David (Titus 2:13; 1 Tim. 3:16; 2 Tim. 2:8)!

Joyfully laboring among you,

Tim

Christocentricity Paper #32-2nd Lord's day in August, 1997

## Rigidly Adhering to Scripture

Grace to you and peace be multiplied from God the Father and from the LORD JESUS CHRIST, the Son of the Father, in truth and love.

In the teaching of our assembly, you often hear me saying these words- "rigidly adhering to Scripture." It is set forth as the ideal way to live, submitting all our thinking and actions, no matter how great or small, to the purifying fire of divine viewpoint. We want to be radically-Scriptural believers.

The way to do this is to ask the "bottom-line question", as we have dubbed it, in all occasions and at all times. That bottom-line question is asked by Paul in the New Testament in two places (Rom. 4:3 and Gal. 4:30). It is, "what does the Scripture say?" By so doing we are enabled to live by every word of God (Deut. 8:3; Mt. 4:4; Lk. 4:4), which is exposing every thought, attitude, decision, action, response, and doctrine to the examination of God's Word, and adjusting to the teaching therein. We must persevere in a steadfast endurance in the Scriptural life.

Christocentrically speaking, why is this so important? There are numerous reasons. Let us examine a few of them.

First, because the LORD JESUS CHRIST is the Son of God (meaning that He is deity-absolute, undiminished, and essential God-Jn. 5:18; Jn. 10:30-36; Jn. 9:35-39; Mt. 14:33; Heb. 1:8) and He has instructed us by His example and words to do so. It is obedience to our Lord and Savior! He is the one who said "and the Scripture cannot be broken" (Jn. 10:35.)

Secondly, a rigid adherence to Scripture is our salvation from the lukewarm, Laodicean, passive, apathetic, insipid, mediocre, half-baked, wimpish, nauseating, half-done, vomit-inducing, non-committed variety of pseudo-Christianity that we see in twentieth-century America today. (Thought you would like to this list in print!) This spirit was condemned by the LORD JESUS CHRIST in Rev. 3:14-22.

Thirdly, since the Scriptures speak of the LORD JESUS CHRIST (Jn. 5:39, Heb. 1:1,2), indeed He is the Word of God (Jn. 1:1, 14; Heb. 4:12, 13; 1 Jn. 1:1-3; Rev. 19:13), a rigid adhering to Scripture is a rigid adherence to CHRIST!

Our LORD JESUS CHRIST, our God having come in flesh, crucified, risen Messiah is certainly worthy of our utmost loyalty!

Now to Him who is able to establish you according to the gospel of JESUS CHRIST, the Son of God-to God, who alone is wise, be glory through JESUS CHRIST, and majesty, dominion, and power, both now and into all the ages. Amen.

privileged to be an overseer in this assembly,

Timothy



## The Centrality of CHRIST

Grace, mercy, peace, and love be multiplied to you.

Our subject of today's writing is the centrality of the LORD JESUS CHRIST which we encounter in the scriptures. This is an enormous subject which the Spirit-filled believer (Eph. 5:18) is ever growing in. Today we will simply look at some of the more important realms that this centrality of CHRIST should be realized in.

The doctrine of the Scripture, and thus the doctrine of a sound assembly or individual is the LORD JESUS CHRIST. This is revealed in 1 Tim. 3:14-4:1. There "the faith" is said to be in JESUS CHRIST. All of the body of doctrine that we have been given to believe is contained in Him. (3:14). That faith is then called "the truth" (3:15) and explained as the mystery of godliness (3:16). What follows is the content of the mystery, and it is all CHRIST!

The preaching which we proclaim is JESUS CHRIST and Him crucified (1 Cor. 2:2).

Every message is to be judged according to its testimony of the LORD JESUS CHRIST and His incarnation. (1 Jn. 4:1-3).

In one of the most all-inclusive categories, all of life, living, can be, in our experience, the LORD JESUS CHRIST. Paul tell us in Phil. 1:21 that, for him, to live, is CHRIST. In 1 Cor. 11:1 he told us to imitate him, just as he had imitated CHRIST. Therefore, we should follow Paul's example of living being CHRIST alone.

"Finally, my brethren, rejoice in the Lord. For me to write the same things to you is not tedious, but for you it is safe." (Phil. 3:1, NKJV).

Brethren, the grace of our LORD JESUS CHRIST, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all. My love is with you all in CHRIST JESUS. Amen.

Tim

Christocentricity Paper #34-4th Lord's day in August, 1997



## Stability in CHRIST JESUS

Grace and peace be multiplied to you from God our Father and the LORD JESUS CHRIST in the full knowledge of God and of JESUS our LORD.

This paper's topic is stability in CHRIST. In 2 Cor. 1:21 God establishes (gives stability) in the LORD JESUS CHRIST. In Col. 2:7 we are established (spiritually stabilized) in the faith (which we know to be the LORD JESUS CHRIST-see 1 Tim. 3:9 cf. 1 Tim. 3:14ff) only as we walk in CHRIST, rooted in CHRIST, and built up in CHRIST (Col. 2:6,7). IN Heb. 13:9 we are stable in grace, which in turn is the teaching of the never-changing, immutable (and thus eternally-stable) LORD JESUS CHRIST (Heb. 13:7,8). In 2 Pet. 1:12 we are made stable in "the present truth" which is the heightened Christocentricity of God's communication of CHRIST in these last days (Heb. 1:1,2). The LORD is our stability in that He is the one doing the establishing (2 Thess. 3:3). 2 Thess. 2:17 reveals the same truth. Rom. 16:25-27 shows that the way the Father establishes us in objective information about His Son, our LORD JESUS CHRIST.

The above flurry of doctrine relative to the believer's true stability in CHRIST shows that our stability isn't a physical one, a reputational one, a positional one (in the earth), an economic one. Our stability is CHRIST JESUS alone. With CHRIST as our establishment we need none other. To say otherwise is to demean the CHRIST. What high and holy privilege to be joined to the LORD JESUS CHRIST. He is all that matters!

"Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might" (Eph. 6:10).

Peace to you all who are in CHRIST JESUS. To Him be the glory both now and to the day of eternity! Amen.

Shepherding for CHRIST,

Timothy

Christocentricity Paper #35-5th Lord's day in August, 1997

## Standing in Christocentric Doctrine

Peace to you.

"Therefore we must give the more earnest heed to the things we have heard, lest we drift away" (Heb. 2:1).

This verse warns us about the perils of complacency toward CHRIST. "The things we have heard" refer to Him. God the Father speaks of Him (Heb. 1:1,2). The "main point of the things we are saying" in Heb. 8:1 had to do with CHRIST as High Priest. "We see JESUS" in Heb. 2:9. We are exhorted to "consider" Him in Heb. 3:1 and 12:3, as we are "looking unto Jesus" in Heb. 12:2. Our verse for study immediately follows an extended passage concerning the deity of the LORD JESUS CHRIST in all of chapter one. Clearly, the context of the book that the verse is found in makes the conclusion clear as well, that this body of "things we have heard" is a Christocentric approach to Scripture, emphasizing the LORD JESUS CHRIST in all things and at all points.

The sense and meaning, then, of the verse before us is that we should not drift (a passive word), through familiarity of the flesh, from the joy over the person and work of the LORD JESUS CHRIST. When novel things (because of their strangeness) attract our spiritual attentions, we are already wandering from the heart-stability of the grace of CHRIST (Heb. 13:8,9).

Our passage is an exhortation to tenacity toward the LORD JESUS CHRIST, loving Him in the affections above all else. When we are situated in this place, spiritually we are not lured by the bizarre in doctrine. As physically was the case in the synagogue, spiritually with us-our eyes are riveted on the LORD JESUS CHRIST (Lk. 4:20). We continue with the LORD (Acts 11:23), not being distracted (1 Cor. 7:35) from the LORD JESUS CHRIST.

"Finally brethren, farewell. Become complete. Be of good comfort, be of one mind, live in peace; and the God of love and peace will be with you." (2 Cor. 13:11).

Tim

Christocentricity Paper #36-1st Lord's day in September, 1997

## Incarnational Exhortation

Grace, mercy, and peace will be with you from God our Father and CHRIST JESUS, our LORD and Savior.

Our brother John, an apostle of JESUS CHRIST, according to the faith of God's elect, taught about the incarnation of the LORD JESUS CHRIST in faith and love which are in CHRIST JESUS. He said in 2 Jn. 7, "For many deceivers have gone out into the world who do not confess Jesus Christ as coming in the flesh. This is a deceiver and an antichrist" (NKJV). Do you see how this one error of their doctrine renders all their instruction "error"? It is as if this one area of the enfleshment of deity is so important, that if one is incorrect in this they can teach nothing soundly. And such is indeed the case! They are rendered deceivers by their incorrectness in this one point. Nothing good can come from them, because, being unregenerate through their disbelief here, they only have the flesh, in which dwells no good (Rom. 7:18). John's statement reveals the vital nature and critical importance of the Scripture's teaching on the incarnation of the LORD JESUS CHRIST.

Through incarnation, the one Mediator between God and men, the Man CHRIST JESUS, was able to "put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself" (Heb. 8:26), in that He "bore our sins in His own body on the tree" (1 Pet. 2:24). The reconciling death and saving resurrection of the LORD JESUS CHRIST (Rom. 5:10) were made possible through incarnation.

By the commandment of God our Savior and the LORD JESUS CHRIST, our hope, the apostles proclaimed the resurrection of the LORD JESUS CHRIST. When believed, the resurrection-gospel makes it justly, and spiritually possible for God to pour out on us the Holy Spirit, and to do so abundantly through JESUS CHRIST our Savior (Acts 10:34-44 and 1 Pet. 1:3). Thus, our reception of the Spirit wouldn't be possible without the incarnation of the LORD JESUS CHRIST.

The truth in CHRIST, namely, the faith which is in CHRIST JESUS, teaches us not to grow wanton against CHRIST, but to live before God and the LORD JESUS CHRIST, motivated by the blessed hope and glorious appearing of our great God and Savior JESUS CHRIST. How could we be so-motivated without the physical presence of the LORD promised, and how could it be promised without incarnation.

I exhort, based on the words of our LORD JESUS CHRIST concerning His incarnation, that we look to ourselves, that we do not lose those things we worked for. This is my incarnational exhortation (2 Jn. 8).

I thank CHRIST JESUS our LORD for all of you, as I am bound, and as is fitting (2 Thess. 1:3 and 2:13).

Pray for me, that I would be a good minister of JESUS CHRIST, and preach CHRIST JESUS, who witnessed the good confession before Pontius Pilate.

The LORD JESUS CHRIST be with your spirit.

Timothy

Christocentricity Paper #37-2nd Lord's day in September, 1997

## A Christocentric Priority

Greetings.

Today we consider a Christocentric priority. This is a priority for us, given by our LORD JESUS CHRIST. This LORD JESUS CHRIST-priority is love-love of the brethren! There are a number of ways that we know this to be one of "the weightier matters of the law" (Mt. 23:23), and thus a priority to the Son of God.

The first way that we realize the divine priority of Christian love is that the LORD JESUS CHRIST gave one "new" overarching command from the beginning of the manifestation of grace (2 Jn. 5), and that was to love one another according to Him as the pattern (Jn. 13:34).

The second fact showing love's priority is that all other commandments are fulfilled and comprehended in it (Rom. 13:8-10; Jas. 2:8).

The third thing revealing love's first-importance is related to faith. Without faith it is impossible to please God (Heb. 11:6), but faith works through love (Gal. 5:6). We can therefore say that without love it is equally impossible to please God.

Fourthly, with all our problems in seeking to live in a manner pleasing to God, if we will truly love each other according to Scriptural definition we will be viewed blameless before the Father and Son (1 Thess. 3:12, 13).

"Finally then, brethren, we urge and exhort in the Lord Jesus that you should abound more and more, just as you received from us how you ought to walk and to please God" (1 Thess. 4:1).

The grace of the LORD JESUS CHRIST be with you.

Tim

Christocentricity Paper #38-3rd Lord's day in September, 1997

## JESUS, the Beauty of Holiness

"Oh, worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness! Tremble before Him all the earth" (Ps. 96:9 NKJV).

"Give unto the LORD the glory due to His name; Worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness" (Ps. 29:2 NKJV).

"And when he had consulted with the people, he appointed those who should sing to the LORD, and who should praise the beauty of holiness, as they went out before the army and were saying: 'Praise the LORD, for His mercy endures forever'" (2 Chron. 20:21 NKJV).

"Give to the LORD the glory due His name; Bring an offering, and come before Him. Oh worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness" (1 Chron. 16:29 NKJV).

"Your people shall be volunteers in the day of Your power; In the beauties of holiness, from the womb of the morning, You have the dew of Your youth" (Ps. 110:3 NKJV).

The morally flawless, spiritually perfect life of the LORD JESUS CHRIST, both in His sinlessness (2 Cor. 5:21; 1 Jn. 3:5; 1 Pet. 1:18, 19; Heb. 7:26; Heb. 4:15), and in His unblemished righteousness (Jn. 5:19; Jn. 5:30; Jn. 8:29) was the zenith manifestation of the beauty of holiness. JESUS CHRIST is the personal embodiment, the enfleshing of holiness beauty..

Never was this more evident than when the LORD JESUS CHRIST, in perfect obedience, gave Himself in love for us as a sweet-smelling sacrifice to God (Eph. 5:21; Phil. 2:8). "Sweet-smelling" to God the Father because the beauty of true holiness was released in a pinnacle revelation of obedience through humility to God, and love for man.

"Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy-meditate on these things" (Phil. 4:8 NKJV).

"To Him who loved us and washed us from our sins in His own blood, and has made us kings and priests to His God and Father, to Him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen" (Rev. 1:5b,6).

Timothy

Christocentricity Paper #39-4th Lord's day in September, 1997

## CHRIST-centered Relationships in the Body

This Lord's day's paper is very simple and straightforward. It is unencumbered with doctrinal technicalities or complication. It simply is presented to us in Scriptures and awaits our utilization of humble obedience.

Here is the concept: The Scripture reveals that whatever one does to a believer in CHRIST, that one does to the LORD Himself. This truth is found in MT. 25:31-45 and Acts 9:1-4. Our LORD JESUS CHRIST takes it personally when we act inappropriately toward brethren. Likewise, He appreciates our service to the saints, as service to Him.

With the LORD JESUS CHRIST at the very forefront of minds, how should we treat each other?

"Finally, all of you be of one mind, having compassion for one another; love as brothers, be tenderhearted, be courteous; not returning evil for evil or reviling for reviling, but on the contrary blessing" (1 Pet. 3:8, 9b).

Your friend,

Tim

Christocentricity Paper #40-1st Lord's day in October, 1997

## Christocentric Highpoints in 1 John

Yahweh be with you!

In the first epistle of John the LORD JESUS CHRIST is everywhere! The letter is about Him, from multiplied angles and reference-points viewed as the Person of faith.

In chapter one He is Beginning, seen, looked upon, handled, and manifested-the life revealed, the eternal Son who is the Father's Word (1:1,2). In this same chapter He is who our fellowship is with (1:4), the Deliverer of our received message about God (1:5). His blood cleanses us (1:7). He is faithful, just, and forgiving (1:9).

In chapter two the LORD JESUS CHRIST is seen as our Advocate with the Father, and is called "JESUS CHRIST, the righteous" (2:1). He is the propitiation for our and the world's sins (2:2). Our knowledge has to do with Him (2:3). He has given commandments to observe (2:4,5). In 2:6 the principle of abiding in Him (an extensive theme in this book) is introduced. Our new commandment is true, in that it is in Him (2:8), and the LORD JESUS CHRIST is the one the fathers have known from the beginning (note italicized words in 2:13,14). In 2:21 the LORD JESUS CHRIST is the truth (cf. Jn. 14:6), the Messiah, one with the Father in essence of deity (2:22), and thus the means of approaching God (2:23). Abiding is reiterated in 2:24 and 2:27. The coming of the LORD JESUS CHRIST is mentioned in 2:28, along with the teaching that there will be shame before Him on the part of some believers in that day. A Christocentric recognition of the righteous is taught in 2:29.

If the LORD wills we will continue this study of the LORD JESUS CHRIST next week.

"May the LORD answer you in the day of trouble; May the name of the God of Jacob defend you. May He send you help from the sanctuary, And strengthen you out of Zion." (Ps. 20:1,2 NKJV)

Timothy

Christocentricity Paper #41-2nd Lord's day in October, 1997

## Christocentric Highpoints in I Timothy

Today's written teaching will focus on the LORD JESUS CHRIST as seen in four examples of blatant Christocentricity found in Paul's first epistle to Timothy.

The first verse we will consider is 1 Tim. 3:9, cross-referenced to 1 Tim. 3:11. 1 Tim. 3:9 teaches that this body of doctrine which has been once-for-all committed to the saints (Jude 3) is contained (spiritually-located) in CHRIST JESUS. We see here that all which has been delivered to us to believe is to be found in the LORD JESUS CHRIST. All truth is in Him (Jn. 14:6; Eph. 4:20,21).

The next verse we look at to discover some of this letter's high level of CHRIST-centeredness is 1 Tim. 6:3. After discharging a major block of teaching in the mind of CHRIST (1 Cor. 2:16), Paul said "Teach and exhort these things" in 1 Tim. 6:2. then he taught, according to our verse, that if any where to reject the substance of this teaching they were, in fact, not consenting to the words solely about our LORD JESUS CHRIST.

In 1 Tim. 3:16 we have the mystery of godliness. The content of this mystery is all about the LORD JESUS CHRIST, who is called "God...manifested in the flesh." this information concerning the LORD JESUS CHRIST is called "the faith" (3:13) and "the truth" (3:15). The communication of God found in the mystery of godliness is the subject-matter which ought to be both majored-in, and mastered by every New Testament assembly.

Finally, 1 Tim. 4:6 addresses Timothy with a principle true of all teachers from God since the resurrection of the LORD JESUS CHRIST. The principle is that if a teacher instructs in the above mystery of godliness, and the warnings on departing from it (1 Tim. 4:1-5) they will be a good servant of JESUS CHRIST. Here it is revealed that what the teacher of good things ministers to the hearers is the person of the LORD JESUS CHRIST in one form or another. The teaching of the LORD JESUS CHRIST nourishes us spiritually, as it is "good doctrine."

"Now the God of peace be with you all. Amen." (Rom. 15:33, NKJV).

Timothy

Christocentricity Paper #42-3rd Lord's day in October, 1997



## “Remember My Chains”

“This salutation by my own hand-Paul. Remember my chains. Grace be with you. Amen.” (Col. 4:18, NKJV)

In the “b” section of the above verse from Colossians Paul says, “Remember my chains.” In what sense did Paul desire his readers to “remember” his chains? It is chiefly in prayer (Phil. 1:12-19; Acts 12:5), and in any deeds of mercy which they had opportunity to do to him (1 Jn 3:18; 2 Tim. 1:16-18; Gal. 6:10).

This response to “chains” doesn’t apply only to the apostle. Heb. 13:3 instructs us to show love to all believers imprisoned for the faith. This very straightforward teaching tell us to minister to the LORD JESUS CHRIST by ministering to His suffering body. This teaching is an exhortation toward mercy-ministry in regard to persecuted brethren.

As I have already said, this is a rather simple encouragement. It is teaching one thing, but the application of this one thing is very diverse. There are so many ways that, in deed and truth, we can creatively and courageously walk this out in works. Many of the things we can do are suggested to us by ministries such as the Bible League or the Voice of the Martyrs. We are not, however, limited to such works. We can constructively come up with some Spirit-impelled ideas that are fresh, and ~~maybe~~ never done before. I exhort you to try to think of some ways that we can serve and care for the suffering church in Communist and Islamically-governed countries where persecution of saints is most severe. I eagerly await the hearing of your suggestions for the Martyr Ministry.

Grace and peace,

Timothy

Christocentricity Paper #43-4th Lord’s day in October, 1997

## The Christ-life

The LORD JESUS CHRIST is our life (Col. 3:4). Life is said to be in Him (Jn. 1:4). He is "the life" (Jn. 14:6). All believers have the life God gives by virtue of the fact that all believers have the LORD JESUS CHRIST, who is the life (1 Jn. 5:11, 12; Jn. 3:36).

While all believers have the life that the LORD JESUS CHRIST is, this is not to say that all believers fully experience CHRIST as life. When to live is CHRIST (Phil. 1:21) the Christian experience is not an accumulation of rules to live by, but the CHRIST to love and worship. this is the "CHRIST-life", to coin a term.

The CHRIST-life, ministered by the Spirit, brings us into a CHRIST-regulated, rather than a self-limited life-sphere. Christ is experientially internalized (Eph. 3:17) to permeate all of our personal experience. The Scripture "comes alive" to us because the LORD JESUS CHRIST is the personification, embodiment, and incarnation of Scripture, and He it is whom we are living in and through. In the CHRIST-life CHRIST lives in us, and we walk by faith in Him (Gal. 2:20). The centrality of CHRIST and Scripture takes us into the experiential expansion of CHRIST in reality (Jn. 3:30).

Throughout this paper the word "experience" has been used often. This is because the CHRIST-life (as we have dubbed it) is going beyond merely knowing about CHRIST, into knowing CHRIST in the application of Scripture-truth. This is what Paul referred to when he spoke of laying hold on eternal life (1 Tim. 6:12,19).

My love is with you all in CHRIST JESUS.

Timothy

Christocentricity Paper #44-1st Lord's day in November, 1997

## CHRIST vs. Abstracts

Our LORD JESUS CHRIST is the Word of God (Jn. 1:1, 14; Heb. 4:12, 13; 1 Jn. 1:1-4; Rev. 19:13). While this title presents Him as God, the Son (Jn. 1:1), and as the truth of God (Jn. 14:6; Eph. 4:20, 21), the Father's communication to man, because of these things it also shows Him to be God's concrete definition toward each spiritual category of thinking. This is what I mean: whenever we wonder about what God says regarding a given issue or idea, the LORD JESUS CHRIST is, in a very real sense, God's answer. In Him, God speaks (Heb. 1:1, 2). God defines His thinking in the mind of CHRIST (1 Cor. 2:16), which we have and grow in.

So much of present -day Christianity wallows in doctrinal ignorance, while all the time possessing the wisdom of God in CHRIST (Col. 2:2, 3; 1 Cor. 1:30). We live in abstracts (undefined, ambiguous notions) furthered by currently-popular pseudo-Christian slogans which are trendy, but devoid of truth (Job 13:12). We make decisions through "catchword theology," rather than on the bedrock-foundation of the revealed LORD JESUS CHRIST (1 Cor. 3:11). When this foundation is ignored in decision-making, what will the righteous do? (See Ps. 11:3).

One word that cannot be truthfully applied to JESUS CHRIST is the word "abstract." As we read through the gospel accounts of the days of His flesh (Heb. 5:7), one looks in vain for vague concepts in the LORD'S speech. He always spoke definitively. He taught clearly with authority, and this is what caused Him to stand out from the hazy cloud of so-called teachers of that day (Mt. 7:28, 29). He preached and taught the oracles of God (1 Pet. 4:11).

The more CHRIST-oriented a ministry is, the more spiritual, Scriptural, doctrinal definition will be produced. As we walk in CHRIST we receive more definition, more clarity of truth (Ps. 36:9)!

Tim

Christocentricity Paper #45-2nd Lord's day in November, 1997

## The Marriage of Doctrine and Godliness

Having partaken of the promise of life which is in CHRIST JESUS through the appearing of our Savior JESUS CHRIST, the grace that is in CHRIST JESUS is now available for our utilization toward practical holiness. This is indeed the will of God (1 Thess. 4:3). In this teaching, we will see how godliness is to be the product of the doctrine of our LORD JESUS CHRIST in our lives.

JESUS CHRIST, risen from the dead, of the seed of David, was preached to us, and we believed. The LORD JESUS CHRIST, the Righteous Judge, was then taught to us (Eph. 4:20, 21), in whom is no sin (1 Jn. 3:5). Is it conceivable that "such a High Priest", who is 'holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners' (Heb. 7:26) would think it a small matter as to our personal holiness? To live in a way of corruption is to deny the reality of the teaching which is the LORD JESUS CHRIST (Eph. 4:17-21).

Having received the salvation which is in CHRIST JESUS, we should seek to live godly in CHRIST JESUS. Note the wedding of our doctrine with true godliness in the following verses: Titus 1:1; 1 Tim. 3:16; 1 Tim. 6:3; Jas. 1:21; 1 Pet. 2:1,2. Maybe the clearest verse in this line of thinking is Jas. 1:22 - "But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves" (NKJV).

According to the LORD JESUS CHRIST, who will judge the living and the dead, we are to use the grace which is in CHRIST JESUS toward holy, upright, godly, pure living in imparted righteousness. He who is the doctrine is the best reason for a godly life (Col. 2:6; 1 Jn. 1:6, 7; 1 Jn. 2:4-6; 1 Jn. 2:28, 29).

The LORD JESUS CHRIST be with your spirit.

Timothy

Christocentricity Paper #46-3rd Lord's day in November, 1997

## Scripture and the Christocentric Believer

Consider with me our title for this lord's day's written teaching: "Scripture and the Christocentric Believer." One thing which you will notice is that it sets up a dichotomy between Christocentric and non-Christocentric believers. That there is such a dichotomy should not be, but sadly, is all too clearly the case. You see, some true believers have left their first love-the LORD JESUS CHRIST (Rev. 2:4). Some real brethren (shamefully) don't have the knowledge of God (1 Cor. 15:34) which is an inevitability if one Christocentrically knows the LORD JESUS CHRIST (Jn. 8:19, Jn. 14:7). The other aspect of this teaching understood by our title is that there is a relationship between one's CHRIST-centeredness and the Scriptures. It will be our task in this teaching to explore that relationship.

Prov. 10:14a says, "Wise people store up knowledge." (NKJV) Prove. 18:15 states, "The heart of the prudent acquires knowledge and the ear of the wise seeks knowledge." (NKJV) In both of these verses the wise one (the LORD JESUS CHRIST-oriented individual, since He is made to us wisdom-1 Cor. 1:30) seeks to gain more spiritual knowledge. This knowledge is found in the LORD JESUS CHRIST according to Col. 2:3. These facts go to show a holy dissatisfaction, on the part of the Christocentric, with how much of CHRIST they ever know. The more Christocentric an individual, the more their recognized need for the LORD JESUS CHRIST.

Scripture is the place where correct information about CHRIST is to be had. It is the only place (2 Tim. 3:16,17). Teachings such as these papers must come from Scripture to have spiritual, edification, and doctrinal value. And thus the connection between Scripture and the Christocentric. Scripture is the well at which the CHRIST-thirsting soul drinks (Ps. 42:2; Ps. 63:1 cf. Jn. 7:37). The LORD JESUS CHRIST is the bread of the truth-hungering saint (Jn. 6:48, 55).

"May the LORD fulfill all your petitions." (Ps. 20:5b NKJV).

Tim

Christocentricity Paper #47-4th Lord's day in November, 1997

## Job's Question, Paul's Answer

Our brother Job took a long time, and used many words to ask one question in Job 28 (please read), but its gist can be summed up in two of the verses in that chapter. The first is verse 12 - "But where can wisdom be found? And where is the place of understanding?" (NKJV) Hear also verse 20 - "From where then does wisdom come and where is the place of understanding?" (NKJV)

Our brother Paul used few words to answer Job's question in Col. 2:3. After speaking of the LORD JESUS CHRIST in verse two he wrote, "in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge." (NKJV)

All the divine wisdom in God's creation is to be found in the Scripture-revealed CHRIST! All of God's knowledge and understanding is the LORD JESUS CHRIST!

Pay attention to Wisdom! Lend your ear to Understanding! (Prov. 5:1) Consider Him! (Heb. 12:3)

Timothy

Christocentricity Paper #48- 5th Lord's day in November, 1997

## The Word is Faithful

"This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief." (1 Tim. 1:15)

This verse from the pen of the apostle Paul presents us with one of the divine reasons for the incarnation of the LORD JESUS CHRIST. I say "one of the reasons" because there are others given in Scripture.

Let us briefly study this verse: "This is a faithful saying" - In Greek it is "PISTOS HO LOGOS." You will notice the title for the LORD JESUS CHRIST given Him in the Scriptures that John was given to pen (LOGOS). We may translate: "The Word is faithful."

This Word is "worthy of all acceptance." The word in Greek translated "acceptance is APODOKE and means "reception, welcome, acceptance." Everyone should receive this communication with joy.

Then the saying itself: "that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners." That the LORD JESUS CHRIST "came into the world presupposes that there was a time when, pre-existent to His humanity, He existed outside the world. The preexistence of the LORD JESUS CHRIST as deity is seen in the following verses: Jn. 3:13, 31; Jn. 1:1-3; Col. 1:16, Jn. 17:5, Jn 8:58 ;1 Cor. 8:6. His preincarnate existence is also seen in the dozens of Old Testament theophanies where He appeared (Jn. 1:18 cf. Jn 12: 37-41 and Isaiah 6) both as the Messenger of Yahweh, and called Yahweh God Himself.

That the LORD JESUS CHRIST "came into the world" also witnesses to His humanity. It is how He came into the world. He has come in the flesh (Rom. 9:5; Jn. 1:14; 1 Jn. 4:2,3; 2 Jn. 7; Col. 1:22; Rom 8:3). In CHRIST "God was manifested in the flesh" (1 Tim. 3:16).

The mystery-testimony of God (1 Cor. 2:1-7), namely, JESUS CHRIST and Him crucified (1 Cor. 2:2), "which none of the rulers of this age knew; for had they known, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory" (1 Cor. 2:8), was the mission of the Messiah Son of God. By His death and resurrection, He made it justly possible for God to forgive sin and save sinners.

Paul, at speaking of sinners, thinks of himself. He said "of whom I am chief." The Greek word underlying the translation "chief" literally means "first," here with the idea of "first in rank, top and highest." "Chief" is an acceptable translation. See Paul's other words on this in 1 Cor. 15:9 and Eph. 3:8.

This is a word worthy of all acceptance because we are all sinners, and CHRIST JESUS died for us all.

Finally, brethren, on a more personal note, pray for me, that I would be a good soldier of JESUS CHRIST.

Grace is with you all,

Tim

## The Basis of Truth

Scriptural evangelical orthodoxy centers around a healthy Christology. Sound doctrine regarding the person of our LORD JESUS CHRIST as it is Biblically explained is contained in the apostolic determination (1 Cor. 2:2), the confession of the abiding believer (1 Jn. 4:15), the mystery of godliness (1 Tim. 3:16), and the good confession that JESUS is the Messiah (1 Tim. 6:13 cf. Lk. 23:3; Jn. 18:33-37). These are different words toward saying the same block of doctrine concerning who JESUS is: the embodiment of deity, Godhead embodied, the Son of God who became a man as well. That He is thus the Messiah who died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and bodily, literally, physically rose from the dead in the same body that He died in, is also comprehended in this testimony of God (1 Cor. 2:1). JESUS CHRIST has come in the flesh (1 Jn. 4:2,3; 2 Jn. 7).

Beyond the limitations of what is generally considered Christology (study of the person of CHRIST), the rest of sound doctrine also emanates from this point. "The apostles doctrine" (Acts 2:42) consisted of all of their knowledge about God and truth. This understanding was acquired by the Holy Spirit's ministry of CHRIST to them (Jn. 14:26; Jn. 15:26, Jn. 16:13), which, in turn, revealed the Father (Jn. 14:7, Jn. 8:19). A cursory reading with Christocentric eyes (the eyes of our hearts being enlightened-Eph. 1:18) will reveal the LORD JESUS CHRIST all through the points of the apostle's letters. The Son of God has given us an understanding, and as such, we are in the true God, our LORD JESUS CHRIST (1 Jn. 5:20).

"Little children keep yourselves from idols. Amen." (1 Jn. 5:21 NKJV).

Tim

Christocentricity Paper #51-3rd Lord's day in December, 1997



## Enlightened Insight

"Open my eyes, that I may see wondrous things from Your law." (Ps. 119:18 NKJV)

"the eyes of your understanding being enlightened..." (Eph. 1:18a)

In the first of the above two verses the Psalmist asked for an opening of his spiritual eyes. The eyes of the heart speak of spiritual vision, insight. The second of our verses tells about how this happens: enlightenment. Enlightenment is when someone is illuminated, to be given light. Since the LORD JESUS CHRIST is the Light (Isa. 42:1-6; Isa. 49:5, 6; Jn. 1:7-9; Jn. 3:19-21; Jn. 8:12; Jn. 9:5; Jn. 11:9; Jn. 12:35, 36; Jn. 12:46; 2 Cor. 4:5, 6; 1 Jn. 1:5; Rev. 21:23) the psalmist was, in effect, praying that he could see the LORD JESUS CHRIST in the law.

What he wanted to behold was "wondrous things," and those from the Old Covenant. The Hebrew word for "wondrous" is akin to the word translated "wonderful" in Isa. 9:6, speaking of the Messiah, and the word "wonderful" in Jud. 13:18 when the LORD JESUS CHRIST appeared to Manoah and his wife as the Messenger of Yahweh.

The seeing of the LORD JESUS CHRIST through the spirit of wisdom and revelation (Eph. 1:17) is what Paul taught about in 2 Cor. 3:14-18. We can pray the psalmist's prayer today and expect the Holy Spirit to give us enlightened insight into the seeing of the LORD JESUS CHRIST on the pages of the Old Testament Scriptures.

It has been my prayer throughout this year that the God and Father of our LORD JESUS CHRIST would grant us maturity, through a greater perception of, and devotion to JESUS CHRIST, by means of these written teaching. I hope you have enjoyed Him.

a pastor among CHRIST'S flock,

Timothy

Christocentricity Paper # 52-4th Lord's day in December, 1997

## A CHRIST-Crowned Year

"You crown the year with Your goodness" (Ps. 65:11a, NKJV).

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the LORD JESUS CHRIST.

The church of God which He purchased with His own blood (Acts 20:28) believes in the mystery of God; namely of the Father and the Son (Col. 2:2), that in the unique Son, who is in the bosom of the Father (Jn. 1:18), God was manifested in the flesh (1 Tim. 3:16). The true assembly of the LORD JESUS CHRIST, which is His body (Col. 1:24), thus understands that God created all things through JESUS CHRIST (Eph. 3:9), who is Himself God the Word (Jn. 1:1) who became flesh (Jn. 1:14). This is orthodox Christology. This recognition of the true identity of our Lord is so central and crucial to Christian faith that we can rightly say that every spirit that does not confess that JESUS CHRIST has come in the flesh is not of God (1 Jn. 4:3a).

This is indeed good theology. But it is also the best reason for heart-Christocentricity. You see, the fact that we acknowledge the LORD JESUS CHRIST to be deity is the highest reason for our CHRIST-centeredness, because, as spiritual people, we are moving in areas that deal with God. And the LORD JESUS CHRIST is God. Therefore, all of our spiritual life relates to Him. He is the person of our spiritual life (Jn. 1:4; Jn. 14:6; Col. 3:4).

See how this deity recognition/Christocentricity connection was seen in the experience of one of our brothers in Scripture: In Jn. 9:35 the LORD JESUS CHRIST found the man who was born blind and had been expelled from the synagogue for confessing JESUS to be a prophet. You will remember that the LORD JESUS had healed him of his blindness. JESUS asked him, "Do you believe in the Son of God?" The man (soon to be brother) asked for JESUS to tell him who the Son of God was, that he could believe. After JESUS identified Himself as the Son, the man said, "LORD, I believe!" And he worshipped Him. Do you see how worship of the LORD JESUS CHRIST promoted superlative CHRIST-orientation in the brother's soul? At the moment of his perception of CHRIST's deity, he was totally absorbed, entirely enthralled, fully occupied with Him!

Our verse at the beginning of this paper speaks about how God crowns the year with goodness. God, our Father desires to identify the whole year with displays of His goodness. All His goodness is communicated to us in CHRIST JESUS, His Son. God, therefore, would characterize all of our year with CHRIST.

As we open this year, and with it a new year of Christocentricity Papers, let the knowledge of the CHRSIT's Godhead propel us into new degrees of Christocentricity!

a pastor under the LORD,

Timothy

Christocentricity Paper #53-1st Lord's day in January, 1998

## “Fixed On Him”

“And the eyes of all who were in the synagogue were fixed on Him” (Lk. 4:20b, NKJV).

As the eyes of all in that synagogue were fixed on the LORD JESUS CHRIST, so the eyes of our hearts (Eph. 1:18) should today be focused on Him (Heb. 2:9; Heb. 12:2). He is certainly worthy of all our mental attention! We should be so interested in our LORD JESUS CHRIST that our heart-occupation can't be wrested from Him. We can be so absorbed with the LORD JESUS CHRIST that He is the sole object of our affections. For the LORD JESUS CHRIST to be the subject of our contemplation, the fascination of our souls, speaks of a healthy state in the inner man.

Maybe you can honestly say, “That's where I'm at. I love to consider CHRIST JESUS, my Lord at times.” Maybe it was this way once with you, but you have left your first love (Rev. 2:4). Maybe you have a deep appreciation of the LORD JESUS CHRIST, but find yourself distracted by the world and the flesh, and the devil. (All of us have been in the that place, as the battle of Gal. 5:17 rages). Wherever you are situated in relation to this subject, the way is the same, which you all know. You may want to say, as you read this, “How can we know the way?” The LORD JESUS CHRIST is, Himself, the Way (Jn. 14:5, 6). Don't ask, “How?” Just get to know Him deeply. Cling to Him!

an overseer in CHRIST'S assembly,

Timothy

Christocentricity Paper #55-3rd Lord's day in January, 1998

## Christ, Our Provision

"But of Him you are in Christ Jesus, who became for us wisdom from God-and righteousness and sanctification and redemption" (1 Cor. 1:30 NKJV).

The above verse reveals that the LORD JESUS CHRIST is the personal fullness of all of God's provision for us. No matter what direction we might think, doctrinally, it is addressed with CHRIST as the personal answer for our need. God our Father has not given us anything outside of Him. All of God's bounty of grace, mercy, and goodness which follows us all of our days (Ps. 23:6) is had in the LORD JESUS CHRIST.

What do we have that we did not receive (1 Cor. 4:7)? What have we received from God that is not in CHRIST? All fullness was pleased to dwell in Him (Col. 1:19). And we have received of His fullness (Jn. 1:16).

"Grace be with all those who love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity. Amen" (Eph. 6:24 NKJV).

"If anyone does not love the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be accursed. O Lord, come!" (1 Cor. 16:22 NKJV).

Your Elder,

Tim

Christocentricity Paper #56-4th Lord's day in January, 1998

## The Effects of LORD JESUS CHRIST Doctrine

In Rom. 6:17 read, "But God be thanked that though you were slaves of sin, yet you obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine to which you were delivered" (NKJV). Please notice that the obedience to this "form of doctrine" (type of teaching) resulted in our liberation ~~from~~ sin. Submission to this brand of instruction made the experiential freedom ~~from~~ sin's bondage realized. This is the result of heeding the aforementioned "form of doctrine."

But what is this "form of doctrine" that Paul refers to? In Eph. 4:17-19 a corrupt way is discussed. It is the normal life of Gentile unregeneracy. Its elements and characteristics are named, as well as some of its ends. Then in 4:20 it says, "But you have not so learned Christ" (NKJV). Do you see that, in this verse, what is learned (doctrine) is the LORD JESUS CHRIST? He is the subject of our teaching and study. He is our field of study, and should be our field of expertise. Likewise, note that the following of the person of the teaching has the same result as what was described in Rom. 6. There was an experimental loosing from sin's power on our lifestyle.

Thus, the doctrine that frees is the teaching of the person of the LORD JESUS CHRIST. This same concept is taught by the LORD JESUS CHRIST Himself in Jn. 8:31-36. Abiding in CHRIST'S word (the opposite of continued sin) is, in reality, the truth that the LORD JESUS CHRIST is (vv. 31,32 cf. Jn. 14:6). The person of truth sets us free. Free from what? In vv. 34 and 36 the LORD JESUS went on to more exactly define the slavery, and more personally define the truth. He said, "Most assuredly, I say to you, whoever commits sin is a slave to sin" (NKJV). There's the slavery. Then the truth that sets us free from the domination of sin: "Therefore if the Son makes you free, you shall be free indeed."

To summarize then, the LORD JESUS CHRIST is personally the Truth of that form of doctrine who we learn. When we deeply know him we live victoriously over sin in this present evil age. He is our understanding (1 Jn. 5:20) who is the true God. We should stay away from the idols of other forms of doctrine (1 Jn. 5:20) who is the true God. We should stay away from the idols of other forms of doctrine (1 Jn. 5:21).

The grace of our LORD JESUS CHRIST be with you all.

God's fellow-worker (1 Cor. 3:9),

Timothy

Christocentricity Paper #57-1st Lord's day in February, 1998

## Things Which Concern CHRIST

In Acts 28:31 it is stated that the apostle Paul was "teaching the things which concern the Lord Jesus Christ" (NKJV). This is really what the volume of Scripture is. It is an inspired relating of the things which concern the LORD JESUS CHRIST.

In Lk. 24:25-27 it is taught that in the writings of Moses and all the prophets there was information concerning the LORD JESUS CHRIST, particularly things about His death and resurrection with the future glory of His kingdom. That all these things pointed to the LORD JESUS CHRIST is clear from the words of verse 27: "And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, He expounded to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself" (NKJV).

Again, in Phil. 2:21, in speaking of Timothy, the apostle Paul related the excellent spirit (Dan. 5:12) that Timothy had when he said, "For all seek their own, not the things which are of Christ Jesus." Timothy was revealed to be one of an exceptional Christocentricity in that he stood out from among others as a man who consistently concerned himself with "LORD JESUS CHRIST-things."

In that our LORD JESUS CHRIST is essential, absolute, undiminished, almighty, eternal, Creator-God, while in human flesh, His things are all that carry in real value in this present evil age. I exhort you all to set your hearts on these things (Phil. 4:8).

The grace of our God Jesus Christ be with you all.

a servant of Christ,

Tim

Christocentricity Paper #58-2nd Lord's day in February, 1998

## CHRIST Crucified

There are three places in the New Testament which use similar, yet exceptional terminology to refer to the gospel and the teaching which flows from it. These places in Scripture which I have in mind are 1 Cor. 1:23; 1 Cor. 2:2; and Gal. 3:1. They each speak of the crucified Messiah as the subject of the message of the good news. Consider how in each verse there is a "context-clue" pointing to something that gospel teaching is in opposition to.

First, in 1 Cor. 1:23 the preaching of the LORD JESUS CHRIST is opposed to the desires and expectations of the audience. The "context-clue" (as I have chosen to call it) comes in the immediately preceding verse. There we find that the Jews required a sign of power to validate a communication as being from God, and Gentile verification demanded "wisdom," which, in turn, was to be defined according to their own standards of what wisdom is. Paul wrote in our verse, "But we preach Christ crucified, to the Jews a stumbling block and to the Greeks foolishness" (NKJV). The resurrection of JESUS CHRIST was, in reality, the greatest demonstration of power one could ask for (Eph. 1:19,20; Phil. 3:10; 2 Cor. 13:4), and this resurrection is part of the message of CHRIST crucified (1 Cor. 2:2 cf. 1 Cor. 15:3,4). Likewise, the CHRIST crucified in the following verse is called "the wisdom of God." If one truly desired to behold power and wisdom, they needed go no farther than the gospel! So, we see here that human standards, arrived at by human thinking are contrasted with the divine display of wisdom and power found in the person and work of CHRIST.

Second, in 1 Cor. 2:2, still playing on the idea of the Greeks lust for pseudo-wisdom, Paul contrasts the gospel preaching and Christian teaching of JESUS CHRIST and Him crucified with the carnal-desired expression and methodology of that "wisdom." Verse one is the context-clue. "Excellence of speech" (eloquence and impressive vocabulary and delivery, etc.), and "wisdom" (humanly-appealing style of presentation) were rejected by the apostle as prerequisites of successful CHRIST-preaching. The gospel is a set of facts about the LORD JESUS CHRIST, not elocution. It is the preaching of a person, not power of argument (1 Cor. 2:4). It is faithful, not flamboyant, transmission of God's word about His Son.

In Gal. 3:1 we encounter a doctrinal contrast. The entire book of Galatians is a presentation of the grace of CHRIST, chiefly in relation to its salvific appearance in the death of the Son on our behalf

(Titus 2:11; 2 Cor. 8:9; Heb. 2:9). Paul speaks of how the Galatian believers were recipients of a thorough and precise explanation of the theology of the cross. He speaks of it as "the truth" and refers to that truth as JESUS CHRIST having been clearly portrayed before their mind's eyes (Eph. 1:18) as crucified. Countering "CHRIST crucified truth," as we might term it, was a brand of "human achievement-gospel," which was really no gospel at all (Gal. 1:6,7). In this heterodox gospel, CHRIST was not central, and therein the error (Col. 2:8). It substituted man's work for God's, man's "merit: for God's grace (Rom. 11:6), and "filthy rags" (Isa. 64:6) for "the robe of righteousness" (Isa. 60:10).

Brethren, let us be true to JESUS CHRIST and Him crucified in all things!

a steward of the mysteries of God (1 Cor. 4:1),

Tim

Christocentricity Paper #60-4th Lord's day in February, 1998



## Speaking In Christ

In 2 Cor. 2:17 we find the apostle Paul saying these words: "For we are not as so many, peddling the word of God; but as of sincerity, but as from God, we speak in the sight of God in Christ" (NKJV). In concise, yet powerful language the apostle of CHRIST laid down the enduring principle of faithful transmission of the truth to all generations. It is in speaking "in the sight of God" and that "in Christ."

In the verse before us Paul first spoke about the corrupt practice of "peddling the word of God." The phrase here "the word of God" has in it the Greek word for "message, communication, word." It is the Greek word "LOGOS." It is the word which is used to refer to the LORD JESUS CHRIST as the truth of God communicated (Jn. 1:1; Jn. 1:14; Heb. 4:12,13; 1 Jn. 1:1-3; Rev. 19:13). So we can see that the "many" were passing for preachers or teachers of CHRIST (because He is the Word of God that they "peddled"), but they had a selfish motive underlying their supposed pure activity. They would speak of CHRIST, but in a manner that would promote themselves and further their own financial agenda. When one is financially-motivated in the ministry, the purity of doctrine will inevitably suffer.

In contrast to these Paul spoke of himself and those with him as speaking "as from God" and "in Christ." This shows us that when a man truly speaks from God our Father his words will be entirely "in CHRIST"-about CHRIST, for CHRIST, through CHRIST, totally revolving around CHRIST!

He then calls such preaching/teaching "in the sight of God." When one ministers, conscious of the Father in all their service, this one is very careful to stay true to what the Father wants spoken about. That is the Father's Word for the last days-the LORD JESUS CHRIST (Heb. 1:1,2).

In summary, we are enabled to see three very Christocentric portrayals of communication of Scripture-truth from this verse:

- 1) "the word of God"-CHRIST JESUS Himself is the message of God's sent preacher teacher.
- 2) "from God...in Christ"-when we speak with God's enabling grace, the Holy Spirit speaks CHRIST through us.
- 3) "in the sight of God in Christ"-when a speaker is solicitous to please the Father in all they say, all they say will be the One who pleased the Father (Jn. 8:29).

Grace and peace,

Timothy

Christocentricity paper #61-1st Lord's day in March, 1998

## CHRIST, the Fullness

The LORD JESUS CHRIST is wisdom (1 Cor. 1:24, 30), and all wisdom is in Him (Col. 2:3). The LORD JESUS CHRIST is all truth (Jn. 14:6), and all truth is in Him (Eph. 4:20,21). The LORD JESUS CHRIST is the resurrection (Jn. 11:25), and the resurrection is in Him (Acts 4:2).

The above examples serve to show us that all spiritual things are in the LORD JESUS CHRIST, and the LORD JESUS CHRIST is the fullness of all spiritual things. This is the sense of Col. 1:19. A most faithful rendering of this verse is found in the Literal Version: "because all the fullness was pleased to dwell in Him." Here "all the fullness: of the spiritual universe, "all the fullness" of the things of deity, "all the fullness" of the realities of God's truth, are said to be "pleased" to permanently reside in and be found in the CHRIST.

When we begin to consider this in specifics we realize that anything good from the Father has been packaged in the LORD JESUS CHRIST, and given to us in Him. So things in the realm of the Father's thoroughness are entirely to be discovered in JESUS CHRIST, our LORD.

Do we truly enter into the depth of this understanding? It means seeing the kingdom of God, the Scripture, the doctrine, our life, our relationships in the body, the church and our church (universal and local), each believer, godly decisions, and indeed everything that is true as in the person of our LORD JESUS CHRIST.

This is very much spiritually-reasonable (Rom. 12:1,2), because the LORD JESUS CHRIST is deity (Jn. 1:1), and all deity is in Him (Col. 2:9), dwelling in bodily form. In His incarnation, "all the fullness" of God was wrapped up in an "image" of the Deity (Col. 1:15; Heb. 1:3) via flesh (Jn. 1:14; 1 Jn. 4:2,3; 2 Jn. 7).

CHRIST JESUS is God's everything!

in the LORD JESUS CHRIST,

Tim

Christocentricity Paper #62-2nd Lord's day in March, 1998

## The Fatal Error of False Teaching

There is one fatal error that is seen in every false teaching. It is exposed in Col. 2:8. It is that the wrong doctrine is "not according to CHRIST."

Let us develop this thought as we consider what 1 Cor. 2:10 calls "the deep things of God." As we saw in our last Christocentricity Paper, all of God's "things" are discovered in the person of our LORD JESUS CHRIST. This fact alone proves this paper's premise-that the basis of the problem in any doctrinal error is that it is in some sense detached from its vital link with the LORD JESUS CHRIST! If all "the things of God" (1 Cor. 2:11) are "the things which are of CHRIST JESUS" (Phil. 2:21), "the things which concern the LORD JESUS CHRIST" (Acts 28:31), then how could it be otherwise that the real problem with anything untrue is that it is "not according to CHRIST?"

In the Greek New Testament the word here translated as "according to" is transliterated "kata." It means "down," and is often translated "according to" because it takes a metaphorical meaning in conceptual matters from its local and basic meaning. Let me explain: The word's most simple meaning is "down." That is a directional work, a work indicating spatial relationships. Something is "down" as regards something else, or some other place or position.

When philosophy and empty deceit, the tradition of men, is said to be "not (kata) CHRIST" it takes on a figurative meaning (as the Greek prepositions often do). The fault of wrong teaching is that it is not "kata" (dominated by, governed by) CHRIST. Do you see it? It is wrong, precisely because it has not been "downed" or "dominated" by a submission to the person of truth. For teaching to be healthy it must be CHRIST!

Once we deviate from the LORD JESUS CHRIST as doctrinal orientation our teaching is in error. It must be so because CHRIST is the teaching (Act 5:42)!

But let's expand this beyond teaching. Whenever our lives are not "kata" CHRIST, they slide back into "tradition of men," that is, we then function as mere humans (1 Cor. 3:3). What's wrong with that? Aren't we only human? We are human, but we should not operate "according to the flesh" (2 Cor. 5:16-the words a "according to" being "kata" again). We should operate dominated by One who isn't only flesh-we should move in the LORD JESUS CHRIST our God!

So then, let us be "according to CHRIST" in all our endeavors and thinking, motivated by "the mind of CHRIST: (1 Cor. 2:16), in which the sound doctrine resides. When we make assembly-ward decisions, let us factor in the truth of CHRIST! When we choose things for ourselves, let them be done or received in relation to Him! Whenever we act, see CHRIST as our government!

"Consider what I say, and may the Lord give you understanding in all things" (2 Tim. 2:7, NKJV).

Timothy, your brother

Christocentricity Paper #63-3rd Lord's day in March, 1998

## God's Message in Hebrews

The epistle of Hebrews opens with a statement about God's communication with man. In Heb. 1:1, 2a we read, "God, who at various times and in various ways spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets, has in these days spoken to us by His Son" (NKJV). At the very onset of this Christocentric letter the writer, through the Holy Spirit, reveals the essence of divine teaching-the person of our LORD JESUS CHRIST!

It is written that, though God used many means and approaches to reveal His truth in the time period covered by the Old Testament, today under the New Covenant and in this time He has spoken exclusively by means of His Son, our LORD JESUS CHRIST. All that comes to us by way of Scripture is an exposing of the Son. It is God's only subject to speak about with man today.

Some may object, "But the Bible talks of so many subjects. How can they all be limited to the one subject of CHRIST?" Such retort betrays an extremely faulty view of Scripture and its doctrine. It isn't that we are confining many topics into one. It isn't a human work at all. What our premise states is that all of the individual lines of Christian teaching are strains of the one mind of CHRIST (1 Cor. 2:16), which knowing, we understand the real person of CHRIST. As we know His thoughts on this subject or that, we come to know more of Him. He is revealed by God's Spirit writing on the many sub-headings found in who He is. Each category of Scripture-teaching shows another glimpse of one of His sides. All of the various lines of instruction contained in Scripture are so many facets of the LORD JESUS CHRIST manifested. The individual lines of thought found in the Scriptures are all aspects of our knowing the LORD JESUS CHRIST! Scripture presents JESUS CHRIST!

Another place in Hebrews where we find CHRIST portrayed as God's message to man is in 4:12, 13. He is called "the Word of God," God's very transmission of thought to believers. That this is the LORD JESUS CHRIST is clear from verse 13, where it reads, after speaking of the word, "there is no creature hidden from His sight." "His sight!" Not "its" sight. The Word is a person, not a thing, and the person of the word is said to be the LORD JESUS CHRIST elsewhere in the Holy Scriptures (Jn. 1:1, 14;

1 Jn. 1:1-3; Rev. 19:13). He-the Word of God, our LORD JESUS CHRIST-is "Him to whom we must give account."

Finally, in verses seven through nine in chapter 13 we once again note CHRIST as our teaching. Verse seven tells us to remember those who first preached the LORD JESUS CHRIST to us ("the Word of God"). Verse eight says that He is immutable. Verse nine says not to be carried away by other doctrines that are called "strange." Do you see the point? CHRIST was the initial message heard, the Word from God (verse 7). He won't change (verse 8). Therefore, our doctrine, which is the LORD JESUS CHRIST won't change.

One final word here: If one's doctrine is not CHRIST, they should change to conformity with the doctrine of Hebrews-the doctrine which is the LORD JESUS CHRIST. But if one has received, heard, learned, and been assured of the teaching which is CHRIST, and leaves this, this one must heed these verses under consideration and return to "the reasonable, unadulterated milk" (1 Pet. 2:2 literal rendering) of LORD JESUS CHRIST teaching.

Brethren, continue with the LORD!

Timothy

Christocentricity Paper #64-4th Lord's day in March, 1998

## All And In All

Three times in the New Testament we find the phrase "all and in all."

The first instance that I will deal with is found in Ephesians 1:23. Paul is speaking about God's mighty power (v. 19) seen working in CHRIST in His resurrection and ascension (vv. 20, 21). Having been exalted to the right of God the Father, He has been put over all things. Paul then narrows his consideration of all that is under the LORD's feet to discuss one particular subjected entity - the church (v. 22). Then v. 23 says, "which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all" (NKJV). The LORD JESUS CHRIST in His fullness, with all His "width and length and depth and height" (Eph. 3:18,19) of spiritual volume is resident in the mystery - entity of the church, which is His body. He permeates the entirety of His church because He is supplying each member in particular. Therefore, the LORD JESUS CHRIST, with all the fullness that He is fills "all in all" (the entire corporate organism of the body, as well as each individual). Thus the LORD JESUS CHRIST is everything in the believer's realization, appropriation, and experience of truth.

A second instance is found in Col. 3:11. It reads, "... where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcised nor uncircumcised, Barbarian, Scythian, Slave nor free, but Christ is all and in all" (NKJV). Paul is teaching on the new man, created in CHRIST JESUS (Eph. 2:10). In that the new man is created in CHRIST JESUS distinctions in the old natural man are insignificant. CHRIST is preeminently significant, to the point where He is "all and in all." He is all that matters in the new man.

Both of the above references, by using the words "all and in all," communicate a pinnacle Christocentricity. This is something that is very familiar to our assembly. We hear teaching from this perspective all the time. The LORD JESUS CHRIST is seen regularly among us in His supremacy and centrality. Therefore, the next verse may surprise you.

1 Cor. 15:28 reads, "Now when all things are made subject to Him, then the Son Himself will also be subject to Him who put all things under Him, that God may be all in all" (NKJV). To explain this verse: All of the ages of spiritual history were divinely designed by the Father after the pattern of His Son (Heb. 1:1,2 - "worlds" being literally translated "ages"). So God has been all along cultivating the Christocentricity of His saints through progressive revelation. The church as a whole, as well as all of its individuals, should be growing in CHRIST-centeredness. But this verse before us tells of a day, after all things have been gathered together in CHRIST (Eph. 1:10) when the LORD JESUS CHRIST, the Son of God, will deliver His subdued universe over to the Father, and in that day the Father will be the emphasized person in the tri-unity of the persons of the Godhead. We will then be "Theo-centric," but even this will have been brought about through the Son.

For the LORD JESUS CHRIST,

Timothy  
Christocentricity Paper 65 - 5<sup>th</sup> Lord's day, March 1998

## The Spirit's Christocentric Ministry

In the section of the Gospel of John that has come to be called the "Upper Room Discourse" (from its beginning in the upper room where the Lord Jesus instituted the Lord's Supper) the LORD JESUS CHRIST first began to teach His apostles things that would take place in the church after His death and resurrection. One of the prominent themes of this teaching was the coming and ministry of the Holy Spirit. This paper will explore the statements of the LORD JESUS CHRIST on that night which reveal the Christocentricity of the Spirit's ministry toward us.

In Jn. 14:26 this CHRIST-focus of the Spirit is seen in the fact that the Holy Spirit would remind the disciples of the words of the LORD JESUS which were spoken to them in the days of His flesh. The Spirit would not let them forget the very words of God incarnate! And thus His words have come down to us in Spirit-born prophecies of Scripture in the New Testament (2 Pet. 1:20, 21), chiefly in the four gospels, but in other places as well (for instance Acts 20:35).

Jn. 15:26 shows us another aspect of the Spirit's ministry of CHRIST. His mission is summarized as giving witness to the LORD JESUS CHRIST. All that the Spirit of God does He does to, in some fashion or another, convey the truth of the person of the LORD JESUS CHRIST. His various functions of sealing, indwelling, baptizing, teaching, etc. all point in some way back to the LORD JESUS CHRIST.

We will look at one other passage of Scripture in this discourse of the LORD JESUS. In Jn. 16: 13-15 the Spirit directs us into the totality and fullness of genuine spiritual reality (truth) to be found in CHRIST (Jn. 14:6; Eph. 4:20,21). All and every facet of the LORD (who is the Truth) the Spirit of God desires us to know (v. 13). This happening, the Spirit glorifies CHRIST (v. 14). The way that the Spirit of CHRIST accomplishes this is by revealing all of those things that are of the Son (shared with the Father in Godhead). He particularly then speaks of the Son's deity (v. 15).

If all these things are so, what does Spirit-filling mean but CHRIST-consciousness in all things? Let us be filled with the Spirit (Eph. 5:18), concentrated on CHRIST.

In CHRIST JESUS our LORD,

Tim

Christocentricity Paper # 66 - 1<sup>st</sup> Lord's day in April, 1998

## The Word's Rich Indwelling

*"Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another in psalms, hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord." (Col. 3:16 NKJV).*

The above verse informs us that we are to allow the teaching about the LORD JESUS CHRIST to deeply take up residence in our inner man. How do we allow the message of the Messiah to thus dwell in us? If one "allows" something to happen, it means that one is being acted upon by another. The agent acting upon the believer in this case is the Holy Spirit, who is to be granted volitional permission to control us through the state of Spirit-filling (Eph. 5:18).

The vital residence of the doctrine of the person of our LORD JESUS CHRIST in us will show itself in the activities of the remainder of the verse. As the LORD JESUS CHRIST fills us through his word, that will spill over into our teaching other believers the things which we are so personally learning of Him. This is seen in "teaching and admonishing one another" in our verse. One of the main ways that this should happen according to this Scripture is in song. The last part of the verse shows that, while we are doing this toward our fellow believers, it is with consciousness of the LORD JESUS CHRIST Himself.

Being appreciative of the grace of the LORD JESUS CHRIST which we have received (Phil. 1:7), we minister that grace one to another (Eph. 4:29). Thus the rich indwelling of the word of CHRIST does not end with us, but God desires that we edify each other with what we have individually learned of the LORD JESUS CHRIST.

"The grace of our LORD JESUS CHRIST be with all the saints. Amen." (Rev. 22:21 Majority Text).

Timothy

Christocentricity Paper # 67 - 2<sup>nd</sup> Lord's Day in April, 1998.



## Unity Through Christocentricity

*"For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus." (Gal. 3:27, 28 NKJV)*

*"Do not lie to one another, since you have put off the old man with his deeds, and have put on the new man who is renewed in knowledge according to the image of Him who created him, where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcised nor uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave nor free, but Christ is all and in all." (Col. 3:9-11 NKJV)*

The first passage above speaks of the organic union of the church as a corporate entity with the LORD JESUS CHRIST. The second passage speaks of that same union in the individual. In both cases, the result is the same: the abolition of distinctions in the new creation because of our spiritual jointure with the LORD JESUS CHRIST.

The idea is that whenever individuals are in CHRIST, CHRIST is all that matters. All that should be of any import to us as believers in relationship to one another is the LORD JESUS CHRIST. As long as we know that one is in CHRIST through faith in the gospel we should embrace that individual without magnifying differences of class, ethnicity, denomination, or gender.

To illustrate this, let's use one of the above possible distinctions: denomination. If I meet someone who is a Jehovah's Witness, I know that their doctrine does not allow for them to be in CHRIST, for if one holds the tenets of this group they can not be a Christian, because they do not believe in the deity of the LORD JESUS CHRIST. Therefore, spiritual fellowship is impossible. If however I meet someone from a different denomination who believes the true gospel, none of our differences should cause a breach of fellowship, unless they are schismatic in their insistence upon making their doctrinal distinction an issue (Rom. 16:17). Even this would have to be a very severe pressing of their issue to the point where it interferes with love in the assembly. You see how the LORD JESUS CHRIST being the over-arching emphasis of the new mind of the regenerate does away with separations within the body. You also see that, if the LORD JESUS CHRIST is the priority of our thinking, He highlights the distinction between believers and unbelievers.

Let's illustrate this again: suppose we meet someone that claims to be Roman Catholic. While classic Roman Catholic doctrine would hold to the teaching of the Trinity, incarnation of Christ, deity, death, burial, resurrection and Messiahship of JESUS, this is not taught in the vast majority of Roman Catholic institutions. Therefore most who would call themselves Roman Catholic do not hold to these teachings. And therefore again, most Roman Catholics are not believers in CHRIST because they don't have the information necessary to believe.

Along with this, the rest of the doctrine of the Roman Catholic system is fraught with error because of their failure to require Scripture for all of their teachings. But it is certainly possible for an individual to believe the gospel of the person and work of the LORD JESUS CHRIST, while still maintaining a membership in a Roman Catholic church. Should this magnitude of ignorance and error in most Roman Catholics be so large in our perceptions as to cause us to refuse fellowship to the few that honestly embrace the Truth of the LORD JESUS CHRIST? No. They are "in CHRIST," and in Him we could say that there is no Catholic or Protestant. This would be like the Scriptural distinction of "Jew and Greek." The Jews had ritual and laws based on the Old Testament law - economy. The Greek did not. This could have constituted a denominational difference in the early church, had not the apostles of CHRIST made it so clear that in the new man these distinctions were irrelevant.

Please do not misunderstand me as saying that doctrine is not important. I don't believe that any believer should attend a Roman Catholic church because of teaching issues. But we're not talking about church selection here. We're talking about acceptance of true believers in love.

To summarize: Some distinctions are big enough to disqualify fellowship (like our Jehovah's Witness example). Others are important in the realm in which they deal, but do not merit separation within the body of CHRIST. The whole matter at hand is concluded with this: When a person believes in the LORD JESUS CHRIST according to Scriptural definition, CHRIST Himself should loom so large in our minds, that an unqualified reception of that brother or sister is inevitable. (Rom. 14:1; 15:7)

Timothy

Christocentricity paper No. 68 - third Lord's Day in April, 1998

### **Points on Christocentricity**

- 1) The sum of the teaching of the old covenant is the Lord Jesus Christ (particularly His death and resurrection), but in a method of presentation called "a shadow of things to come" and "symbolic".  
Lk 24:25,26,44-46. Col 2:16,17. Gal 4:21-26. Heb 8:4-6,9:9
- 2) The gospel of the death, burial, and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ (I Cor 15: 1-4) is said to have been promised before through His (God's) prophets in the Holy Scriptures. Rom 1:1,2
- 3) Since whatever was written of Scripture before the Christian epoch was written "for our learning" in this time (Rom 15:4), wherein "that form of doctrine to which you were delivered" (Rom 16:17) is the gospel of Christ, it follows that latent in the Hebrew Scriptures is instruction concerning the person of our glorious Lord Jesus Christ. I Cor 10:11
- 4) It is when the focus of the heart turns toward the Lord Jesus Christ that the Spirit reveals the person and work of the son of God concealed under the letter of the Old Testament. II Cor 3:14-18
- 5) The Lord Jesus Christ Himself has taught that the principles behind the writing of the Old Testament Hebrew Scriptures was a testimony of Him. Jn 5:39, 5:45-47
- 6) The Lord Jesus Christ is the declaration and explanation of all that God the Father is and is like. Jn 1:18
- 7) God has designed His church and kingdom to recognize the supremacy of the Lord Jesus Christ in absolutely all things, which includes all scriptural teaching. Col 1:18
- 8) The whole of the New Testament is God's communication concerning His Son, and thus the sum of all the New Testament is our Lord Jesus Christ. Heb 1:1,2
- 9) The entirety of the teaching of scripture and the totality of scripture itself is synonymous with the Lord Jesus Christ, because He is the Word of God. Jn 1:1. Rev 19:13
- 10) Just as the scripture says that God is in Christ and yet that Christ is God (Col 2:9, Jn 14:10,11, cf Jn 1:1), so the Scriptures teach that truth is in Jesus and yet that He is Himself the Truth. Eph 4:21, Jn 14:6
- 11) Coming to an understanding of Christian doctrine is called "learning Christ" and therefore it follows that all Christian doctrine is the Lord Jesus Christ Himself. Eph 4:20 (note context)
- 12) The faith, which is the body of doctrine that we as Christians are to believe, is embodied and encapsulated in the Lord Jesus Christ. I Tim 3:14, Eph 3:17, Jas 2:1 (genative of identification)
- 13) The Holy Spirit who is the author of scripture (II Tim 3:16, II Pet 1:20,21), has as His foremost priority and function, the testimony of the Lord Jesus Christ, so that the complete revelation of the scripture is a testimony of Christ by the Spirit. Jn 15:26
- 14) Radically "all truth" is that which the Holy Spirit has heard from God the Father about the Son, thus glorifying the Lord Jesus Christ in all the Scripture generally, and every Scripture specifically. Jn 16:13,14
- 15) There is no true wisdom or knowledge (even in scripture) which isn't found in the Lord Jesus Christ. Col 2:1-3, I Cor 1:30
- 16) Any and all teaching from scripture must be "in Him" and "according to Christ". Col 2:7,8

- 17) All wisdom is defined as "Christ Jesus".
- 18) The substance and content of all sound doctrine is the Lord Jesus Christ. Col 1:17, I Tim 6:3, II Tim 1:13
- 19) The doctrinal teaching of grace which has been spoken to us is about the eternal, immutable Lord Jesus Christ. Heb 13: 7-9
- 20) The doctrine that we grow in is the grace of "Jesus Christ and Him Crucified" explained. I Cor 2:2-8, II Peter 3:18
- 21) The whole spirit (in the sense of a disposition, motivation, operating principle, functional tendency, goal) of God's inspired inerrant infallible communication of the prophecy of scripture is the "testimony of Jesus." Rev 19:10

Christocentricity Paper # 69, 4<sup>th</sup> Lord's Day in April of 98'

## Word and Truth

In Jn. 17:17 the Lord Jesus Christ, while addressing the Father in prayer, said, "Your word is truth." In this statement He identifies the Word of God as truth, and reveals that spiritual truth is only to be found in the Word. In the first part of the verse before us it is shown that our sanctification is in the sphere of that "word-truth."

Let us now consider how this word which is truth is personified as to its essence in Scripture. Both truth and the word are designations for the Lord Jesus Christ in Scripture, truth in Eph. 4:20, 21 and Jn. 14:6, and the word in Jn. 1:1, 14; 1 Jn. 1:1-3; Heb. 4:12, 13; Rev. 19:13. Our sanctification is in the One who is the Truth and Word (1 Cor. 1:2). He is our sanctification (1 Cor. 1:30). This sanctification is realized and takes place at the point of our faith in Him (Acts 26:18).

God's Word and God's Truth are interchangeable, convertible terms in that they are both comprehended in and as the Person of the Lord Jesus Christ. Truly, truly, I say to you that God's Truth is the Word of the Father, our sanctification, the Lord Jesus Christ.

Grace to you in the name of the glorious and ever-blessed Lord Jesus Christ.

Timothy

Christocentricity Paper #70-1st Lord's day in May, 1998

## Jesus: The Word of Life.

*"That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, concerning the Word of life - the life was manifested, and we have seen, and bare witness, and declare to you that eternal life which was with the Father, and was manifested to us - that which we have seen and heard we declare to you, that you also may have fellowship with us; and truly our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ."*  
(1 John 1:1-3)

In this passage from the first epistle of John the LORD JESUS CHRIST is referred to as the "Word of life" and "that eternal life." Here we see that both the message and the life is the LORD JESUS CHRIST. John speaks of the message of life in personal terms. That which he heard, saw, and looked upon, as an eyewitness of both the sufferings and resurrection of the LORD JESUS CHRIST (1 Peter 5:1) were those things that he personally experienced with the LORD JESUS CHRIST in the days of His flesh and in the beginning of the time of His glory.

He also refers to the LORD JESUS CHRIST as the one who was from the beginning. He was in the beginning with God (John 1:1,2), and He is the Beginning (Rev. 1:8; 22:13). If we were to ask ourselves in what sense the LORD JESUS CHRIST is the Beginning, we would find the answer in Rev. 1:14. He is "the Beginning of the creation of God." This means that the LORD JESUS CHRIST is the Source, the Origin of all creation (John 1:3; Col. 1:16).

John refers to JESUS CHRIST as the One that he heard, in that he was an earwitness of the teachings of the LORD. He refers to the LORD as the One that he had seen because he had seen the LORD JESUS CHRIST all the time that He ministered on the earth from the baptism of John to the day that He was taken up (Acts 20: 21,22). John also spoke of handling Him with the hands. The LORD JESUS CHRIST had invited the apostles to do this in Luke 24:39 to verify His bodily resurrection from the dead, validating with their own senses His corporeal substance.

So we see in this passage the LORD JESUS CHRIST presented as the very message, the essence of God's communication to man - the "Word of life."

Timothy

## Christ: the Faith in our Hearts

*"That Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; that you, being rooted and grounded in love may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the width and length, depth and height." (Eph. 3:17, 18 NKJV)*

In this letter of Paul to the Ephesian assembly, and in this prayer of his, in which he reveals some of his intercession for these saints, he says that CHRIST dwells in the hearts through the body of doctrine which has been committed to believers to hold. The reason that I say this is because in the Greek text of verse 17 an article precedes the word "faith." The word for "dwell" in the same verse is the Greek word for "to reside" with an intensifying preposition as a prefix. When we put these two bits of information together from the original language, the idea that is communicated is that the knowledge of CHRIST becomes real to the Christian heart as CHRIST Himself, in a heightened way, resides in the believer's thought processes through his understanding of New Testament truth.

We must next consider what "the faith" is as to its overall essence in Scripture. Jas. 2:1 speaks of "the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ" with "the faith" being in apposition to the genitive of identification, "of our Lord Jesus Christ." It identifies the faith as information concerning our LORD JESUS CHRIST. Again in 1 Tim. 3:9, one of the requirements for deacons is that they hold "the mystery of the faith with a pure conscience." Just a few verses down in the chapter, this mystery is defined as "the mystery of godliness" and all its content is CHRIST.

So we see that the faith is the information, the substance, which is CHRIST JESUS. The more the believer learns about his Lord and Savior, that is, the more doctrine he learns from a LORD JESUS CHRIST perspective, the more the LORD JESUS CHRIST is real to him in experience.

Here is a penetrating pastoral question: How real is the LORD JESUS CHRIST to you in your day-to-day and moment-by-moment experience. Some may answer "He is not in the forefront of my mind most of the time, but I want Him to be." Do you see what this verse teaches about how to lay hold of Him as our eternal life? It is in honest believing reception of the faith, and growing in it on a daily basis.

Let the word of CHRIST dwell in you richly!

A pastor-teacher in God's field (Eph 4:11 and 1 Cor. 3:9)

Timothy

Christocentricity Paper #72- 3<sup>rd</sup> Lord's Day in May 1998

## Rejoicing in CHRIST JESUS

*"For we are the circumcision, who worship God in the Spirit, rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh." (Phil. 3:3)*

While there are a number of things in this verse which should characterize a believer in the Son of God, the one we will deal with in this Christocentricity paper is the phrase "rejoice in Christ Jesus." It speaks about the believer's sphere of joy. That in which the believer ought to find all his joy is in the person the LORD JESUS CHRIST. Our joy is found in Him. Our joy is located in CHRIST.

If this is the case, then no outward circumstance can take us outside of experiential joy. This does not mean that we cannot have sorrow. To the contrary, while it is said of the LORD JESUS CHRIST Himself that he was anointed with the oil of gladness more than other men around Him (Heb. 1:9; Psalm 45:7), He was also characterized as "a Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief" (Isa. 53:3 NKJV). What we are saying is that joy is not forfeited by sorrow provided that that joy is a rejoicing in knowing the LORD JESUS CHRIST. He doesn't change (Heb. 13:8). Therefore if our joy is Him who cannot change, our joy cannot be lost.

This joy/sorrow mix that we see in the LORD in "the days of His flesh" (Heb. 5:7) was only one of many paradoxes in the person of JESUS. It is what contributed in making Him so unpredictable. It is also what largely contributes to making Him incomprehensible to the unspiritual mind. How can a man have two conflicting emotions at the same time? This is not natural. It is supernatural. For that reason the natural mind is unable to understand the LORD. This is just one example of the what makes Him the "Paradox-Person" of Scripture.

When we are filled with the Spirit (Eph. 5:15), walking in truth (3 John), walking in love (Eph. 5:2) we are really walking in CHRIST (Col. 2:6), Who was anointed with the Spirit in His humanity (Acts 10:38), who is the truth (John 14:5; Eph. 4:21,21) who is love because He is God (1 John 4:8). When we allow the life of the LORD JESUS CHRIST (John 1:4) to permeate our being, we likewise will have His paradox-life on many points. CHRIST being our joy will cause our joy to be unalterable, even though heaviness, grief, and sorrow may invade our lives.

In JESUS CHRIST our joy,

Tim



## Christ Our Life

*"When Christ who is our life appears, then you also will appear with Him in glory." (Col. 3:4)*

In this verse, the LORD JESUS CHRIST is called "our life." The life of our old man has died and the life that we now have is hidden with CHRIST in God (Col. 3:3). In Him is life and that life is the light of men (John 1:4). The one that follows CHRIST has this light of life (John 8:12). Eternal life is in God's Son (1 John 5:11), therefore, he who has the Son has life; and the one who does not have the Son of God does not have life (1 John 5:12). The word of CHRIST (Col. 3:16) is the word of life (1 John 1:1).

All of the above statements and their references point to the fact that all spiritual vitality and spiritual existence are to be found in the LORD JESUS CHRIST. There is no life that in any true sense can be said to be from God that is not from the LORD JESUS CHRIST. All of these statements speak of the life of God - eternal life - which those who believe on the Son of God receive (John 3:16-18).

Even biological life (mere physical existence) comes from the LORD JESUS CHRIST (John 1:1-3; Col. 1:16). He is the beginning of all life, He is the source of all consciousness and spirit.

In our verse the LORD JESUS CHRIST is simply and boldly called "our life." Our life is eternal, but each of our lives (without the LORD JESUS CHRIST) is merely a vapor of vanity (James 4:14; Ecc. 1:2).

Therefore let us "lay hold of eternal life" (1 Tim. 6:19), which is an exhortation for us to appropriate through faith and obedience all of the Person of our life.

Timothy

Christocentricity Paper # 74 - 5<sup>th</sup> Lord's Day in May 1998.

## Seeking Heavenly Things

*"If then you were raised with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ is, sitting at the right hand of God." (Col. 3:1)*

The above verse tells us that since we have been raised with the LORD JESUS CHRIST in baptism through faith in God's work of raising Him from the dead (Col.2:12), it is spiritually reasonable (Rom. 12:1,2) for us to seek those things which correspond with where our true life exists. This true life resides in the Person of the LORD JESUS CHRIST Himself who is seated at the right of God in Heaven. This reveals that the believer ought to have a heavenly value system, a spiritual set of divinely - revealed priorities. The things that we value should be acquired from the mind of God who is the LORD JESUS CHRIST (I Cor. 2:16). We have this mind because we are in Him, and the Holy Spirit has been given to us. We can now think with God in inner spiritual mechanics so that we can operate in divine viewpoint. When we do so we will evaluate things as God does, passing them through the filter of His Son. Thus the LORD JESUS CHRIST becomes the gauge through which we approve or reject whatever we submit to His mind for analysis. When this is done with the subject of treasures (those things which we place highest value on) all is determined by where the treasure lies (Matt. 6: 19-21). If we seek the things that are above, then our hearts will be focused there.

The reason we are exhorted to seek heavenly things is because that is where CHRIST is, and that is where we are positionally in Him. Spiritual sensibility demands that since our destiny is a heavenly one (Rom. 8:29), it is the logical thing to do to direct our attention there.

The opposite of having this heavenly mindset (a Christocentric perspective) is to be focused on things of the earth (e.g. job, man's opinion of us, worldly pleasures, money, problems, one's earthly future, desire for other things).

Here in Colossians we are exhorted by the Holy Spirit through Paul to keep our focus on the LORD JESUS CHRIST (Heb. 12:1; 3:1; John 1:29; 2 Tim. 2:8), to sustain our love for the things of the LORD JESUS CHRIST (Phil. 2:21; Acts 28:31), and to keep our attentions on things above. I also exhort you to the same.

Tim

Christocentricity Paper # 74 - 1<sup>st</sup> Lord's Day in June 1998.

## The Doctrine of Christ

*"Whoever transgresses and does not abide in the doctrine of Christ does not have God. He who abides in the doctrine of Christ has both the Father and the Son." (2 John 9 NKJV)*

The context of this verse helps us define what it means by "the doctrine of CHRIST." In verse 7 we are told that many deceivers have gone out into the world who do not confess that JESUS CHRIST has come in the flesh. These deceivers are also called "antichrist." We see that they deny the incarnation of God the Son. Verse 8 then warns against receiving such because we will lose what was worked for in that we will not receive a full reward if we welcome such false teachers. That this is the way we should understand what this verse is saying is seen by the context after verse 9 (vv. 10,11). In the midst of all this context stands the ninth verse with its term "the doctrine of Christ." So we can see that the doctrine of Christ is Christology proper (the teaching of the Scriptures concerning the Person of our LORD JESUS CHRIST). It deals with His deity, humanity, and Messiahship.

Now for the meaning of the verse itself:

"Whoever transgresses and does not abide in the doctrine of Christ." This much of the verse teaches that it is possible to trespass doctrinally. To err in the essentials of Christology proper is to sin in one's teaching.

"Does not have God" The word have is "echo." It can be translated "to have" or "to hold." The doctrinally - transgressing individual has not apprehended God.

"He who abides in the doctrine of Christ has both the Father and the Son." Note that the one who transgresses does not have God, and the one who abides in sound teaching of CHRIST does have both Father and Son. "God" is in apposition to "the Father and the Son," indicating the shared deity between, and of, the Father and the Son. Here is a powerful proof of the full deity of the LORD JESUS CHRIST.

Finally, please take notice of the centrality and supremacy of the LORD JESUS CHRIST in truly Christian preaching and teaching. What one says about CHRIST JESUS determines whether their teaching is evil or of God. The LORD JESUS CHRIST is the issue with the Father.

Do indeed "look to yourselves," in order that we do not forfeit all that we have labored for. We want to receive a full reward!

Timothy

## Christ in the Old Testament

*"Then I said 'Behold I come; in the scroll of the book it is written of me.' " (Psalm 40:7 NKJV)*

The passage of scripture above is the words of the LORD JESUS CHRIST prophetically spoken by David, as we can see from Heb. 10:5-10. Furthermore, the writer of Hebrews gives a word as to the time of their fulfillment when he places these words in verse 5 at the time "when He came into the world." Therefore one can see that David wrote of the thoughts of the LORD JESUS CHRIST at the time of the incarnation. These were the words of the thoughts of God the Son when He was becoming a human being.

In this verse there is a reference to "the scroll of the book," here a designation for what we would refer to today as "the Old Testament" (2 Cor. 3:14), which was all of the Scripture that was written at the time of the incarnation of CHRIST. This place in scripture clearly tells us that the Old Testament scriptures taught of the LORD JESUS CHRIST.

Consider what the rest of Scripture has to say about this concept. Peter wrote that the Old Testament prophets prophesied of the grace of the LORD JESUS CHRIST in His suffering for us, and of the following glories, though they didn't always understand what they spoke or wrote about (1 Pet. 1: 10-12). The LORD JESUS CHRIST Himself said that Moses wrote about Him (John 5:46), and that indeed all of the prophets and the Psalms spoke of Him as well (Luke 24:44). In correcting two disciples who were reluctant to believe the testimony of the women as to the resurrection, He said, "Oh foolish ones, and slow of heart to believe in all that the prophets have spoken!" Evidently, all of the prophets of the old covenant prophesied of the LORD JESUS CHRIST according to this word in Luke 24:25.

As we approach the writings of the Old Testament we should be mentally poised to receive revelation on the LORD JESUS CHRIST from its pages. We should anticipate that the Holy Spirit will reveal more of the LORD JESUS CHRIST that we have to this point not seen of Him from these Scriptures.

The grace of the LORD JESUS CHRIST be with you all.

Timothy

Christocentricity Paper #77 - 3<sup>rd</sup> Lord's Day in June 1998.

## CHRIST is All!

I have a friend, a brother in our LORD JESUS CHRIST, with whom I correspond via e-mail. He always ends his messages to me with a concise yet powerfully Christocentric statement: "CHRIST is all!" When I think of that statement I am reminded of Phil. 1:21, where Paul wrote to the church at Philippi, "for to me, to live is Christ, and to die is gain."

This verse conveys Christocentricity in its ultimate. Paul was saying that he had no other interests, but CHRIST, no other occupation but CHRIST, no life but CHRIST. CHRIST was indeed "all," as our brother would put it. The apostle was absorbed and obsessed with CHRIST! His living day-to-day consisted of such magnification of the lord that all possible other elements of life were so small to the point of being out of view. CHRIST reigned supreme in his heart.

He also wrote, "Imitate me, just as I also imitate Christ" (1 Cor. 11:1 NKJV). Let us indeed follow Paul in the CHRIST-life! Let us also say "CHRIST is all," loving Him beyond words or imagination! The Father can accomplish a love for the LORD JESUS CHRIST in us that is "exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think" (Eph. 3:20).

Sincerely,

Tim

Christocentricity Paper #78-4th Lord's day in June, 1998

## CHRIST'S Coming and Our Holiness

The grace that is to be brought to us at the revelation of JESUS CHRIST has a sobering influence (1 Pet. 1:13). It is a holiness-producing hope. This is the premise of this paper.

The coming of our LORD JESUS CHRIST and our gathering together unto Him (2 Thess. 2:1) is near. The LORD is at hand (Phil. 4:5b). The Judge stands at the door (Jas. 5:9). Though no man knows the day or the hour of the LORD'S presence (Mt. 24:26), we do know that now our salvation is nearer than when we believed (Rom. 13:11).

Consider again the effect that our Hope should have on us: Rom. 13:12, 13 states, "The night is far spent, the day is at hand. Therefore let us cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armor of light. Let us walk properly, as in the day, not in strife and envy" (NKJV). Given that when CHRIST, our Life, appears we also will appear with Him in glory (Col. 3:4), He transforming our lowly bodies, according to the working by which He is able even to subdue all things to Himself (Phil. 3:21), what manner of persons ought we to be in holy conduct and godliness (2 Pet. 3:11)?

As we eagerly wait for God's Son to appear from heaven a second time, apart from sin and for salvation (1 Thess. 1:10; Heb. 9:28), this blessed hope of the glorious appearing of our great God and Savior (Titus 2:13) has a purifying influence on our lives (1 Jn. 3:3), because we know that the day of His appearing is also the day of our evaluation and reward (2 Tim. 4:8). Thus eagerly waiting for the revelation of our LORD JESUS CHRIST (1 Cor. 1:7) causes us to walk in truth. We are thus motivated by the coming of our LORD JESUS CHRIST with all His saints (1 Thess. 3:12), while looking for the mercy of our LORD JESUS CHRIST unto eternal life (Jude 21).

Be patient, brethren until the coming of the LORD (Jas. 5:7) when He shall come and wait no longer (Heb. 10:38), bringing with Him those who have fallen asleep in Him (1 Thess. 4:13-15), descending from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God (1 Thess. 4:16), catching us up in the clouds to meet Him. And thus we shall always be with the LORD (1 Thess. 4:17).

"Therefore, beloved, looking forward to these things, be diligent to be found by Him in peace without spot and blameless" (2 Pet. 3:14 NKJV).

Timothy, an overseer by the Holy Spirit  
(Acts 20:28)

Christocentricity Paper #79-1st Lord's day in July, 1998

## Bringing Christ Into Daily Life

"And whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him" (Col. 3:17 NKJV).

"And whatever you do, do it heartily, as to the Lord and not to men" (Col. 3:23 NKJV).

In the above two verses from Colossians we are taught in the Spirit a principle of CHRIST-orientation in practicalities. It is the concept of keeping the LORD JESUS CHRIST at the forefront of our thinking in everything we do.

In the first of the verses above we see that not only in the sphere of our actions ("in deed"), but also in that of speech ("in word") the LORD JESUS CHRIST is to be preeminent (Col. 1:18). the majority of our communication is to be about Him. For that matter "whatever" we do "in word" is to be of Him! How much destruction could be "covered" in the Jas. 5:20 sense, if believers would limit the death-dealing tongue to speak only the words of CHRIST our life (Prov. 18:21, Col. 3:4)?

All that we do is to be done in the service and love of our LORD JESUS CHRIST. Do we really grasp all this? Think of it! All of the domain of our speaking and acting done consciously to glorify the LORD JESUS CHRIST. What a glorious prospect to accomplish all things in accordance with His character.

The second verse above says that all that we do should be done "as to the lord"-seeing Him in all our circumstances and responsibilities. We need to cultivate a capacity to perceive our LORD JESUS CHRIST in relation to all the details of life. While we focus on the LORD JESUS CHRIST in whatever we need to do we should do so "heartily." This word translates what is literally in Greek "out of soul." The idea is that because we have something of the LORD JESUS CHRIST as our motivation we can have all of our soul into the performance of whatever is of Him.

These two verses of Scripture teach believers a LORD JESUS CHRIST mindset in the situations to be encountered in life. Let us determine in our hearts to consider the LORD JESUS CHRIST (Heb. 3:1; Heb. 12:3) at all times, nurturing Christocentricity in all points (Eph. 4:15).

Tim

Christocentricity Paper #80-2nd Lord's day in July, 1998

## Walking in CHRIST

**"As you have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in Him" (Col. 2:6 NKJV).**

As we begin to consider this verse of Scripture in Christocentric light, think back to the time when you received the LORD JESUS CHRIST. For some of you this may be difficult if you were a young child raised in a Christian home. Think in that case of the time when you were first conscious of personally believing in Him. As we heard the gospel (which is entirely about Him) we were conscious of only one object in our mind's eye. He was what we were thinking about, and all of our contemplation under the preaching of God's good news was the LORD JESUS CHRIST.

That is exactly how we are to continue with the LORD (Acts 11:23). Of course we consider deeper things concerning Him now. But all of those things are to be viewed as a compartment of the whole truth as it is contained in JESUS (Eph. 4:20,21). Just as the LORD JESUS CHRIST was the subject of the consideration of our hearts when we first believed, He is to be the occupation of our minds and hearts today. As we think on Him, our conduct will conform to that which He is (1 Jn. 1:6). This is what our verse calls walking "in Him."

Another aspect of walking in CHRIST is continuance in sound Christology. Nowhere else in Scripture do we find the designation of the Son of God exactly as we do here in the Greek New Testament. It literally would read "the CHRIST-JESUS, the LORD." We are to abide in the teaching (2 Jn. 9) that the man JESUS is the Messiah (the CHRIST), the promised future world-ruler who fulfills the predictions of the Hebrew prophets. This same JESUS is "the LORD." He is the God of all the universe the Master of His own creation. JESUS (the name He acquired at His birth, thus pointing to His humanity-Mt. 1:21) is both LORD and CHRIST (Acts 2:36).

As you have received the CHRIST-JESUS, the Lord, so continue to walk in love, behaving yourselves in accordance with His holy character, as the result of a settled focus on Him!

Timothy

Christocentricity Paper #81-3rd Lord's day in July, 1998



## CHRIST Supreme

In Col. 1:18 the reader encounters the fact that the LORD JESUS CHRIST is to be recognized as supreme in the Christian consciousness. We are shown in this verse that CHRIST is to have preeminence (first place) in radically everything. Let us look to the context to see more of what this means.

Verse 15 of this chapter calls the LORD JESUS CHRIST "the firstborn over all creation." Here, as elsewhere, the term means "highest in rank," as the one in an Oriental family born first had the place of highest position. Verse 16 goes on to explain why this is so: because the LORD JESUS CHRIST, being God, created all things. Therefore all created beings should rightfully acknowledge His absolute Lordship. Verse 17 states that "all things" consist in Him in that He is their preserving Source. The beginning of verse 18 then shows another realm in which the LORD JESUS should be known as supreme—that of the new creation, both in its individual and corporate dimensions (2 Cor. 5:17; Eph. 2:15).

These two spheres (material and spiritual creations) contain all of existence. In the LORD JESUS CHRIST is the Lord and Master, Firstborn and Head. However, at this present time not all in the first creation acquiesce to the Lordship of CHRIST (Phil. 2:9-11).

We who are in that category of humanity which can see the glory of CHRIST (Jn. 1:14) have the distinct privilege of being able to conform to the knowledge of His preeminence now, before the time (1 Cor. 15:8) "of the age to come" (Heb. 6:5), when the glory of the Son of Man will be obvious to all.

May the Lord count us worthy of this calling, that the name of our LORD JESUS CHRIST may be glorified in us, according to the grace of our God and LORD-JESUS CHRIST (2 Thess. 1:11,12).

Tim

Christocentricity Paper #82-4th Lord's day in July, 1998

## Consider Him

Brethren, in this week's Christocentricity Paper simply consider with me the glorious and gracious Person of our Lord Jesus Christ:

From all of eternity past the Son of God existed as absolute, essential, uncreated, inoriginate, full deity, "wise in heart and mighty in strength" (Job 9:4a). Job spoke of Him in all the majesty and glory of His Godhead when he said, "He removes the mountains and they do not know when He overturns them in His anger; He shakes the earth out of its place, and its pillars tremble; He commands the sun and it does not rise; He seals off the stars; He alone spreads out the heavens, and treads on the waves of the sea; He made the Bear, Orion, and the Pleiades, and the chambers of the South; He does great things past finding out, Yes, wonders without number: (Job 9:5-9 NKJV). Again he spoke of our great God Jesus Christ before His incarnation when he said, "With Him are wisdom and strength, He has council and understanding. If He breaks a thing down, it cannot be rebuilt; If He imprisons a man, there can be no release. If He withholds the water, they dry up; If he sends them out, they overwhelm the earth. With Him are strength and prudence. The deceived and the deceiver are His. He leads counselors away plundered, and makes fools of the judges. He loosens the bonds of kings, and binds their waist with a belt. He leads princes away plundered, and overthrows the mighty. He deprives the trusted ones of speech, and takes away the discernment of the elders. He pours contempt on princes, and disarms the mighty. He uncovers deep things out of darkness, and brings the shadow of death to light. He makes nations great and destroys them; He enlarges nations and guides them. He takes away the understanding of the chiefs of the people of the earth, and makes them wander in a pathless wilderness. They grope in the dark without light, and He makes them stagger like a drunken man" (Job 12:13-25). In these verses we gaze upon the splendor of His Godhood as we see Him as Creator, Sustainer, Sovereign Lord, and King of kings.

Then, at a point in time, this awesome One condescended to touch man in grace. He did not come in His gracious appearing (Titus 2:11) in a burning bush (Ex. 3:4), or a pillar of cloud (Num. 12:5), or a whirlwind (Job 38:1), as in times past. He came in flesh (1 Jn. 4:2,3) and took the name "JESUS" (Mt. 1:21). The Man CHRIST JESUS (1 Tim. 2:5) came to die on a cross for us, so that we might be saved (1 Tim. 1:15). He died for our sins and rose from the dead on the third day (1 Cor. 15:3,4). He dies no more (Rom. 6:9), but now ever lives (Heb. 7:25).

Thanks be to the God and Father of our LORD JESUS CHRIST for the unsearchable riches (Eph. 3:8) of his indescribable Gift (2 Cor. 9:15)!

Grace and peace,

Timothy

## "Who"

Dear brethren, consider our LORD JESUS...

- ✓ "who is called Christ" (Mt. 1:16).
- ✓ "who remembered us in our lowly state" (Ps. 136:23a)
- ✓ "who gives food to all flesh" (Ps. 136:25a).
- ✓ "who went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with Him" (Acts 10:38).
- ✓ "who is blessed forever. Amen" (Rom. 1:25).
- ✓ "who will render to each one according to his deeds" (Rom. 2:6).
- ✓ "who inflicts wrath" (Rom. 3:5).
- ✓ "who gives life to the dead, and calls those things which do not exist as though they did" (Rom. 4:17).
- ✓ "who was delivered up because of our offenses, and was raised because of our justification" (Rom. 4:17).
- ✓ "who is over all, eternally blessed God" (Rom. 9:5).
- ✓ "who will also confirm you the end that you may be blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ" (1 Cor. 1:8).
- ✓ "who became for us wisdom from God-and righteousness, and sanctification and redemption" (1 Cor. 1:30).
- ✓ "who will both bring to light the hidden things of darkness and reveal the counsels of the hearts" (1 Cor. 4:5).
- ✓ "who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to bear it" (1 Cor. 10:13).
- ✓ "who was preached among you" (2 Cor. 1:19).
- ✓ "who is the image of God" (2 Cor. 4:4).
- ✓ "who knew no sin" (2 Cor. 5:21).
- ✓ "who gave Himself for our sins, that He might deliver us from this present evil age according to our God and Father" (Gal. 1:4).
- ✓ "who died, and furthermore is also risen, who is even at the right hand of God, who also makes intercession for us" (Rom. 8:34).
- ✓ "who being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, and coming in the likeness of men" (Phil. 2:6,7).
- ✓ "who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead" (Col. 1:18).
- ✓ "who is our life" (Col. 3:4).
- ✓ "who died for us, that whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with Him" (1 Thess. 5:10).
- ✓ "who was raised from the dead" (Rom. 7:4).
- ✓ "who will establish you and guard you from the evil one" (2 Thess. 3:3).
- ✓ "who gave Himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time" (1 Tim. 2:6).
- ✓ "who witnessed the good confession before Pontius Pilate" (1 Tim. 6:13).
- ✓ "who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from every lawless deed and purify for Himself His own special people, zealous for good works" (Titus 2:14).
- ✓ "who was made a little lower than the angels, for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honor, that He by the grace of God, might taste death for everyone" (Heb. 2:9).
- ✓ "who was faithful to Him who appointed Him" (Heb. 3:2).
- ✓ "who in the days of His flesh, when He had offered up prayers and supplications, with vehement cries and tears to Him who was able to save Him from death, and was heard because of His godly fear" (Heb. 5:7).
- ✓ "who has come, not according to the law of a fleshly commandment, but according to the power of an endless life" (Heb. 7:16).
- ✓ "who has been perfected forever" (Heb. 7:28).
- ✓ "who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God" (Heb. 12:2).
- ✓ "who endured such hostility from sinners against Himself" (Heb. 12:3).
- ✓ "who is able to save and to destroy" (Jas. 4:12).

- ✓ "who committed no sin, nor was deceit found in His mouth; who when He was reviled, did not revile in return" (1 Pet. 2:22,23).
- ✓ "who Himself bore our sins in His own body on the tree, that we, having died to sins, might live for righteousness-by whose stripes you were healed" (1 Pet. 2:24).
- ✓ "who has gone into heaven, and is at the right hand of God, angels, and authorities and powers having been made subject to Him" (1 Pet. 3:22).
- ✓ "who holds the seven stars in His right hand" (Rev. 2:1).
- ✓ "who walks in the midst of the seven golden lampstands" (Rev. 2:1).
- ✓ "who has eyes like a flame of fire, and His feet like fine brass" (Rev. 2:18).
- ✓ "who lives forever and ever" (Rev. 15:7).
- ✓ "who loved us and washed us from our sins in His own blood, and has made us kings and priests to His God and Father, to Him be glory an dominion forever and ever. Amen" (Rev. 1:5, 6).

your brother,

Tim

Christocentricity Paper # 84-2nd Lord's day in August, 1998

## The Meekness and Gentleness of Christ

As it is said in Scripture that the LORD JESUS CHRIST is Wisdom (1 Cor. 1:30) and that all wisdom is in Him (Col. 2:2,3), and that the LORD JESUS CHRIST is the Truth (John 14:6) and that all truth is in Him (Eph. 4:20,21), so it is revealed in Scripture that the LORD JESUS CHRIST is the Word of God (John 1:1, 14; 1 John 1:1; Heb. 4:12,13; Rev. 19:13), and yet speaks of the Word of God as a concept (John 17:17). Each individual word from God on any subject is a part of the entire word that the LORD JESUS CHRIST is. Thus all the subjects of Scripture are really categories of the one great subject of God, namely, the LORD JESUS CHRIST, the Son of God and the Word of God.

In the LORD JESUS CHRIST are found two categories that this paper is occupied with. They are meekness and gentleness, which are in CHRIST JESUS (2 Cor. 10:1).

Meekness is submission to the treatment one receives from others without fleshly rejection. It is thus possibly best defined as "a non reactionary spirit." It is that disposition wherein an individual is not quick tempered, but long suffering. Anger is not readily or quickly manifested in a "spirit of meekness" (Gal. 6:1).

Gentleness is as kindred grace to meekness, and thus is mentioned with it. But it is a distinct virtue. It is the calm response to people and circumstances that flows from meekness. Gentleness is the manifestation of meekness. If one is not inclined to "fly off the handle" at people (meekness), then it will be revealed in a dignified answer, lacking the "heat" of carnal emotional display (gentleness).

In all this there is no hint of weakness or irresponsibility. As we have seen, these two qualities are said to be part of our LORD JESUS CHRIST, and a cursory reading of the Gospels will not hint at a weak or easily intimidated man in the LORD JESUS. On the contrary, He is Almighty God!

Let us be careful to follow the LORD JESUS CHRIST, our example (1 Pet. 2:21; John 13:15) in these two most important areas of our Christian walk - meekness and gentleness!

Tim

Christocentricity Paper #85 - 3<sup>rd</sup> Lord's Day in August, 1998

## **"Truthing in CHRIST"**

**"But speaking the truth in love, may grow up in all things into Him who is the head-Christ"**  
**(Eph. 4:15).**

The above verse, which is the contrast to being taken in by mediate deception of demons through false teachers, has in the NKJV the words, "speaking the truth." This is one word in Greek, the English word "speaking" having no equivalent in the original. It is a verb-the verb form of the noun "truth." Thus we would translate this something like "truthing in love..."

In that the LORD JESUS CHRIST is the truth (JN. 14:6), and all truth is in Him (Eph. 4:20, 21), this is a command to live in the life that the LORD JESUS CHRIST is, manifesting divine truth through His Spirit. It is a call to the Christocentric life, functioning in the life that CHRIST is (Gal. 2:20). As we conform thus to the image of the LORD JESUS CHRIST, point-by-point we give ground over to Him, and thus all things, one-by-one, come under the dominion of His manifested Lordship in our lives.

And so the remainder of this verse tells believers that as we grow in each area of who the LORD JESUS CHRIST is and what He is like, ours will not be merely an abstract maturity, but growth into a Person-the LORD JESUS CHRIST. We "grow up in all things into Him." He is the sphere of our growth, the realm of our maturity. The most mature among us are those who have perceived the LORD JESUS CHRIST (not just theoretical doctrine) as each point in the Father's self-disclosure. The LORD JESUS CHRIST really is the life of such believers (Phil. 1:21; Col. 3:4; Gal. 2:20).

Timothy

Christocentricity Paper #86-4th Lord's day in August, 1998

## Incorruptible Love for CHRIST

"Grace be with all those who love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity. Amen" (Eph. 6:24 NKJV).

In this verse of Scripture it is shown to believers that the grace of God is on the saint who loves the LORD JESUS CHRIST "in sincerity" (as it is translated here). This is assuredly so, as we see in the word "amen" at the end of our verse. But what does it really mean to love our LORD JESUS CHRIST in such a manner? Two words in the verse are vitally important to our comprehension of this word from Scripture. They are "love" and "sincerity."

"Love" is the verb form of the Greek for a dedicated, devoted, commitment-appreciation, which because of its usage in Scripture, associated with the sacrifice of the LORD JESUS CHRIST, is often explained as being unconditional and self-sacrificial in its nature. It is the Greek word "agapao." It also has, as part of its meaning, that the object loved is valued as precious.

"Sincerity" is a Greek word meaning "incorruptibility." it is the opposite of decay or decomposition. It speaks of an inability of something to rot.

When we put these words together the concept we are presented with is this: The kind of life which receives greater grace (Jas. 4:6) is that life wherein there is not found the gradual process of a decline in our first love (Rev. 2:4). the multiplication of grace for strength is given to the saint who has an undecaying devotion, an incorruptible dedication, a commitment that doesn't decompose because the Christian prizes the LORD JESUS CHRIST above everything and everyone. To put it another way, the preciousness of the LORD JESUS CHRIST, perceived, recognized by the disciple, doesn't allow anything to hinder their increasing love for the LORD JESUS CHRIST. This is the disciple indeed, who continues in CHRIST's word (Jn. 8:31), the holy devotee of the Son of God who doesn't seek his own pursuits and pleasures, but seeks and cares for the things which are of CHRIST JESUS (Phil. 2:21).

One of the most painful and sorrowful things in the life of a true pastor from CHRIST is to watch a sheep's devotion to CHRIST rot before his eyes. Decisions of declension are made, choices of backsliding are decided upon, the focus on the LORD and the attention to Scripture wanes, all contributing to the downward cycle of a corruptible love. If the greatest joy of a genuine shepherd of CHRIST is to see those walk in truth who are under his spiritual care (3 Jn. 4), then the greatest disappointment and sadness is to observe ones whom he labors among losing the sense of supreme valuation for the knowledge of CHRIST JESUS, the Truth (Phil. 3:8).

Dear brethren, allow the Holy Spirit to nurture in you all an undying "agape" for our LORD JESUS CHRIST, the great god in flesh!

Timothy

## **The Fellowship of the Mystery**

We who have believed in the LORD JESUS CHRIST, the Person of the Mystery (1 Tim. 3:16; Col. 1:27) have come to understand by His grace (1 Jn. 5:20-Note the grace-word "given") the revealed secret of His unity and consubstantiality of deity with the Father (Col. 2:2). His essential, uncreated, absolute, eternal, unbegotten Godhead as the Son was declared by the Father when He raised Him from the dead (Rom. 1:3-4) and thus vindicated the LORD JESUS in His claim to be the Son of God (1 Tim. 3:16; Jn. 8:28; Acts 4:10, 11; Ps. 118:22; 1 Pet. 2:7; Mt. 21:33-34 [= Mk. 12:1-11; Lk. 20:9-18]).

We who have believed in Him have entered into the mystery-entity of the body of the CHRIST (Col. 1:24-27 and Eph. 3:1-6). This is where, "as we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another" (1 Jn. 1:7, NKJV), for "truly our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ" (1 Jn. 1:3, NKJV. Our fellowship with one another is based on our fellowship with God.

Thus the fellowship of the mystery results from our believing on the Person of the mystery. Our fellowship with one another ought therefore to be a living fellowship-a fellowship of life-because our fellowship is around the ever living One (Heb. 7:25; Rom. 6:9; Rev. 1:18), who Himself is Life (Jn. 1:4; Col. 3:4).

May our fellowship ever be characterized by the manifestation of our Life in our midst!

Tim

Christocentricity Paper #88-1st Lord's day in September, 1998



## How Transformation Occurs

Paul, after teaching that the very real glory which was connected with the age of law in the Old Testament was a temporal one (2 Cor. 3:7), showed that the glory of the New Testament characterized, by the reception of the Spirit (2 Cor. 3:8), and ministering the righteousness of life (2 Cor. 3:9) was lasting and permanent (2 Cor. 3:10). He went on to write, "For if what is passing away was glorious, what remains is much more glorious. Therefore since we have such hope, we use great boldness of speech—unlike Moses, who put a veil over his face so that the children of Israel could not look steadily at the end of what was passing away" (2 Cor. 3:11-13, NKJV). Paul then taught in this letter that "the same veil" remained on the minds of unbelieving Jews when reading the Christocentric Old Testament Scriptures because that veiling is only removed by faith in CHRIST (2 Cor. 3:14-16).

In verse 18 of 2 Cor. 3 the apostle, having explained these truths, instructed on how genuine transformation takes place in the life of a believer. As we read Scripture and see the LORD JESUS CHRIST therein, we become like the One we are viewing. Without the hindrance of the veil of an unregenerate mind we perceive CHRIST beyond the letter through the Spirit (2 Cor. 3:6). Beholding the LORD JESUS CHRIST in whatever place of Scripture we are in, we radiate that discovered CHRIST in life. We are transformed "into the same image from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord" (meaning that we advance from one degree of manifestation of the LORD JESUS to another higher degree of revealing Him, all by the grace from the Holy Spirit). Through seeing the LORD JESUS CHRIST by means of Scripture we are transformed into conformity (Rom. 12:2) to His image (Col. 3:10) in true righteousness and holiness (Eph. 4:24). Our transformation is thus realized to be a Christocentric transaction of the Holy Spirit through Scripture-teaching.

Let the word of CHRIST dwell in you richly (Col. 3:16a), resulting in a spiritual metamorphosis according to the image of the LORD JESUS CHRIST.

Timothy

Christocentricity Paper #89-2nd Lord's day in September, 1998

## God's Self-revelation

"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God" (Jn. 1:1).

We learn from the above verse of Scripture a number of things about the LORD JESUS CHRIST whose name is called "the Word of God" (Rev. 19:13). We find that He was already in existence in the beginning when the heavens and the earth were made (1:1a cf. Gen. 1:1). We learn that He was distinct from God His Father while together with Him before the foundation of the world (1:1b). And we know of His true Godhood, thus knowing that His existence in the beginning was because of His eternal self-existence (1:1c).

Though these statements about Gods' CHRIST are taught through this verse, the fact that we will focus upon in this written teaching is learned from the title given Him here, the name used to designate the Son of God.

What does it mean that the LORD JESUS CHRIST is the "the Word of God?" First, the Greek word for "word" here is "logos," speaking of a communication, message, thought expressed by words. There is another Greek word which signifies an individual word. What is conveyed here is that the LORD JESUS CHRIST is the thought of God on every subject. Whatever God's divine and eternal view on an issue, it is contained in CHRIST. He is God's self-communication, His self-disclosure, His self-revelation. The LORD JESUS CHRIST is the Revealer of God in that He is God revealed.

Secondly, the LORD JESUS CHRIST is the totality of all that God has said and is saying. To a first century Jew (such as John) "the word of God" was a designation of the infallible, inerrant, inspired, flawless communication of God's thoughts in divinely-selected words, usually conveyed through a prophet. When written down, this communication was called "Scripture." Here then, the LORD JESUS CHRIST, by use of this terminology applied to Him, is said to be the entirety of Scripture. He is the Person of Scripture, the "Scripture-Man." This One is all that Scripture was about. He Himself is all that Scripture teaches! Through different forms, and in various ways (especially in the Old Testament-Heb. 1:1) the Scriptures speak of Him.

Thirdly, He is God's point to doctrine today. What would God say to us? The answer is: His Son! (Heb. 1:2) CHRIST is the ultimate end, the goal of all doctrinal instruction that God would have us to know.

In these ways, God the Father, in sending His Son by way of incarnation, has revealed Himself to man (Jn. 8:19; Jn. 14:6-9; Mt. 11:27). That we might deeply know God, let us study the LORD JESUS CHRIST. That we might deeply study the LORD JESUS CHRIST, let us examine and search the Scriptures.

Tim

## The Word Become Flesh

“And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth” (Jn. 1:14 NKJV).

This verse before us teaches that God the Word (Jn. 1:1), the LORD JESUS CHRIST (Rev. 19:13) “became flesh.” He who always was God became a man, and thus deity was housed in a human body (Col. 2:9). The God of the Scriptures took on a fleshly body.

The enfleshment of the Godhead having taken place, the Message of the Father was “spoken” to man in the last days (Heb. 1:1,2). The LORD, the Word always existed, just as Ps. 119:89 says: Forever, O LORD, Your word is settled in heaven NKJV). The Word, as the Father’s eternal thinking-divine thought, was spoken in incarnation. Thus it was that God “dwelt among us”-God with us, Immanuel (Isa. 7:14; Mt. 1:23). The One who was the sum total of all divine viewpoint was expressed by the Father in a bodily theophany.

While most of His own did not receive Him (Jn. 1:10,11) some “beheld His glory”-saw Him for who He really is -God and Word. The disciples of the CHRIST believed in His manifested glory (Jn. 2:11). The Father and the Son made their home with them (Jn. 16:23). This glory which they perceived was CHRIST’s glory as the Unique One of the Father, God’s one-of-a-kind Son (the Monogenes), and His glory was with the revelation of grace and truth;

When the Son was manifested to humans in His taking on of our own humanity, the things that stood out to John, as he wrote this verse, were grace and truth. He wrote that the LORD JESUS was full of both of these aspects of the glory of God’s person. The goodness of God’s undeserved favor toward man, and all of God’s genuine absolute spiritual reality was displayed in the LORD JESUS CHRIST.

Beloved brethren, let us never grow ungrateful as we behold the riches of CHRIST JESUS (Eph. 3:8) that have come to us through Him. Permit the Holy Spirit to stir up an awe for our Savior because of these things. Allow our God to generate a spirit of remembrance of the LORD and renewed love for Him deep in the inner man.

Grace be with you all.

Timothy

Christocentricity Paper #91-4th Lord’s day in September, 1998

## **"Him We Preach"**

**"Him we preach warning every man and teaching every man in all wisdom, that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus" (Col. 1:28 NKJV).**

After teaching in Col. 1:27 that CHRIST among us is the mystery of the hope of glory, Paul went on in the verse above to speak of the LORD JESUS CHRIST as the subject of the Christian Teaching. He did so by stating that our communication of Christ is the essence of the word of God. He said, "Him we preach."

It is not "what" we preach, but "who" we preach. The point of the apostle's announcing is the Person of our LORD JESUS CHRIST. The real gist of the apostle's message concerned itself with the identity and salvific accomplishments of the LORD JESUS CHRIST.

Those being the case, there was a warning ministry and a teaching service toward all who would hear. That admonition and instruction was likewise "in all wisdom," wisdom being another name for the LORD JESUS CHRIST Himself (1 Cor. 1:30) Disciples were taught "all" (each area, every point, all facets) "wisdom" (of the LORD JESUS CHRIST). They were trained in CHRIST-perception! And since they were learning Him (Eph. 4:20) as each individual category of the Word was opened up to them, they were growing up in a "LORD JESUS CHRIST maturity" (Eph. 4:15). That is, their maturation was not abstract, but personal-dealing with the personality of the Word of God.

Next, there was the potential of each spiritual hearer being presented as perfect in CHRIST. This latter part of our verse reveals that the LORD JESUS CHRIST will hold pastors partially responsible for the condition in which the assemblies they labored among are found in the day of CHRIST. Paul wanted to be able to deliver to the LORD JESUS mature saints, saved from the ravages of foolishness and ignorance, through the ministries of announcement, admonition, and instruction. This perfection Paul wrote of is entirely in the sphere of CHRIST!

Timothy

Christcentricity Paper # 92 - 1st Lord's day in October, 1998

## The Multi-dimensional CHRIST

In so many cases today in the churches of the LORD JESUS CHRIST we see a sad situation of imbalance existing. I speak of the losing sight of our multi-dimensional CHRIST. It is when an individual or assembly or denomination or ministry overemphasizes one aspect of our LORD, failing to see Him in His varied manifestations of the virtues of His Person.

Let me explain: When we begin to so stress a particular aspect of the truth that the LORD is to the neglect of other aspects of His fulness (Col. 1:19; Jn. 1:16; Eph. 3:19) we fail to see the LORD JESUS CHRIST in all His glory.; It results in our limiting the Holy One of Israel (Ps. 78:41). We get so locked in to a particular manifestation of our LORD that we become incapacitated to behold Him as He reveals Himself another way. Our very light becomes darkness.

Now let us illustrate: It can happen with gifts. One gift, ministry, or activity of God (1 Cor. 12:4-6) dominates our thinking to the quenching of the Spirit (1 Thess. 5:19) respecting His diversities. It can happen with teaching. One doctrinal category preoccupies our minds to the point where we are bored with other branches of the true Word of God. It can happen with people. One personality essentially becomes our Christianity (instead of CHRIST) so that we look down on other brethren (for example Paul, Apollos, or Cephas-1 Cor. 1:12, 13 and 1 Cor. 3:4). It can happen in so many ways, but the result is the same: a reduction of CHRIST through human increase (opposite of Jn. 3:30).

Paul shared with us his prayer that the Ephesian saints would comprehend "what is the width and length and depth and height: (Eph. 3:18 NKJV). This is a four-dimensional presentation of CHRIST the Truth. Many are just "width believers," others simply "height saints" while there are the two or three dimensioned "combination disciples."

Denominationalism is an expression of this one-sidedness. But it is only on expression of it. Modern-day Pharisaism is another. Measuring others by ourselves or our own group is another (2 Cor. 10:12). Maybe you can think of many more examples.

What we should want to do is to be open to "the fullness of Christ" (Eph. 4:13), experiencing all of Him in all of us (Eph. 1:23), recognizing CHRIST JESUS as He who is "all and in all" (Col. 3:11).

rejoicing in CHRIST JESUS,

Tim

Christocentricity Paper #93-2nd Lord's day in October, 1998

## CHRIST formed in Us

“My little children, for whom I labor in birth again until Christ is formed in you” (Gal. 4:19 NKJV).

When once we begin by the Spirit (Gal. 3:3) in focusing our spiritual attentions on JESUS CHRIST clearly portrayed among us as crucified (Gal. 3:1), and then remove our mind's eye from Him to anything else, we become those for whom it is necessary for CHRIST to be formed in us all over again. This was the case with the churches of Galatia (Gal. 1:2). Paul sought to rectify the problem with a letter of doctrinal instruction. This reveals that the solution is chiefly an issue of teaching. Once the focus is lost it must be regained by a consistent emphasis on the LORD JESUS CHRIST throughout the teaching one listens to. The LORD JESUS CHRIST must ever be put before the subject's eyes of understanding (Eph. 1:18).

But this doesn't mean that one ever has to lose sight of the LORD JESUS CHRIST as the Person of preeminence. On the contrary, we can set our hearts to abide in CHRIST and say along with David, “He only is my rock and my salvation; He is my defense, I shall not be moved” (Ps. 62:6 NKJV).

What we learn from these things is that the formation of CHRIST in us is having Him fill our thoughts as our Foundation (1 Cor. 3:11) and from there, through the faith, He resides in our hearts as we receive more teaching from a Christocentric perspective (Eph. 3:17). Therefore, let us continue to behold the LORD in the word!

considering Him,

Timothy

Christocentricity Paper #94-3rd Lord's day in October, 1998

## The Excellence of the Knowledge of Christ

In Phil. 3:8 we encounter the phrase “the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord” (NKJV). This “excellente” (something that excels) is in reference to other things. The knowledge of the LORD JESUS CHRIST is exceeding in value as compared with other things. That is what the apostle is saying as we examine the context of this Scriptural phrase.

Paul put a genuine and deep knowledge of the LORD JESUS CHRIST above all things in his prior life as an unbeliever (Phil. 3:4-7) and above all things that he could consider of any value in his life as he wrote (Phil. 3:8b). Whatever relative value or worth something might have, when compared with the infinite wealth of knowing the LORD JESUS CHRIST, it paled in its appeal to Paul’s Christocentric heart. His set of divine priorities, received from the Spirit, the Scripture, and his Damascus-Road experience caused him to account all else besides this knowledge as “rubbish” that he could continually gain new insights into and communion with the LORD JESUS CHRIST.

Paul was willing to undergo anything that would bring him closer to CHRIST, even if it meant like sufferings to the afflictions of JESUS (Phil. 3:10).

And what about us? Do we prize a true, thorough, and intimate knowledge of our LORD above all else. Do we esteem the reproach of CHRIST as greater riches than other possible worldly benefits (Heb. 11:25)? Does CHRIST have first place in our lives and hearts?

your friend,

Timothy

Christocentricity Paper #96-1st Lord’s day in November, 1998

## CHRIST: The Content of the Mystery

Consider with me the teaching concerning our LORD JESUS CHRIST found in Col. 1:24-28. I believe we shall find the LORD JESUS CHRIST to be the point and substance of the New Testament revelation.

In verse 24 Paul spoke of his joy in sufferings, recognizing that they were the direct result of his ministry of CHRIST JESUS to the Gentiles, and were thus for their sakes. He called those sufferings "the afflictions of Christ," associating them with the service of the LORD JESUS, seeing them not to be divorced, but in connection with the LORD JESUS CHRIST Himself.

Verse 25 brings to our attention Paul's stewardship that was given to him by God. He then defined that responsibility before the Father in the words "to fulfill the word of God." That "word of God" was then in turn defined to be "the mystery" in verse 26. Again, that mystery was defined in verse 27 as "Christ in you." So it is easy to see, following line-upon-line (Isa. 28:13) how the content of the New Testament mystery is the LORD JESUS CHRIST revealed in His union with "His body, which is the church" (v.24). The mystery is CHRIST...in His spiritual life in communion with His body.

Messiah (CHRIST) had been taught on in the Old Covenant. But in organic union with His people, joined as one spirit (2 Cor. 6:17) had never been portrayed in the previous ages.

Therefore, since the LORD JESUS CHRIST is the very matter of the mystery whom we fellowship around, Paul's communication of this mystery could only be the Person of the Son of God! This is what he says in verse 28: "Him we preach," warning and teaching all in the wisdom that CHRIST Himself is (cf. 1 Cor. 1:30), so that all his hearers would become mature-perfected in their comprehension and apprehension of the Son of God.

With the transmission of this final block of doctrine concerning the LORD JESUS CHRIST His fulness of teaching was complete. This is what Paul meant by saying that his service was "to fulfill the word of God," to supply, as an apostle and prophet the last leg of Christian doctrine (Eph. 3:5,6).

May we rejoice in the unfolding of the Person of the mystery-our glorious and infinite LORD JESUS CHRIST!

"for the word of God and the testimony of JESUS CHRIST"  
(Rev. 1:9)

Tim

Christocentricity Paper #97-2nd Lord's day in November, 1998



## More Mystery Material

Last week we learned that the LORD JESUS CHRIST is the mystery, in that He had never been revealed in previous ages as being the Head of the body. Indeed, the concept of the body of the CHRIST had never been heard of in Old Testament days. Today we see another place in Scripture where the issue in the mystery we teach is said to be our LORD JESUS CHRIST. It is 1 Tim. 3:15-4:1. Watch how words that express God's true doctrine are applied to, and identified as, the LORD JESUS.

Paul was writing to Timothy in case he was delayed in coming to him, so that Timothy would know how to lead the church in Ephesus in ecclesiastical proprieties. This is important because a church is a "pillar and ground of the truth" (v. 15) in a given location. This being the case, it is revealed to us that what an assembly teaches should be "the truth." This is referring to the totality of God's thought revealed in the Holy Scriptures for His people. This sum of correct instruction from God is His Son (Jn. 14:6). The LORD JESUS CHRIST is the truth!

Without any break in thought, Paul went on to speak of this "truth" as "the mystery of godliness" in verse 16. As we look at its contents we see only objective teaching concerning the Person and accomplishments of the LORD JESUS CHRIST: He is GOD manifested in flesh, risen from the dead in divine vindication, studied by angels, proclaimed among nations according to the revelation of this mystery among the Gentiles (Rom. 16:25, 26; Col. 1:24-28; Eph. 3:1-8), and received up in glory, speaking of His Melchizedekian resurrection-High priesthood in heaven, which followed His ascension (Heb. 4:14-10:21). The whole of this aforementioned mystery concerns Him!

But the Holy Spirit was through His New Testament prophets (envoys of the mystery-Eph. 3:5) continually revealing that in our times some, and even many, would depart from this doctrinal orientation which teaches solely CHRIST and sees all Scripture as a conveyance of Him. Verse one of chapter four calls this departure from the above "truth" (v. 15) and "mystery" (v. 16) a leaving of "the faith," showing this term to be also a reference to "that form of doctrine to which you were delivered" (Rom. 6:17), in other words, LORD JESUS CHRIST teaching!

From the above considerations we can recognize the LORD JESUS CHRIST to be the Truth, the Mystery, and the Faith to whom we have come (Mt. 11:28). Amen.

Timothy, your elder and friend

Christocentricity Paper #98-3rd Lord's day in November, 1998

## Our Redeemer-God

"O Israel, hope in the LORD; for with the LORD there is mercy, and with Him is abundant redemption. And He shall redeem Israel from all his iniquities" (Ps. 130:7, 8 NKJV).

Indicated in the above quotation from the Psalms is the concept that God Himself would personally redeem His people from iniquity. Allow this truth to sink down deeply into your heart. God promised to be the Redeemer of His people.

But, building upon that idea, we find from Heb. 9:15 (speaking of the LORD JESUS CHRIST) that death was necessary for such redemption. This verse reads "And for this reason He is the Mediator of the new covenant, by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions under the first covenant, that those who are called may receive the promise of the eternal inheritance" (NKJV). Note that the death of the Mediator was required to effect the redemption. This necessitated that God, who would redeem His people, become a man to be able to die, and to act as a representative of humanity in death (Heb. 2:16).

Going back to the first point, our Redeemer couldn't be merely a man, only human, but had to be God, because if he were only a man he could not effect our redemption at all (Ps. 49:7, 8). Abundant proof could be cited from the Old Covenant that the promised Redeemer would be identified as and associated with God, as the Word was with God and was God (Jn. 1:1). The prophet Isaiah particularly spoke much of this idea of the "Redeemer-God." See Isa. 41:4; 43:14; 44:6, 24; 47:4; 48:17; 49:7, 26; 54:5,8; 59:20; 60:16; 63:16.

When "the Word became flesh" (Jn. 1:14) He was named "JESUS" for the express reason, as stated by the angel, "for He will save His people from their sins" (Mt. 1:21). Our Redeemer-God, the LORD JESUS CHRIST has become a man so as to give Himself a ransom for all and thus become the only Mediator between His Father in heaven and men on earth (1 Tim. 2:5,6). "CHRIST" crucified" (1 Cor. 1:24) is our redemption and our Redeemer (1 Cor. 1:30; Eph. 1:7; Col. 1:14).

Let us give all glory to CHRIST JESUS, and ascribe greatness to Him, because He has redeemed us to God by His blood out of every tribe, tongue, people, and nation (Rev. 5:9). Praise our incarnate Redeemer-God, the LORD JESUS CHRIST!

in CHRIST JESUS,  
Timothy

Christocentricity Paper # 100- 5th Lord's day in November, 1998

## CHRIST, The Shared Life of the Body

In Jn. 14:6 our LORD JESUS CHRIST referred to Himself as "the life." In Col. 3:4 Paul wrote in Spirit-inspired prophecy of the LORD JESUS CHRIST again as "our life." The One who is the life has become our life. Again, considering life as a possession of the Son of God, John wrote in Jn. 1:4, "in Him was life," and he recorded the words of the LORD JESUS CHRIST in Jn. 5:26 to the effect that the Son has "life in Himself." Life as a concept is in CHRIST. Life as a Person is CHRIST!

Lets now take this one step further in a progression of thinking, a line of Scriptural reasoning: The Life was manifested (1 Jn. 1:2). That Life was CHRIST, whom we have received, so that , having CHRIST we have life (Jn. 3:6; 1 Jn. 5:12). We have life in CHRIST because life is in CHRIST. This is the testimony of the Father concerning the Son (1 Jn. 5:11). It is not as if some of us have life and others of the body don't. Some may "lay hold of eternal life" (1 Tim. 6:12, 19) while others of us do not (sadly), but the possibility to enjoy all that CHRIST is is open to all believers. This means that any one saint, possessing life, doesn't have it outside of the body of the CHRIST. Our Life is a shared Life. We all partake of one CHRIST (who is the Life)! Or "is CHRIST divided" (1 Cor. 1:13). I trust that you all will hold no idea of our LORD JESUS being divided in His distribution to and in His body. The one Life is the Life of each. We have together this fellowship of the shared Life of the body, our LORD JESUS CHRIST.

Now lets progress to take this into experience. Since we share CHRIST and He is our communion of life, the fullest expression of CHRIST, our Life, will be when we are gathered together with other believers. Gathered unto His name (Mt. 18:20), the power of our LORD JESUS CHRIST is with us (1 Cor. 5:7), and we see a greater degree of His fullness, filling each and all in the assembled church (Eph. 1:23). As we develop together into the maturity of CHRIST (Eph. 4:13) we should thus be enjoying each other to a higher degree, to a greater extent. We are the bearers of CHRIST-Life to one another. We are "conveyers" of life one to another. We live together around CHRIST. More on this in our next paper.

Timothy

Christocentricity Paper #102-2nd Lord's day in December, 1998

## CHRIST is Corporate Life

As we found last week, our LORD JESUS CHRIST is the Life of the body, His church. When we say that we have Life, we must never disconnect what we think of as our personal possession of Life from the possession of the entire body. What we have personally of CHRIST we share with the whole spiritual family of God in heaven and on earth (Eph. 3:14, 15). CHRIST is called "our Life" (Col. 3:4), not "MY" Life. "What is your life? It is even a vapor that appears for a little time and then vanishes away" (from Jas. 4:14 NKJV). My life, your life is temporal-passing, fleeting, momentary. Our Life is eternal and everlasting-the CHRIST.

The assembly of saints is an expression of the LORD JESUS CHRIST wherein each disciple has the opportunity to get to know the LORD JESUS CHRIST through contact with the multi-faceted grace of CHRIST ministered through the members of the body (1 Pet. 4:10). Fellowship with believers around our LORD JESUS CHRIST produces LORD JESUS CHRIST love for one another. We experience the LORD JESUS CHRIST in each other. The life of CHRIST is thus communicated among us in our sharing of the Life while we share ourselves. We each contribute to the receiving of our corporate Life, the LORD JESUS CHRIST. Whenever we gather together we should exhort with the life of CHRIST. It should be a living, genuine, vital, edifying and grace-imparting (Eph. 4:29) relationship that advances the entire church by strengthening the individual members of the body. Our standing in CHRIST should spill over to our walking in Him (Col. 2:6; 1 Jn. 1:7; 1 Jn. 2:6). Our state "in CHRIST" should not remain solely positional and theological, but should become practical, affecting the promotion of Life in our local assembly. We should view our Christian friendships as a sharing of CHRIST with one another.

When CHRIST permeates our midst in everything we do with and toward each other we will be truly loving the brethren and seeing the LORD JESUS alive in our assemblies. The churches of the LORD JESUS CHRIST desperately need to see this manifestation of the LORD in these days. Let us each determine to contribute to the nourishing of this Life among us. Let us all decide to cultivate the shared corporate expression of our Life in details. Let us individually choose to promote the LORD JESUS CHRIST in our assembly that we might "behold how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell in unity" (Ps. 133:1 NKJV).

love in CHRIST JESUS,

Tim

Christocentricity Paper #103-3rd Lord's day in December, 1998

## The Alpha and Omega

In Rev. 1:8 the LORD JESUS CHRIST said, "I am the Alpha and Omega." I seek to cause us to understand these titles for our LORD JESUS CHRIST in this Christocentricity Paper.

First let us consider Him (Heb. 3:1; 12:3) as the Alpha. Alpha is the name for the first letter in the Greek alphabet. As Alpha, the LORD is the Source of all things. It particularly present Him as the Deity, living and true. Because He is the Origin of all people and things, He is called "the Beginning of the creation of God" (Rev. 3:14). Without Him there would be nothing, because He created all things (Jn. 1:3; Col. 1:13-16). CHRIST is the Beginning of history, creation, and our own salvation as well. Our beginning as firstfruits of God's creatures (Jas. 1:18), the start of our spiritual lives as children of God is because of JESUS, the Alpha. As Alpha, He is the Author of our faith (Heb. 12:2).

The LORD JESUS CHRIST is also the Omega. Omega is the name for the last letter in the Greek alphabet. He is the One to whom all of history flows, receiving a divine culmination in Him (Eph. 1:10). All of the Father's intentions for the ages are to be realized in CHRIST (Heb. 1:2-the Greek word for "worlds" being the word "aion," meaning "age," here in the plural. God structured the epochs of spiritual history according to the pattern of His Son. Each successive era in God's plan highlights something of CHRIST to man.) As the Omega, as pertains to our salvation, the LORD JESUS CHRIST is the Finisher of our faith (Heb. 12:2).

The LORD JESUS CHRIST is never called "the Alpha" separate from "the Omega" in Scripture. That is, these aspects of CHRIST are not dissociated in Scripture. He is always both Alpha and Omega. Here we understand that He is not simply Beginning and End, but all that is between. We can describe this concept as CHRIST being "all." He is the everything of God's universe and plan. he is the extremities and the matrix of God's truth. He is truth Himself (Jn. 14:6). Our LORD JESUS CHRIST is the entirety of the Father's world. He is the Person of the Fullness (Col. 1:19). He is everything of God "from A to Z." All the fullness of deity dwells in Him in bodily form (Col. 2:9). He is the totality of spiritual everything!

in, for, and through our LORD JESUS CHRIST,

Timothy

Christocentricity Paper #104-4th Lord's day in December, 1998