

The HEARING OF Faith

LIVING STREAM MINISTRY RADIO NEWSLETTER

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"He therefore who bountifully supplies to you the Spirit . . . does He do it out of the works of the law or out of the hearing of faith?" Galatians 3:5

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Life-Study of the Bible

W E L C O M E S

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Dear Listeners,

Thank you for your encouragement! Many of you have told us that your view of the Old Testament has become fresh and new from these broadcasts in Exodus. One of the things that we appreciate in this ministry is that the unveiling of the types in the Old Testament brings to us a deeper and richer enjoyment of Christ. We hope this has been true for you as well.

Enclosed with this edition of *The Hearing of Faith* is our *Reference Guide to the Tabernacle*. The response from our listeners to this short guide was so positive that we decided to send this valuable resource to all of you.

You probably noticed the new reply card we sent you in last month's mailing. It is important that we hear from you, so we included some extra options on the card. Please take note of them. We have also provided more space for your comments, and we hope that you will take the time to write us.

Finally, many of you who listen to the broadcast over the Internet have told us that you have experienced difficulty with your connection. By the time you receive this month's issue, those technical problems should all be resolved. Please send us an email at radio@lsm.org if you are still having problems.

Living Stream Ministry Radio

WHAT IS THE ALL-INCLUSIVE CHRIST?

God's heart's desire as revealed in the Scriptures is for Christ to be our center, our life, our reality, and our everything so that we can be His corporate expression. We call this marvelous Christ the all-inclusive Christ because He includes and embodies all the riches of God for our experience and our enjoyment.

Ephesians 3:8 speaks of the unsearchable riches of Christ. Once we receive Christ as our Savior and life, He comes into us with these unsearchable riches. In 1 Corinthians 1:9 Paul tells us that we were called into the fellowship of God's Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, that is, to participate in, experience, and enjoy Christ as everything to us. Then in Colossians 1:12 Paul tells us that the Father has qualified us for a share of Christ as our allotted portion. This again shows us that Christ is our portion for our experience and enjoyment. He is the all-inclusive One that we need to pursue and experience day by day. In Philippians the apostle Paul aspired to magnify such a Christ, to live Christ, to be found in Christ, to gain Christ, and to pursue Christ so that this Christ could be everything to him.

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CHRIST

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The Scriptures also reveal that as the all-inclusive One, Christ is the reality of all the necessities of our human life. John 20:22 says that Christ breathed Himself as the Spirit into the believers. He is our air for us to breathe. In John 6:35, Christ revealed Himself as the bread of life, and in verse 57 He tells us that we need to eat Him so that we can live because of Him. This shows us that Christ is our spiritual food. In John 4:10 and 14 and in John 7:37-39, we see that Christ is the living water for us to drink. In John 8:12, the Lord tells us that He is the light of the world, and if we follow Him, we will have the light of life. Galatians 3:27 says that we need to put on Christ, showing us that Christ is our clothing. In John 15, the Lord tells us that we need to abide in Him. This shows us that Christ is our dwelling place, our home. In Matthew 11:28 the Lord tells us to come unto Him and He will give us rest. All these verses show us that Christ is all-inclusive. He is our real air, food, water, light, clothing, home, and rest for our enjoyment.

Not only so, this all-inclusive Christ is the reality of all the shadows in the Old Testament for our enjoyment today (Col. 2:16, 17).

It is very significant that in John 8:58 the Lord Jesus reveals that He is the great I AM. He said, "Before Abraham came into being, I AM." Christ is the very God as the great I AM, the One who was, the One who is, and the One who will be. We might say that after Christ came into us, it is as if He is a blank check within us. We can write that check out for whatever we need. In John 14:6, He says "I am the life," so if we need life, He is our life. In John 8:12, He says "I am the light," so if we need light, He is our light. Whatever we need, He is. He is everything to us for our enjoyment.

God wants us to enjoy the all-inclusive Christ with all His unsearchable riches. When we enjoy the riches of Christ day by day, this will make us corporately His fullness for His expression in this universe, so that God can be expressed in glory forever and ever, first as the Body of Christ, and consummately as the New Jerusalem for eternity.

For further reading on this subject, please see the footnotes for the above referenced verses in the New Testament Recovery Version and The All-Inclusive Christ by Witness Lee, published by Living Stream Ministry.

Excerpt from

HOW TO STUDY THE BIBLE BY WATCHMAN NEE

The book How to Study the Bible contains messages given by Watchman Nee in Kuling, China, during his training for his co-workers between 1948 and 1949. The following excerpt is from chapter one entitled "Three Prerequisites."

THE NEED TO BE SPIRITUAL

In John 6:63 the Lord Jesus said, "The words which I have spoken to you are spirit." The words of the Bible are not only letters but spirit. We also should recall the Lord's word in John 4:24: "God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit." Here the Lord points out a fundamental principle: God is Spirit, and man can only touch Him with his spirit. God is Spirit and we can only worship Him with our spirit; we cannot worship Him with anything other than the spirit. God is Spirit, and we cannot worship Him with our mind, emotion, or will. Colossians 2:23 speaks of "self-imposed worship." This means worshipping with the will. This is wrong because God is Spirit, and because God is Spirit, those who worship Him must worship in spirit. John 6 says that the Lord's words are spirit. The basic principle is the same: Since the Lord's words are spirit, we have to read them in spirit. In other words, we can only touch spiritual things with the spirit.

The Bible is not only a book with words or letters printed on pages of paper. The very nature of the Bible is spirit. For this reason, everyone who reads this book must approach it *with his spirit*; it must be read *with the spirit*. The spirit that we are referring to is the spirit of every regenerated person. We call this spirit the "regenerated spirit." Not everyone has this spirit. Therefore, not everyone can read the Bible well. Only those who have this spirit can read the Bible well; those who do not have this spirit cannot read it well. This spirit is needed to worship God. This same spirit is needed to read the Bible well. Without this spirit, a man cannot know God. Without this spirit, he cannot know the Bible either. Perhaps we were born into a Christian family. Before we were regenerated, we probably had read the Bible already, but we did not understand it. We understood the history and facts recorded in the Bible, but we did not understand the Bible itself. This is not surprising, because God's word is spirit. If we do not use our spirit, we cannot read this book. When can a man begin to understand the Bible? On the day he receives the Lord, he can begin to understand the Bible. From that day forward, the Bible will become a new book to him; he will begin to understand and treasure this book. Although he may not understand everything in it, he will begin to love it. He will read it daily and yearly. If he misses his reading, he will feel hungry; he will feel that something is missing in his life. When he reads God's word this way, he will begin to understand it. He can understand it because he is now regenerated. "That which is born of the Spirit is spirit" (John 3:6). We should put John 4:24, 6:63, and 3:6 together: "God is Spirit," "The words which I have spoken. . . are spirit," and "That which is born of the Spirit is spirit." The words in the Bible are spirit. The life which a man receives at the time of regeneration is spirit, and it takes a man with a spirit to read the words of spirit. Only then will the Bible shine within him, and only then will it become useful to him. . . .

. . . One must read the Bible with his spirit and in the realm of spirit. No matter how educated, logical, and analytical a man is, he cannot understand the Bible if he does not have this spirit.

From How to Study the Bible by Watchman Nee, pp. 9-11, published by Living Stream Ministry

