

#13 Christian Maturity

1 Last week we had a wonderful service examining the text brother Branham used for his Sermon Christ is the Mystery of God Revealed. In his text brother Branham read from Colossians chapter one. We examined this Scripture and found it to be eye opening concerning "the Knowledge of the Son of God", where Jesus came into this world for one purpose, and that was to do the will of His Father. We found in our study that he did not live for himself, but he lived for others. Not just once in a while, but everything he did was for others. Either for the Father or for you and I. That is how he lived, and he is our example.

2 From his sermon The Spoken Word is the Original Seed 62-0318M P:91 brother Branham said, "God's Son was His example Seed. And what His Life was when the Spirit poured upon Him after His baptism and the Holy Ghost come upon Him, the very Life that He produced will, that same watering Spirit of the Holy Ghost will bring forth the same kind of a Life, doing the same thing that He did; if it's the same Seed. Son of God Seed will bring forth a Son of God Seed."

3 And we saw the example seed wash the feet of his disciples, and instruct them to do for each other what he did for them.

4 Now, in getting back to brother Branham's text in Colossians 1, we'll pick up at verse where we left off. 25 "Whereof I am made a minister, according to the dispensation (or Stewardship) of God which is given to me for you, to fulfill the Word of God; 26 Even the mystery which hath been hid from ages and from generations, but now is made manifest to his saints: 27 To whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory (value) of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory (the hope of the Doxa of God, the hope of receiving God's opinion, God's values and God's judgments.) 28 Whom we preach, warning every man, and teaching every man in all wisdom; that we may present every man perfect (or complete) in Christ Jesus: 29 Whereunto I also labor, striving according to his working, which worketh in me mightily."

5 Now, in these last two verses we heard Paul say, Christ in you, the hope (or earnest expectation) of glory (in other words, Christ in you brings us an earnest expectation of receiving the very mind of God)

6 Now, this is important for us to know because Paul also tells us that without having the Spirit of God we will never understand the things of God. Therefore, the values of God can not be understood by the mind that is void of God's spirit.

7 1 Corinthians 1:4 I thank my God always on your behalf, for the grace of God which is given you by Jesus Christ; 5 That in every thing ye are enriched by him, in all utterance, (Logos) and in all knowledge; 6 Even as the testimony of Christ was confirmed (stabilized) in you: (Now, the Greek word used here speaks more deeply than the word confirm would suggest unless you take the word confirm more deeply to mean "after a period of growth, and understanding, you become stabilized. And the purpose of this is verse 7) 7 So that ye come behind

in no gift;(which is a spiritual endowment, or ability to comprehend) waiting for the coming (which is the apokalupsis, unveiling, manifestation or revelation) of our Lord Jesus Christ: 8 Who shall also confirm you (shall stabilize you unto the end.) unto the end, that ye may be blameless (totally justified) in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. 9 God is faithful, by whom ye were called unto the fellowship of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord. 10 Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment.

8 So you see, he is telling us that there is no way we can all speak the same thing, and be no divisions among us unless we are all joined together with the same mind, and same judgments. And that is totally impossible unless we all have the same Spirit, because only having the same Spirit can we have the same mind.

9 And in fact that is what he goes on to say in the next chapter. And remember, this was not written with chapters and verses. It was a letter to the Corinthians. And although they professed to believe yet they were not mature believers. They were in fact quite immature, and so Paul had to rebuke them more because they were not stabilized like the Ephesian church. That is why Paul had to speak to them about this stabilizing effect of the Holy Spirit in their lives. And so as we read on we will see Paul tell them that unless they have the Spirit of God in them they will never understand the things of God.

10 For the rest of what we call chapter one Paul goes on to rebuke them for all the contentions and divisiveness that is going on, pitting one brother against another as though the brothers are in different categories or something. As though one brother's ministering, or his role in the family is more important than the next brother's role.

11 11 For it hath been declared unto me of you, my brethren, by them which are of the house of Chloe, that there are contentions among you. 12 Now this I say, that every one of you saith, I am of Paul; and I of Apollos; and I of Cephas; and I of Christ. 13 Is Christ divided? was Paul crucified for you? or were ye baptized in the name of Paul? 14 I thank God that I baptized none of you, but Crispus and Gaius; 15 Lest any should say that I had baptized in mine own name.

12 Now, let's skip past the rebukes, and get to the real point that Paul is making here.

13 1 Corinthians 2: 1 And I, brethren, when I came to you, came not with excellency of speech or of wisdom, declaring unto you the testimony of God. 2 For I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified. 3 And I was with you in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling. 4 And my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power: 5 That your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God.

14 And that is where the Message followers have veered away from in the Message itself. God came down and used the vessel of William Branham to hide the truth in simplicity, to hide it from those whose minds are blinded from the simple truth, and whose minds think the deeper you teach the better it is. I have seen it in every camp in this Message, where men come to the pulpits and they are going to teach so deep that no one can understand

where they are coming from. God's prophet never did that? Jesus didn't do that. He said suffer the little ones to come unto me for such are the kingdom of God. He said unless you become like these little ones, not in understanding but in your opinions of your own selves, unless you humble down like them you will never make it. That's what Jesus said.

15 So Paul says the same thing in verse 6. Howbeit we speak wisdom among them that are perfect: "teleios" "mature", yet not the wisdom of this world, nor of the princes of this world, that come to nought: 7 But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world unto our glory: 8 Which none of the princes of this world knew: for had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory. 9 But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him.

16 Now, here is the key...10 But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God. 11 For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God knows. 12 Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God. 13 Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teaches; comparing spiritual things with spiritual. 14 But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. 15 But he that is spiritual judgeth all things, yet he himself is judged of no man. 16 For who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct him? But we have the mind of Christ.

17 Now, in getting back to Colossians 1:28 28 Whom we preach, (Now, notice this Christ in you that Paul is preaching is the same Spirit that was in Jesus.) Christ in you, the hope of glory 28 Whom we preach, and in preaching Christ in you, the hope of glory, (Your hope of receiving God's Doxa, his values, His opinions, and his judgments) Paul adds, warning every man, and teaching every man in all wisdom; that we may present every man perfect (or complete, finished off, mature) in Christ Jesus: (and then in verse 29 he tells us that is why he so labored among the people) 29 Whereunto I also labor, striving according to his working, which worketh in me mightily.

18 Now, why would he speak of striving to get the brethren to the place where they were mature and complete or finished in their character? And why would he choose to use the words, "WARNING EVERY MAN" concerning this state of maturity that he strove to bring us to?, because, God is not coming for immature kids.

19

The adoption of sons is not for children, but for sons that have fully matured, and are responsible and are walking and talking in the image of the first born son.

20 The same Greek word "teleios" which the Apostle Paul used here and was translated as the word "Perfect", is also used in various epistles by the Apostle Paul to mean a full maturity as we see in 1 Corinthians 13:10 But when that which is "perfect" that which is "teleios" is come, then that which is in part shall be done away. 11 When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, because I thought as a child: but when I became a man, (an adult male) I put away childish things because I put away childish thinking.

21 And again this word "teleios" is used in 1 Corinthians 14:20 Brethren, be not children in understanding: howbeit in malice be ye children, but in understanding be men. "teleios"

22 Ephesians 4:13 Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect (a "teleios") man, unto the measure of the stature (helikia-maturity (in years or size):--age, stature.) of the fulfilling of Christ:

23 So again we see that it is not about just being a son, but it is all about coming to full maturity in Christ so that we might fulfill Christ.

24 Again in the book of Philippians we hear Paul say the same thing in Philippians 3:15 Let us therefore, as many as be perfect, (as many as be teleios- full maturity), be thus minded: and if in any thing ye be otherwise minded, God shall reveal even this unto you.

25 Now, to better understand what this Scripture speaks of let's back up to verse 9 and read.

26 Philippians 3:9 And being found in him, not having mine own righteousness, (not having mine own right-wise-ness) which is of the law, but that which is through the faith (the revelation) of Christ, the right-wise-ness which is of God by Revelation: 10 That I may know him, (not know about him, but that I may know Him, (That I may Ginosko Him, know Him, by experiencing him). That is what this word know or ginosko actually means. It does not speak of an intellectual knowledge, but a knowledge that is based on experience. And this is the same word Mary said when she said, "How can I be pregnant with child having known Ginosko no man."

Luke 1:34 Then said Mary unto the angel, How shall this be, seeing I know not a man? Seeing, I Ginosko not a man. And this word ginosko is a word which means to know by experiencing. In fact the definition of the word experience means: An Active participation in events or activities which leads to the accumulation of knowledge. An event or a series of events participated in or lived through which leads to knowledge. Then when Paul says, That I may know Him and that I may know the power of His resurrection.

27 Then Paul is talking about knowing or experiencing Christ and also experiencing the power of His resurrection. So what then is this power of His resurrection? It's the Holy Spirit, that's what it is.

28 The Apostle Paul said in Romans 8:11 But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you.

29 So the Apostle Paul speaks of not only Knowing Him by experiencing him, but by also experiencing the same Holy Spirit that was in Him. So don't tell me that just because you believe Brother Branham or you believe Brother Vayle that you have the Holy Spirit. You've got to have the experience of Him in you. Not just an intellectual understanding.

30 From his sermon, Earnestly contending for the faith 55-0123E P:28 brother Branham said, "Paul was down here in the natural realm with his Ph.D. See? He didn't know... He had an intellectual faith, but he didn't have a Divine faith. There's quite a difference in me having an intellectual faith than a Divine faith. There's where you, my Baptist friends, fail to go on. You get the intellectual faith by that, but it must be a Divine revelation of Jesus Christ to you that just came out of the heart. The intellectual faith is not enough. That's all right, but it only brings you to the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is a personal experience of the birth, the new birth, regeneration, making a new creature in Christ."

31 Even in this sermon, Christ is the mystery 63-0728 P:147 Brother Branham tells us the same thing, "Notice, God holds this key alone. No theologian can tell you. It's not known; it's hid from them. They know nothing about it. So the schools... "Well," you say, "I got a Ph. LL.D." You only make... To me and I believe unto God and to any real, true believer, that means you're just that much farther away; you just backed off. God is not known by education; He's not known by how to explain it. God is known by simplicity and of revelation of Jesus Christ in the most illiterate person. See? Not your theology; it's a revelation of Jesus Christ. "Upon this rock, I'll build My Church." No other rock's accepted; no other thing's accepted; no other Roman rock; no other Protestant rock; no other school; no other nothing; but on exactly the revelation of Jesus Christ in a new birth. He born in there and injects His own Life, and your life is gone, and the Life of Christ is projecting Itself through you with the preeminences to the people that they see the very Life, and works, and signs and wonders that He did is doing the same thing through you. Outside of that, the rest of it's not even called to at all.

32 Now, listen friends, You might think I am harping on this over and over again, and you are right, but I am not harping, I am trying to get you to the place where you will get desperate enough to die to your self and your church spirit and allow the Spirit of Christ to come in. And when it does you heard what he said would take place in your life. He said when you are born it is actually Christ being born in you, and when he does that he injects His very own life, and works, and signs and wonders. The same things He did you can not help but do, If it is His life living in you.

33 But you've got to die. Everything that is not important seems to be important to you. Why? If Christ has come alive in you that is all you want to talk about, think about, because Christ in you becomes the center of your Life.

34 Now, why is it that when you women are expecting a child, that you can make that little child the center of your life, and yet when Christ, the Very same Spirit that dwelt in Christ wants to be birthed in you, you don't pay no attention to it?

35 Just look at the activities that go on when a woman is expecting. They begin to get a room ready, they paint the walls, they try to created an atmosphere that they think the baby will be at home with. They think about "oh, my what should my baby wear? What kind of clothes can I buy for her or for him?" And that mother begins to look at her own nutrition and says to herself, I better cut out this and I better cut out that because it would not be healthy for my little baby, and yet when Christ is wanting to be clothed upon in us, we don't spend half the time thinking about those what we should feed him? Or how we should dress the body he wishes to live in. Do you know why? Because Christ being born in you is not as much a reality to you as that little flesh and blood baby is.

But I tell you this, if ever you get that revelation in you of the New Birth, then all your thoughts are turned towards birthing that Christ child in you and raising it up to full maturity.

36 Brother Branham said in Christ is the mystery 63-0728 P:120 "Look, Christ in you makes Him the center of Life of the revelation. See? Christ's Life in you makes Him the center of the revelation. Christ in the Bible, makes the Bible a complete revelation of Christ. Christ in you makes you the complete revelation of the whole thing. See, what God's trying to do? What is the new birth then? You say, "Well, Brother Branham, what is the new birth?" It is the revelation of Jesus Christ personally to you. Amen. See? Not you joined a church, you shook a hand; you done something different; you said a creed; you promised to live by a code of rules; but Christ, the Bible... He is the Word that was revealed to you. And no matter what anybody says, what takes place, it's Christ. Pastor, priest, whatever it might be... It's Christ in you. That is the revelation that the Church was built upon.

37 Philippians 3:9 And being found in him, not having mine own right-wise-ness, which is of the law, but that which is through the revelation of Christ, the right-wise-ness which is of God by Revelation: 10 That I may know him, and that I may know the power of his resurrection, and that I may know the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death;

38 There we are, three things here, 1. to know Him by experiencing him, 2. to know the power of His Resurrection by experiencing His Spirit alive in you quickening your mortal body by making it come alive to the fact that Christ is in you, living your life for you, and that brings us to the third point Paul makes here, 3. to know him in the fellowship of his suffering, which he says is "being made conformable unto his death".

39 Now, what does this mean, "being made conformable unto his death"? well the word conformable means Quick to comply; submissive. So when he says, "being made conformable unto his death", he is saying, you must be quick to be submissive to your own death of self even as Jesus was quick to be submissive to his own self in death.

40 Philippians 3:11 If by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead. 12 Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect: but I follow after, if that I may apprehend (grasp or understand) that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus. 13 Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, 14 I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. 15 Let us therefore, as many as be perfect, (complete, finished off, teleios, arrived at adulthood) Let us therefore be thus minded: and if in any thing ye be otherwise minded, God shall reveal even this unto you. 16 Nevertheless, whereto we have already attained, let us walk by the same rule, let us mind the same thing.

41 James 1:4 But let patience have her perfect work, (her work that matures, completes, and finishes off) that ye may be perfect (mature, complete, and finished off) and entire, wanting nothing.

42 James 3:2 For in many things we offend all. If any man offend not in word, the same is a perfect man, (mature, complete, and finished off) and able also to bridle the whole body.

43 1 John 4:18 There is no fear in love; but perfect love (mature, complete, and finished off love) casteth out fear: because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love. (is not mature, complete, and finished off)