

## **How God Is for Christ**

Prayer: “Father, we thank You. Thank You for Your Son, Your Beloved Son, the object of Your affection, the Son of Your love. Thank You for Him. Thank You, Father. You have graced us. You have graced us in the Beloved. Thank You for where we are. Thank You, Lord Jesus. He’s the object and we’re the object. He’s the Beloved and we’re the beloved. Hallelujah! Thank You for where we are. We’re in Him. Praise You this morning. Thank You, Jesus. Rip veils away by the power of Your Word. We trust in the power of the Holy Spirit sent down from heaven as we speak this living Word to execute Your administration. Let the Word administrate right into our hearts. Stop every question. Deal with every intrusion. Shut every mouth. Lord, prostrate us under Your light. Thank You, Jesus. We trust in You. Have Your way on this earth. Take further steps in every one — from the oldest to the youngest, to every teenager, to every couple, to all of us senior citizens. Lord, do a transforming work. Admire Yourself. Get Yourself in every one. Thank You, Lord. We trust in You. We will arise and go to Bethel. Hallelujah! Oh, hallelujah! Thank You, Lord! This is what fills our heart. Amen. We trust

## *How God Is For Christ*

Your grace today to rise up from Babylon, to rise up from Egypt, to rise up from Assyria, to rise up from every other place, to come to Zion, to make our pathway into Zion. Amen. The City of the living God! We're glad! We're glad! Because our feet are inside, inside Jerusalem. Thank You, Lord. Renew our minds. Break the powers that have been over our thought life, the unrenewing, the thoughts about the church that are off. Lord, open us to a pure revelation. Jesus! We ask You for this for Your own sake. Do it, Lord. You are coming soon. Prepare the earth. Prepare the bride. Prepare us. Thank You, Jesus. Amen.”

### *Christ is central in the Father's testimony*

**I**n response to questions related to our own state and condition, we must firstly realize that God is for Christ. Is God interested in us? Is God interested in what we are doing? We have to see that God is interested in Christ. And this is the unique revelation in the whole universe — the spotlight is on Christ. The revelation we are under is the Father's testimony concerning His Son. The Father testifies concerning His Son. We have heard our testimonies. We have spoken our testimonies. The Father also has a testimony. The Father testifies.

## *How God Is For Christ*

Let us turn to 1 John chapter 5, the testimony of God. The Father has a testimony. We all love to hear the testimonies of all the saints because it is such a transmission of life to us, to hear our testimony. Now let us all stop and pause and hear the testimony of the Father. First John 5 gives us that. Verse 9 says, "If we receive the testimony of men, the testimony of God is greater, because this is the testimony of God that He has testified concerning His Son." The Father is speaking and testifying and witnessing about His Son. Listen to His testimony. Hear what the Father says. Hear what the testimony of God is. It is the testimony concerning His Son.

Then it says, "He who believes into the Son of God has the testimony in himself." If you want to enjoy and to hear and to respond to the testimony of God that He has testified concerning His Son, then exercise your spirit to believe into Him, fall upon Him, open your whole being to Him. Not just intellectually. Give everything over to Him. Open your being to the Son and believe into Him. When you believe, you enter into a room and in that room is the testimony of God. You get in there by saying, "Jesus." You get in there by saying, "Lord Jesus, I love You." You get in there by saying, "Lord, I believe in You." When you take the step and not just stand out here, looking on the outside, trying to see inside, you do not get

## *How God Is For Christ*

the testimony of God. But when you actually open yourself and confess with your mouth, “Jesus,” when you move into that room, you get the testimony of God.

And listen to what it says: “He who believes into the Son has the testimony in himself; he who does not believe God has made Him a liar because he has not believed in the testimony which God has testified concerning His Son. And this is the testimony, that God gave to us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. He who has the Son has the life; and he who does not have the Son does not have the life.” Amen. This is the testimony of God concerning His Son. And we have it in ourselves, that is, He has given us eternal life. So the Father has the testimony concerning His Son.

God is for Christ. It is painted all over the New Testament — the centrality, the all-sufficiency, the supremacy, the preeminence of Christ. And these are not just high-sounding words. This is not just something symphonic in our speaking. This is the reality. It is the reality of our living. It is the reality of our existence. It is the reality of our relationships. It is the reality of how we deal with everything in our lives. It is an enjoyment, an experience of a coming and coming and coming to this One. “Come unto Me all you who labor and are heavy-laden and I will rest you. I will not only give you rest, but

## *How God Is For Christ*

I Myself, in person, will rest you. I'll pat you on your cheek and I'll put you in My bosom and I'll just say, 'I love you.' I will rest you." But just come. It is a coming to the Lord Jesus, to this One who is the centrality of all things in reality. So God is for Christ. It is too awesome.

### *Christ is central in our weaknesses*

To understand the deep meaning of how God is for Christ, we must see how Christ is the centrality in God's economy. God's economy is God's administration. It is God working things out. It is the way God does it. And the way God does it is Christ. That is the way He is doing it. And you sisters, as wives, in your marriage, in your relationship to your husband, for an expression of God in your home, the way God is administrating your relationship with your husband is Christ in you. And the way Christ is central in you is mingled with lots of feelings of weakness, failure in your self, even at points hopelessness over yourself. The way He does it is to catch you in your weakness, in your sense of fallenness, even in your hurts and in your angers and in your bitternesses that you can feel wanting to gain ascendancy within your being. Now Christ is the all-sufficiency for you. And He says, "My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is being

### *How God Is For Christ*

perfected in that weakness,” in those feelings that you have within yourself that you are nothing and that you can do nothing. It is just poverty in spirit. “But Lord, I need you. Lord, live in me. Be in me the exact disposition that is to be to my dear husband. Be that in me.” “Let this disposition be in you,” just let it be in you, “which was also in Christ Jesus our Lord” (Phil. 2:5).

### *Joined to Another life*

Right there, within your spirit, in that interaction, sisters, in your relationship with your husband, that is the centrality and the preeminence of Christ in the universe. And that is the church. And that is the makeup of the church life. It is Christ Himself in the nitty-gritty of our experiences where He is becoming our source. We have lived. We have run on our own steam. We have gone our second mile and our third mile and we have run out. Thank God we have run out! Amen! Because there is Another life. And that word “Another life,” is right out of Romans 7: “We are joined to Another, even to Him who is raised from the dead.” We are joined to Another! It is Another! I like the word “Another.” It puts it apart from me. It makes a distinction between me and “Another.” “We are joined to Another, even Him who is

## *How God Is For Christ*

raised from the dead.” So my spirit and your spirit is joined to Another life that is in our spirit. And we just interact, we open up. We bring ourselves and we keep coming to Him. And in that coming is a transmission, a transmission of all that He is into our being.

Sometimes you may feel it emotionally. Other times you do not feel a thing. Sometimes it is manifested. At other times it is totally hidden. But whether it is manifested or hidden, you walk by faith. You open your mouth by faith. It is cold turkey, “Lord Jesus.” And whether or not you feel immediate deliverance, there is a divine operation — resurrection life that has been marvelously programmed to operate, to tear down in us the resistance, to break up the fallow ground, to take away the stony heart out of our flesh and to give us a heart of flesh. “I give you a new heart and a new spirit, and I will take the other one out, and I will give you a heart of flesh.” It is an inner, divine, marvelous operation of a resurrected Christ who fits perfectly into our spirit and knows how to sympathize and feel and enter into every kind of emotion, every kind of temptation, every kind of distress. He knows how to enter into it. And according to the Greek text, the verb indicates that He is sympathizing, not just because He lived two thousand years ago, but because He has carried that humanity in resurrection to the throne and He bears

## *How God Is For Christ*

within His being a present feeling over everything. He is the God-Man in resurrection, our High Priest who is interceding. So why not come forward? Why not draw near? Why not come boldly to the throne of grace to receive this grace for timely help over and over again? Amen! Thank You, Jesus, for such a Christ, the centrality of this Person.

### *Christ is central in God's audible speaking*

He is an awesome One. Awesome is throughout the Old Testament. Our God is an awesome God. He does awesome things. And His awesomeness is focused in His Son. At every juncture, every major juncture, Christ is the centrality. In God's testimony, He is the centrality. In God's speaking, He was the centrality. At the baptism, at the transfiguration, on those occasions, He spoke and He did not have a lot of words to speak. He just spoke the same thing. In fact, He repeated Himself at the baptism and at the transfiguration, because He really does not have anything else to say. "This is My beloved Son, in Whom I am well pleased. Hear Him." If you didn't get it a few years ago, get it now. This is the testimony of the Father speaking. "This is My Son. Hear Him." Such a focus.

## *How God Is For Christ*

### *Christ is central in God's plan for the universe*

In God's plan for the universe it was Christ. Look at Hebrews chapter 1. Verses 1-3 say, <sup>1</sup> "God, having spoken of old in many portions and in many ways to the fathers in the prophets, <sup>2</sup> has at the last of these days spoken to us in the Son, whom He appointed Heir of all things, through whom also He made the universe;<sup>3</sup> who, being the effulgence of His glory and the impress of His substance and upholding and bearing all things by the word of His power, having made purification of sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high." What a Christ. He is the heir of all things, and it was through Him God made the universe. Just look at Christ and His awesomeness in the Father's testimony, in the Father's speaking, in God's plan for the universe. It was Christ who was front and center. So here we have these major factors.

### *Christ is central in eternity past*

Then you go back into eternity past. Romans 8:29 declares we were all predestinated. That means in eternity past the window is open. You get to peek back there. And we get to see the counsels that were going on in the

### *How God Is For Christ*

Godhead. And what we see in eternity past is the centrality of Christ in respect to us. Our destiny, our meaning, our existence is wrapped up in being predestinated to be conformed to the image of His Son. So in eternity past it is Christ who is the One that all of us are conformed to. So we can see His preeminence over us. I am a wasted person if I am not touching Jesus. If I am not calling, if I am not interacting, if I am not praying, if I am not oriented to this Christ in my being, I am wasted humanity. I am just flesh, going to die one day. But I have been marked out and predestinated with a destiny determined in the Godhead. Mind, emotion, will, and body, you are predestinated to be conformed and saturated in every part with Christ for His image with all the saints that He could be the Firstborn among many brothers. Look how central He is in eternity past.

### *Christ is central in creation*

In all of creation Christ is central. First John 1:3 reveals that apart from Him not one thing came into being that has come into being. He is the central factor of all creation. So His centrality, His preeminence, is there in eternity past, and in creation.

## *How God Is For Christ*

### *Christ is central in the Bible*

Then we see how Christ is central in the Bible. Find the summary verses in the Bible. How do you summarize Genesis to Revelation in a few verses? What verse, what verses, capsulize the heart of the whole matter of God's thought and administration in the Bible? We have it in 2 Corinthians 1:20. Paul says, "For as many promises of God as there are..." Some translations read a little differently: "For all the promises of God." Or, "For as many as there be." Paul is throwing out the net. Whatever promises you find, wherever they are, whatever they are, however they are, as many promises of God as there are, in Him is the yes. "In Him is the yes; therefore also through Him is the Amen to God," to His glory. So in Him is the yes and through Him is the Amen. So you could gather up the entire Bible and just say, "In Him is the yes." He is the meaning of it all.

### *Christ is central to understand man*

So look at the centrality. God is for Christ in every dimension. Hebrews 2:6 says, "What is man?" in relationship to man's life. This question comes out of the Psalms: "What is man that Thou art mindful of him?"

## *How God Is For Christ*

Then he says, “You made him a little lower than the angels, crowned him with glory and honor.” And he begins to speak about man, answering the question, “What is man?” And you put everything under His feet. And yet we do not now see everything put under His feet. Then right away, front and center, “But we see Jesus.” The name is Jesus, referring to Him in His humanity, the Jesus of Nazareth. So we see that when you talk about man, the meaning of man is Jesus Christ. He is front and center in relationship to man. For the church life, He is all in all. We put on this new man and now Christ is all in all in the new man. This is the church life as the new man, where Christ is all in all.

### *Christ is central at the end of the age*

Look at the preeminence. Look at your Bible. Read the verses. Look at the preeminence of Christ. This is awesome. At the end of the age, we have Revelation 1:1. Here we are. The age is ready to close, and the first thing we read is, “The revelation of Jesus Christ which God gave to His servant,” or “which God gave to Him.” So here at the end of the age, the first word in the book of Revelation is simply the unveiling, the revelation, of Jesus Christ. This whole book is an unveiling of Him. It

## *How God Is For Christ*

is Him in the churches. It is Him in His administration in the midst of the tribulation and the Antichrist and the governments of the world rebelling, going against God. Watch His administration. It is an unveiling of His being over all. Things that are happening are not just happening. Everything on this earth, including everything in conflict, is being allowed from the throne of God. It is the throne of God and of the Lamb. There is no other book that has the word “throne” in it more than the book of Revelation. It is the throne. When John opened the door and saw, he says, “And behold, a throne was set in heaven.” And that throne permeates the entire last days of the history of humanity and the convulsions and the cataclysmic, supernatural events that take place. He is over all.

The revelation of Jesus Christ in His judgment over Babylon, that counterfeit religion, that thing that has caught so many people and substituted Christ with other things — with a religion, with formality, with outward show and display — things that have no inward reality, but are inside a cage of demons and an abomination. So all the hallelujah’s in the New Testament are stored up. Not one is released in the New Testament until Babylon goes up in smoke. The first time in the New Testament that you read a hallelujah is when He judges the counter-

### *How God Is For Christ*

feit whore. And then everybody said, “Hallelujah! Hallelujah!” That which deceived the world, that which deceived the earth, is exposed. “And then He showed me the bride, the Lamb’s wife.” Hallelujah. And there we see Christ and the church in all the glory expressing God for eternity. So we could see Christ judging Babylon. We can see Him with the vision of the bride. It is the Lamb’s wife. And that is the holy city. So in eternity future, at the end of the age, in the kingdom, we see the centrality of Christ.

### *The church is how God is for Christ*

Now, I do believe in our spirit, in our understanding, in our good mentality, with our being, we all apprehend the centrality of Christ from beginning to end in every dimension. This is more than open to us. So He becomes the factor of our experience moment by moment. This is the grand revelation of the entire Bible. It is Christ. And because God is for Christ, I want to tell you, I want to announce to you, how our God is for Christ, the unique way our God is for Christ. Let me tell you how God is for His Son, Christ. Because He is so much for Christ, He is for the church. That is how He is for Christ. That is how Christ’s preeminence is made manifest in the universe. It

## *How God Is For Christ*

is manifest through the church. There is no dichotomy between Christ and the church. Because God is for Christ, He is for the church — the Body of Christ.

There have been some insinuations through the years that we talk too much about the church. Even recently some kind of speaking came to our ears, even face to face with some brothers. “You used to talk about Christ, but in the last few years you just talk about the church.” That kind of question that came to us put us in a spot. It was as if to say that the church and the church life and the experiences in the church life are something different from Christ. That is not the case, as we will see. But how God is for Christ is by being for the church and for the producing of it.

*The admiration of Christ is in the church*  
*(2 Thess. 1:10)*

The admiration of Christ in this universe and the glory of God in this universe one day takes on a form. If we see that vision and that form, we will deeply appreciate the present church life today and our experiences with the Lord in our relationships with one another, because we will see the form that Christ takes for eternity. Now turn to 2 Thessalonians chapter 1, verse 10: “When He

## *How God Is For Christ*

comes...” This is the Lord’s second coming. “When He comes,” to be what? “glorified,” where? “in His saints,” and to be what? “marveled at” where? “in all those who have believed (because our testimony to you was believed) in that day.” “When He comes.” Look at Him coming. Watch Him coming. He is coming in a way to be glorified where? In His saints. He is glorified in His saints. And listen, “to be marveled at in all those who have believed.” Look at His form. Look at Jesus. Ten thousands upon ten thousands. He is glorified and He is marveled at in His saints. He is wearing His Body. In His resurrection He is glorified with all of us conformed to His image. Oh what a present to the Father. What a kingdom He has brought in. The kingdom of the Son of His love is now turned over to the Father, where He is admired, where He is marveled at, where He is glorified. Where? In all His saints.

*The manifestation of Christ is in the church*  
*(Col. 3:3-4)*

Because God is for Christ, He is for the organic part of Christ, the church. Don’t dichotomize Christ and the church. If you are so much for Christ and if I am so much for Christ, the way God is for Christ is by being for the

## *How God Is For Christ*

church. And the way we are for Christ is in the church life. It is not optional. It is not take it or leave it. It is a matter of revelation, of seeing the form this One takes in eternity. Colossians 3:3 says, “For you died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God.” That is where we are. “You died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. When Christ our life is manifested, then you also will be manifested with Him in glory.” Amen. Then you will also be manifested with Him. When He is manifested, you will be manifested. And He is your life right now. Amen. So He is wearing the church. The way the Father is for His Son is by giving Him many brothers conformed to Him, the Firstborn (Rom. 8:29). So to be for Christ is just as much to be for the church. Don’t dichotomize and divide what God has not divided. So we can see this is the form.

### *Christ is central in the builded church (Matt. 16:13-18)*

Now turn to Matthew 16:13, where the Lord took them to Caesarea Philippi. In the middle of verse 13 it says, “He asked His disciples, saying, Who do men say that the Son of Man is?” And verse 14 gives the many opinions. Then verses 15-17 say,<sup>15</sup> “He said to them, But you, who do you say that I am?” <sup>16</sup> And Simon Peter

## *How God Is For Christ*

answered and said, You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.<sup>17</sup> And Jesus answered and said, Blessed are you, Simon Barjona, because flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but My Father who is in the heavens.” So here He tells Peter, “Blessed,” because Peter acknowledged the Son of Man to be the Christ, the Son of the living God. He was preeminent. He was all-inclusive. He is the One in His Person and work to accomplish it all. So Peter says, “You are the Christ.” That is surely the centrality of Christ.

Now the Lord wanted to transmit something into Peter at that moment. “Peter, you are for Me. You are so much for Me now. This is revelation. Now I want you to understand the way you are to be for Me. Now upon this rock, Peter, upon this rock in verse 18, I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it.” But before He said, “Upon this rock,” He says, “And I also say to you, that you are Peter, and upon this rock I will build My church.” This means the Lord turned from Himself as the Christ, the Son of the living God, saying that this revelation is the rock, and then said, “It is upon this I will build My church.” So the way I am the Christ, the way I am the Son of the living God, is by this confession. And this confession will bring forth a builded church. That is how Christ is central. That is how Christ

## *How God Is For Christ*

is all in all. He is all in all through and by means of the building of the church.

So He hits your relationships. He touches them over and over again. You cannot stay in your self. You cannot stay in your feelings. You cannot stay hurt. You cannot stay mad. You cannot stay unforgiving. You cannot stay hard. You have got to break and to interact with another Person in respect to all the saints and let the same Calvary love that flowed from that cross flow from our spirit toward all the brothers and sisters. So there is an atmosphere of peace and harmony in the church life, in the building. “That is how I am central. Peter, you say you are for Me. I also say to you that you are Peter, and upon this rock...” This rock can include (1) the revelation of Christ, (2) Christ Himself, (3) the confession of the revelation, and even (4) Peter himself as a living stone embodying a revelation, embodying a confession, embodying the speaking of Christ. “Upon this rock,” can include all four ingredients. “Upon this rock, I will build.”

*Christ is central in the corporate knowing of Him  
(2 Cor. 5:14-17)*

So we have got to get this straight. We have got to realize that to be for Christ is to be for Christ the way God

## *How God Is For Christ*

is for Christ. So there is no competition. There is no separation when we speak concerning Christ and the church. Paul says it in Ephesians: “This mystery is great, but I speak concerning Christ and the church.” This is the Christ we must know. This is the Christ Paul knew. Second Corinthians 5:14 says, “For the love of Christ constrains us because we have judged this, that One died for all, therefore all died; and He died for all that those who live may no longer live to themselves but to Him who died for them and has been raised.” Awesome verses. He died for all, therefore all died.

I would have read and I would have written, “He died for all, therefore everybody was forgiven.” We could understand that: He died on the cross so everybody is forgiven. But it does not say that, although that is true. What it does say here? “He died for all, therefore all died.” That means something happened to all of us. We were taken out of the way. You and I don’t even have a chance to please God anymore. Our chances to please Him were taken away. We died. You cannot even go to the starting blocks. You cannot even start there, because you died. You are trying to be better. You are trying to pull yourself up by your own bootstraps. You are trying to gain favor with God. You are trying to improve your life. You are trying to rearrange and get it together. Sorry. You died!

## *How God Is For Christ*

You don't even have a chance. The way God did it is by putting us in His Son, and He died for all. And we are counted as members of Him and because He died for all, we all died. We died in His death. Hallelujah! He was raised and we were raised. His relationship is ours. His "Abba" is our "Abba." His standing is our standing. His righteousness is our righteousness. Amen. Thank You, Jesus! This is the church. We are all in Him. He died and we all died, so that we would no longer live to ourselves.

To live to yourself is to live to your own religion, is to live to your dead works, is to live to trying to do something to please God in any kind of form it may take — through Bible study, through prayer. Even calling on the name of the Lord as a practice will not save you. Righteousness saves you. Calling brings us into contact. It is not a work that we are doing. Reading my Bible is a participation in God. It is not a work. All the work has been done. It is a finished work. I am resting in this Person who did it all. So now we no longer live to ourselves, but ~~in Him~~.

Now we go to 2 Corinthians 5:16: "So then we, from now on, know no one according to the flesh; even though we have known Christ according to the flesh, yet now we know Him so no longer." Brothers and sisters, these words bear deep study and penetration. What did Paul mean by saying, "We do not know Christ according to the

## *How God Is For Christ*

flesh”? We don’t know Him any longer in that way. What new knowing of Christ is Paul referring to when he says, “Even though we have known Christ according to flesh, yet now we know Him so no longer”? And he prefaced it by saying that we no longer know one another according to flesh. And then he goes into verse 17, “So then if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old things have passed away; behold, they have all become new.” This is the new knowing of Christ.

Paul knew Christ as Jesus of Nazareth. He was aware of His earthly life as a single individual in the flesh. He knew Christ in that way. But on the Damascus Road, when the Lord came and the light shined and he was knocked to the ground, he said, “Who are You, Lord?” When the voice came and said, “It is hard for you to kick against the pricks,” he said, “Who are You, Lord?” He said, “I am Jesus whom you are persecuting.” In that moment Paul had a new knowing of Christ. He was persecuting the church. But when the Lord spoke to him He said, “I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting.” Paul was transferred from an old knowing to a new knowing, from an individualistic Christ to a corporate Christ — to a Christ who was the head of a many-membered Body. And to touch the least of the members was to touch Him.

That is how we are for Christ. It is by being for the

## *How God Is For Christ*

members, by being for the church. That is the knowing of Christ. In which way do we know Christ? We say we know Christ. How does God know Christ? God knows Christ as the Head of His Body, the church. How did Paul discover Christ? He discovered Him as a corporate Christ in the members. So to be for Christ is to be for Him in the way God has revealed Him. This is awesome. This word really cuts through layers of concepts and views. This word destroys all the individualistic views of Christ and brings us to the real kind of Christ in this universe who has become the Head of His Body, the church.

*Christ is central in His baptized Body  
(Gal. 3:27-28)*

Now let us read Galatians 3:27: “For as many as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ.” Let me ask, were you baptized? Have you been baptized? I have been baptized. I do believe we have all been baptized. And if there are any who haven’t been baptized, let us baptize you. If you believe on the name of the Lord Jesus, you need to be baptized. “As many as were baptized into Christ.” But when we were baptized, we may have only had the thought that I, individually, am being baptized into Christ, and that now I am in union with Christ in my

## *How God Is For Christ*

spirit. And maybe all that we saw was just our individual merging with Christ in baptism. Probably most of us have this consciousness.

But in this verse, the way Paul describes “baptized into Christ” is that we have put on Christ. When I am baptized into Christ, what kind of Christ am I baptized into? The Christ that I put on. What does it mean to put on Christ? Verse 28 says, “There cannot be Jew nor Greek, there cannot be slave nor free man, there cannot be male and female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus.” The word “one” here is not in the neuter gender. It is not just “one thing.” It is in the masculine gender. And all the translators have said, including the commentators on the Greek text, that legitimately this should be translated either “one man” or “one person.” “You are all one man in Christ Jesus.” Or, “You are all one person in Christ Jesus.”

So when Paul says you have been baptized into Christ, you have put on Christ, he does not go on and describe the individual life of Jesus. He does not speak about His humanity here and His death and His resurrection as just isolated events in His own life. After he says that you have put on Christ, he immediately adds, “There cannot be Jew...” What does this have to do with the individual Jesus? Paul must be talking about another realm here — a corporate realm. “There cannot be Jew,

## *How God Is For Christ*

there cannot be Greek. There cannot be slave or free man, male or female, for you are all one person, you are all one man, in Christ Jesus.” Amen. That is how God is for Christ. He is for a Christ that everyone has been baptized into, making up one new man, one person, one corporate entity — the church. This is the revelation of the apostles.

*Christ is central in the recovery of the churches*  
(Rev. 1—3)

On this earth today there is much speaking about revival, much speaking about many works for the Lord. And all of this is God moving on the whole earth. Yet eventually the burden of the same things Paul saw must come forth on this earth, must be in all the saints everywhere. Not just a revival of our institution, a revival of our work, but a tearing down of all of man’s work to recover, to rebuild again, the house of God according to this revelation and under this administration. But it may come in odd ways. It comes this way: look where you are. You are on Patmos. You are on an island out here, rocky, jagged, forsaken. The Roman emperor banishes people to this place. And you are isolated here — just off the Asian coast in Aegean Sea. Here you are under a heavenly vision, but you have nothing but an island and you are by yourself.

## *How God Is For Christ*

But right there, the revelation of Jesus Christ came to John. And He says, “What you see, write in a book and send it to the coastline, to these cities: Ephesus, Smyrna, Laodicea. Get this letter to the churches. Speak to the churches. Let the saints get back to their first love. Open the door once again and start dining with Jesus. Don’t tolerate that Jezebel among you. Don’t allow anything to creep in to contaminate the church. I am coming for My bride, and I want to walk among the churches. You are for Me? You want the revelation of Jesus Christ? I am for the churches. That is how you are for me. So that is why there is always a battle over the raising up of the church life in any place. We have to see that John’s vision of Christ was a vision of Christ standing in the midst of the seven lampstands to perfect and to supply and to prepare the bride.

Even to the end of the Bible, in Revelation 22:16, it is, “I Jesus send My angel to go testify these things for the churches.” Then verse 17 says, “And the Spirit and the bride say, Come.” So here you have churches in verse 16, and then you have bride in verse 17. Church is bride. That is the divine thought. “The way you are for Me is to be for Me in this way.” Oh, God is for Christ. But look ~~how~~ He is for Christ.

## *How God Is For Christ*

### *Christ is preeminent as Head of His Body, the church (Col. 1:18)*

Now let us look at the grand finale of all the verses in Colossians 1. In no other place do we see the preeminence of Christ in such a bold way as in these verses. Here He is in verse 15: “Who is the image of the invisible God, the Firstborn of all creation, because in Him all things were created.” This verse sweeps the whole universe. “In Him all things were created, in the heavens and on the earth, the visible and the invisible, whether thrones or lordships or rulers or authorities; all things have been created through Him and unto Him.” What a spotlight on Christ. All things are in Him and through Him and unto Him. Our spirit admires this Christ. Look at Him. Every atom is connected to Him. Verse 17 says, “And He is before all things, and all things cohere in Him.” So He is before it all. And everything is being held together in Him. All these verses just unveil His preeminence in every dimension.

We say we are for this Christ. But look at Him now. Look at the kind of Christ who is the preeminent Christ. Look at how He is preeminent. Look at the way, look at the form which His preeminence takes. Verse 18 says, “And He is the Head of the Body, the church.” If you take

## *How God Is For Christ*

Christ and you take Him in His fullness, and the way He is preeminent, you have to take Him with His church. You have to take the church. You have to take the Body. You have to take the Christ who is the Head of His Body, the church. He doesn't come in any other way. You cannot buy Him in any other way. He comes as a "corporate package," so to speak. He is only a Head of His Body, the church. So you cannot just take Him and not take me. You have to take Him with me, and I with you, and we with each other. We must take not only each other, but the church where we are, all the saints, and the churches everywhere for the Lord's building up for His testimony. This is the testimony of Jesus.

### *The way the preeminence of Christ is revealed in the N. T.*

So before the principalities and powers, I like to bind the thoughts and the theology and the teaching and the concepts that make a dichotomy that to be for Christ is one thing and to be for the church is another thing. In the Word, the kind of Christ that Paul knew was the One who said to him, "I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting when you are going from house to house and dragging the saints into prison." That is the kind of Christ Paul knew. And

## *How God Is For Christ*

today to live the church life, to attend the meetings, to fellowship with the saints, and to pass through your trials are all the arrangements God has made to build up the church and to exhibit His Son. So the way our God is for His Son, Christ, is as the Firstborn among many brothers. “In the midst of the church,” Jesus says, “I will sing praise to You.” And He is the Head of His Body, the church, that in everything He would have the first place.

The real way Christ has the first place is if there is a church emerging on the earth. If there are no churches, if there is no building up, if there is no church life, there is no first place and preeminence of Christ in this universe. In God’s government He intends to rule the whole universe. But He has an appointed way to do it. He won’t do it without His Body, the church, His building. He is coming back to be admired and to be marveled at in all those who are organically His very Body, members of Him. That is why today the church life is so awesome. It is because the church life is where Christ is preeminent and has the first place in all things.

In my thought as a young man serving the Lord, the church had very little significance in my thought. I mainly focused on gospel preaching, Bible studies, and the baptism of the Holy Spirit. I experienced all those things. But the church was just a little part. We need the

*How God Is For Christ*

church because we need fellowship. Every Christian needs fellowship. Then one day the Lord opened my eyes, and that day has turned into a long day, a long day. And this revelation keeps growing and growing so that today there is more and more awareness and consciousness that there is no way for me to proceed as a Christian apart from the church life on this earth.

Oh, thank You, Lord, for this revelation and for this administration. Hallelujah! We bow at Your feet. Thank You for Paul. Thank You for John. Thank You for the revelation. Lord, we say amen to the grace of God given to these members that You have given to us. Thank You, Lord Jesus. Oh, do a work in us. Operate in us for the church life on this earth. Wherever, whatever, turn all of our Patmoses, every Patmos, into a glorious church life. Amen. Thank You, Jesus.

— *Bill Freeman*