

## Christ — Our New Point of Reference

The Lord's death and resurrection have made it possible for us to experience a wonderful transfer out of the self and into the Lord Jesus — to live *in* Him and *unto* Him. The apostle Paul speaks of this transfer in 2 Corinthians 5:15: "And He died for all, that those who live should *live no longer to themselves, but to Him* who died for them and rose again." This indicates that to be in the result of the Lord's death and resurrection — to be in "the good" of it — means that we are persons who are freed from the self and no longer live to ourselves. This means that our self is no longer our center and point of reference. Our self is no longer what we are oriented to or what we consult with. What a glorious release — *self* is no longer our center. We have been wonderfully rearranged. Hallelujah! This rearrangement means that now Christ in our spirit is our new center and point of reference.

This is the deep significance of the Lord's death — *we* are crucified. "It is no longer *I*," no longer *ego*, no longer *me*, "but Christ lives in me" (Gal. 2:20). We know that to become a regenerated person is not merely to receive eternal life as a future possession. It is to know that you are now a person who has been inwardly rearranged. There has been an organic, life change in your being so that you no longer need to refer to your mind, emotion, and will as your center, as your point of reference, as your base of operation. There is a new base of operation for your whole being. Now your spirit, joined to the Lord, is your new center. We no longer live to ourselves but to Him.

The goal of all the dealings with the self is to experientially effect a transfer so that we are living the identical life that the Lord Jesus lived on this earth. Of His life and living the Lord Jesus said, "I do nothing from Myself" (John 8:28). The Greek preposition *from* is very strong. It means "I do nothing *from the source of Myself*. I Myself am not the source." This is how the Lord lived. He lived a human life, one with the Father, not speaking from Himself. Indeed, He did nothing from Himself. He did everything in union and fellowship with the Father. The most striking thing about the Lord's human living is to see the source of His living. The source and base of His operation was His spirit joined to the Father. This in itself is revelation concerning the proper source of our human living.

What a glorious release — we no longer live to ourselves, but to the Lord. Of course, in our experience this depends on how much our self has been dealt with, how much we have practically dropped this self. For instance, how much have we dropped our opinion? How much have we not lived by our reasoning? Second Corinthians 5:15 says, "no longer live to themselves." This can be amplified to read, "no longer live to our opinion and no longer live to our reasoning, but to Him." This is what it means to be freed from the realm of the self-life.

After seeing opinion and reasoning as expressions of the self, we need to look at another primary aspect of self's expression, that is, being subjective. Opinion is one kind of expression of the self-life, reasoning is

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another, and being subjective is still another. Subjectivity is definitely the expression of living in the self. Let us consider this matter so that we could be transferred out of every degree and form of subjectivity.

### WHAT BEING SUBJECTIVE IS

First, we need to understand the meaning of being subjective. The following three points will help us: (1) the definition of being subjective, or what being subjective is; (2) what being subjective does — how it operates, how it manifests itself, and what its characteristics are; and (3) how to deal with being subjective, which also means how to deal with the self.

#### *Everything arising out of self and measured by self*

Let us consider what being subjective means. For this we need to observe Philippians 2:3-4. In the first part of verse 3 Paul says, “Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit.” This means do not let the self be the source of your living. To do something by way of selfish ambition is to do something out of the self. Then the last part of verse 3 says, “but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself.” And verse 4 says, “Let each of you *look out* not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others.” The Greek word for “look out” is *skopeo*, from which we get the word *scope*. Thus, the meaning of this word is “looking at, scoping, or focusing on an object.” This indicates that the problem with some of the Philippians was that they were just looking at and focusing upon their own things. They were being subjective, fully in themselves.

Being subjective is the opposite of being objective. To be subjective means that there is no objective base in our experience. Everything arises out of ourselves, and we measure everything by ourselves and with ourselves. Our standard of measurement is how we feel, and it is based on our subjective states of mind and our subjective moods. We measure and relate to everything from ourselves. We relate to God and others subjectively, that is, according to our own moods and feelings. To us, “the final court of appeal” is how we feel. This is what it means to be subjective. It means to be literally sunk into ourselves. There is no objective standard in our experience.

There are four pillars that will pull us away from our subjectivity and bring us into a transfer of source. The first pillar is *Christ Himself*: “No longer I, but Christ.”

This Person, this lovely Person, loves us and died for us. He is now revealed in us. He lives in us and has become our glorious center. This Person will pull us out of ourselves. Holding the Head (Col. 2:19), that is, interacting exclusively with Christ, will pull us out of our subjective states and moods. The second pillar is *our spirit*. It is not only this Person, but this Person dwelling in our spirit. We hold and seize this Christ from our spirit by calling upon His name (Matt. 22:43; 1 Cor. 12:3). Calling upon the name of the Lord is how we let our spirit prevail. This pillar will make the transfer for us. If we stay in our spirit, our spirit will catapult us out of our subjective feelings.

The third pillar is *the truth*, the pure Word, the revealed facts — all that the Bible reveals about us. The God-breathed Word will correct, instruct, rebuke, and realign us to the truth itself (2 Tim. 3:16). This will deliver us out of our subjectivity. The fourth pillar is *the Body*. Being in fellowship with the members of the Body will keep us in the light and out of our subjectivity (1 John 1:7).

To be a person who is not subjective and sunk into oneself is to be a person enjoying Christ, exercising our spirit, standing with the truth, and being in fellowship with the members of the Body. These pillars are the provisions for us to be delivered from our subjectivity, to no longer live to ourselves but to Him.

#### *Definitions of a subjective person*

Let us read some of the dictionaries’ definitions of being subjective. The first definition is “relating to the thinking subject; having its source in the mind.” This is one dictionary’s definition of a person who is subjective. That person’s source is the mind. The second definition is “pertaining or peculiar to an individual subject or his mental operations; depending upon one’s individuality or idiosyncrasy.” You could add “peculiar ways of relating to ourselves and to others.” In other words, it refers to the way we hear and perceive others. The third definition is “tending to lay stress on one’s own feelings or opinions; given to brooding over one’s mental states; excessively introspective or reflective.” The fourth definition is “existing in the mind only, without anything real to correspond to it; illusory and fanciful.” These are some of the definitions in *The Oxford English Dictionary* and *The Webster Dictionary* related to being subjective. By the Word of God and by these definitions, we realize that a person who is

subjective is confined and bound up in himself, without objective reality.

The objective reality in this universe includes these four pillars: *Christ, our spirit, the truth, and the Body*. Apart from these four things we are left to ourselves, to measure ourselves by ourselves and compare ourselves among ourselves (2 Cor. 10:12). To measure others by our own subjective moods, feelings, and opinions is to be left in our self. Thus, we see that subjectivity is in this realm — just being shut up and confined to our own subjective states and moods, with no objective base.

Under this kind of definition, we all have to admit that there is some degree of subjectivity in us. And with some of us there is a great degree of subjectivity. Even though we know doctrinally about Christ, our spirit, the truth, and the Body, we are inwardly in disarray because we do not exercise ourselves in these four realms. We do not believe any of the objective facts. Experientially, we only believe *our* feeling. Our own feeling is the deciding factor. Our own feeling and thought-life looms larger than the truth itself. We are controlled by self because we live solely to our self. This makes it very difficult for Christ to be lived out and for us to have the proper organic relationships in the Body. May the Lord expose all subjectivity in us and give us a quick transfer into Himself.

#### WHAT BEING SUBJECTIVE DOES

If we are not clear about this definition of being subjective, if this is still too doctrinal, let us go to the second point to identify what subjectivity does to us, how it behaves, and what its characteristics are.

##### *It makes us an opinionated and reasoning person*

First, subjectivity makes us an opinionated and reasoning person. Opinions and reasoning are related to believing our own thoughts and remaining within the confines of our own reasoning. This is the way subjectivity acts. A subjective person is a person who believes his own opinion and feels his opinion is better and higher than others'. A subjective person will only believe his own mind and his own reasoning, making it very difficult to fellowship and receive the Lord's light.

Perhaps for our whole life some of us have never believed anyone. We only believe our reasoning mind. Our final court of appeal is our opinion, our view, and our judgment. This is why Paul in 2 Corinthians 10:4-

5 calls reasoning a "stronghold" that needs to be overthrown. If we let our spirit prevail in prayer and open up to the fellowship in the Body, we can have this reasoning and opinionated mind overthrown and begin to experience a transfer into our spirit.

##### *Being subjective leaves us ignorant of ourself*

Subjectivity also leaves us ignorant of ourself so that we do not know ourself in God's light. This is what being subjective does. In 1 Corinthians 2:11 Paul says, "For what man knows the things of a man except the spirit of the man which is in him?" Who knows the things of man? Who knows the self? Who knows the rottenness of fallen man? Who knows that there is nothing good in himself? Who knows that this self is not to be trusted? Who knows that his opinion and reasoning is untrustworthy? Who knows himself? According to Paul's word, it is only the spirit of man that knows the things of man. This shows us that unless we are vitally joined to the most objective part of our being, our spirit, we are going to be ignorant concerning ourselves. The spirit of man is the factor in man that supplies to him his objectivity. In other words, to be objective — to be divided, to know yourself, even to condemn the self, and to not trust yourself, your opinion, or your view — is to be a person who is exercised in spirit — who uses the spirit, listens with the spirit, and is always conscious of the spirit's registrations (2 Cor. 2:12-13).

When you are in the realm of the spirit, you become wise concerning your real state. You discover that there is nothing good in you, and you can admit it, confess it, and humble yourself. You can repent without strain. You can admit your fallen state. You can say to your husband, "Dear, I'm stubborn, I'm rebellious, I'm jealous, I'm bitter." You can confess your state with ease, because when you are in your spirit you know that in your flesh dwells no good thing. You are not trying to defend or excuse yourself. Rather, you are objective about yourself. And that objectivity makes it easy for you to always agree with God's diagnosis of the flesh (Rom. 7:14, 18).

But when you do not exercise your spirit, you stay enmeshed with yourself. You remain a whole person, that is, an unbroken person. You are proud, you cannot admit, you cannot confess, you cannot apologize, because there is no objective base in you. You are caught up and immersed in the feelings of pride with its stiff neck and its inability to lose its face. This self is so intact

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## Partaking of Christ as Life

**T**he Christian life is a supplied life. It is not a life of effort and strain — of attempting to grind out a proper Christian life from our own energy and resources. The fact is, we do not have the resources within ourselves. We come far short. Only Christ can live the Christian life. His life is the only life that is qualified to actually live it. He is the all-sufficient One. He has all the grace and ability to live such a life. It's all in Him!

So how does this translate from Him to us? How do we begin to live the Christian life? Simply by receiving from Him. It's not a matter of *doing*. It's a matter of *receiving*. It is a matter of being supplied by Him. He supplies us with His all-sufficient life to live in us and through us. So often we think of the Christian life as an opportunity to demonstrate our gratefulness to the Lord. After all, we reason, He died for me on the cross and saved me — the least I can do is try my best to live a proper Christian life for Him. But tragically, such an approach is doomed to failure. We do not have the resources to fulfill our intentions, regardless of how good and sincere they may be. The Lord said, "apart from Me you can do nothing." Nothing! Of course, we can do a lot of things. But the things we can do have no weight or value in relation to the Christian life. They are nothing before God. We must realize that God's intention is that Christ not only *die* for us, but also *live* for us. Yes, He died on Calvary for us. But do we realize that He also wants to live for us? Paul summed it up when he said, "I am crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but it is Christ who lives in me."

Thus, the Christian life is a supplied life. This is a basic truth that can be found throughout the Bible. In fact, God has used the most basic picture of being supplied in the physical realm to show us this truth in the spiritual realm. How is it that we are supplied physically? We partake of food. The principle is so simple: we eat and we live. In order to have the energy to function, we must eat. There must be a daily intake of food to live our daily physical lives. If we do not eat, we become weak and lethargic. Performing even the smallest things becomes a great chore. This principle is also true in the spiritual realm. In order to live spiritually, we must eat spiritual food.

### *The Tree of Life*

This basic principle of eating spiritual food is seen at

the very beginning of the Bible. When God created Adam and placed him in the garden of Eden, He provided him with a certain tree from which to eat. That tree was the tree of life, which bore fruit and was "good for food." God then instructed Adam not to eat of another tree in the garden — the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. God pointed Adam to the tree of life, indicating His intention that man would eat and live by its food. What is this tree of life? What does it represent? The Bible clearly reveals that the tree of life is a figure of Christ as life to be our spiritual food and supply. We can see this from the Scriptures in two different ways.

First, we see this in the way that man was barred from the tree of life after he rebelled against God. Man, by his disobedience, ate of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil and thus sinned against God. As a result, the Bible records that God forbade man in his sinful state to "take also from the tree of life, and eat, and live forever." The phrase "eat and live forever" indicates that the tree of life supplies eternal life. In other words, if man would eat of the tree of life, eternal life itself would be supplied into him.

Second, at the beginning of the Gospel of John it says, "All things came into being through Him [Christ], and apart from Him not one thing came into being which has come into being. In Him was life and the life was the light of men." This passage in the Gospel of John is speaking of creation and how all things came into being through Christ. Then it says that in Christ was *life*. The Gospel of John goes on in the following chapters to say that Christ is the bread of *life*; He is the water of *life* (living water); He is the way, and the truth, and the *life*; He is the resurrection and the *life*; He is the One who has the words of *life*; He is the One who came in order that we might have *life* and have it abundantly; He is the One in whom we believe in order to receive eternal *life*. The apostle Paul echoes this same reality by referring to Christ as "our life." All these passages reveal one thing — that Jesus Christ is eternal life for man to receive, partake of, and enjoy. In other words, He is the tree of life. Hence, God's original intention for man at creation was that man would partake of Christ as his spiritual food. God never intended Christ to be a religion, or a set of does and don'ts, but food for our life supply. That is why He placed Adam in front of the tree of life and instructed him to eat of it. His original plan was that man would partake of Christ as eternal life and thus live by Him.

### *The Bread of Life*

This same reality of Christ as life was revealed by the Lord Jesus Himself. In John 6 Jesus declared that He was the true bread that came down out of heaven to give life to

the world. He said that He was the bread of life and that those who ate this living bread would live forever. Then Jesus made some startling statements. He said, "He who eats My flesh and drinks My blood has eternal life," and "He who eats Me, even he shall live by Me." Notice the phrase "eats Me"! What a strange thought! Many of His disciples who heard this were offended, thinking He was referring to cannibalism — an eating of the Lord's physical flesh. But the Lord made it clear that He was not speaking of a physical eating, but a spiritual eating. He wanted His disciples to eat of Him in the Spirit. This is what He meant when He said, "It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh profits nothing." In other words, eating Christ as the bread of life does not consist of eating the Lord's flesh. That would profit us nothing. Yet, there is great profit in eating Him in the Spirit, because as we do, the Spirit gives us eternal life! Thus, we can again see that Christ Himself is our spiritual food, our daily bread.

However, partaking of Christ as our tree of life and our bread of life does not refer just to our initial believing in Jesus. It is true that when we believe in Christ, we receive Him as eternal life. Surely this experience is a real partaking of Christ. But listen to how the Lord phrases it: "He who eats Me, even he shall *live by Me*." The partaking of Christ is a matter of our *living*. It refers to how we live the Christian life day by day. And when the Lord made this short statement, "He who eats Me, even he shall live by Me," He was unveiling to us the most basic principle of the Christian life — that to really live the Christian life we must eat of Christ.

Perhaps you have been a Christian for many years. You have read the Bible, listened to messages, and read various Christian books. From all these sources you know how a proper Christian should live and behave. You also know that a Christian should have a single and pure heart for God. But one problem exists — it seems you never quite measure up to the Christian standard which you have learned. It seems that you fail outwardly in your behavior. You find yourself losing your temper or participating in activities that are worldly or fleshly. Or you fail inwardly in your attitudes and reactions. Or you do not feel that your love for God is that strong. Your heart seems lukewarm and distant. You have tried numerous times in the past to pick yourself up, to resolve to do better, and to try a little harder. But eventually the result is always the same — failure. You conclude that the Christian life which is described in the Bible is impossible to live. So you either settle for a mediocre Christian life or you give it up altogether.

But the Lord did not say, "He who tries harder or

resolves more, even he shall live by Me." He said, "He who *eats Me*, even he shall live by Me." The basic problem with the kind of life just described is that we try to live without eating. Such a thought seems absurd to us in the physical realm. It is so plain and obvious that eating is an essential prerequisite to living. But many of us somehow miss this fact in our spiritual walk. We try to live the Christian life without any daily intake of Christ as our food supply. We are spiritually malnourished, weak, and even starving. We have no energy or ability to walk in the Spirit and deny the flesh. So, if we desire to live by Christ, the most basic and essential factor is that we first eat of Christ.

### *Our Spiritual Food*

How is it then that we can partake of Christ? Practically, how do we eat Jesus? How can we be supplied with Christ on a daily basis? The answer is found in the Lord's following statement. After saying, "It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh profits nothing," He went on to say, "*the words* which I have spoken to you are spirit and are life." That is, the Lord's words are the practical means by which He supplies Himself to us as spiritual food.

This truth is presented again and again in the Bible. The word of God is the practical conveyor of Christ as our life supply. The words of Christ actually transmit to us His Spirit and life. This is why the apostle Peter encourages us to long for the pure milk of the Word, as do newborn babes, that by it we may grow unto salvation. The apostle Paul said that the Word is like both milk and solid food. Jeremiah declared, "Your words were found and I ate them, and Your words became for me a joy and the delight of my heart." So when we come to the Word, our approach must not be merely academic. We must not read the Word in a perfunctory or indifferent manner, simply fulfilling our duty as a Christian. We must come to His Word to get food! Just as the children of Israel gathered manna each morning, so we should partake of Christ in His Word each day.

This is why one of the best habits to develop in our Christian life is spending time with the Lord each day. Set aside in your schedule a period of time that is reserved exclusively for fellowship with Him. And during this time, read the Word prayerfully. Let the Word feed your spirit. Don't approach the Word in a mental way only, to learn doctrines or to memorize Scripture. But also allow the Word to be food to your spirit. It is helpful to select some of the verses from your reading that impress you and then pray these verses back to the Lord. And as you pray over the

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and whole that it cannot be broken through, it cannot be penetrated, it cannot be reached, because it does not know itself. It does not know its folly. Apart from our spirit, we do not know ourselves, and we are ignorant of ourselves. But when we touch our spirit, oh, we loathe ourselves. We recognize that there is nothing good in us; through and through we are altogether flesh. We are full of sin and the flesh with its reactions, bitterness, hatred, and lust. Indeed, every gross sin is a possibility with us.

The spirit of man is the key to knowing ourselves in God's light. This is revealed not only in 1 Corinthians 2:11, but also in Proverbs 20:27: "The human spirit is the lamp of the LORD, searching every inmost part" (NRSV). Furthermore, Ezekiel 36:31 tells us what happens at the time of receiving a new spirit (cf. verse 26): "Then you will remember your evil ways and your deeds that were not good; and you will loathe yourselves in your own sight, for your iniquities and your abominations." In other words, from our spirit (1) we know ourselves in God's light, (2) we are inwardly searched, and (3) we are able to loathe ourselves. Loathing ourselves has nothing to do with morbid introspection. It is actually a gift of grace imparting to us the ability to remain objective about our fallen state *by agreeing with God's judgment of it*.

When we remain in our self, or soul-life, we lose that God-given ability to know ourselves the way God knows us. Paul states this in 1 Corinthians 2:14: "But the soulish man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; nor can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." The soulish man is the man that stays in himself. He remains locked up in his own thoughts and feelings. The things of the Spirit are foolishness to him; that is, the Spirit's judgment of the flesh as it is revealed at the cross is not grasped or understood. Instead of agreeing with God's judgment of the flesh, the soulish man seeks to protect, defend, and excuse what God condemned on the cross (Rom. 8:3).

To be subjective is to be left in a state of blindness and ignorance, in which we do not know ourselves according to God's estimate of things. When this is the case, whenever we come to fellowship with the saints, we basically trust our own view and opinion. We only see things with our own mind and feeling. We are not that flexible in fellowship, because when our opinion is rejected, we take it in a personal way and *we feel* rejected. Our opinion and self are so linked together that when things do not go our way, we get defensive and upset. Genuine fellowship is very difficult with a sub-

jective person because he does not have a proper relationship with himself.

What is a proper relationship with ourselves in God's light? It is that we do not trust our mind and feelings that much. Yes, we fellowship about matters, but at the same time, we do not have that much confidence in our view. We are not like Peter who took the Lord aside and confidently said, "This shall not happen to You" (Matt. 16:22). Peter did not know himself. He was without any flexibility. He could never have said such a thing so confidently, with his opinion being expressed, if he had known himself. So the Lord had to expose him by allowing him to fail again and again until he experienced a transfer of source, as manifested in his two Epistles.

We have seen that being subjective means that we are ignorant of ourselves. So we need to seize our spirit, our objective base. When you are a person exercising your spirit, you become wiser and more discerning. That is, you are wiser and more discerning about *yourself*. You do not trust yourself anymore. You know yourself in God's light (Psa. 36:9). And because you know yourself, you know others. It is not a matter of a gift of discernment falling upon you. The more we know ourselves — how fallen we are, how we cannot trust ourselves, and how much we need to live moment by moment by the Lord Himself — the more we will know others' condition. This is surely a spiritual qualification for those who serve and take the lead in the church.

Those who have any responsibility in the church must know themselves. This knowing comes by exercising the spirit, being broken, and realizing our untrustworthiness. Without this, the Lord's testimony will be mixed and impure. It will be led by persons who do not know themselves, who trust their opinion and view, and who lead the church with an undealt-with self. May the Lord cause us to be in our spirit more and more so that we will discern everything with our spirit. When we get into the spirit we know the things of man. This includes all the basic things about man — man's creation, man's fall, man's fallen condition and state, man's redemption, man's regeneration, and man's state of simultaneously having both flesh and spirit (John 3:6). Being in the realm of the spirit is the secret of being delivered out of ignorance and into God's light.

### ***Being subjective makes us prone to deception***

Being subjective also makes us prone to deception. In 2 Corinthians 11:3 Paul says, "But I fear, lest

somehow, as the serpent deceived Eve by his craftiness, so your thoughts may be corrupted from the singleness and the purity that is toward Christ.” Here Paul says that the enemy deceived Eve by his craftiness. The way the enemy gained an entrance was through Eve’s thought-life. When she was seduced and deceived by the enemy, she became utterly subjective. She did not touch the Lord Himself and His presence. She left her objective orientation to the Lord and stayed within the confines of her own thoughts and thinking. Because of this she was deceived and drawn out into sin. So we can see that when we stay in this realm, our own thoughts become our source and we are prone to deception.

This deception is especially related to the thoughts about oneself—high thoughts, elevated thoughts, proud thoughts, even thoughts based upon visions we have had (Col. 2:18), a calling we have had, who we think we are, the spiritual person that we think we are. This is what Paul warns against in Romans 12:3: “For I say...to *everyone* who is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think.” That means everyone is subject to this temptation. So if we are a person subjectively thinking about oneself, considering oneself, measuring oneself with oneself, we are prone to be deceived. The feeling within a subjective person who is deceived is that “I have the goods. I really know better.” This is all subjectivity. And this is Satan’s way of deceiving us from the simplicity and the purity which is toward Christ.

So we need to come back to the objective source of our spirit. From our spirit we deal with our high thoughts by praying, “Lord, my thoughts are untrustworthy. Lord, I need to pull down all this elevated thinking in my mind, this thinking of myself more highly than others.” This attitude of distrust concerning oneself is also expressed in Philippians 2:3 where Paul admonished the saints to do things “in lowliness of mind.” This means “Lord, we are nothing, and out of ourselves we can do nothing. We have no trust in our own thoughts. We are just persons trusting in You.” This kind of exercise of our spirit will preserve us from being prone to deception.

### *Being subjective condemns us*

Being subjective will always manifest itself in one’s life by a stream of condemning thoughts. The real source of condemnation with many people is simply subjectivity. This is the kind of condemnation referred

to in Romans 7 and 8 — subjective condemnation. A person lives with condemnation because he believes his own feelings and his own state of mind, both of which have their source in the flesh. Thus, he is set up for the accuser of the brethren.

If we do not stand with the four objective facts — Christ, the spirit, the truth, and the Body — we are left to the onslaught of condemnation from the enemy. This is because we are identifying with the sin in our flesh. It reacts, it moves, it has its tendencies, and it seeks to act itself out (Rom. 6:12). Paul’s description of his subjective state in Romans 7 reveals that there was a fierce struggle going on within his being because he had no objective base to lay hold of. There was no truth, no spirit, no Christ, and no Body. So he ended up with a desperate cry, “O wretched man that I am!” (v. 24). His wretchedness was due to his being confined to his own thoughts and emotions. His subjectivity in handling himself resulted in subjective condemnation.

Then he bursts forth in Romans 7:25, “Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord!” (NASV). And again in Romans 8:1-2 he declares, <sup>1</sup>“There is therefore now no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus. <sup>2</sup>For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus made me free from the law of sin and of death” (ASV). These two facts uttered by Paul reveal the way he was delivered from subjective condemnation: “*through Jesus Christ*” coupled with “the law of the Spirit of life made me free.” In these verses, Paul discloses *how* he was delivered. His deliverance did not come from an experience that he passed through. His deliverance came as a result of moving out of his subjective state into the objective reality of Christ, the spirit, and the truth.

Not only did Paul know himself “*in Christ*,” but he also saw that everything now was to be processed “*through Jesus Christ*.” And the way he could process everything through Jesus Christ was by “*the law of the Spirit of life*” resident within him. In other words, his spirit mingled with the Holy Spirit became to him the great objective base for his deliverance out of subjective condemnation. In the spirit he could substantiate the reality of being “*in Christ*” and doing all things “*through Jesus Christ*.” If we live condemned, if we live continuously accused, no doubt the reason is that we believe our own subjective feelings and state of mind rather than *Christ, the spirit, the truth, and the Body*. So we need to remain steadfast in these four pillars to be delivered from the subjective state of condemnation.

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### ***Being subjective makes us fearful***

Subjectivity makes us fearful. That is, when we stay in ourselves considering our own feelings and thoughts, we are fearful and timid. Second Timothy 1:7 says, "For God has not given us a spirit of fear [cowardice or timidity], but of power and of love and of a sound mind." Then verse 8 says, "Therefore do not be ashamed of the testimony of our Lord." This testimony includes the meetings of the church. There may be some who have not testified in over six months or a year. Why would we not testify? Why would we not stand up to release the portion of Christ that we have enjoyed? It may be due to a subjective state and mood that comes over us during the meeting. We feel self-conscious. Our point of reference is our self. We are more occupied with what we are not, than with Christ. Being immersed in our personal failure, our own overall condition, and our present situation are symptoms of our subjectivity. When these things become our point of reference, we are fearful and feel ashamed. This is what subjectivity does to us. It binds us with a fearful self-consciousness and keeps us from functioning as a member of the Body.

But the Word declares that God has not given us a spirit of fearfulness or timidity, but of power, of love, and of a sound mind. With such a spirit, we can stand up and open our mouth with the testimony of our Lord. Some of us may need to spring up out of our seats calling upon the name of the Lord from our spirit, and overthrow our subjectivity. It is a paralyzing thing to be bound by your own thoughts about your condition. This is what subjectivity does — it makes us fearful to talk about Christ. We are more occupied with what others are thinking about us than with Christ. We are afraid of saying the wrong thing. We are caught up within the confines of our mind. So we need to exercise our spirit of power, love, and a sound mind to get out of ourself and be transferred out of our subjective state to enjoy Christ and flow Him out to others. When we exercise our spirit by calling upon the name of the Lord, we instantly usher our whole being into God Himself as our source. It is by this kind of action that all subjectivity is overthrown and Satan is defeated in our lives.\*

— Bill Freeman

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\* This article is taken from chapter 5 of the book, *The Cross and the Self* by Bill Freeman. This book of 321 pages may be ordered for \$12.00, postpaid, from **Ministry Publications**, P. O. Box 12222, Scottsdale, AZ 85267 • Phone: (602) 948-4050 • Fax: (602) 922-1338.

(Continued from Page 5)

Word from deep within your spirit, you will discover food! By doing this each day, your spirit will be nourished and strengthened.

As your spirit is nourished, you will be supplied to live by Christ. The Christian life will no longer be lived by your own effort, energy, and resolutions. It will not be an outward imitation of Christ. Rather, it will be a spontaneous living out of Christ as your life. Because you have eaten Him, and have been supplied and strengthened by Him, you can now quite effortlessly live by Him. You find that His love automatically flows out to others. His strength endures difficult environments. It has nothing to do with your own energy or qualities. It has everything to do with your regular partaking of Christ as the tree of life.\*

### ***Scripture References:***

*The tree of life:* Gen. 2:8-9, 15-17; 3:22-24; Rev. 2:7; 22:1-2, 14  
*Christ as our life:* John 1:3-4; 3:14-16; 4:13-14; 6:32-63; 7:37-38; 10:10; 11:25; 14:6; 17:3  
*The Word as our spiritual food:* John 6:63; 1 Pet. 2:2-3; Matt. 4:4; Heb. 5:11-14; Jer. 15:16  
*Spending time with the Lord:* Matt. 6:5-6; Luke 10:38-42; Rev. 3:20; Mark 1:35; Luke 5:16; 6:12; Heb. 4:16

— Kirk Eland

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\* This article is taken from chapter 12 of the book, *Christ: the Christian Life* by Kirk Eland. This book of 218 pages may be ordered for \$9.95, postpaid, from **Ministry Publications**, P. O. Box 12222, Scottsdale, AZ 85267 • Phone: (602) 948-4050 • Fax: (602) 922-1338.

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