

# The Pearl of Great Price



**JOHN HOLLAND**

# **THE PEARL OF GREAT PRICE**

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A study of our spiritual pilgrimage of holiness leading to the fulfilment of Christ's kingdom in us, and our ultimate state of rest in Christ in God.

Published by COVENANT MINISTRIES INC.  
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ISBN 0958635803

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## CHAPTER 1

# JESUS CHRIST -THE PEARL OF GREAT PRICE

**Matt 13:44-46**

**"Again, the kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field, which a man found and hid; and for joy over it he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field. Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant seeking beautiful pearls, who, when he had found one pearl of great price, went and sold all that he had and bought it."**

## THE ATTRIBUTES OF JESUS CHRIST

### JESUS CHRIST - REVEALED IN THE SCRIPTURES

First note that the treasure and the pearl of great price were hidden. Jesus Christ is that treasure and that pearl, hidden away in our hearts, to be sought after and found, and to be experienced personally.

In Psalm 27, David expresses the Lord's desire for us to seek Him, and then his own ready response. **"One thing I have desired of the LORD, that will I seek: that I may dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the LORD... When You said, "Seek My face," my heart said to You, "Your face, LORD, I will seek." Ps 27:4, 8.**

We have His assurance that if we seek Him with all diligence, we will find Him. **"And you will seek Me and find Me, when you search for Me with all your heart."** Jer 29:13.

The obvious starting point of our search is the Scriptures, which provide us with a full revelation of His attributes. Here are some examples.

### HIS NAME

*'Jesus'*

**"And she will bring forth a Son, and you shall call His name Jesus, (salvation) for He will save His people from their sins." Matt 1:21.**

He is the Saviour of mankind.

*'Immanuel'*

**"Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and bear a Son, and they shall call His name Immanuel," which is translated, "God with us." Matt 1:23.**

*'Messiah' 'The Christ'*

**"He first found his own brother Simon, and said to him, "We have found the Messiah" (which is translated, the Christ)." John 1:41.**

Messiah means 'the Anointed One.'

### *'The Prophet'*

**"The LORD your God will raise up for you a Prophet like me from your midst, from your brethren. Him you shall hear,"** Deut 18:15.

**"Then those men, when they had seen the sign that Jesus did, said, "This is truly the Prophet who is to come into the world." John 6:14.**

Essentially the ministry of Jesus was that of a prophet, showing people their present state, and foretelling what was to come in God's plan of things..

## **EXPRESSING HIS DEITY**

### *'Son of God'*

**"And I have seen and testified that this is the Son of God." John 1:34.**

This title testifies to Jesus' divinity. Before His incarnation, He was with God and equal with God. **"Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God"** Phil 2:5-6.

### *'Mighty God, everlasting Father, Prince of Peace'*

**"For unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given; and the government will be upon His shoulder. And His name will be called Wonderful, Counsellor, Mighty God, everlasting Father, Prince of Peace." Isa 9:6.**

**"Wonderful"** His whole manifestation is a wonder.

### **"Counsellor"**

**"But of Him you are in Christ Jesus, who became for us wisdom from God; and righteousness and sanctification and redemption." 1 Cor 1:30.** A renewed mind is one where worldly wisdom is substituted by the wisdom of Christ. Through His indwelling presence in our minds, **"we have the mind of Christ."**(1 Cor 2:16) In effect, He is our counsellor.

**"Mighty God"** The character He will express against His anti-Christian enemies.

**"Everlasting Father"** The everlasting founder and Head of His Christian family.

### **"Prince of Peace"**

Here 'Prince' is not a royal title, but an indication that he is the chief, or Principal One of peace. He establishes our reconciliation and peace with our Father, and **"...He Himself is our peace"** Eph 2:14.

**'I AM'** **"Jesus said to them, "Most assuredly, I say to you, before Abraham was, I AM." John 8:58.**

This was the same reply given by God to Moses in answer to the question, **"when I come to the children of Israel and say to them, 'The God of your fathers has sent me to you,' and they say to me, 'What is His name?' what shall I say to them?"** And God said to Moses, **"I**

**AM WHO I AM."** And He said, "Thus you shall say to the children of Israel, 'I AM has sent me to you.'" Exod 3:13-14. "I AM" is a title exclusive to deity.

*'The Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End...the Almighty.'*

"I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End," says the Lord, "who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty." Rev 1:8.

"These things says the Amen, the Faithful and True Witness, the Beginning of the creation of God:" Rev 3:14.

*"the Amen"* The fulfilment of all that is spoken by God in the Scriptures.

*"Beginning of the creation of God"* Not the first thing created, but the originating source of creation through whom God worked.

"Therefore thus says the Lord GOD: "Behold, I lay in Zion a stone for a foundation, a tried stone, a precious cornerstone, a sure foundation; whoever believes will not act hastily." Isa 28:16. The titles above express the eternal nature of God and the Lord Jesus Christ.

*'The Prince of life' 'The Resurrection and the Life'*

"But you denied the Holy One and the Just, and asked for a murderer to be granted to you, and killed the Prince of life.." Acts 3:14-15.

*"the Prince of life"* Again 'Prince' is not used as a royal title, but rather 'the chief,' or 'Principal One.' Jesus is the principal source of life appointed to man by God.

"For as the Father has life in Himself, so He has granted the Son to have life in Himself..." Jn 5:26.

Jesus told His disciples, "I have come that they (mankind) may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly." Jn 10:10. He said "I am the way, the truth, and the life," and berated the hard of heart because they were "not willing to come to (Him) that (they) may have life." Jn 5:40.

Jesus in us is a source of divine life which is readily released to meet our needs. He explained to His disciples that just as He lived by the indwelling power of the Father, so they were to likewise live through Him. "As the living Father sent Me, and I live because of the Father, so he who feeds on Me (draws on My indwelling life) will live (will have a measure of My divine life to meet his needs) because of Me." John 6:57.

## HIS LORDSHIP

*'Lord Jesus Christ'*

"Therefore God also has highly exalted Him and given Him the name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." Phil 2:9-11.

The full title of Jesus is "the Lord Jesus Christ." Paul expresses His Lordship in the following blessing.

**“The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.” 2 Cor 13:14.**

He is Lord of all. **“The word which God sent to the children of Israel, preaching peace through Jesus Christ--He is Lord of all.” Acts 10:36.**

He is sovereign Lord of lords and king of kings. **“He who is the blessed and only Sovereign, the King of kings and Lord of lords...” 1 Tim 6:15 (NAS).**

He is destined to have an eternal government, and rule over all of God’s people. **“But you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are not the least among the rulers of Judah; for out of you shall come a Ruler who will shepherd My people Israel.” Matt 2:6.**

God has **“put all things under His feet, and gave Him to be head over all things to the church...” Eph 1:22.** He has **“given him for a witness to the people, a leader and commander to the people.” Isa 55:4.**

## **ALMIGHTY CONQUEROR**

***‘the Mighty One of Jacob,’ ‘the Lion of the tribe of Judah’***

**“You shall drink the milk of the Gentiles, and milk the breast of kings; you shall know that I, the LORD, am your Saviour and your Redeemer, the Mighty One of Jacob.” Isa 60:16.**

**“Do not weep. Behold, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has prevailed to open the scroll and to loose its seven seals.” Rev 5:5.**

**“These will make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb will overcome them, for He is Lord of lords and King of kings; and those who are with Him are called, chosen, and faithful.” Rev 17:14.**

**“Ask of Me, and I will give You the nations for Your inheritance, and the ends of the earth for Your possession. You shall break them with a rod of iron; you shall dash them to pieces like a potter’s vessel.” Ps 2:8-10.**

## **HIS HUMANITY**

***‘the Son of Man’***

**“For as the Father has life in Himself, so He has granted the Son to have life in Himself, and has given Him authority to execute judgment also, because He is the Son of Man.” John 5:26-27.**

Even though He is the Son of God, Jesus also delighted in the title ‘Son of Man.’ Because of His humanity, He was able to offer Himself as a perfect sin offering for mankind. Because of His humanity He is a High Priest capable of executing wise and sympathetic judgment. And now, at the right hand of God the Father, He holds the unique position of humanity and deity--being God the Son, and Son of Man.

## HIS CHARACTER

### *'Love'*

The very essence of Christ's character is love. **"Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one's life for his friends."** Jn 15:13.

**"For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."** Rom 8:38-39.

### *Gentle Patient Victorious*

**"Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls."** Matt 11:29.

**"A bruised reed He will not break, and smoking flax He will not quench;" he will bring forth justice for truth. He will not fail nor be discouraged, till He has established justice in the earth;"** Isa 42:3-4.

**"He is able even to subdue all things to Himself."** Phil 3:21.

### *'Full of Grace and Truth'*

**"And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth."** Jn 1:14.

**"You are fairer than the sons of men; grace is poured upon Your lips; therefore God has blessed You forever."** Ps 45:2.

**"And of His fullness we have all received, and grace for grace (or grace heaped upon grace). For the law was given through Moses, but grace and truth came through Jesus Christ."** Jn 1:16-17.

### *'Faithful and True'*

**"Now I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse. And He who sat on him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He judges and makes war."** Rev 19:11.

**"If we are faithless, He remains faithful; He cannot deny Himself."** 2 Tim 2:13.

### *The Glory of His Beauty*

**"You are fairer (Lit: 'beautifulness beautiful' or perfectly beautiful with spiritual or inward beauty) than the sons of men; grace (from the Holy Spirit) is poured upon Your lips; therefore God has blessed You forever (with a supreme worldwide everlasting kingdom). Gird Your sword upon Your thigh, O Mighty One (to take unto Yourself your kingdom), with Your glory and Your majesty (His destroying sword is the instrument through which His glory and majesty are manifested and vindicated). And in Your majesty ride prosperously because of truth, humility, and righteousness; (He will prosper because of truth, humility, and righteousness) and Your right hand shall teach You awesome things. (He needs no other instructor) Your arrows are sharp in the heart of the King's enemies (as in: "Now when they heard this, they were cut to**

the heart.” Acts 2:37); **the peoples fall under You. Your throne, O God, is forever and ever; a sceptre of righteousness** (the eternal nature of His kingdom arises from its righteousness) **is the sceptre of Your kingdom. You love righteousness and hate wickedness; therefore God, Your God, has anointed You with the oil of gladness** (the anointing of joy) **more than Your companions. All Your garments are scented with myrrh and aloes and cassia** (as the garments of a bridegroom), **out of the ivory palaces, by which they have made You glad.”** Ps 45:2-8.

**“Unchangeable”** **“Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever.”** Heb 13:8.

### **NAMES ASSOCIATED WITH HIS CROSS**

***‘The Spotless Lamb of God’ ‘Saviour’ ‘Our Passover’ ‘Redeemer’***

**“...knowing that you were not redeemed with corruptible things, like silver or gold, from your aimless conduct received by tradition from your fathers, but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot.”** 1 Pet 1:18-19.

**“For indeed Christ, our Passover, was sacrificed for us.”** 1 Cor 5:7.

**“All flesh shall know that I, the LORD, am your Saviour, and your Redeemer, the Mighty One of Jacob.”** Isa 49:26.

### **HIS PRESENT OFFICE**

***‘The Great High Priest’***

**“Seeing then that we have a great High Priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession.”** Heb 4:14.

**“Therefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our confession, Christ Jesus,”** Heb 3:1.

Jesus, our High Priest, presents our confessions or testimonies to His atoning blood on our behalf before the throne of God.

***‘Mediator’ and ‘Advocate’***

**“For there is one God and one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus,”** 1 Tim 2:5.

**“My little children, these things I write to you, so that you may not sin. And if anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.”** 1 Jn 2:1.

A mediator is a ‘go-between,’ and an advocate is one who stands with us or alongside of us. Notice that it is as ‘the Son of Man’ that Jesus acts as our mediator and advocate, and that He is the only mediator between God and man.

***‘Judge of Israel’ Judge of the Whole World***

**“Now gather yourself in troops, O daughter of troops; he has laid siege against us; they will strike the judge of Israel with a rod on the cheek.”** Mic 5:1.

**“For He is coming, for He is coming to judge the earth. He shall judge the world with righteousness, and the peoples with His truth.” Ps 96:13.**

**“In mercy the throne will be established; and One will sit on it in truth, in the tabernacle of David, judging and seeking justice and hastening righteousness.” Isa 16:5.**

### **HIS PRESENT MINISTRY**

#### ***‘The Good Shepherd’***

**“I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd gives His life for the sheep.” John 10:11.**

**“The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want.” Ps 23:1.**

**“Give ear, O Shepherd of Israel, you who lead Joseph like a flock; you who dwell between the cherubim, shine forth!” Ps 80:1.**

**“He will feed His flock like a shepherd; he will gather the lambs with His arm, and carry them in His bosom, and gently lead those who are with young.” Isa 40:11.**

**“As a shepherd seeks out his flock on the day he is among his scattered sheep, so will I seek out My sheep and deliver them from all the places where they were scattered on a cloudy and dark day.” Ezek 34:12.**

**“And He shall stand and feed His flock in the strength of the LORD, in the majesty of the name of the LORD His God; and they shall abide, for now He shall be great to the ends of the earth;” Mic 5:4.**

**“For you were like sheep going astray, but have now returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls.” 1 Pet 2:25.**

#### ***‘Author and Perfecter of Our Faith’***

**“let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, fixing our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith..” Heb 12:1-2 (NAS).**

**“So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word (rhema, or word spoken in our hearts) of God.” Rom 10:17.** We hear the word of the Lord, we respond in obedience, He releases His faith in our hearts.

#### ***‘The Word’***

**“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.” Jn 1:1.**

**“He was clothed with a robe dipped in blood, and His name is called The Word of God.” Rev 19:13.**

Not only was Jesus the living word, or the full living expression of God’s word (logos), He is the almighty power of God invested in the word. In the reading above, He faces His enemies in His name **“The Word of God.”** His spiritual foes are slain by the word of truth.

### ***'The Light of the World' 'The Light of Life'***

**"Then Jesus spoke to them again, saying, "I am the light of the world. He who follows Me shall not walk in darkness, but have the light of life." Jn 8:12.**

**"Through the tender mercy of our God, with which the Dayspring from on high has visited us; To give light to those who sit in darkness and the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace." Lk 1:78-79.**

**"A light to bring revelation to the Gentiles, and the glory of Your people Israel." Lk 2:32.**

Jesus is still **"the light of the world,"** and **"the light of life."** He still brings the light of revelation and truth through the Holy Spirit to a world plunged in darkness. He first came as **"the light of the world,"** and **"the Messenger of the covenant."** (Mal 3:1). In the latter days He will **"come into His temple"** in a world steeped in darkness as **"the Sun of Righteousness...with healing in His wings,"** Mal 4:2. Although **"darkness shall cover the earth, and deep darkness the people, the LORD will arise over you, and His glory will be seen upon you."** (Isa 60:1-2) **"The sun shall no longer be your light by day, nor for brightness shall the moon give light to you; but the LORD will be to you an everlasting light, and your God your glory. Your sun shall no longer go down, nor shall your moon withdraw itself; for the LORD will be your everlasting light, and the days of your mourning shall be ended."** Isa 60:19-20.

### ***Reflecting God's Glory***

He is **"the brightness of (God's) glory and the express image of His person, and upholding all things by the word of His power."** Heb 1:1-3.

**"And He is before all things, and in Him all things consist. And He is the head of the body, the church, who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in all things He may have the pre-eminence. For it pleased the Father that in Him all the fullness should dwell,"** Col 1:17-19.

**"the Branch of the LORD shall be beautiful and glorious"** Isa 4:2.

**"For behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and deep darkness the people; but the LORD will arise over you, and His glory will be seen upon you."** Isa 60:2.

### ***Intimacy of the Lord's Presence in "The Song of Songs"***

'The Song of Songs' is an allegory that paints a picture of the search of the earnest Christian when entering into a personal relationship with the Lord. It reveals His love for us, and His desire to be found by us.

**"He brought me to the banqueting house, and his banner over me was love."** Song 2:4.

**"I am my beloved's, and his desire is toward me."** Song 7:10.

The seeking heart becomes His exclusive property.

**“My beloved is mine, and I am his. He feeds his flock among the lilies** (in a climate of purity). Song 2:16.

**“A garden enclosed** (His exclusive property) **is my sister, my spouse, a spring shut up, a fountain sealed** (for His personal use).” Song 4:12.

## CHAPTER 2

# THE STATE OF OUR HEARTS

### FINDING THE PEARL OF GREAT PRICE

Although our search of the Scriptures provides us with a foundation of intellectual knowledge and spiritual insights into the nature of Jesus, it still lacks the element of the personal experience of His presence. The rest of this study will be directed towards finding and personally experiencing the Lord as the pearl of great price hidden away in our hearts.

### The Lord Dwells in Our Hearts

The Scriptures tell us that the Lord dwells in our hearts. **“For this reason I bow my knees to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, from whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named, that He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might through His Spirit in the inner man, *that Christ may dwell* (settle down and abide) *in your hearts* (your inner man or true self) *through faith* (your faith in receiving Him); that you, being rooted and grounded in love (the love that comes through Christ’s indwelling), may be able to comprehend (to understand and apprehend) with all the saints what is the width and length and depth and height (the vastness or infinitude of God)--to know the love of Christ which passes knowledge (i.e. all intelligent knowledge without experience); that you may be filled with all the fullness of God (through Jesus Christ in us).”** Eph 3:14-19.

### In Spiritual Terms, What is the Heart?

Firstly, let us make a brief analysis of the nature of man from the aspect of his tripartite being--spirit, soul, and body.

**The spirit** is that part through which man communicates with God. It has the functions of conscience, intuition, and communion.

**The soul** comprises the intellect, and the emotions which proceed from the senses. It is the seat of man’s personality--the organ of volition and natural life. Compared with the spirit, which is the higher God-centred part of man, the soul is the baser part of man--the seat of carnal desire.

**The body** is the external, visible part of man, through which he makes contact with the world.

### The Heart

By contrast, the heart of man is not as easily defined. It is not the spirit, because it has so many capacities that may proceed from the soul.

For example, drawing from the intellect, the heart may ‘think,’ ‘perceive,’ ‘understand,’ ‘imagine,’ or ‘debate.’

Emotionally, it can be ‘merry,’ ‘glad,’ ‘joyful,’ ‘anxious,’ ‘bitter,’ ‘despairing,’ ‘sorrowful,’ or full of hatred.

Volitionally, the heart can purpose or will, 'be steadfast,' 'gentle' and 'humble,' 'single-minded, or hardened and insensitive.

It is not entirely the soul, because it derives some of its nature from the spirit. A true heart draws near to God to love Him, with all the intellect feeling and will brought under the control of the spirit. A true heart (controlled by the spirit) is God-centred, receiving and holding fast His word.

The heart signifies the true inner self--the settled nature of the inner man which has been formed out of the intermingling influences of the soul and spirit as they react with one another. The heart is what the man is in truth--the genuine self apart from physical looks or superficial reactions.

Christ's spirit dwells within our spirits. However, when we say that Christ is abiding in our hearts, we mean that He is actively working at the coal face of the intermingled soul and spirit where our true self is being forged. When we invite the Lord into our hearts, we are giving Him leave to operate in the realms of our souls and spirits to create the inner man in the image of Himself. With our co-operation, by degrees the Lord establishes His kingdom in our hearts.

To change for the better, i.e. to become more Christ-like, the influence of the soul on man's heart must diminish, and be replaced by the higher influences of the spirit. The destructive nature of soulish desires and self-interest impede our progress in discovering the Lord as "the pearl of great price."

### **SOULISH DESIRES A BARRIER TO KNOWING THE LORD**

Peter warned the young church of the destructive nature of fleshly lusts to the soul. **"Beloved, I beg you as sojourners and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts which war against the soul."** 1 Pet 2:11.

The apostle James issued a similar warning when he stated that the soul that sets its affections on the things of the world is at enmity with God. **"Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with (hostility towards) God? Whoever therefore wants to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God."** James 4:4.

John also warned the church, **"Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world--the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life--is not of the Father but is of the world."** I Jn 2:15-17.

Soulsh affection and attachment to the things of the world renders the soul like unto the world. A mind governed by desire becomes blind to the things of God and loses its capacity to be enlightened by the spiritual light of God. Jesus said, **"No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be loyal to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon."** Matt 6:24.

When the soul has a covetous attachment to things, the end is torment and bitterness. This is because the eye is never satisfied, and the heat of desire grows in the soul. The result is an insatiable craving for more and more things. Such people are ever demanding, restless and discontented. Even when attaining they are never satisfied, and the soul becomes wearied, weakened, and defiled. There can be no relief until a person repents and casts off his affection for the world and turns to the Lord.

Even the best things of the world are a poor substitute for the things of God. For instance, the wisdom of the world is folly compared to the wisdom of God. Therefore to come into union with the wisdom of God, the soul has to go through the process of unknowing or discarding the wisdom of the world in order to experience the liberty of wisdom from God through the Spirit.

In Isaiah, God pleads with His people: **“Why do you spend money for what is not bread (the Lord--the bread of life), and your wages for what does not satisfy (the things of the world)? Listen carefully to Me, and eat what is good, and let your soul delight itself in abundance (of the goodness of the Lord).”** Isa 55:2-3.

### **OUR HEARTS ARE CORRUPT AND NEED CHANGING**

The true nature of our hearts is only known by Christ and God. **“For the LORD does not see as man sees; for man looks at the outward appearance, but the LORD looks at the heart.”** 1 Sam 16:7.

Jesus pointed out to the Pharisees that it is the state of our hearts that governs our behaviour. **“For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lewdness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness. All these evil things come from within and defile a man.”** Mark 7:21-23.

Some Christians may be surprised that the bible consistently condemns the corrupt state of man’s heart. For instance, Jeremiah wrote, **“The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked; who can know it? I, the LORD, search the heart, I test the mind, even to give every man according to his ways, according to the fruit of his doings.”** Jer 17:9-10.

Jesus’ observation was not confined to the Pharisees. He said that it was **“out of the heart of men** (mankind in general--not just non-Christians),” that **“proceed evil thoughts, adulteries etc, etc.”** We would like to think that this condition changed when our spirits were regenerated, and that now we have pure and undefiled hearts.

In fact our hearts have changed in a general sense. Before regeneration we **“were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world. But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near (to God) by the blood of Christ.”** Eph 2:12-13. Now in general our hearts have been turned towards God, and towards good rather than evil.

However, the fact is that the heart of the regenerated person is still corrupt--still generating **“evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lewdness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, (and) foolishness.”** The hidden motives of our hearts are often manipulative and self seeking, and at complete variance to the outward show of our behaviour. At best we can say that we have divided hearts, sometimes seeking to satisfy the demands of the flesh, and sometimes the will of the Lord.

### **THE KINGDOM OF GOD IS WITHIN US**

Despite our impurity, the Lord makes the surprise statement that the kingdom of God is within us. **“The kingdom of God does not come with observation; nor will they say, ‘See here!’ or ‘See there!’ For indeed, the kingdom of God is within you.”** Lk 17:20-21. The place where Jesus has chosen to reign, or establish His kingdom is in our hearts. He is able to do this after He has done a refining work in us that enables Him to reign.

We see this in its right perspective when we relate it to the parable of the leaven. **“Another parable He spoke to them: “The kingdom of heaven is like leaven, which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal till it was all leavened.”** Matt 13:33.

His kingdom in our hearts begins like a small quantity of leaven, which grows until it fills or captivates our whole being. With our co-operation, the Lord undertakes the work of establishing His kingdom in our hearts. This is a profound and extensive work that fills and extends beyond this lifetime.

It is important to understand that our hearts are a battleground, where Christ and Satan contest each other to gain control of every facet of our lives. The degree to which each one succeeds is determined by the degree to which our hearts are turned either to the Lord, or towards satisfying the demands of the flesh.

## CHAPTER 3

### THE PATH OF THE CROSS

#### WALKING IN THE VICTORY OF THE CROSS

Even though our hearts are to some degree divided, it is still possible, even for a young Christian, to experience Christ's victory over sin and the flesh. This is achieved by walking in the light of what Jesus acquired for us through His cross.

As well as procuring our salvation, the cross of Christ achieved all that is necessary to destroy the power of carnal flesh, and break Satan's power over us. This is made known to us through the Scriptures, which repeatedly point out that our 'old man' was incorporated in Christ's death on the cross.

#### WHAT CONSTITUTES THE 'OLD MAN'?

The "old man," is what we were before salvation and regeneration. Characteristics associated with the old man were:

(1) We had a spirit that was virtually dead to the spiritual things of God. Part of the salvation process is the regeneration of our spirits.

(2) We had a carnal nature with fleshly desires that enticed us to commit sins. In Colossians, Paul describes the old man plagued by this carnal nature in the terms of the "**body** (the whole person) **of** (under the sway of) **the sins of the flesh.**"

(3) Associated with the 'old man' was a power, or law of sin, which imposed further pressure on our carnal natures, compelling them to commit sins. In Romans, Paul describes the old man held captive by the power of sin in the terms of "**the body**(the whole person) **of** (held in the power of) **sin.**"

(4) The old man was held captive by the spirit of the world. It is through the operation of the power of sin over fallen mankind that Satan has become "**the ruler of this world.**"

(5) The 'old man' was under the curse of the broken law, the end result of which is condemnation and eternal damnation.

#### UNION WITH CHRIST IN HIS DEATH

God's solution to our 'old man,' held captive by the appetites of the flesh and the power of sin, was to incorporate it in Christ's death on the cross. Every characteristic of the old man was included in Christ's death on the cross

*The Flesh* We, including our carnal nature, were crucified with Christ. Paul writes, "**I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.**" (Gal 2:20 KJV).

*The Power of Sin* And Paul declares that we are dead to the power of sin. "**For the death that He died, He died to sin once for all; but the life that He lives, He lives to God. Likewise you**

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