

PERSONAL NOTES

As Paul declared, *"I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus"* (Phil. 3:14). The Kingdom is always calling us forward.

Lecture 4: The Witness of Christ in the earth

The Day of the Lord has dawned

Throughout every generation God has moved according to His eternal purpose. He has never hurried, nor has He ever been delayed. Every season has served its appointed purpose, preparing the way for a greater revelation of His Son. Today we stand at the threshold of another unfolding of that purpose. The Spirit is calling His people beyond spiritual infancy into maturity, beyond merely believing in Christ to becoming living expressions of His life. The Day of the Lord is not simply a future event to be anticipated, but the progressive unveiling of His reign within a prepared people.

If your deepest longing is to see humanity restored, creation delivered from its bondage, and the nations transformed by the life of God, then allow the Master Potter to continue His work within you. God never begins His greatest works upon the stage of history; He begins them quietly within yielded hearts. Before He changes nations, He changes people. Before He establishes His Kingdom in the earth, He establishes His Kingdom within His sons. His greatest work is not something He performs around us, but something He accomplishes within us.

For many centuries the Church has faithfully proclaimed the Gospel, and countless lives have been brought into the Kingdom through the grace of God. We rejoice in every genuine work of His Spirit, for each season has fulfilled an important purpose in His unfolding plan. Yet every stage of God's work prepares the way for a fuller revelation still. The Father is continually leading His people onward into greater measures of Christ. Unless we recognise that He is always moving toward the fulfilment of His eternal purpose, we may cling to yesterday's visitation while missing today's invitation.

The Witness of Christ

Before His ascension, Jesus gave His disciples a commission that reaches far beyond preaching sermons or establishing religious institutions.

"But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me." Acts 1:8

Notice carefully what He did not say. He did not say they would merely witness **about** Him. He said they would become witnesses **of** Him. There is a profound difference.

A witness is not simply someone who repeats information. A witness is living evidence that something is true. The Father's intention has always been that Christ should become so fully formed within His people that their very lives bear testimony to His nature. Wherever they walk, Christ walks. Wherever they minister,

Christ ministers. Wherever they love, forgive, heal, or restore, the world catches a glimpse of the invisible God made visible once again.

This is the witness for which creation longs. The world has heard countless arguments about Christianity, but it still waits to behold the living Christ revealed in ordinary men and women whose lives have become extraordinary through His indwelling Presence. As Jesus declared, *“By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another”* (John 13:35). The greatest testimony has never been eloquent words but transformed lives.

Known by its Fruit

Our Lord repeatedly directed our attention to fruit rather than appearance.

“You will know them by their fruits.” Matt. 7:16

Fruit is the visible evidence of an invisible life. No branch strains to produce fruit. It simply abides in the vine, and the life within naturally expresses itself outwardly. In the same way, the Christ-life within us must eventually become the Christ-fruit without us. Love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control are not merely virtues to be admired; they are the very character of Christ reproduced within His people (Gal. 5:22-23).

This is why God is more concerned with our formation than our activity. Activity may impress people for a season, but fruit reveals the life from which it grows. The Father desires that His people should become so united with Christ that His life flows through them as naturally as sap flows through the branches of a healthy vine (John 15:1-16). As He is, so are we in this world (1 John 4:17). The historical Jesus walked the dusty roads of Galilee; the risen Christ now desires to walk the streets of every nation through His Body.

The Embodiment of Christ

Even now, beyond the attention of headlines and public acclaim, God is quietly forming a people who are becoming the embodiment of His Son. This is not the work of human ambition, religious organisation, or clever strategy. It is the patient work of the Holy Spirit, shaping Christ within surrendered hearts until His nature becomes visible in everyday life.

Paul speaks repeatedly of this divine objective. He laboured *“to present every man mature in Christ”* (Col. 1:28). Again he writes, *“My little children, for whom I labor in birth again until Christ is formed in you”* (Gal. 4:19). God’s purpose is not merely that people should attend church, but that Christ should become fully formed within His Church.

PERSONAL NOTES

PERSONAL NOTES

When His sons are manifested, the Life of Christ will flow from them as naturally as rivers flow from a spring. His mercy will heal the brokenhearted. His wisdom will confound the wise. His peace will calm fearful hearts. His righteousness will expose darkness without condemnation, and His love will draw people to the Father.

Their ministry will not depend upon outward methods but upon the inward abundance of Christ Himself. They will not merely speak about Him; they will reveal Him.

Like Father, like sons. The manifestation of the sons of God is therefore nothing less than the manifestation of the Son of God through many members. What was perfectly revealed in Jesus Christ will be progressively expressed through a mature people who share His heart, His character, His wisdom, and His compassion.

A different kind of revival

Many sincere believers long for revival, yet often imagine it in terms of larger meetings, greater crowds, more impressive programmes, or increasing religious influence. While God has graciously used such things throughout history, His ultimate purpose reaches far beyond them.

The manifestation of the sons of God will not simply be another series of evangelistic campaigns, larger auditoriums, more sophisticated technology, or more gifted personalities standing behind pulpits. God's final answer to a broken world is not a better religious system, but a mature people in whom Christ Himself is fully revealed.

From receiving Christ to revealing Christ

The journey of the believer is beautifully portrayed in Israel's three great annual feasts. Each feast reveals another dimension of God's unfolding purpose in His people. **Passover** speaks of our beginning; **Pentecost** speaks of our formation; **Tabernacles** speaks of our manifestation. Together they reveal the progressive work of Christ from new birth to mature sonship.

In the **Passover Feast** we receive Jesus Christ as the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world. Here the miracle of regeneration takes place. Our spirits are made alive, joined to the Lord, and we become new creations in Christ. The incorruptible Seed of God is planted within us, and eternal life begins. This is the glorious beginning of our journey, but it is not the end of God's purpose.

Pentecost carries us beyond conversion into transformation. Here the Holy Spirit begins His patient work within the soul, renewing the mind, healing the emotions, correcting the will, and forming the character of Christ. Day by day He teaches us to deny ourselves, to walk in obedience, and to live by the Spirit rather than by the impulses of the flesh. Christ is no longer merely received within our spirits; He is increasingly formed throughout our inner being.

Then comes the **Feast of Tabernacles**, the great consummation toward which all previous dealings have pointed. Here Christ is no longer hidden within His people but revealed through them. His Lordship becomes visible in daily life. His character shines through human vessels. His Presence is no longer confined to private

devotion but overflows into homes, communities, and nations. The Feast of Tabernacles is nothing less than the public manifestation of the indwelling Christ. It is heaven touching earth through a people fully yielded to their King.

Ministering Christ to the world

The sons of God are not being prepared for a ministry limited to church buildings or religious gatherings. They are being prepared for humanity itself. Their field is the marketplace, the family, the classroom, the government office, the hospital, the prison, the farm, and the city street. Wherever people are found, there the ministry of Christ is needed.

They will minister to presidents and paupers alike. Before them every earthly distinction loses its significance. Wealth and poverty, education and simplicity, influence and obscurity all disappear before the overwhelming reality that every person is deeply loved by God and desperately needs the life of Christ. The mature sons recognise no favourites, for the Father Himself shows no partiality. They see people not according to status, race, or achievement, but according to the eternal value God has placed upon every human soul.

Neither will their ministry depend upon outward appearance or religious performance. Their authority will not be established by titles, positions, impressive buildings, or carefully organised programmes. The power of their ministry will flow from the life of Christ dwelling richly within them. Wherever they go, His wisdom will speak, His compassion will heal, His truth will liberate, and His peace will quiet troubled hearts. Their very lives will proclaim that Jesus Christ is alive.

Arise, Shine

Isaiah looked far beyond his own generation and saw a day when God's people would become radiant with His Presence.

"Arise, shine; for your light has come, and the glory of the Lord has risen upon you. For behold, 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. The Gentiles shall come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your rising." Isa. 60:1-3

Notice that the prophet does not deny the existence of darkness. Indeed, he declares that darkness will increase. Yet he immediately announces something greater. The answer to growing darkness is not greater fear, nor louder arguments, but a brighter manifestation of Christ.

Darkness has no power against light. It simply disappears wherever light is revealed. God's answer has always been the same. He shines through His people.

PERSONAL NOTES

The world is not merely waiting for better explanations of Christianity. It is waiting to encounter the living Christ expressed through transformed lives. As His sons arise in His likeness, nations will be drawn, not to personalities or organisations, but to the light of His Presence shining through them.

The mountain of the Lord

Isaiah also foresaw another remarkable scene.

“Now it shall come to pass in the latter days that the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established on the top of the mountains... All nations shall flow unto it.” Isa. 2:2-3

Throughout Scripture mountains often represent kingdoms or governments. Here the prophet sees the Kingdom of God established above every other authority, not by military conquest, but by the irresistible attraction of divine life.

People come willingly. They say, *“Come, let us go up.”* No one forces them. No one manipulates them. Truth itself draws them.

This is the nature of Christ's Kingdom. Wherever His Presence is truly manifested, hungry hearts are drawn toward Him. They come seeking His wisdom, His peace, His righteousness, and His life. The mountain is not built by human effort. It rises because Christ is revealed.

Summary

God's purpose has always been far greater than bringing people to a moment of salvation. His desire is to form Christ within His people until His life is visibly expressed through them. The Christian journey moves progressively from receiving Christ, to being transformed by Christ, and finally to revealing Christ to the world.

The three great feasts beautifully portray this unfolding work of God. Passover brings the miracle of new birth. Pentecost forms the character of Christ within the believer. Tabernacles points toward the full manifestation of His Presence through a mature people who have yielded every area of life to His Lordship.

The ministry of the sons of God is not confined to religious meetings or church programmes. Their lives become the message. Whether standing before presidents or serving the poorest of society, they carry the same Christ, ministering His love, wisdom, mercy, and truth without partiality.

Isaiah's vision reminds us that God's answer to increasing darkness is increasing light. As His glory rises upon His people, the nations are drawn to the brightness of Christ revealed within them. The Kingdom advances not by force but by the irresistible beauty of the King made visible in His sons. The Father is preparing a people who no longer merely speak about Jesus but embody His life. As Christ is formed within them, His Presence overflows into every sphere of society, until the knowledge of the glory of the Lord begins to fill the earth as the waters cover the sea.

PERSONAL NOTES

Questions

1. What do the three Feasts reveal about the Christian life?

2. What happens during the Feast of Passover?

3. What is the primary work of Pentecost?

4. What does the Feast of Tabernacles represent?

5. Where will the ministry of God's mature sons take place?

6. Why will their ministry have authority?

7. What does Isaiah 60:1-3 teach us?

8. What does the mountain of the Lord represent in Isaiah 2?

9. How are people drawn into God's Kingdom?

10. What is the ultimate purpose of God in His Church?

Study Answers

1. They reveal God's progressive work in His people: Passover speaks of new birth, Pentecost of spiritual formation, and Tabernacles of the manifestation of Christ through mature sons.
2. Through faith in Christ, we receive new life, are born again, and become partakers of the divine nature.
3. The Holy Spirit forms Christ within the soul by renewing the mind, restoring the heart, and teaching believers to walk in obedience.
4. It points to the mature manifestation of Christ through His people, where His life is openly expressed in the earth.
5. Everywhere people live, in homes, workplaces, communities, and nations, not only within church buildings.
6. Because it flows from the indwelling life and nature of Christ rather than from religious position or human ability.
7. That in a world covered by darkness, God's glory will arise upon His people, and the nations will be drawn to His light.
8. It represents the supreme Kingdom and government of God established through His manifest Presence.
9. Not by force or manipulation, but by encountering the beauty, truth, and life of Christ revealed through His people.
10. To form a mature people through whom Jesus Christ is fully revealed, so that His Kingdom may extend to every nation and His glory may fill the earth.