

Message Three

Proclaiming the Gospel of the Glory of Christ, Who Is the Image of God

Scripture Reading: Heb. 1:3; Col. 1:15; 2 Cor. 3:18; 4:4-6

- I. **Christ the Son is “the image of the invisible God,” “the effulgence of His glory and the impress of His substance”—the expression of what God is—Col. 1:15; Heb. 1:3:**
 - A. Christ the Son, as God’s embodiment, is the image of the invisible God, the expression of the essence of God’s attributes—Col. 2:9; 1:15; 2 Cor. 4:4; Heb. 1:3.
 - B. Man was created according to Christ with the intention that Christ would enter into man and be expressed through man—Col. 1:27; Phil. 1:20-21a.
- II. **Christ is the image of God and the effulgence of His glory; hence, the gospel of Christ is the gospel of His glory that illuminates and shines forth—Col. 1:15; Heb. 1:3; 2 Cor. 4:3-4; 3:18; Rev. 6:2:**
 - A. The gospel of the glory of Christ is the gospel of the glory of the blessed God—1 Tim. 1:11:
 1. The expression *the gospel of the glory of the blessed God* refers to God’s economy in verse 4.
 2. The gospel with which the apostle Paul was entrusted is the effulgence of the glory of the blessed God—Heb. 1:3; Rom. 1:25; 9:5.
 3. By dispensing God’s life and nature in Christ into God’s chosen people, this gospel shines forth God’s glory, in which God is blessed among His people—2 Cor. 1:3; Eph. 1:3, 6, 12, 14.
 - B. The gospel is the gospel of the glory of Christ, which illuminates, radiates, and shines in our hearts—2 Cor. 4:4, 6:
 1. God’s shining in our hearts results in the illumination of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ, that is, in the enlightenment that causes us to know the glory of God in the gospel of Christ—vv. 4, 6.
 2. In verse 4 *God, image, Christ, glory, gospel, and illumination* are all in apposition, referring to the same wonderful person; God is the image, the image is Christ, Christ is the glory, the glory is the gospel, and the gospel is the illumination.
 3. The illumination of the knowledge of the glory of God is in the face of Jesus Christ; this indicates that the gospel of the glory of Christ is a lovely person on whose face we can see the glory of God—vv. 4, 6; Matt. 17:2.
 4. The glory of God manifested in the face of Jesus Christ is the God of glory expressed through Jesus Christ, who is the effulgence of the glory of God; to know Him is to know the God of glory—Acts 7:2; Heb. 1:3.
 - C. Through the illumination of the gospel of the glory of Christ, the Christ of glory as the excellent treasure is received by the believers; now the shining reality of Christ, the embodiment and expression of the Triune God, is the treasure within us—2 Cor. 4:6-7:
 1. God’s shining, which is God’s dispensing, in our hearts brings into us a treasure, the all-inclusive Christ, who is the embodiment of the Triune God

as the life-giving Spirit to be our life and everything—vv. 4, 6-7; Col. 2:9; 3:4, 11; 1 Cor. 15:45b.

2. This treasure, the indwelling Christ, is the divine source of the supply for the Christian life—2 Cor. 13:5; 4:7; Phil. 4:13.
- D. God shines in our hearts that we may shine on others so that they may have the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ, that is, the knowledge of Christ, who expresses and declares God—2:15; John 1:18:
1. The gospel of the glory of Christ first shines into us, and then it shines out from within us—Matt. 5:16.
 2. In our preaching of the gospel, there should be an illumination; we need to shine forth the gospel of the glory of Christ from within us—Phil. 2:15.
 3. Christ as the treasure within us is the source of the power energizing us and enabling us to manifest the truth; if we would live for the manifestation of the truth, we must renounce the hidden things of shame, not walk in craftiness, and not adulterate the word of God—2 Cor. 4:2, 7.
 4. In proclaiming the gospel of the glory of Christ, we should not preach ourselves but Christ Jesus as Lord, who is the content of the gospel—v. 5.
 5. Those who receive the gospel of glory through our shining will have Christ as the precious treasure dispensed into them; then, like us, they will be earthen vessels containing this priceless treasure—vv. 4, 6-7.