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Eternal Purpose Transcriptions
Class 2 – 130825

Before the Shadows

Last time I introduced what we're going to be talking about in this class, and gave some basic statements about what God's eternal purpose is, or at least as far as I can see it. I know I'm talking about something that's so far beyond what I have seen, but I feel like I have seen enough to share what I have seen. In other words, I'm really conscious of the fact that I'm talking about God's eternal purpose here, and that kind of gives me “the fear of the Lord.” But I do feel like there's a little that I have seen in a way that has affected my heart and my view. Someone, in our group two nights ago, was talking about the eternal purpose of God being kind of like a track that your heart runs on, and I kind of see it like that too. You start to see a little something of what God desires—even the fact that He has always desired something specific! I say that because I think that most people just think that God made the world, and then people screwed up, and then God said, “Oh well, I guess I'll save the nice ones.” I don't know what people exactly think, but we need to realize that there was something behind the creation, there was something motivating Him, or more accurately, there was a motivation living inside of Him.

I think that part of God's nature are these two incredible realities called love and glory. Love being the aspect of God's nature to give Himself, to share Himself, and to pour out Himself. That's not just something God feels, that's part of who God is. John says God is love. What does that mean? I don't know, but I think part of the constitution of God, the very being of God, is this giving of Himself and that's really what you see in scripture. God didn't have to make anything, He didn't have to reveal Himself, He didn't have to do anything that He did. And yet, He is always revealing Himself and making Himself known, and if that isn't enough, He's inviting us into who He is. If you can, take a bunch of steps back from all the Christianity you've been involved with and all the assumptions and presuppositions you've just accepted because you've heard it a bunch of times, and begin to think about natural creation coming out from *a desire* of God. Think about Him actually wanting something and that He made natural things according to this desire.

Part of this desire that's in His heart, or part of what motivates Him because it is Him, is this “thing” in Him that is totally opposite to everything we are by nature. What we are by nature is this fallen Adamic man that wants to *take* things. And that's just what we do. We drive down the street and we

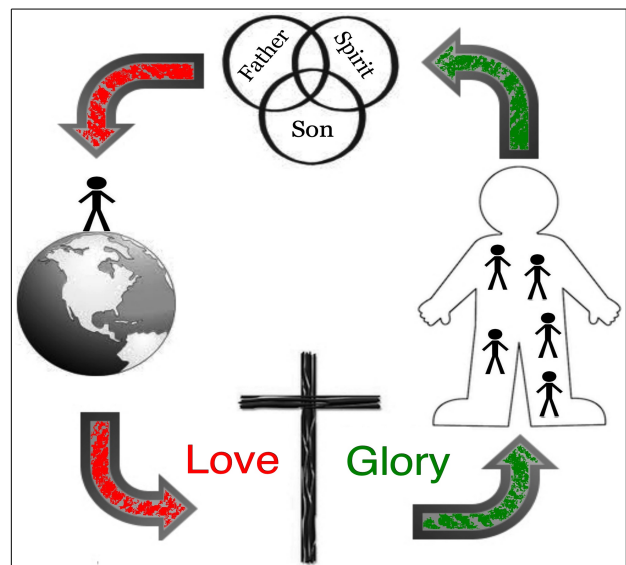
see something that looks nice and we pull over and buy it. We see a person that we want to date and we call them and try to make them our own. But part of God's constitution and being is that He is always wanting to share everything that He is. He's always had that relationship with His Son. He's always had a relationship where everything that the Father is, has been constantly given to the Son. Then the Son becomes the very expression of what He's receiving. That's why you see in Hebrews chapter 1 it says the "Son is the radiance of His glory, the exact representation of His nature." Or He is called "the word of God," or Jesus says, "The Father loves me and has given everything into my hands" or, "The Father loves me and is showing me all things that He is doing." Jesus isn't just saying the Father loves Him, and because He feels this way, He's doing something. It's more than that. He's defining the actual love itself. **He's saying, "Look, here's what the Father's love is: He gives Me everything. Here's the nature of His love: He hides nothing from Me." Therefore Jesus becomes this vessel of that reality in such a way that for people to see Him is to see the Father. Love is the Father giving Himself.** He doesn't get anything back in glory that didn't come from Him to begin with. We don't add our own stuff to what He gives us, and Jesus (as a Man) didn't either. He said 'I don't do My own will, these aren't My words, these aren't My works, this isn't my will.' In the incarnation He became a vessel that received. I know He's the second person of the Trinity, the uncreated God, but when you look at Him as a Man that walked on the earth, He was this walking receptacle and showcase of all that God is and God has.

I say all this first of all because I feel like that gives us an idea of what the eternal purpose of God is. **What you see in the Seed, God wants to see in the harvest. What you see in the earthly natural body of Christ, God desires to have that same thing in the resurrected body of Christ, which is the church.** The church is the resurrected body of Jesus Christ. I know Jesus came out from the tomb and that Jesus had some kind of physical form. I'm not denying the bodily resurrection of Christ; absolutely that is real. And yet, He didn't let anyone really know Him in that forty day resurrected form. He didn't let anyone touch Him, not really, maybe quickly in the hole of His hand and then He disappeared. He didn't want to be known and related to in that form. That wasn't the body that believers were going to cling to and know after the resurrection. There was a greater body, or a greater experience of that body, you could say. Not just the head coming back from the dead, but a corporate body that shares His resurrected life. The body becomes the expression of it. I'm saying all this because what you see in the Seed is what God desires in the full grown plant. What is that? It's a corporate body, and again, you can call it a temple, a bride, a kingdom, a land, a harvest, etc. All of them are just different perspectives of God describing the same thing. What is that thing? It is a corporate entity that receives all that God is and has: love.

The only way that God can love you is through the cross. That's the only way because that's the way He empties the vessel and that's the way He fills the vessel. The cross is how He removes everything from you that is in the way of what He wants to give you, and it's also how He gives you everything He

has and is. So the cross is both the dumping out of the Adamic nature of the vessel; the killing, the crucifying, the putting to death of the old, and it also becomes the way that the new is given. If anyone tries to teach you or preach to you about the love of God and it isn't related to the cross of Christ, I seriously think you should plug your ears until they're done talking, because it's not true. The love of God is awesome and real. It's part of His being. It's part of the eternal purpose. But you'll never know it, experience it, you'll never walk in it, and it will never be a reality in your heart separate from the cross of Jesus Christ that made you fit to receive it by killing you, by crucifying you with His Son. He made you fit to receive the love of God poured out in your heart by the Spirit that He gave you (Romans 5:5). Without that cross, it's like pouring water on a duck's back. It rolls off, it doesn't soak in, there's nowhere for it to go. It's like trying to fill up a completely sealed container; it just won't go in.

I want to show this picture of love coming down so that glory can come back up. That's how I see the whole testament. It's so single in my heart. What's the story of Adam and Eve? It is the story of the way that God took something out of Adam, formed a companion that would become the increase and glory of Adam, and then gave it back to Adam! That's how it starts. That's the very first thing you read about. And every picture of purpose has this same element.



Having said that, I want to talk a little bit about what's before all of this. I titled the notes here "Before the Shadows". I think one of the most necessary things to understand when you're reading the bible, or when you're thinking about purpose, it's the reality that first—and this may sound elementary and maybe even self-evident, but there are a million of different ways that we ignore the implications of this statement—**first, there was spiritual substance, and then there were created physical, natural shadows that came out from that spiritual substance and pointed back to it.** Again, there was spiritual substance and then there were created shadows that point back to that spiritual substance.

We live in a world that is a collage of things that have come out from spiritual substance. In Hebrews 11:3 it says "by faith we understand", which is a neat thing to say just in and of itself because faith is something more than belief, otherwise you couldn't understand by faith. So "by faith we understand that the worlds were prepared by the Word of God so that what is seen is not made out of things that were visible." Do you see what he's saying there? He's saying the things you see didn't just come out of other things that you see. The things that you see came out of the things that you can't see in order to

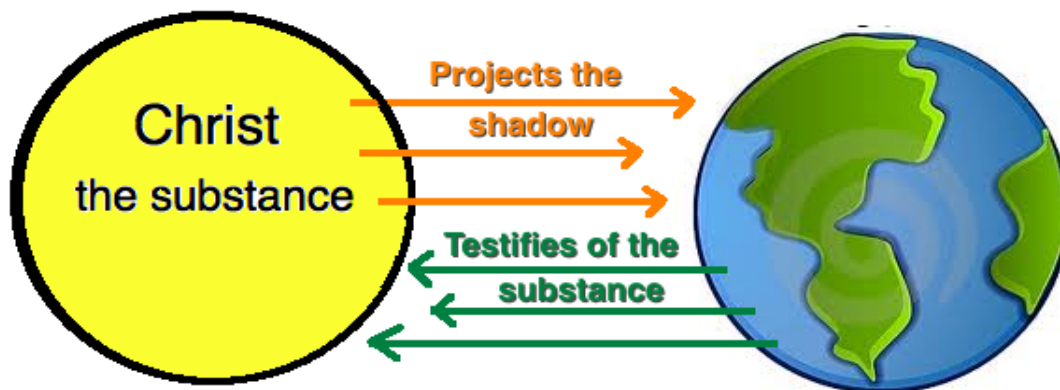
represent it, illustrate it, and testify of it. **That's what faith understands, because faith starts to see what's behind the shadows. Faith working in your heart starts to see shadows as shadows and to see the thing all the shadows are pointing to. It starts to see the substance of all the things that had been hoped for. Faith becomes evidence in you of the things that cannot be seen.** That's what faith does. By faith you understand. You understand and you look past the shadow and looking past the shadow is the same thing as looking back to the beginning, looking back to the things that were in the beginning. The Bible talks about the things that can't be seen and how we have to fix our hearts on them. Since we're dead to the things which are seen, let's fix our eyes on the things above which aren't seen. It talks about walking by faith, not by sight. Sight accesses the natural realm and faith sees the things which existed before the natural creation of testimonies. We must understand this fundamental thing: that first there was spiritual substance and created things came out from that in order to point back to to it and ultimately to bring you out of that created realm back into the beginning.

**The Substance/Definition
that casts the shadow**

The fulfillment of all
spiritual words is here

The Created Shadow

The fulfillment of spiritual
words is NEVER here



Remember when Jesus was being quizzed about marriage and divorce and they pointed to the natural created realm and to the law asking, "Why did Moses say you could give your wife a certificate of divorce if you're saying that it's not in the heart of God?" and Jesus says, "That's true. God permitted that because of the hardness of your heart, but that wasn't here in the beginning. He wasn't really even talking (not primarily) about human divorce. That's not the point. I'm not trying to talk about divorce right now, I'm trying to say that when he refers back to "the beginning," the reality of covenant was perfect, spiritual, and uninterrupted in the spiritual substance, and human marriage (the shadow) came out from it. In lots of ways, the natural falls short of reflecting that eternal, spiritual reality that was before it.

Jesus was always thinking of that spiritual substance that gave definition to all of these natural things. How do we know that He was thinking that? Man walks around the natural creation and just sees things. Things we are so used to, things that just kind of make up our day and sometimes we stop and say, "Oh that's pretty" or, "Oh, that's cool" or most of the time we just drive right through it and get on with our business. But Jesus came into this creation and saw it like no man had ever seen it before. He saw it for what it was: a whole collection of pictures of Himself! That must have been a really strange experience. He walked into the earth and maybe he just kept his mouth shut for the first 30 years or so, but I just imagine Him looking at water and thinking to Himself, "That's me." Or looking at bread and saying, "That was made to speak of Me," and looking at wine, or shepherds, or light dawning in in the morning, and whatever it was that he was looking at and saying, "All these things were first spiritual realities in Me before they were ever natural things here. I don't look like them, they all look a little bit like me." Then He finally begins His ministry and begins saying these types of things... and it must have sounded just absolutely ludicrous. "I'm that. I'm the bread. I'm the door. That door you have? That looks a little bit like Me. I'm the good shepherd. I'm the vine. I'm the light. I'm all these things!" He's not just grabbing these random realities in the natural creation and saying, "That one does a good job looking like Me." No, these things were first spiritual realities of Him and now He was gathering them back up into Himself.

So when we read the Bible, first of all we need to understand that spiritual things are more real than natural things. We don't like that. At some level most Christians believe that, but there's something deep down inside of us that resists that because of our natural birth, because of our flesh. There's another realm that feels more real to us. We don't really want spiritual things to be more real, but we like the idea of having spiritual resources when our natural ones fail. We like the idea of gaining a spiritual body one day when our natural one fails. We like the idea of having a spiritual parachute there for us. But we don't actually want to live our lives in the natural realm with our hearts totally fixed upon, and our treasure placed in, something spiritual because the natural just feels more real, relevant, and important to us most of the time. Even though we would give lip service to the fact that spiritual reality is more real, I don't think we really want to live that way nor read the Bible that way. In other words, when we read the Bible we are always look to the realm of shadows. We are always looking to how God is going to effect the natural world, our natural lives, our natural dreams, protect our natural loved ones, provide our natural desires.

For example, Scripture speaks about the kingdom of God. Somebody asks "where is it?" We usually answer, "Well, it's in the middle east in the future!" Or somebody says, "This prophecy in Isaiah is so cool." But why is it cool? And somebody answers, "Because it's going to happen on the USA in 2013! That's why it's important." Or somebody asks "Where's the love of God?" And the reply is, "Check your checkbook or bank account, you'll see the love of God."

Do you see what I'm saying? We look to the natural realm to see the reality of these things. We are interested in spiritual things to the measure that we think they effect natural things. But we are looking at it completely backwards. For instance if I said to someone, "I think the temple in Ezekiel Chapter 40 is spiritual, that is, it's talking about something spiritual." And that person responds, "So you don't take that scripture literally?" But I would say, "Yes, I take it very literally. More literally than if it was built by stone in a place on earth." You see?...That initial response assumes the most literal is the most natural, and that's not true. That's looking at things backwards. Think about it.... do you think that to God the most real is the spiritual, eternal, never changing realities in His Son? Or do you think it's a physical block, a shadowy copy made in the natural realm, which is very temporary and can be seen and understood from a multitude of different perspectives? Which one do you think is more real to the Lord? Which one is more literal?

This is not usually the lens we have over our eyes when we read scripture. We read scripture wanting to know where or how we can find spiritual things in the natural realm. We don't feel like its "real" unless it touches the natural realm. But this is backwards. We should be reading Scripture understanding that these words are using natural pictures to testify of spiritual things... and the spiritual things are million times more real. Oh, but the spiritual reality of life, light, truth, and substance in Christ is so foreign to our hearts that a lot of the time we don't even know what it means to look at Christ in order to know these things! And even worse, we don't even want to.

I've seen this enough to know that, for the natural man, telling someone that something is spiritual and not natural is like taking candy out of their hand. Take for example the crown of righteousness that Paul speaks of and say to someone, "I don't think that's an actual crown, like a metal circle." And they'll say, "So you don't think it's real?" And you say, "No, no it's real! I totally think it's real. It's so real, spiritually real and wonderful, but it's not a shadowy metal bar that someone wraps around your head. Do you really even want that? It sounds heavy and uncomfortable and weird. Can you imagine wanting to live the rest of your life with a big metal crown on your head? Every time you see the Lord you have to throw it down and pick it back up again. Who wants that? Or do you just want the personal glory of receiving a crown? Or having Jesus hand you a crown? What is so attractive about that crown that could possibly make it something natural that you want? Or could it be that Christ Himself is that crown given to you, and His glory and His kingdom and kingship can always work in you? Is that possibly what that crown speaks of? But with many people, by saying this it's like you've robbed them of something... and they still want a crown! That's the kind of carnality that works in our hearts. Why am I talking about that? **Well, we're never going to understand the eternal purpose of God unless we understand that the natural testifies of the spiritual.**

The Bible is a book and the Bible is made of words. Now I know these words came from God, and I believe every one of them came from God. I believe they are God's words. But, there's nothing

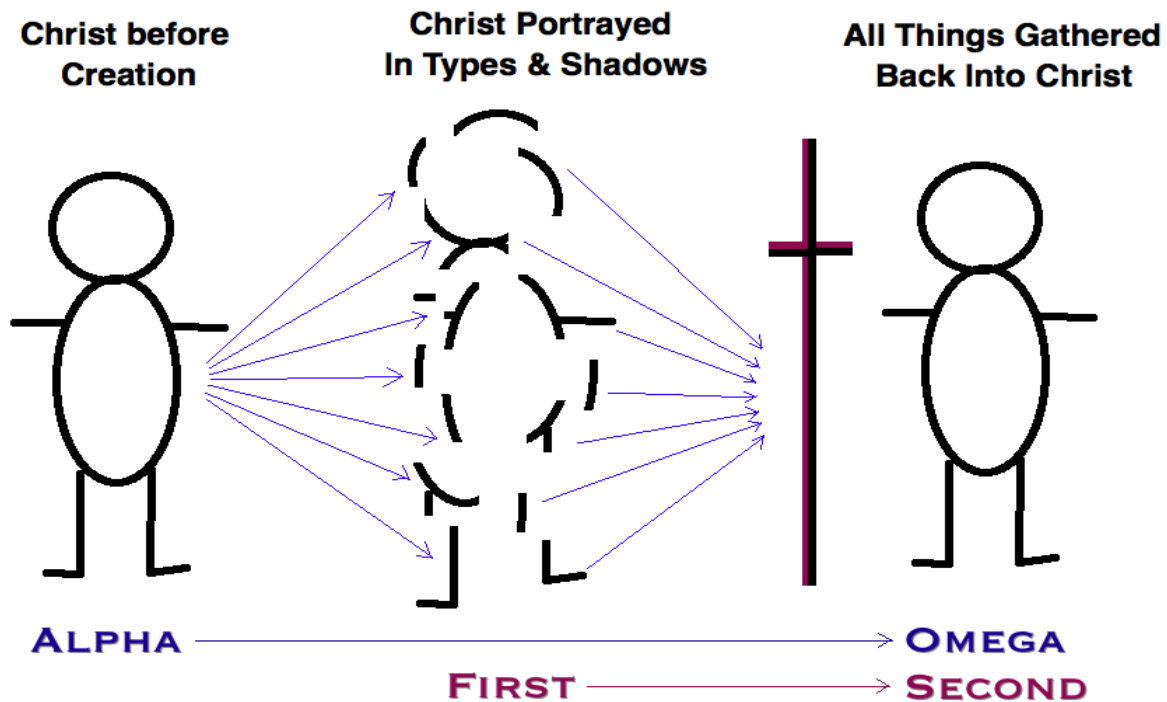
spiritual in the pages. They testify of something spiritual. **Therefore, this testimony that were going to be spending some time looking at in this class, has to bring our hearts out of the words and into the spiritual reality**, otherwise we're just like the pharisees Jesus rebuked in John 5:39: "You think that the life is in here, but I'm the life and you won't use this like a window to see Me. You won't follow where this points you to find Me. In fact, you've made a god, you've made an idol out of the words. You're worshiping the words, learning the words, memorizing the words, and studying the words. You're putting them into nice little compartments and organizing them into theologies and here I am standing before you and you won't come to Me to have life." The strange thing is, this would offend a lot of Christians. I've seen Christians that won't put their Bible on the floor because they want to be careful with the word of God. Friends, It's words on pages... **and they are all true and all come from God, but the thing that makes them spiritual is the Person they are testifying of that we must to come to see, know, and live in.** I read the Bible all the time, and I don't want to be misunderstood and have people say I'm disrespecting the word of God. But the book isn't the Word that lives in you. These are words that speak of the Word, and it's 100% true and accurate, unlike most words and unlike most books. The Bible is God's gift; it is accurate in its testimony of that living Word. But we need to approach it with this understanding: **From God's point of view, before there were ever words or natural things that pointed to Him, there was something more real.**

From our point of view, going back to this diagram, before there was a created realm of shadows, God had His spiritual reality. We are born here (in the realm of natural testimony), we are born first in the realm of shadows, and yet the scriptures say and show us in so many ways that the natural, or what we call "the first," is an introduction, or an arrow, that points us to something greater. Paul says in 1 Corinthians 15:46 "However, the spiritual isn't first, but the natural." He's talking about human experience. From God's perspective, obviously the spiritual was first, but for us the spiritual is not first, but the natural, and afterward the spiritual. "The first man was of the earth made of dust; the second Man is the Lord from Heaven. As was the man of dust, so also are those who are made of dust; and as is the heavenly Man, so also are those who are heavenly. And as we have borne the image of the man of dust, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly Man." I think that's how we need to approach this class, how we need to approach scripture, and how we need to approach our understanding of the Lord in general. If we don't understand this, our goals and expectations will be set in the wrong realm, in the wrong reality. We'll be reading the Bible without understanding what it's pointing to. It's like a bunch of arrows pointing in a bunch of random directions. It's a free-for-all with how to interpret them or understand them. Or maybe they're not even arrows. Maybe we think the Bible is just about spiritual facts that we must read, memorize, and learn. A lot of people do that. But that is not how we should approach this at all.

With that said, I want to say something else about the word fulfillment. This is preliminary to some of the more specific things, but it's essential. It's essential to understand that when you think of the

word fulfillment, or God fulfilling something, by definition, you can't think of the natural realm. **The fulfillment of what God is describing with words is not natural. Why? Because everything in the natural realm by definition came out from the spiritual substance and points back to it.** The fulfillment of anything ever spoken cannot be in the testimony. That's a real simple thing to say, but I hope we understand it. I don't think we often do.

What is fulfillment? It's the thing God was looking at when he made the physical copy with testimonies, pictures, and words. Where do you come to the thing that God had in mind when he was building the pattern in the earth? How do you find the substance described by the words that came out of the prophets mouth? Where do you find it? You're not going to find it in the realm that is the testimony. You're never going to find it there. This isn't complicated... It's just like saying, "no matter what part of my shadow on the wall you look at, you're not going to find me. Even if you spend your whole life looking for the substance of Jason in my shadow, you're never, ever, ever going to find it because it's not there." Why not? Because Jason is the one *casting* the shadow, and in order to find the substance of that shadow, you're going to have to lift up your eyes and see the thing that the shadow comes out from. Do you see? This is obvious to us in the natural realm, but for one reason or another it's not obvious to us in the spiritual realm.



We need to understand this: that first was the spiritual, eternal, that which is hidden in God or hidden in Christ. Then there was the mystery of types and shadows and pictures and promises and prophecies in the created realm that point to the substance. I use the word mystery because we didn't know what it was point to. The law and the prophets were mysterious because man couldn't

see in that covenant what they were testifying of. Part of this natural testimony was words, God's words. I include His words in this category of "things that testify" because words don't contain substance, they only speak of it in the same way the tabernacle spoke of it, the same way the life of David spoke of it. Words... all they can do is speak of something, they can't contain that thing. Everything God has said, done, and written in the natural realm points to a reality, but the fulfillment is not going to be found in the testimony. **Why is that relevant? It's relevant because as Christians we are always looking for the fulfillment in the natural realm...and it's not there.** Even though Paul will tell us, "Every blessing is yes and amen *in Christ.*" Or "All of the blessings *are spiritual and they're in Christ.*" We don't know what to do with those kind of statements. We don't know what spiritual things really are, and we really only care about natural things.

Somebody reads one of these verses and says, "Where are these blessings?" And another person answers, "Just look at your life. Have you counted your blessings?" "Oh yeah, what are those again?" "Well, do you have a car?" "Yes, I do." "Well there's one blessing! Do you have a computer? Do you have a nice family? Does your family love you? Well, then count your blessings." And so the person responds, "Oh ok, so all the blessings you're talking about, all the blessings promised to Abraham, Isaac, and Ishmael.... that's my car?" "Yeah!" "Oh, then I guess I do have the blessings of God!"

Or let's say you're in the book of Revelation and you're reading about this incredible revelation of Jesus Christ, and you go talk to a person who has been a Christian longer than you and you ask them, "This revelation of Jesus Christ, why is this relevant to me?" And the common answer is, "Because the Antichrist is coming soon and he is going to take your guns, and put a mark on your hand!" That's the answer that some give. Or, "Because the end of the world is going to shake your house or your family or turn your father and mother against you." So your looking for where this thing actually touches you, and the answer is almost always the natural realm.

Or you're trying to find out how much God loves you and you go to a pastor and say, "I don't know if God loves me." And rather than pointing you to the Son of His love in whom love is a reality and an experience forever, the pastor tries to pick through your day and find a few good things that happened, and says, "Look, He *does* love you!" You have a bunch of hard things going on in your life, things are bad, you got a flat tire, you tripped and broke your knee, your son's is sick, and you're trying to find the love of God. And in the midst of this list of bad things, someone tries to tell you that God loves you based on this other list of slightly better things. That should seem absolutely absurd to us, but that's what we do!

Friends, we are always looking for spiritual realities outside of the boundaries of Jesus Christ. That's not what the Bible is about. If that's what your Christianity is about, I just want to say good luck making that work because it never will. It will always be disappointing, confusing, and dead. If you're

looking outside the boundaries of Christ, outside the One who is and always has been the fulfillment even before the natural shadows were created, if you're looking outside of the boundaries of Him for those things and you're trying to experience the love, truth, righteousness, and the eternal purpose of God outside of faith's apprehension and experience of the substance, you're going to have a very frustrating Christian life. It's going to go a million places that don't make sense to you and you are going to have to jump around from one thing to another trying to make sense of shadows that you don't even understand as pointing to substance. The answer is always to look unto the One in whom all things of God have always been in, and into whom you've been invited, and in the light of whom you can see and experience all these things.