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Eternal Purpose Transcription
Class 3 130901

Christ the Substance

The last class I called Before the Shadows and we talked about how we're born into a realm, a world that God considers to be a realm of shadows; natural shadows which are pictures of spiritual and eternal things. When God created the earth he wasn't just experimenting, or creating something because He was bored. I believe you could say that the natural universe is a realm of self-expression. It says in the Psalms, the heavens declare the Glory of the Lord; the earth pours forth His speech. What does that mean? It means that creation, the natural creation, in so many different ways, is like a big canvas onto which God has painted a myriad of living pictures of his own nature, of his own ways, of His eternal purpose.

The natural creation is a natural picture of God's eternal purpose in a new creation. And so there are pictures of good things in it and pictures of bad things in it, but all of them portray eternal, spiritual realities. There are two sides of the cross, there is what God rejects, crucifies, and puts away. And there is what God raises up, accepts, brings unto Himself. So in the natural creation we see dark and light. In Israel we see Saul and David, Jacob and Esau. There are deserts and also water, etc. These are all shadows that contain something of the image of the substance but not the substance itself.

If you look at a shadow, in a lot of ways it testifies of the substance but it never ever, ever contains the substance itself. (We don't seem to get this so I'm emphasizing it again) Christians like to say that the spiritual is more real and I think that every Christian would agree with that as a fact, but we don't really like that fact. I mean, we don't really like that the spiritual is most real because to our hearts the natural is far more important and more real. So when we approach scripture or when we think of our relationship with God we always start off totally backwards. **With our carnal minds we think, "How can I get spiritual things to be my earthly experience?" instead of "How can I leave the earth behind in my heart and know and dwell in and see and abide in spiritual reality?"**

Almost all of religion (and when I say religion I mean that which has its origin in man's mind) is an attempt to grab onto God or his promises, his blessings, his scriptures or his righteousness, etc. and pull it down into the fallen world of shadows to humanize it, to naturalize it and to worship it as a natural thing. We do that in the church. Sadly, that's what the church mostly is. I'm not trying to be mean or judgmental or critical, because I can say this about myself too. That's just what man does.

Man creates towers of Babel. Man builds the city of Babylon. Babylon is man's attempt to copy Zion. In all the scriptures that refer to Babylon, we see it is a natural, human creation, that uses natural man's resources and ideas, religion and power and false unity to build something that man calls a spiritual city, spiritual church. Then on the other hand there is **the heavenly Jerusalem, Zion and that is purely spiritual. Christ all and in all. Zion has Christ as its substance, its source, its purpose, its fountainhead.** I say all that just as a review, and to say that we are generally facing in the wrong direction. This is something that only the light of Christ can correct. You cannot just decide that you're going to face in the right direction. Naturally speaking, you don't even know what spiritual reality is, let alone know how to let spiritual reality bring your heart out of darkness and dwell in light. So that was my little review.

OK, I wrote down a list here of just the fundamental things we need to understand. I think probably next week we'll get into the creation of the church or how God brought it into existence. I don't mean a history lesson such as Paul's missionary journeys. I mean the actual way that God opened up His eternal unbegotten Son and let us into him, to participate in His life and become the vessel of His Glory. We'll look at that a little bit next week but there's a few things I need to say now that I think are fundamental, like building blocks upon which everything else sits.

The **first** thing that I wrote down here is that we have to know that **the reality of salvation is an exodus.** We have to understand that. It's definitely an entrance too and in some ways the entrance is more important than the exodus because the entrance is into Christ, our Promised Land. But still, we need to understand that our experience of salvation is an exodus, it's a leaving behind; it's a coming out of something that we've called our life; that we've called our country, kindred and father's house. It's leaving what we think relationship is what we think purpose is and what we think life is. It's leaving behind the most basic things that humans define in their heart 5000 times during the day without even thinking about it. Salvation is going to bring you out of those things. Salvation is going to bring you out of that light by which you saw those things. Salvation is going to make those things dead to your heart... not that they don't exist, but you'll see that they are not your life. They are not where life is found or how life is known. Salvation is going to bring you out.

When you look at the Old Testament there are many stories about people where the focus is a coming out of everything. You really have to be blind to miss it, and yet we do miss it because we are blind until the Lord begins to deal with our heart our exodus. Then it starts popping up in every story. There is this coming out of everything that the human being has known. Abraham. The first thing that God says to Abraham, "Get thee out of thy country, kindred and father's house". Get out of your country (the place you call your home), your kindred (the people you call your own) your father's house (I think that speaks of the inheritance, the things that are yours based upon being in that home). Get out of all of it and go to a land that I'm going to have to show you. I can't give you a map there because it's not anything that natural eyes can see. In fact when Abraham gets there he

doesn't really understand where he is or why it's great. He just sees a drought and he quickly leaves for Egypt and has to be sent back.

Next, look at his nephew, Lot in Sodom and Gomorrah. Get out! Don't take anything with you. Don't even look back because the place has been condemned.

Israel – get out of Egypt! I'm not fixing Egypt. You're getting out of Egypt and don't let your hearts live in those fleshpots, and leeks and onions and garlic and all the imaginary things that you thought were better about Egypt. Get out. Get out.

Regarding Rebecca, Jacob says, "Don't let my son go back to that land." He says to his servant, "Go get a bride that's willing to come out. Swear to me that you won't send my son back there. But you go there and see if there is anyone willing to come out of there and come here."

It's the same thing with Rachel. Jacob goes in to the land of Laban, that hostile, manipulative environment and pulls out Rachel, and before she goes, she says, "What inheritance do I have here? Is not my inheritance with you, Jacob? I have nothing left of my father's house." She comes out. She comes out.

In Ruth, Naomi says, "Go to your people. I have no more sons in my womb that I can give to you." Ruth says, "No, no. Your land will be my land, your people my people, your God will be my God. I'm leaving everything behind and I'll find everything anew in Israel." And we can mention Rahab too. Rahab says, "Look, I know that this whole land is under the judgment of God and I'm not going to try to protect it. I just ask that when you destroy it, you take me out of it with you." So she paints the blood on her door, (well in her case it's a red cord but it's the same picture.) She paints the judgment over her door and when they come in and slaughter everyone in that city, the one that's already been slaughtered in the Lamb, lives and comes out.

It's rare to find Christians talking about an exodus, and if you do, it's just an exodus out of hell, or out of a certain kind of behavior. We talk of an exodus out of a sinful life, an exodus out of a naughty past or whatever. But we don't talk much of an exodus out of a country, kindred and a father's house! We don't talk much of an exodus out of a world that's condemned, a world that God is not even trying to fix.

What is the church? It's a people called out of the earth. They're not of the earth. This is all over the New Testament. Paul says, "We've been raised up, raised out, we're now citizens of heaven, and we don't belong to the earth. We have a time period where we have this treasure in natural vessels but even so, that's not our true home. We're out of it. We're strangers in the world; therefore do not fix your mind on things below because that's not where you are. Don't act like mere men because you're not." The whole New Testament is this proclamation and Jesus says it probably clearer than anyone when He says "you're not of the world even as I am not of the world."

So whether it's the Old Testament or the New Testament, you're going to see this same reality. God is sending something into this world, into this realm, not to beautify the fallen realm, but to call out from it those who will come and live in His realm, which is a person, and that person is obviously Jesus Christ. To live in Him and to know Christ not just as the deity that saved us, but as the world, the life, the light, the universe of love and truth and spiritual reality in which we live and dwell and have our being. So, that is one of my fundamental things.

The **second** one: The bible is really just two things. It's not complicated. If you read the bible and feel that it's complicated, it's because you're seeing it with the wrong mind. And that's ok. I do it every single day. I read it and find things I don't understand; I know that I'm just not seeing it clearly. So I just keep reading it until the Lord has something that He is able to show me with where I'm at in my heart. But, when you see the bible clearly, I think that you see, very simply, that **the Old Testament is a declaration in shadows of what was coming in Christ, and in the New Testament it is a proclamation of what has come.** It is just that simple.

I don't want to say that one is more valuable than the other but I would definitely say that the Old Testament is a much more detailed and full description of Christ than we have in the New Testament. Because that's exactly what the Old Testament is! It's thousands of God-designed pictures of what is now a spiritual reality in your soul (whether you see it by faith or not). And the New Testament doesn't get into all of the types and shadows, but it does mention several of them in order to say "this has been fulfilled in Christ, and Christ is in you".

And I want to say something here. The New Testament is not the fulfillment of the Old Testament. That's just not true. The fulfillment of the Old Testament is the new life, the new man, the new light. It is Christ Himself that fulfills the old, and the New Testament simply declares Him to have come. The *New Testament* can't be the fulfillment because it's just words. It just declares these old things fulfilled and it points to the place, the Person (Christ) in whom they are fulfilled, and also the place where that Person lives (in you). But you can't say the New Testament fulfills the Old. You could say the new *covenant* is the fulfillment of the Old Testament. You can say that the new man is the fulfillment of the Old Testament. You can say the new life or the New Jerusalem or any spiritual realities in Christ.

So, the bible is two things: the Old testament is the declaration of what was coming in shadows and the New Testament is the proclamation of what has now come.

Now the **third** fundamental thing. I think all of these are vital but this may be the most vital in my heart. **Christ himself is the substance, the spiritual essence of all spiritual things.** Christ isn't just the best spiritual thing. He's not just the leader of all spiritual things. **He is the substance and the living definition. He gives all of these things, all of these pictures of Him, all the words that**

describe Him; He gives them their substance and definition. They don't define him, He defines them.

We need to understand this about words. You can read a bunch of words and you can memorize these words and you can think that because you memorized the words that you understand Christ. But it's just the other way around. **When you know Christ, then for the first time you can understand the words. Because these words don't define Him; they can't define him.** What I'm trying to say is that we don't even understand the true meaning of the scripture until the appearing of the Lord Jesus Christ. THAT is the meaning. Someone asks what does this word mean, what is righteousness? Then a well meaning bible scholar or pastor might say, "Well that's a good question, let's look it up." Then you pull out bible dictionaries and a few verses about righteousness and then you say, "Now I understand what righteousness is." Know you don't! Don't be deceived! Christ is righteousness. When you see righteousness in the face of Jesus Christ, then you can return to that scripture with some understanding. And until then that scripture is testifying out from the substance in order to bring you back to it. Do you understand? Words come out from Him who is the definition to they try to pull you back in and see those words fulfilled in Him.

That's why Jesus is called the Word. He's called the Word because he's the living definition. He's the one living definition of all spiritual things. If you were to ask God to define love He would not do it with words. He would just point to His Son because right there is the living definition. If you were to ask God to define truth He wouldn't give you a list of true things that testify of Christ, he would just point to His Son and say, "Know Him. If you know him you know the truth". If you are to ask God to define anything he has testified of in the scriptures he might even quote to you Hebrews 1:1: "In many times and former days I have spoken in many ways and diverse forms but at the end of those days I have spoken in Son." Know that it is "in Son". The communication of our God in the new covenant isn't Jesus speaking to you, but rather God showing you His Son who is the fullness of everything God has ever said about the Kingdom, about the light about righteousness about the covenant. Everything.

This is going to be super important to us as we go along because we're looking at the church, we're looking at the eternal purpose of God fulfilled in this corporate thing, this corporate body that receives his love and bares his glory. The church, as we'll see, is going to be defined by a Person. In the same way, John hears a voice, and he turns to see what spoke to him and he sees seven candlesticks. He could have stopped right there. He could have just turned back around and preached the seven candlesticks, but he kept looking and as he looked he saw in the midst of the seven candlesticks, he saw the substance of the candlesticks. The thing that gave them life and the thing that gave them light was one like the Son of Man in the midst of the candles. **And so he sees the church defined by the Person.** There's so much we can say about that and we need to say about that but I just want you to understand in this class... what the boundaries of the church? Is it, how

many people are involved? No. It is the measure of Christ involved in those people. How big is the church? Is it how many nations have heard the gospel preach? No. It is the measure of Him operating in those where have heard the truth. You see the difference? **It is not what we bring and add to Him. It's what He works of Himself in us. So the boundaries of His body are the boundaries of His life working in the body.**

This is a gross analogy, but if you took a cadaver and you took an arm and stuck it on me and you made another green sleeve that looked just exactly like mine, you could not say that you have added anything to the body of Jason. Why? Because to be part of my body it has to be living by my life. It doesn't matter if it looks just like me, or looks the same as the rest of my body. The boundary of my life is the boundary of my body so it doesn't matter where you stick that arm. The ring on my finger isn't my body. And my clothes are not part of my body. Why? You could put a thousand fake arms on me, or get the best wax sculpture of my head and attach it with superglue... but still, the body is defined by the LIFE, and that is how the church is.

We look at all these things that man has added to the church in his blindness and we say, "look at the church, look how big it is, look how great it is, or maybe...look how horrible it is, look how divided it is". We have all these things and we've just stuck them on with super glue because of our own ideas of what the church was. We look at it and someone says, "Hey, it's great, it's growing!" and others say it's horrible, it's disgusting, look, it's shrinking". We have all these opinions based on all these things that we tried to put on it, stick to it, yet it hasn't changed one bit unless the Life is taking more ground, because **the church is defined by the boundaries of the Life**. The Life, the Person defines the church.

But the natural man defines the church according to his natural light, and his personal opinions and evaluations. Man says that the harvest is a bunch of people that get saved, right? The Kingdom.... well, there are so many different views of the Kingdom it's not even worth spending the time going through them. The bride of Christ is a divine love affair with the natural man. He loves you just like you are; He's ravished for you, He's pursuing you, He wants to be enthroned upon your affections and all that kind of stuff. That's not true! What I'm trying to say is that all of these things in the natural mind are defined by some view of man but in God's heart the fulfillment is in Christ and it is Christ.

Let me try to draw it out so that it can be seen on the board. Here's Christ in this diagram and here's the world and the substance is here in Christ and the world has a bunch of arrows that testify to that substance. So God's eternal purpose in Christ projects shadows in this direction towards the earth and all the shadows testify back in this direction towards Christ. So words come out from Christ, for instance, and are spoken here in the world about God and the fulfillment of those words is here in Christ. Natural things like sunrises and butterflies and all the things we talk about are here in the earth **but the fulfillment of those things is here in Christ Himself because the fulfillment has to be**

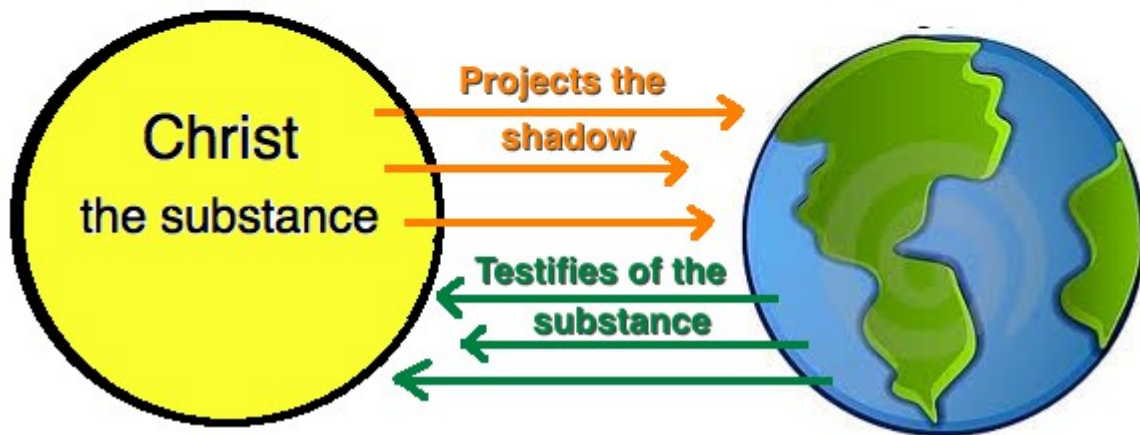
of the nature and substance that God is bringing us into, and not the shadow realm. Then you can say that all of God's dealings in the old covenant such as the tabernacle, the feasts and the offerings and all of that is where He was painting the pictures here in the earth but the fulfillment is never in the earth. I know that sounds so simple but once again we just don't believe it. Or maybe we believe it as an idea but when we start looking for the fulfillment of things that were written in the bible we look to the wrong realm.

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



We talked a little bit about this last week. We say, "When is this scripture going to be fulfilled?" we don't even think about in Whom it is fulfilled or what the substance of it is. We just want to know when. **And when we ask, "When it's fulfilled?" then what we're actually asking is, "What natural thing, in the earth, is going to be the fulfillment of something that God spoke here?"** Well, the things that God spoke of testified to the spiritual substance. The fulfillment is never going to be in the natural realm. The true fulfillment is always some aspect or reality of Christ.

I promise you one thing; the fulfillment of that God has spoken is a spiritual reality, even if there has been a natural manifestation of it. For instance, God spoke of a natural judgment and restoration of Israel, and there indeed was a natural judgment and restoration of Israel; the Babylonian captivity. There was the testimony of the true fulfillment here in the earth. But again, this testimony (the Babylonian captivity) spoke beyond its day, beyond its covenant and beyond this realm to a spiritual reality that is only fulfilled in Christ. And it is always that way. So **The true fulfillment of anything is not found in the realm of testimony. The fulfillment is found in Christ, as Christ, and therefore the**

experience of that fulfillment is going to be internal and spiritual. There might be testimonies of it in the external, the natural realm. But **the place where the testimony becomes an eternal reality is in Christ, and therefore in you.**

These things shouldn't be questions for us any longer. It shouldn't be a question whether the things in the bible testify of something else. Of course they do! Which ones? All of them! All of them do. Why? Because this bible was not written for the natural man to be read and understood with natural eyes and applied to the natural body. I know that's what we do; I'm aware of that. But let me tell you something – the bible is not beneficial for the natural man. I don't care if you read one proverb a day and apply it to your natural life. It doesn't mean that the bible was written for the natural man. The bible is a spiritual testimony of a spiritual reality that has to be read with spiritual eyes in spiritual light. And the fulfillment and experience of what is read will be an eternal, internal reality of the living substance who is Christ. And though you might experience natural pictures and testimonies and manifestations of some of the things in the bible in the natural realm, that's just because the shadows always align with the substance. They were created to do so, but that doesn't mean that the bible is a book that speaks of natural things. The bible wasn't written to show you how to be a good natural person and how to live a good natural life. No! The bible was written to invite your soul out of that realm to be found in Him.

So, I'm telling you that there's no true fulfillment in the earth. Fulfillment is a word that doesn't make sense in the earth. Fulfillment is the gathering up of all shadows back into the substance. And that's what Ephesians 1 talks about. Paul says that all the things of the former ages are now gathered up in Christ, in the administration of the fullness of time. That's what he's doing. A bunch of testimonies came out from Christ and now in the administration of the Spirit, the administration of the fullness of times, all those things are gathered back into Christ and we are gathered back in with Him.

I'm trying to settle this issue and maybe for some of the newer people that might be listening to this, it may be newer and sound strange, and so just as I always do... I say take it to the Lord and let him settle the issue in your heart. But this needs to be settled with us. It's not a question of, "You know, as I'm reading this scripture, I wonder if this is talking about something that's going to be natural or if it's talking about something spiritual?" It's always spiritual! Though there be natural expressions or natural manifestations the true and real fulfillment is spiritual.

So the bible must be read as God's attempt to communicate with the human heart using parables, types, figures, shadows, symbols, patterns, copies. This is what the bible is. It uses man's words to invite into God's realities. It uses man's symbols, which of course can be read and applied to the wrong realm. That's why they asked Jesus, "Why do you speak in parables?" Jesus answered, "In hearing they don't hear and in seeing they don't see." Jesus is using natural words to declare spiritual realities and it's so easy for the natural man to hear natural words and apply to the natural

man and the natural realm. But then he says, "Let them who have ears, hear." Those who have a different kind of ear, hear and see something beyond symbols, figures and parables, patterns, copies, and types.