

**WCCC 1996**

**Brother Stephen Kaung**

**In Christ and Christ In Us (2)**

Please turn to 1 Corinthians 1:30, the first part, "*But of Him you are in Christ Jesus.*"

Let's also read

*1 Corinthians 15:45-49, "So also it is written, 'The first man, Adam, became a living soul.' The last Adam became a life-giving spirit. However, the spiritual is not first, but the natural; then the spiritual. The first man is from the earth, earthy; the second man is from heaven. As is the earthy, so also are those who are earthy; and as is the heavenly, so also are those who are heavenly. Just as we have borne the image of the earthy, we will also bear the image of the heavenly."*

Let us bow our heads and pray.

Lord, we are here together to look to You. Your word is the truth, and the truth will set us free. Therefore, we look to You to release Your word, so that Your truth can be in every heart, and we can be freed in You. Listen to our prayers. In Jesus' name. Amen.

This morning we are going to share about "In Christ". Yesterday we have already had some sharing on what is there "In Christ", or we can say we had some sharing on what Christ is about. When we speak of Christ, how much do we know Christ? Do we only see a little bit of Christ? Or, do we see Christ as God sees Christ? There is a huge difference here. If God opens up our inner eyes, perhaps we can see Christ as God sees Christ, I believe there will be a tremendous change in our living. Because God's word tells us, all the fullness of the deity dwells in Christ, in Christ all the fullness of deity dwells in bodily form. None of us can fully comprehend the fullness of God, none of us can fully comprehend all the fullness of deity. God's fullness is God Himself, therefore we have no way of measuring how abundant His fullness is. But in Christ all the fullness of deity dwells in bodily form. Whoever God is, He dwells in Christ. His nature and character dwell in Christ, nothing is deducted from it, because the Father and the Son are one.

Not only do we see in Christ all the fullness of deity dwells in bodily form, we also see all of God's purpose dwells in Christ. We can say that apart from Christ, God has no other purpose. All of God's purpose and work dwell in Christ. Outside of Christ, God has no purpose nor work. We also see all of God's promises are in Christ. If it is not in Christ, God has no promises. If it is not by Christ, not one purpose can be fulfilled. Therefore, this is the fullness in Christ. God wants us to see this fullness so that we can rise up and pursue the Lord. Yesterday morning we said that if we have other pursuits outside of Christ, as if our Christ is not enough, then we will be led into error. Therefore, we need to look unto Christ, as mentioned in Hebrews 12.

This morning we would like to look deeper into "In Christ". We need to see how we can be in Christ. We have already seen the fullness in Christ, now we need to know how we can enter into Christ. We will look at what we have gained through salvation. What has our salvation given us? What does salvation want us to gain? When we think of our salvation, immediately we think of our sins are forgiven. I believe this is a very glorious matter to us in our salvation. When we were dead in sins and transgressions, when we were oppressed by the burden of sin, when we were sighing in sin, thank and praise God, salvation has come upon us, our Lord Jesus has shed His precious blood for our sin. When we receive the Lord Jesus, His precious blood washes away all our sins and causes us to have peace, and we are like walking in the air. Indeed, having our sins forgiven is the most joyous matter. This is one thing that is given to us through salvation.

But our salvation does not only give us forgiveness of sin, this is a passive side of it. Salvation also works actively, just as we have mentioned that salvation also brings justification. Originally, we are not able, we dare not, and we are not worthy to come before God. If we were to come before God, we would be struck down. But thank and praise God, we are justified before God because of our Lord Jesus Christ's salvation. It is as if we have never sinned so that we can come boldly before God. This is a tremendous grace given to us through salvation. Every time when we come before God, we do not depend on ourselves; every time we come before God, we are putting on Christ because Christ is our righteousness. This is what salvation gives us.

Brothers and sisters, sometimes when we wake up in the morning, we are full of peace within us. We come before God as if we have much courage. However, when night comes, after going through the day, it seems we have some weakness and some failures. So when we come before God, we have some fear, we are not sure if our God would accept us. This is the feeling of many Christians. But we

need to know this is a mistake. It is because we do not depend upon ourselves, whether we have been good or bad, to come before God. We cannot come before God if we are good nor can we come before God if we are bad. Today, we have a position that allows us to come before Him. It is not because of us, it is because Christ is our righteousness. Brothers and sisters, we can change, but our righteousness can never change. Therefore, because He is our righteousness, we can come before God anytime. It is indeed a tremendous grace.

What does salvation bring us? Salvation allows us to enter into the veil. In the Old Testament, no one can enter into the holy of holies because God's glory is in the holy of holies. No one is worthy to see God's glory. It is only with the blood and the burning incense that the high priest can go behind the veil and redeem the people's sins once a year. This tells us the way to the holy of holies is not yet open. But thank and praise God, because the Lord Jesus has torn open His body on the cross, He has opened up a new and living way for us to enter the holy of holies without fear. Now we can depend on the blood of our Lord and His fragrance to draw near to God, to worship God, and to behold His beauty anytime. Brothers and sisters, this is the tremendous grace given to us in our salvation.

Not only this, what else does our salvation bring us? If we are to count, I am afraid brothers and sisters need to sit here until tomorrow or the day after. If we are to enumerate all that we receive because of our salvation, we will have to keep counting even during eternity. Therefore, I think we should wait until we are in eternity to count because we are still living in time today and we are still restricted by time. Brothers and sisters, salvation has brought us much grace, but these are only the manifestations, these are not its origin. We can say that these are the branches only and not the root. So, what does salvation bring us? Brothers and sisters, we need to look at the root of our salvation. The word of God always brings us back to the origin. If we are only able to touch some manifestations, these are only the branches. We can only gain one and lose the other. But God always brings us back to the source. Because when we are brought to the origin, you will see all that is in the origin and you will not lose any of it. When God saves us, when salvation comes upon us, brothers and sisters, God has done something immense, which is to place us in Christ. This is what God has done for us in His salvation. Very often we only know about the grace of forgiveness of sin, we may also experience a little of the grace of justification and being able to come before God boldly. But we do not realize that God has placed us in Christ, and because of this, we have problems in our spiritual growth. Therefore, brothers and sisters, we need to see how God has placed us in Christ this morning. Because this is the origin of our salvation.

If we want to know how we are in Christ, the easiest way is to know how we are in Adam. I think everyone of us has enough experience on this, so we will begin with Adam. In the Bible there are only two men, even though there are hundreds of thousands of people on earth today. There are countless people in human history in the past thousands of years. However, there are only two men before God. The name of the first man is Adam, and the name of the second man is Christ. There is not a third person apart from these two. When God created man in the beginning, God used the dust to make the form of the man and breathed air into the man's nostrils, and this man immediately became a living soul with spirit. We know that when God's breath entered into a man, the breath became the man's spirit, because breath and spirit were the same word in the original text. When God breathed into this body made of dust, man received a spirit, and this is the spirit of a man. And when the spirit comes into contact with the body, the soul comes into being, and it is a living soul, because man is a living soul.

Outwardly, we have this body so we can come into contact with the material world; inwardly, we have a spirit so that we can come into contact with God, because God is Spirit. Inside of us, we have a soul so we can come into contact with ourselves. We have the realization of ourselves because we have our mind, our will, and our emotion. These represent our being. Therefore, the first man created by God is a living soul with a spirit. Why did God give him a spirit? We know that animals have a body and a soul, but only human beings are the spirit of all beings because only man has a spirit. It is because the purpose of God creating us is for us to have fellowship with Him, and to receive a non-created life from Him so that we can be united with God in life. This is the purpose of God creating man. Regrettably, our ancestor Adam disobeyed God's command. God's words said that you shall not eat of the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, for the day you eat of it you shall surely die. But Adam ate the fruit, he lived for more than nine hundred years and bore sons and daughters. Is this because God's words did not come true? No. because when he ate the forbidden fruit, his spirit towards God died, and he could no longer fellowship with God.

Even though he is a living soul, but his spirit is dead towards God. Therefore, we call him a natural man today. What is a natural man? In 1 Corinthians 2, it is translated into "a man of the flesh" in Chinese. It is the natural man in the original text. What is a natural man? It is a fallen man. His spirit is dead towards God. He is living in the flesh. He is living in the natural. What does the Bible say? A natural man does not understand the things of the Spirit because they are foolishness to him. A natural man does not know the things of the Spirit. Not only does he not know, he does not accept them, because he is cut off from God. This is the first man. The Bible tells us the first man is from the earth. He comes out from the earth; therefore, he is earthy.

In other words, his origin is the ground, his nature is the earth, therefore, he is earthy. This Adam, his nature, his personality, his behavior, his living, all is in the natural, all is of the earth, all is connected with the world. This is Adam. This is our ancestor. But the Bible also tells us, Adam is not only a man, Adam is also a federal head. He is not only an individual, he is also a corporate man. Adam is a man but he is not just an individual. Because he is the first man, he is our head. Therefore, all that are born of Adam is in Adam. There are hundreds of thousands of people in the world, but God said there are only two men: Adam and Christ. All those who are born of Adam are in Adam. Brothers and sisters, when we are born into the world, regardless of what your family name is, what you have inherited traces back to Adam. All of us who are born into the world are born into Adam. How Adam is earthy, we are also earthy. Adam's life is our life, Adam's nature is our nature, Adam's personality is our personality, Adam's living is our living.

Adam is a very big man and he has included all of us in him. Some people express certain parts of Adam, some express another part of Adam. Regardless of what you express, you are Adam. Your natural patience is Adam; your natural impatience is Adam. All that is out of the natural is Adam. All that Adam is you are. Therefore, we cannot really comment that this person is better than that person because we are just the same. Is it so, brothers and sisters? All that Adam is we are. You cannot escape from Adam. This is the principle of the federal head in the Bible. It is because in God's eyes, Adam is the first man. At the same time, we see that Christ is the second man.

Not only who Adam is, we are; at the same time, what Adam did is what we do. Adam ate the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil and disobeyed God's command. Because of his one sinful deed, we all died. Brothers and sisters, what Adam did is what we do. Why? It is because we are in Adam. Hebrews 7 spoke about the matters of Abraham and Melchizedek. When Abraham returned after winning the battle, Melchizedek came to greet him. Melchizedek was the priest of the Everlasting God. Melchizedek blessed Abraham, and Abraham gave a tenth of the spoils to him. Verses 9 and 10, "And, so to speak, through Abraham even Levi, who received tithes, paid tithes, for he was still in the loins of his father when Melchizedek met him." It is because when Melchizedek came to greet Abraham, Levi was already in his forefather's loin. We know that among the Israelites, the tribe of Levi is separated unto God.

Of course, we cannot return to this today, because God's salvation has made us all priests. In 1 Peter we are told that we are the royal priesthood. Therefore,

it is not like the practice of only one out of twelve tribes that served God. That was an emergency policy. God's original intention is for the people of Israel to be a kingdom of priests; today, the Lord's salvation is to bring us back to God's original desire. Therefore, brothers and sisters, all those who are saved by grace are priests. To be a priest is to serve God, you can have an avocation, but your vocation is to serve God. But, in the Old Testament time, because the Levites did not have inheritance on earth, as God is their inheritance, so the Israelites were to allocate a tenth for the Levites. But the Bible shows us, Abraham gave one tenth to Melchizedek, therefore through Abraham even Levi, who received tithes, paid tithes to Melchizedek.

I wonder if brothers and sisters are able to understand this? It is because when Abraham paid tithes to Melchizedek, Levi was already inside Abraham's body as told in the Bible. We know that Levi came from Abraham, even though there were several generations in between them. But God said that Levi was already in Abraham's loins. Therefore, when Abraham offered tithes, Levi offered tithes. This is the principle of representation in the Bible. We have already mentioned the principle of the federal head in the Bible. Here, we see the principle of representation. What Abraham did was what Levi did.

Why are we, who are born in Adam, born as sinners? Adam became a sinner because he sinned; he was not a sinner before he sinned. He was not a saint either. He was a neutral man. However, as soon as he sinned, he became a sinner. What about you and me? We are born as sinners. We sin because we are sinners. This is what is different from Adam. Then we say, "It was Adam who sinned. Why should we become sinners?" It is because we are already in Adam, even though there are many generations between Adam and us. We Chinese often talk about King Zhou Wen. He had one hundred sons. He sent his one hundred sons to different places in China and became the origin of the one hundred family names in China. I came into contact with a brother in China and he was the one-hundredth generation. Today, we are all from the lineage of Adam. When Adam sinned, we sinned in his body. What he did represent what you and I do; therefore, we are born as sinners.

Let us read

*Romans 5:15-19, "But the free gift is not like the transgression. For if by the transgression of the one the many died, much more did the grace of God and the gift by the grace of the one Man, Jesus Christ, abound to the many. The gift is not like that which came through the one who sinned; for on the one hand the judgment arose from one transgression resulting in condemnation, but on the other hand the*

*free gift arose from many transgressions resulting in justification. For if by the transgression of the one, death reigned through the one, much more those who receive the abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness will reign in life through the One, Jesus Christ. So then as through one transgression there resulted condemnation to all men, even so through one act of righteousness there resulted justification of life to all men.”*

Therefore, you can see because Adam sinned, it resulted in condemnation for us all. We are all dead. This is the principle of representation.

There is another principle, they are actually connected, which is the principle of one and many. You see the appearance of “one” and “many”. What one is, so is many. What one does, so do many. Because Adam is the federal head. Dear brothers and sisters, do we know that before we believed in the Lord we were in Adam? When we believed in the Lord, what was the reason we believed? Did you feel that your sins were very heavy? The Holy Spirit moved your conscience and let you see your sins, see the awfulness of sin, see the frightfulness of sin? Or, you saw the result of sin is death? Many are afraid of death, and they know there is judgement after death. It is not that everything comes to an end when someone dies. It is not that convenient. Because of these reasons, you were willing to repent and trust in the Lord Jesus. Or, you felt that there was no righteousness in you, therefore you received the Lord Jesus as your righteousness. But, brothers and sisters, is there anyone who believed in the Lord Jesus because he felt that he was in Adam? I think if the reason you believed in the Lord is because you saw that you were in Adam, your salvation was a tremendous one. This kind of understanding towards salvation is not superficial, it is thorough.

Dear brothers and sisters, we need to be freed from Adam. We are all in Adam. If you are in Adam, you do not have a way. You can think of ways to improve yourself; you can use education to educate yourself, you can try to improve, you can practice bettering yourself, you can use all kinds of ways to improve yourself. But all that you do is superficial, only outward decorations. Your inside remains unchanged. Just as the Bible said, “the taste remains.” The goodness that comes out of you is the taste of Adam.

The outcome of your practicing to better yourself has the taste of Adam. Of course, the sin that comes out of you has the taste of Adam. Even the service that is out of you has the taste of Adam. You cannot get rid of Adam no matter what. Paul said, “*Wretched man that I am! Who will set me free from the body of this death?*” Paul said these words in Romans 7:24. There is a historical background to these words. This is not only Paul’s personal experience, there is also a historical background. It was said that during the Roman Empire there

was a type of punishment. If a person murdered another person, what would be done? The murderer would be tied up with the corpse of the person who was murdered. Face to face, feet to feet, eye to eye, and mouth to mouth. The corpse was tied up with the murderer, and the poison from the decaying of the corpse would slowly enter into the body of the murderer, until the murderer was also dead. When Paul said these words, he said, "*Wretched man that I am! Who will set me free from the body of this death?*" This corpse that was tied to his body of death was nothing else but himself. He was tied together and could not be freed. The poison of death was there to make him die. He said, "*What I want to do I cannot do; what I don't want to do I do. I am helpless. Who can free me from Adam?*" Brothers and sisters, do we have this cry within us? Who can set me free from Adam? Dear brothers and sisters, if you are in Adam, you have no salvation, you have no way. When you are in Adam, one day you will say, "Wretched man that I am!" What we need today is to be freed from Adam. How can we be freed from Adam? This is our greatest need.

How do we enter into Adam? We enter into Adam through birth; we do not join into Adam. If you know what Adam is about, I don't think you will be willing to join him. We are born into it, we have no choice, and we cannot help it. We are born into Adam. Then how can we be freed from Adam? If we are born into him, then we need to get out by dying. There is only one way to get out of Adam, that is when we are dead. If we die, we die to Adam. Therefore, you see death is the only way to be freed from Adam. But you and I cannot die because if we die then we are dead. Here, you see God's wonderful salvation. Sometimes I wondered why God would do it this way. Because of the sin of one man and I am condemned also? I did not eat the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, why should I die also? This is not fair.

But, brothers and sisters, I truly thank and praise God because this principle is the way of salvation. Without this principle I am done. When I sin, I will perish. But thank and praise God. God has placed all men into Adam until the second man came. He is not only the second man. The Bible says the Lord Jesus Christ is the second man, He is also the last Adam. This is a wonderful thing. He is the second man; He is also the last Adam. We Chinese say that our ancestor is the Yellow Emperor; therefore, we all have yellow faces. We call ourselves the descendants of the Yellow Emperor. In Chinese legend, one time when the Yellow Emperor was fighting with Chiyou in a battle, it was very foggy and the compass was invented, and the Yellow Emperor won the battle. If Chiyou had killed the Yellow Emperor at that battle, brothers and sisters, would you be here today? If the Yellow Emperor had died, there would not be any descendants from the Yellow Emperor. Therefore, fortunately the Yellow Emperor won the battle and today there are descendants from the Yellow Emperor.

Our Lord Jesus is the last Adam. What is the last Adam? For example, my family name is Kaung. If I were the last descendant of the Kaung family, there would no longer be a Kaung family after I die. Today, in mainland China, after a person dies, his name will be carved on his tombstone. If this person is already dead, the name is in black color. If the person has not died but the tombstone is just prepared ahead of time, his name is in red color. And if the family still has someone living, the family name will remain red. If this family no longer has anyone living, then the family name will also be black.

Here, we see that Christ is the last Adam. When Christ died, the Adamic race ended. There is no more Adam. Therefore, brothers and sisters, you can see the wonder of God's salvation. All died in Adam, but all will resurrect in Christ. Our Lord is the second man; not only is He the second man, He is also the last Adam. When He was on the cross, He had brought everyone in Adam on the cross. When He died on the cross, the Adamic race came to an end. Therefore, it is said in Romans 6:6, "*knowing this, that our old self was crucified with Him, in order that our body of sin might be done away with, so that we would no longer be slaves to sin.*" The old self here refers to Adam. This old self is in singular form; it refers to Adam. Whether it is you or me, we are all in this old self, we are all in Adam. Therefore, when the Lord was crucified on the cross, our old self, which is Adam, has been crucified with Him, because He is the last Adam. Our body of sin is done away with, this body of sin is unemployed, so that we are no longer slaves to sin.

Dear brothers and sisters, thank and praise God, this is the principle of one and many, this is the principle of representation, this is the principle of the federal head. This principle is carried out before God. Therefore, when the Lord Jesus died on the cross, we all died. When Adam died, all who are in Adam died. When the Lord Jesus resurrected from the dead, we who are in Christ resurrected. Today, we are in the second man. Dear brothers and sisters, therefore, in 1 Peter 1:3 it says that we are born again through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. His dying is our dying. He has put an end to Adam. His resurrection is our resurrection, so that we can enter into the second man. When we believe in the Lord Jesus, not only has His resurrected life entered into us, He has also placed us in Christ. Death causes us to be freed from Adam and resurrection causes us to enter into Christ. Dear brothers and sisters, we are in Christ today not because of what we have done. It is not because we have accumulated enough merits so that we can enter into Christ. It is also not because of how bad you are that you are not able to enter into Christ. You are in Christ because of God. It is God's grace. It is God's mercy. It is the redemption of Christ Jesus that elevates us into Christ. Dear brothers and sisters, this is

salvation. Salvation is moving us from one place to another. We get out of Adam and enter into Christ. Therefore, salvation is a change in our position.

It is not only a change in the outward form; it is a fundamental change. It is a tremendous change in our position. Just as the Bible says that God has rescued us from the dominion of darkness and has transferred us into the kingdom of His beloved Son. Dear brothers and sisters, are you in Adam today, or are you in Christ? If you are in Adam, you will be helpless. You are hopeless. No matter how you strive, you cannot be freed from Adam. In Adam all died. Brothers and sisters, all your hope is in Christ. So, this is our question today: are you in Adam, or are you in Christ? If you are in Adam, then you cannot be in Christ. If you are in Christ, then you will not be in Adam. There is no fellowship between life and death; there is no communion between light and darkness. Yesterday we spoke of what truth means. Truth is what God has accomplished for us in Christ. Therefore, according to truth, a person who believes in Jesus Christ has been put to death in Adam and has been born into Christ by God. If anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. If a person is in Christ, there is a new creation. All the old things have passed away, new things have come. Dear brothers and sisters, we are in Christ today. There is a new creation in Christ; there are no old things in Christ. Adam's nature, Adam's habits, Adam's behavior, whether good or bad, have all passed away, because everything in Christ is new, all are from God. According to the truth, this is absolute. Truths are absolute.

Dear brothers and sisters, what is our problem today? It is our experience not matching the truth. We have already received experience. The experience is the Holy Spirit has worked into you what Christ has finished. Therefore, experience is relative but the truth is absolute. Truth and experience ought to be one. If they are not one, there is a problem. Brothers and sisters, according to our experience, do we feel sometimes we are in Christ and sometimes we are in Adam? Perhaps we are in Adam more than we are in Christ. According to the truth this is impossible. If you are not in Christ then you are in Adam; if you are not in Adam then you are in Christ. This is absolute. But pitifully, in our experience these two often do not come together. What are the reasons?

The first reason is because we do not understand the truth adequately. If we have an adequate understanding of the truth, our old self has been crucified with Christ. That is why it says in Romans 6:11, "*Reckon yourselves to be dead indeed to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus our Lord.*" How do we reckon? Where does your faith come from? It is because you have seen the absolute truth. You saw Christ's finished work on the cross and you saw Christ has brought you to

the cross. Because of this, you are able to reckon and say, *“Thank God. I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me.”* Dear brothers and sisters, we need to have a deeper understanding of the truth. We need to accept this truth with faith. And the truth will set us free.

The second reason is we do not obey the Holy Spirit enough. The Holy Spirit wants to work in us the finished work of Christ. But often we do not obey. Because of disobedience, we are not able to experience the fullness of Christ. Therefore, dear brothers and sisters, we need to stand in Christ with our faith today. Whenever you are not in Christ, you will fall into Adam in your experience. It is no wonder history will repeat itself. In Christ, the old things have passed away and all things have become new. Therefore, may the Lord open our inner eyes so that we can see God has already placed us in Christ. We need to live in Christ, as our brother mentioned in the evening, then Christ will live in us.

Let us bow our head and pray.

Our God, we truly thank and praise You. Because You have done a great thing. How thorough is Your salvation! Thou have saved us out of Adam so we can be in Christ today. This is such a position. This is such grace. Today, we can be freed from Adam, be freed from all of Adam’s nature, be freed from all of Adam’s behavior. Today, we can receive Christ, receive His life, and receive His work. We thank and praise You. All the glory be to You. We pray in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.