

WCCC 2023

Brother Ted Peng

**God makes known His manifold wisdom
through the church (2)**

Good afternoon brothers and sisters. I hope you have had a little rest. The burden the Lord put in my heart for this session is "By His resurrection life". Yesterday we mentioned the eternal purpose of God, and how God meant that to be something very practical. This is what God has in mind. So you see that work out in the true story of the Philadelphia church.

Then the apostle Paul emphasized to us the eternal purpose of God and the inheritance given to us is placed side by side. They are essentially not separable. When we realize that, you see in history, that we have all these wonderful people: Abraham, Moses, Ruth, David, Isaiah and so on. In their own lifetimes, they had only known of this inheritance from God. But in essence, God really revealed to them His own eternal purpose: Christ, that is to come, and the wonderful church of God. At that time it was called Jerusalem, and it meant "God's people together".

Thank the Lord when we really see this, we see God's eternal purpose as a wonderful gift to you and to me. During our lifetime, this is a light shining on our path.

On the other hand, it requires us to overcome. It requires us to walk with the Lord, to pay some price.

When I was reading where the apostle Paul writes of the eternal purpose of God and the inheritance in Chapter 1 of Ephesians, it is interesting that he immediately mentions the resurrection of Christ. When you come to Colossians - which is a very practical aspect of the eternal purpose of God, there you see again Paul emphasizes the resurrection life of Christ. His risen life in us.

In 1 Peter 1, it is the only place in the Bible that talks about the heavenly inheritance. We didn't have time to talk about it yesterday. After our meeting, a sister came up to me and said, "what is the difference between an earthly inheritance and a heavenly inheritance?" I thank the Lord that it gives me a chance to talk about it a little bit today.

Peter only had 2 books, 1 and 2 Peter. But when he wrote 1 Peter, in the 3rd verse, he immediately got into the heavenly inheritance. When you read on in 1 Peter, you see this heavenly inheritance covered in the book. So I am only going to read the first 3 verses.

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His abundant mercy has begotten us again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,
1 Peter 1:3

I want to underline 2 thoughts here: one, "through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead". When Peter is trying to talk of the heavenly inheritance, he starts with the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

The other thought is "living hope". In the Chinese translation it reads "lively hope". It is also very nice, but what he is really saying is "living hope". This living hope means that as we live, it is our hope all the time.

to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and that does not fade away, reserved in heaven for you,
1 Peter 1:4

What he is saying is that through the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ, now we have this incorruptible and undefine and unfading inheritance. That inheritance is reserved in heaven for us. When you see this, it is incorruptible. What is corruptible is inside [us]. It talks about a life. The resurrection life of Christ Jesus coming in now is our incorruptible life.

And it is undefiled. It means the dirty things from outside cannot touch it. With the resurrection life of Christ in us, the outside things cannot touch us.

The third thing - it says "unfading". Unfading, again, is a matter of life. Because fading is like a flower, here today and fades away a month later.

So these 3 words have to do with life: "Incorruptible", "Undefiled" and "Unfading". Where does this life come from? It comes from the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ. It is wonderful the life that we have. With that we can inherit this heavenly inheritance.

Where does this life come from? It comes from the risen life of our Lord Jesus. In these 2 sentences, our apostle Peter gives us this picture. He calls it "the inheritance reserved in heaven". It makes a difference between the inheritance on earth.

The sister was telling me that the 12 tribes that entered into the Promised Land with Joshua, each of them had their own place. So when we inherit, which part are we inheriting? I told the sister, "No, we are inheriting a heavenly inheritance."

So thank the Lord that Peter helps us understand this heavenly inheritance. Where does it come from? It is not only that life, but what that life brings; what that life enables you and I to do. How you and I can live a life according to it.

While we are so living, that inheritance is being accumulated in heaven.

who are kept by the power of God through faith for salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.

1 Peter 1:5

This "who" refers to you and me. We who have the deposit of the heavenly inheritance, at the very last time, it will be revealed to us. That salvation has nothing to do with sin. That salvation is what God is going to give us at the last time.

It is like redemption and salvation. Brothers and sisters, think a little broader. On one hand the Lord redeems us from sin. We are delivered out of something, but also delivered into something. Like Ruth, she was redeemed into Boaz's farm.

At the very end, the final salvation is given to us. What is that final salvation? Peter didn't say it here. But final means at the very very end.

I can give you a picture at the end of Revelation. We remember the 144,000. That hopefully includes both you and me. The 144,000 at the end are standing with the Lamb on Zion. Those 144,000 are overcomers. Wherever the Lamb goes, they will follow.

Brothers and sisters, think about this. What is the inheritance for the 144,000? Their inheritance is the Lamb and Zion. What is the inheritance for the Lamb? The Lamb's inheritance at that time is the 144,000.

This is one picture at the end.

Another picture is that of the Lamb and the Bride at the end. Remember that she wears fine linen, representing the righteous acts of the saints. The garment of the Bride is the righteousness, the righteous acts of the saints.

Brothers and sisters, today, by the Lord's mercy, go with Him and do good things. And also, don't do it today, and tomorrow we do the opposite. If we walk with the Lord, we have righteous acts. At the very end, on the garment of the Bride, every righteous act of you and me is there.

This is really in the Bible. To me that is so encouraging. That means the Bride is actually our inheritance. Because our righteous acts are always with her. The Lamb watches all the time. It is on her garment. It is never ending, always there.

Our inheritance is the garment of the Bride. The Lamb sees that to be His own inheritance. The Lamb, our Lord Jesus Christ, will take your and my good acts to be His inheritance. These are not just the acts. The acts represent the person. That means, you and I, if we really walk with the Lord and be a blessing to brothers and sisters in the church, the Lord remembers that. He will never forget. He is your inheritance, and you are His inheritance.

The third picture, towards the very end, is the New Jerusalem. The New Jerusalem has a very large wall. The wall is characterized by people. The base of the wall are the 12 apostles' names. The gate of the wall are the names of the 12 tribes. The wall is measured according to the measure of man. What that means is that in the Lord's mind, the wall is represented by people.

Dear brothers and sisters, if we walk right in our own life, if we follow the Lord Jesus, we will finally be on that wall. The wall is a composite of brothers and sisters, the saints across the ages. God thinks that it is so precious, and He sees us as His wall.

This New Jerusalem is the inheritance of you and me, all the wonderful saints. The Lord also sees us to be His wall, His inheritance.

This is how the Lord sees us. This is also how the Lord wants us to be. Yes brothers and sisters, we live no more than 140 years. I haven't heard of anybody living over that. But it doesn't matter. You are on the fine linen, the garment of the Bride. You are also on the wall of the New Jerusalem.

If we really walk right and live an overcoming life, we are among the 144,000 with the Lamb on Zion. Don't worry when you think 144,000 is such a small number. You will be there. 144,000 means 12 x 12. 12 in the Bible is the perfect number. In the mind of the Lord is perfect square.

Brothers and sisters, if we walk right and live right, being a delight to our Lord Jesus, being a blessing to brothers and sisters, we will be there. It is not what I say, but what the Bible says. It is not only the apostle John who writes this in Revelations. This is what Peter implies in 1 Peter. So thank the Lord for that. I leave that with you.

Resurrection Life

Coming to this resurrection life, remember the apostle Paul who wrote Ephesians 1. He talks about the eternal purpose of God in v10. In v11 he talks about the eternal purpose of God plus the inheritance. In v13 he talks about how the Holy Spirit is a guarantee that we will receive the inheritance. And in v18 he writes about how the Lord will be so pleased because He sees His

inheritance now in the saints. And a couple of verses down, he writes about how God will use His mighty power to raise Christ up to be the Head of all things, way above all powers and principalities. And you and I, His Church, is the fullness of Him that fills all and is in all.

But notice one thing, that this is so important to God that the Holy Spirit is the guarantee. He will use the great power that He used to raise His Son to make this happen. See how this resurrection power is related to God's eternal purpose.

How is this related for us to receive this inheritance? On one hand, it is hard. On the other hand, it says that God will use His resurrection power to make it happen. Then Paul makes it practical. In Ephesians 2, at the beginning, he says that God has already raised us up with His Son, and seated us in the heavenly places.

and raised us up together, and made us sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus,
Ephesians 2:6

The Chinese translation is more explicit - seated together with Christ and in Christ. We are raised from our death through God's mighty power to be with Christ. But not only raise us up, but seat us together with Christ. To raise us up is a change in position. It is a transition. To be seated there is to stay there.

In the first chapter, Paul writes that God has used His resurrection power to raise His Son up above all principalities and powers. God is using that same power to raise you and me from our problems. Not only to be delivered from that, but also to be seated with Christ. With that, everything else happens. Chapter 3, 4 and 5. Everything happens because of that.

The apostle Paul says that we are raised up from a bunch of things. What are these things?

One is our sins and transgressions. The other thing is the course of the world. The third thing is the power of the authorities in the air. And fourthly, our own flesh (v 2-4). You see how clearly Paul writes about this process. We are raised up from a state, what is that state?

1. Our sins and transgressions
2. The influence of the world
3. The authorities of the air - Satan
4. Our own flesh

I thank the Lord that the apostle Paul ties it so clear. Those are our problems. Because of my flesh, this is where I am now. Because of the world, I am in such bondage. Because of Satan, he gives me this and that problem. He makes me hate my brother. All these things, apostle Paul

says that the power that raised Jesus from the dead will raise us from these things. And He doesn't allow us to go back there tomorrow. His great power will leave us in that state.

One most precious thing is that we are seated there with Christ. If you and I just sit there by ourselves, we will come down again a week later. But we are with Christ. That will keep us there.

Brothers and sisters, this is a truly wonderful thing. We better believe it. If we believe it, we will be a different person. To my dad and mom, to my wife and husband. To my children. To my brothers and sisters in the church.

Not only that, but with that we are seated with Christ in the heavenly places, we can appreciate the eternal purpose of God. We can take that as our portion, and also be bold enough to think that we have a responsibility for that.

This, brothers and sisters, I believe is what the apostle Paul wants to convey.

We come to Colossians. Paul wrote Colossians and Ephesians at the same time. It says similar things.

If then you were raised with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ is, sitting at the right hand of God.

Colossians 3:1

When Paul said, "raised with Christ", he did not mean this is only in your thoughts. He had spent a lot of Colossians 2 talking about this. He is asking us to think about it - we are raised with Christ, and He is sitting there on the right hand of God. Think about things there.

It is similar to Ephesians 2:6. Being raised with Christ and seated with Him in heaven. In Ephesians 2 "being seated with Him", and in Colossians we are there with Him.

"For you died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God." Colossians 3:3. You died to your old self. Let me give you an illustration. I am standing here. I have my old self and my new man. Paul is saying to consider my old man dead. And my new man is now with Christ in God.

Brothers and sisters, I thank the Lord that he said not to be afraid because we are now dead. It is a happy thing, because it means my old self is dead. And my new self is hidden with Christ in God.

So Paul is saying the same things as in Ephesians. With that great things happened. I would say there are 2 areas: one areas is that while you are seated with Christ in heavenly places, you start to understand the Bible. You start to understand Ephesians and Colossians. I think this is what he really meant.

Yesterday our brother mentioned Ephesians 1. The Holy Spirit comes and opens our inner eyes so we can see. That verse is immediately before Paul writes about the resurrection. Ephesians 1:17. And in v18 and 19, there is the resurrection.

So your eyes are opened by the Holy Spirit, and you are filled with the resurrection life.

If you say, "Lord, no, I am happy enough. I don't need the resurrection life." I think you are essentially rejecting the Holy Spirit's work. I think your inner eye cannot be opened. In all these things said yesterday, there will be nothing to do with you.

But if you are humble enough to say to the Lord, "I need your resurrection life in me". With that humility, the Holy Spirit can shine in our hearts. Our eyes are opened, and we see the wonderful calling, to see that God has His inheritance in the saints. And also to see His mighty power.

Brothers and sisters, this is the apostle Paul's burden. With this, we start to be able to understand the Bible, certainly Ephesians and Colossians. When I say "understand", I don't mean that you can explain it like Brother Godwin Sun. But you can feel it. In your heart, you can say "that is right". In your heart, you can say "this year, I don't know the details, but this is so good. Tomorrow, by your mercy, I will understand it more. I will also be able to explain it to my kids." This is the wonderful resurrection power and the working that we are being brought into.

I'll give a personal example. I was in my 30s and I was just saved. There were many things in the Bible I didn't understand. The brothers were sharing on Hebrews. I found Hebrews so hard. At that time there was an elderly sister who had a burden to share about the Cross, especially the cross as explained by Sister Jessie Penn-Lewis.

There was a Christian Summer conference that I attended. This sister had a session in the afternoon. I knew she would speak on the cross because she loved to speak on the cross. We all knew it. When I went, they were singing a song. The song, I guess is by Fanny Crosby,

Jesus lead me near the cross,
there a precious fountain
In the cross, in the cross
Be my glory ever

My tears define my whole time there. After that, there was Bible study the next Friday. I went to my brother's house and outside his house was a park. I had arrived too early, so I sat on the grass under the tree. I opened my Bible and turned to Hebrews. I turned to the first page, and some verses jumped to me. I turned to the second page, and a few more verses jumped to me.

It was only 10 to 15 minutes, and I just turned the pages, and the Word of God spoke to me. I now understood more and I spoke to others about it. It was wonderful to me.

I realized one thing - when I see the Lord's love, everything else becomes clear. This is my personal experience. The Holy Spirit comes in and our hearts are changed. If I keep questioning, I am as good as dead.

The Holy Spirit is so eager to open my understanding, that I could draw close to Him.

Many years later, I heard Brother Kaung emphasizing a verse. The Lord Jesus said this in John 7:17

If anyone wills to do His will, he shall know concerning the doctrine, whether it is from God or whether I speak on My own authority.

Today you are all very very smart. The younger you are, the smarter you are. You may say "I want to understand the verse before I believe". Things about God doesn't work this way. There are so many smart people in the world who do not know anything about God. They can talk about it, they can know the Bible from the first page to the last, but know nothing about God.

The wonder about being a Christian is that you believe, then you know. When you are touched by the wonderful presence of the Lord and His life, and then you start to understand, just as what happened to me.

But the Lord is even more serious. He is saying that if you are willing to do His will, even if you don't understand it, you want to do it just as Jesus did when He was 12 years old, being about the business of His Father. If you say, "I want to be like Jesus, doing my Father's will", it is then Jesus says you'll understand. It is then you'll be able to discern if what Jesus says is from God or of His own invention.

So the apostle Paul tells us to be humble. Allow yourself to be raised from all these things. Allow yourself to be seated with Christ in the heavenly places. Then you will appreciate the purpose and will of God. Then you will be willing to do His will. Then you will understand His Words.

Dear brothers and sisters, this is absolutely true. Today, if you have some trouble with the gospel of John, humble yourself. Pray to the Lord. I want to do your will. I want to see you. And then He will for sure open your eyes.

The first thing I want to tell you is to be raised with Christ, to be seated in the heavenly places by His resurrection power, then you will understand the Bible. Not only understand, but understand deeply.

Remember the two sons. It is hard for the elder son to understand his dad. From that moment on when the second son came home, it is very easy for the second son to understand his father's mind. I leave you with this.

What the resurrection power can do for us.

This has to do with how we live. The easiest way to look at this is from Colossians 3. It speaks of very practical things. How to be a father. How to be a husband. How to be a wife. How to be a son. How to be a worker at work. And also, how to be a boss. Very very practical.

The idea is this: if you are seated with Christ, raised from all this stuff, and are in the heavenly places, all these things are now doable. You can be a good husband. You can be a good wife. A good son. A good worker. A good boss.

If you think from that line, then Colossians 3 comes alive.

Before I go into this chapter, you know the resurrection life is in you and me. It is the intent of our Lord Jesus that the life He gave us is that resurrection life. When you realize that this is His intent, then you have the confidence that the resurrection life is indeed in you and me.

When the Lord came to the earth, John the Baptist sent someone to ask Jesus if He was the One. Jesus replied, "The blind see, the deaf hear, the leper is cleansed, the lame walk, and the dead become alive, and the poor have good news preached to them. This is what I came to do. To make the blind see, the deaf hear, and the dead to come alive."

What Jesus is saying is this, "I am bringing my risen life to them. So that they can see. They can hear. They can be healed. They can walk. They can be raised."

This is Jesus' intent.

The day Lazarus died, and his sisters Martha and Mary were so sad. This family of 3 now had a brother who died. How could they live? The Lord came, and Martha said, "Lord, if you had come earlier, my brother would not have died."

You might think Mary is very spiritual, and wouldn't have said something like this. But Mary said exactly the same thing "Lord if you had come earlier, my brother would not have died."

The Lord said, "I am the resurrection and the life". Brothers and sisters, this is what the Lord brought into the world. To bring His resurrection to people. He is the resurrection and the life.

Thank the Lord that Lazarus walked. The two sisters' hearts had died, but now their hearts are alive again. The next few days, there was a dinner. Martha served without complaint, and Mary poured out this nard on the Lord, without a word. The Lord said that wherever the gospel is preached, this woman's story will be told. That nard is the praise.

This is what the Lord Jesus brought. He meant the resurrection life for you and for me. He gave it to Martha, Mary and for their brother. And He has given it to you and me. He has given us a risen life. We ought to treasure that, and live according to it.

Be a good wife. Be a good husband. Be a good dad. Be a good son. Be a good worker. Be a good boss. Brothers and sisters, you may think I am saying these things just out of my head.

Let's read a few verses about husband and wives. Colossians 3

18 Wives, submit to your own husbands, as is fitting in the Lord.

19 Husbands, love your wives and do not be bitter toward them.

20 Children, obey your parents in all things, for this is well pleasing to the Lord.

21 Fathers, do not provoke your children, lest they become discouraged.

22 Bondservants, obey in all things your masters according to the flesh, not with eyeservice, as men-pleasers, but in sincerity of heart, fearing God.

And Colossians 4:1

Masters, give your bondservants what is just and fair, knowing that you also have a Master in heaven.

There is a key word on how we ought to live these relationships. In Colossians 3:23-24,

23 And whatever you do, do it heartily, as to the Lord and not to men, 24 knowing that from the Lord you will receive the reward of the inheritance; for you serve the Lord Christ.

Paul never forgot this part of the inheritance. The last part of v24 is the most important, "for you serve the Lord Christ". Brothers and sisters, this verse does not only apply to the boss and worker, it applies to all the roles he wrote about before.

To be good to your wife, it is because you serve the Lord Christ. Wife, be good to your husband, because you serve the Lord Christ. Kids, be good to your parents, because you serve the Lord

Christ. In essence, in all relationships, at home or at work, remember that everything we do, we serve the Lord Christ.

Our dear brother spoke of testimony. If we consider everything we do, at home, at work, in school, as serving the Lord Christ, I guarantee you, you will have a wonderful testimony.

Everything we do is serving the Lord. Remember that we are seated with Christ in the heavenly places. You go to school, and there is a chance for you to use AI to answer exam questions. You are seated with Christ. Your teacher said not to use AI. Your teacher has turned around, but the Lord is seated with you. You cannot use AI to answer your exam questions.

It is so wonderful that we can be seated with Christ in His resurrection life. And you also don't cheat your husband, and you don't cheat your wife. Nobody sees you, but you are seated with Christ. You see how wonderful our Lord Jesus Christ is?

Let me give you another personal example.

Many years ago in Southern California, people were having the habit of driving very fast, cutting in and out. People started getting angry. There was an incident where someone lowered his window and took out his gun and shot at the other car that had cut into his lane. That is an extreme case.

So many people were so angry that they would curse as they drove, especially when people cut into their lanes. I told the Lord that I cannot do that. I hated myself for it. I told the Lord, "you sit by my side." From that time on, I never had the urge to curse when I drive.

Let me give you another example that may be close to you.

When we started to have the internet, you may spend 2-3 hours a day on the screen. There are so many websites. Things you don't want to see, it will come to you anyway. It is just a click away. After a while, I told the Lord, "I don't want this thing. So could you just sit by my side".

I thank the Lord that for so many years, He has sat by my side, protecting me from the temptation on the screen.

I am sharing this with you because the world is now so dirty. But our heavenly inheritance cannot be defiled. The Lord will for sure help you. My secret is to ask the Lord to sit by my side. You may have your own secret, but the important thing is that the Lord has already given you and me a provision. He is so pleased and so willing. He desires to sit with you.

The minute His life came to us; the minute we read the book of Ephesians, we already know that He has raised us up to sit with Him, so that sins and transgressions cannot touch us. The flesh cannot touch us. The world cannot touch us. Satan cannot touch us.

This is the promise that is absolutely true. Think about it. This is truly wonderful. The Lord is so good. He has saved us.

I spoke about the relationship at home, at work and at school, and there is something else as we are following the Lord. If we want to serve His purpose, in His church we want to serve His purpose, to bring God's blessing to brothers and sisters, and to gospel friends. I want to work with brothers and sisters in all things.

On Sundays I go to church, and I see brothers and sisters do various things. I want to do something too. There is a problem. The only thing left to do is to wash the toilet. The others are doing the other things. What do you do?

The wonderful thing is that the Lord has raised us up to be seated in the heavenly places. With that I will happily wash the toilet.

Or if we are serving with brothers and sisters, I may have been misunderstood and a brother has said something that has hurt me deeply. I want to go to another church. It might be perfect there.

Then I remember that I am seated with Christ in the heavenly places, and I come back to that brother. Be nice to him. Be good brothers again. All these things are gone by the grace and mercy of the Lord.

To be raised with Christ above all this stuff, to be seated with Christ in the heavenly places. I believe this is the solution to many of our problems. It turns me from a bitter person into a person with love. It can make me from a person who only complains about others into a person that is humble.

This, brothers and sisters, is a very practical way the risen life of Christ can help you and me.

I am a poor speaker, so I am unsure I can convey the burden God has placed in my heart. But this thing - to be raised with Christ and seated in the heavenly places was such an important thing to the apostle Paul. That it makes us a different person - a different husband, wife, brother and sister. It also allows us to walk on this way of God's eternal purpose and to become God's inheritance.

Lord, we thank you so much. Your heart and mind towards each of us is unimaginable. We also thank you for the provision you have given us. Your own life, your own purpose, your own

resurrection life - it is so tremendous. In the past we might have missed it, neglected it. But in light of your purpose and your coming back; in light of your love to the church and your attention to each one of us, in every aspect of our life, we pray that you have mercy on us. May your grace be upon my dear brothers and sisters. Thank you Lord. In the name of our Lord Jesus we pray, Amen