

CHURCH FELLOWSHIP – December 1, 2019

Announcements

- The new phone list is now available and on the table to be picked up.
- We will read the third chapter of the section “Maturing in Life” from Volume 2 of the Ministry Digest.
- The dates of the video training are December 24 – January 1.
- Next week is the deadline for registering for the video training. Registration after this date will incur a late fee.
- We will continue week 6 in the Holy Word for Morning Revival from the Memorial Day Conference.
- The Thanksgiving conference webcast schedule will be
 - Message 5: LD morning
 - Message 6: LD evening, 6:00 pm
- The Wednesday night ministry meeting webcast starts at 7:30 pm and will be shown at the following locations:
 - Miyake – Central Bellevue, (425) 451-7294, in English
 - Chang – Overlake, (425) 830-3900, in Korean
 - Wang – South Bellevue, (425) 653-2249, in Chinese
 - The Smiths will not be able to host until December 18th

Burdens for Prayer

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Germany • Hong Kong • Meeting hall modifications - finding contractor | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • District meeting • Children and YP meetings • College work coordination |
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This Week: December 1 – December 7

Morning Revival: *The Experience of Christ*, week 6

Hall Cleaning: Downstairs – Central Bellevue
Upstairs – Central Bellevue

Tuesday	7:30pm	Prayer meeting
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Saturday	8:30am	Breakfast
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Lord’s Day	9:30am	Lord’s Table
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December

12/24 – 1/1	Video Training
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THE EXCELLENCY OF THE KNOWLEDGE OF CHRIST AND THE DETAILED WAY TO EXPERIENCE CHRIST

CHAPTER SEVEN

THE LAW AND CHRIST

In order to know what the excellency of the knowledge of Christ is, we need to see that the main comparison in chapter 3 is between the law and Christ. Verse 5 says, “As to the law, a Pharisee.” Verse 6 says, “As to zeal, persecuting the church; as to the righteousness which is in the law, become blameless.” In these two verses *as to* is used three times: as to the law, as to zeal, and as to the righteousness which is in the law. In verses 7 and 8 Paul uses the words *on account of* three times: on account of Christ, on account of the excellency of the knowledge of Christ, and on account of whom, referring to Christ. In verse 5 Paul says, “As to the law,” but in verse 7 he says, “On account of Christ.” Here we see the contrast between the law and Christ.

A second comparison is that between zeal for the law and the knowledge of Christ. The third comparison is that between the righteousness of the law and the righteousness which is out of God and based on faith. The focal point of these comparisons, however, is the comparison between the law and Christ. The knowledge in verse 8 is not the knowledge of the law but the knowledge of Christ. This knowledge has its excellency because Christ is excellent.

Do you still believe that the law is excellent? If you say no, I would ask you to compare the law of the Old Testament with the law of the Roman Empire. By this comparison the law of the Old Testament is excellent, for it excels Roman law. But if you compare the Old Testament law with Christ, it does not have any excellence.

THE EXCELLENCY OF THE KNOWLEDGE OF CHRIST

Christ is the embodiment of God. All the fullness of the Godhead is embodied in Christ and dwells in Him. What could be more excellent than the fullness of the Godhead and Christ as the mystery of God? According to the New Testament, no one can know Christ adequately because He is so excellent. In Matthew 11:27 the Lord Jesus said, “No one fully knows the Son except the Father.” Thus, it is impossible for us to know Christ fully; He surpasses all things and far transcends our comprehension. One day, however, the Lord brought His disciples to Caesarea Philippi and asked them to tell Him who people were saying that He was. “They said, Some, John the Baptist; and others, Elijah; and still others, Jeremiah or one of the prophets” (16:14). All these were nonsensical answers. Then the Lord asked His

disciples, “But you, who do you say that I am?” (v. 15). Suddenly, Peter responded, “You are the Christ, the Son of the living God” (v. 16). There is no comparison between the Son of the living God and Elijah or any of the other prophets. After Peter made his declaration regarding Christ, the Lord Jesus said to him, “Blessed are you, Simon Barjona, because flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but My Father who is in the heavens” (v. 17). The Lord Jesus seemed to be saying, “Simon, you are a son of Jonah, the son of a man of flesh. Nevertheless, you have received a heavenly revelation. This did not come from flesh and blood but from My Father in the heavens who has revealed it to you. I am not simply a Nazarene, the son of Mary. I am the Son of the living God.” With Jesus the Nazarene there was seemingly no excellency, but with the Son of the living God there is excellency. None can compare with Him.

Although Peter received the revelation in Matthew 16, in Matthew 17 he acted foolishly on the Mount of Transfiguration. When Moses and Elijah appeared, Peter said, “Lord, it is good for us to be here; if You are willing, I will make three tents here, one for You and one for Moses and one for Elijah” (v. 4). Peter’s word offended the heavens. Therefore, a voice from heaven said, “This is My Son, the Beloved, in whom I have found My delight. Hear Him!” (v. 5). This voice seemed to be saying, “Peter, don’t suggest building three tents, one for Moses, one for Elijah, and one for the Lord Jesus. Listen only to the Son of God.” This voice was a shock to Peter. With the two other disciples Peter fell on his face. But when they lifted up their eyes, “they saw no one except Jesus Himself alone” (v. 8). Jesus Christ, the embodiment of the fullness of God, is excellent. His excellence far surpasses that of Moses and Elijah.

When Paul was Saul of Tarsus, he knew nothing of the excellency of Christ. Rather, he thought that the law was marvelous, and, as a Jew, he was proud of it and zealous for it. He appreciated the law to the uttermost. In his zeal for the law, he persecuted the church. One day, on the road to Damascus, a light from heaven suddenly shined upon him, and he was knocked to the ground. At that time he had a vision of Someone more excellent than the law—the Son of the living God. From that time onward, Paul knew that Christ was infinitely superior to the law. The law was given from God and by God, but it was only of dead letters. Now Paul had seen a living person who was the embodiment of God. Can the law compare to this living person? Impossible! This living person may be likened to gold and the law to clay. Before knowing about gold, we may appreciate clay, but by seeing the gold, we receive the excellency of the knowledge of the gold. This illustrates Paul’s experience in coming to the excellency of the knowledge of Christ. The excellency of the knowledge of Christ is the excellency of Christ realized by us.

One day a brother brought me a large round stone. This stone was so ugly that I did not care to even touch it. Then the brother said, “Brother Lee, you have said that Christ had no outward beauty or comeliness but that He was beautiful within. This stone is like Christ in this regard. Outside it is ugly, but inside it is beautiful.” Then the brother cut the stone, and within it was a beautiful, transparent crystal. Before he cut the stone, I had no knowledge of the crystal. In fact, I did not appreciate it and wanted to throw it away because it was so ugly. But after the stone was cut, the beauty within appeared before my eyes, and I gained the excellency of the knowledge of the crystal.

In like manner, before his experience on the road to Damascus, Paul did not have the excellency of the knowledge of Christ. Rather, he thought that Jesus was merely an illegitimate son of Mary who was born and raised in Nazareth. Paul treasured the law, but he despised Jesus. However, on the road to Damascus, the excellent Jesus appeared to him, and he was shocked when he met the Lord. The Jesus whom Paul thought was buried in a tomb now appeared to him from the heavens. On that day he learned that Jesus was not earthly but heavenly and divine. He came to see the excellency of this wonderful One. On account of the excellency of this knowledge of Christ, Paul came to realize that the law cannot compare with Him. Therefore, he could have said, “I have made a comparison between Jesus and the law, and I have decided to take Christ. I count all things loss on account of the excellency of the knowledge of Christ.”

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Bible Reading Schedule with Footnotes	
Lord’s Day, November 1 st	Rev. 8:13—9:11
Monday, November 2 nd	Rev. 9:12-21
Tuesday, November 3 rd	Rev. 10:1-4
Wednesday, November 4 th	Rev. 10:5-11
Thursday, November 5 th	Rev. 11:1-4
Friday, November 6 th	Rev. 11:5-14
Saturday, November 7 th	Rev. 11:15-19