

He is God of the heavens and the earth. And of course, John 1:1, we're all so very familiar with how John opens, very similar to the way Genesis opens. In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God.

Now I would like to turn to Ephesians chapter 1. Paul, an apostle, starting with verse one of Christ Jesus by the will of God, to the saints who are at Ephesus, who are faithful in Christ Jesus. Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenlies in Christ. And it's verse three that I wish to read again. Blessed is the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenlies in Christ.

The history of the Christian, the deeper Christian life. I'm not sure you can separate the deeper Christian life from the Christian life, but very quickly, let's take a look at the Christian life, the deeper Christian life in its context. Perhaps the most frequent mistake we make about the Christian life is that it started on earth with the advent of Jesus Christ. Now, while realizing that I'm taking a term out of the first century and thrusting it back into eternity, nonetheless, I am accurate when I say that the Christian life did not begin on this earth, is not native to our creation, and is not native to our species. And that's one of the reasons you've come here, and you're having such a difficult time being a Christian and living the Christian life.

The Christian life is not native to our species and did not begin on this planet. And next, you cannot live the Christian life. I'd like for you to know this. Write it down and never forget it as long as you live. You cannot live the Christian life. And if you try, you'll beat your head out; you'll go berserk. You will be so frustrated all your life. The thing you're going to have to lay down is any hope that you can ever live the Christian life. Now, I can promise you that you cannot live the Christian life, because Jesus Christ announced that He could not live the Christian life. He said it clearly. He said it very clearly, and He said it this way. Without the Father, I can do nothing. That means that we've got to press the Christian life further back than Jesus Christ. He is not the originator of the Christian life.

Now this takes the Christian life totally and completely out of ethics, out of "do"ism, out of performance, out of that which you do for God and what you do by grit, by gum, by gosh, or by or by, whatever, or by golly. And the fascinating thing, and we will dwell on this later, is that Jesus Christ turned to you and said, "Without Me, you can do nothing." And therefore, that presses us out before eternal, before time, and we're pressed back to the original Christian, the only Christian, and the only creature who can live the Christian life, and that is God the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. He can live the Christian life. He not only can live the Christian life; He is the Christian life. Anything He does is the Christian life, and if He doesn't do it, that's not the Christian life. His being, His existence is, His status is the Christian life. He alone can live the Christian life.

Now then, the next fascinating thing about all this is that He does not live the Christian life in time, in space-time. He lives in the eternals in spirit. That's where He lives the Christian life,

and He lives it by the means of His own life. Last week, someone pointed out something really wonderful and graphic. He said we talk about living the Christian life. He said there's no such term in the New Testament. In fact, do you know the word Christian virtually does not appear in the New Testament? Is it once or twice? Three times. We're clear on that. It's three times. Okay. All right. Three times it appears. It does not speak of the believers living the believer's life. Those references are completely left out. What is put in its place is simply the term eternal life. And this particular brother began quoting all the passages speaking of eternal life, and he substituted the word "living the Christian life." It worked perfectly. There was no difference.

The first-century Christian understood that eternal life is a higher form of life than human life. Eternal life is a life form, not a state. It is God, God lives the Christian life by means of eternal life, which is the life of His particular species. Are you following me? His species is divinity, and that is called eternal life. That is a kind of life, and He lives the Christian life by means of His own being, which is eternal life, and you cannot live the Christian life by human life. It's got to be lived by eternal life. Now, eternal life is not physical, does not belong to our planet, does not belong to the physical creation, and is not native to this sphere. It is native to the other realm. Now, have you got all of that? You're really clear. Good. You're not clear. Don't worry about it. This only takes about 30 or 40 years.

Now then, let us return to the fountainhead of the Christian life, and let us make this wonderful, glorious discovery, and that is the Christian life is a spiritual thing lived out in the spirituals. Now I'm going to use the term spirituals. It's a New Testament term and it refers to that realm which is invisible, non-matter, non-dimensional, cannot be seen, cannot be measured, has no atoms in it, has no molecules, has no electrons nor protons. It is the other realm. It cannot be measured. It is vast, and it is small, and it is neither, and that is where God dwells.

And now, let's go on. God is spirit. Basically, the Christian life then is confined to that which is spirit, and it is confined to the spirit realm or the spiritual realm. Well, that leaves me way out, because I'm confined to the physical realm, and I have no way in; it sounds like I'm in bad trouble, because the Christian life is lived in the spiritual. Well, be at peace. Good news is coming. Now then, I want us to look at God, and I want us to look at Him and recognize two or three very simple things. Let's forget that creation has ever happened. Let's just go back to when God was. He was the All, okay? There's nothing but God. He is spirit, and He's spirit in the spiritual, and He's living the Christian life, and He's not sweating it. And isn't it amazing, He is not sitting there reading a theological book. Isn't it amazing that He is a non-theological God?

It took the gospel reaching the western world, passing over into Greece, where Aristotle reigned before there ever was Christian doctrine. Before that, there were living letters and beautiful stories written by men possessed by their Lord. It took men like Augustine, Ambrose, Tertullian, Origen, and Jerome to give us an Aristotelian breakdown of Christian doctrine, and they literally scissored the New Testament up and pasted it together by topics, and then began to philosophize over their scissored together works. But the God that we see here is not demanding of Himself that

He passes out tracts on the street; He is not there winning people to Himself in eternity; He is not saving the lost. He is God, and this is the very first thing we learn about Him.

There is the Father, there is the Son, and the Spirit, and they are not in a stressful environment. They are not in an environment of demand. They are not all these things that we get under there. The Father is the source; the Son is the receiver. The Son cannot live the Christian life except by the life the Father imparts to Him, which is His eternal life, and the Son lives by means of the Father. The Father has not demanded that the Son pass out tracts or read the bible. He has not demanded that He speak in tongues. He has not told Him to go to church every Sunday. There are no demands being met on the Son nor on the Spirit. What we discover there in eternity past is one thing, and that is—It is the fellowship of the Godhead, and therein lies the Christian life lived out long before we ever came along. It is a fellowship of divinity. It is a fellowship in spiritual realms. It is a fellowship in a non-dimensional situation. It is a fellowship without requirements. It is a fellowship without demand. It is a fellowship that is beautiful. It is saturated in a mutuality of love and acceptance; good night, it's the Godhead, it's the Father and the Son and the Spirit, and they are in fellowship with one another. And if I could get the Christian life for you and to me down to one basic sentence, I would say it begins, its fountainhead, its origins, its source, its headquarters are when you and I, as believers, redeemed Christians, redeemed believers join into and become part of that eternal fellowship. And that which I have just described is the origin of the deeper Christian life, the fellowship of the Godhead. Are you clear? Wonderful! That's the origin.

The next thing I want you to know is that your own origins are spiritual. Now, this one is going to be a little hard to take. Now, if there's anything I can do this week, I want to get you off the earth. I want to give you a sense of other places, spiritual realms. I want to give you a sense of the other place. I want you to not be so earthbound or hidebound. I want you to begin to consider and appreciate spiritual things, consider spiritual realms, consider heavenly places, consider spirituals. Well, Gene, I'm here on this earth. What are you talking about? Are you talking about heaven? I'm talking about the realm where God is. Let's not put any specific term on it. Where God dwells, it is the eternal, it is the spiritual. And my dear friend, long before you got to Earth, long before you were born on this planet, your true, real origins were spirit. You were spirit before you were soul or body. Gene, I don't know what you are talking about. I'll try to explain.

There's a verse of scripture. If you listen to it, it's in Ephesians 1. If you hear it translated properly, it will say this. You were *marked off in Christ before the foundation of the world*. You were marked off in Christ before the foundation of the world. Now then, you are four parts. You're actually one, but you are four. More you're one than you are four, but I'm going to say it this way. You're made up of four things. It's usually talked about body, soul, and spirit. Let's go the other direction. Right at this moment, your content, what you're made up of, is you're made up of the Lord's life, divine life. You didn't know that; we have become partakers of the divine nature. Now that'll hold up in any theological place in the world. That's taught even by Baptists. We have become partakers of the divine nature. If you have eternal life, you live; If you have no eternal

life, you live in condemnation. And just on and on and on. You have the life of God the Father in you. That's the first part of you. Now you're also spirit, but interestingly enough, we are told that these two have become one. He who is joined to the Lord is one spirit. So, these two have become one. Now that's where we get three-part man being three-parted, but actually it's four parts. Two of them have joined. You got that? So, there is the divine life of God, which is by nature and content Spirit. There is your own spirit. The two have joined, and they have become one. What have they become? Gene, I don't really, I'm not clear, but I can tell you this: Eternal life is in there, divine life is in there, God the Father is in there, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit is in there. You're doing fine now.

You have a soul, bless your heart. Now we have problems. Nothing wrong with that soul, God loves that soul above all things. He died for that soul, but the soul is just a little bit damaged, just a tiny tad bit damaged. You know, you know you're up, you're down, you're sideways. You're neurotic, you're schizophrenic, you're paranoid, and you're all just a little damaged from the fall. We're not talking about sin; we're talking about damage. Okay? Then you got a body that ended up turning into flesh, and that's where sin dwelt, until Jesus Christ took it to the cross and crucified it. So, we're three parts: God's life, your spirit becomes one, soul, and body. You're three parts.

Now, which one of those parts showed up first? Which one? Who said that? That's right, Terry. The first part showed up first. The first time you ever were found, the first time any history of you has ever been noted was when you were discovered in God. You were marked off in Christ. When He was the eternal Son before His incarnation, you were marked off in the eternal Son before the foundation of the ages. That part was marked off to be put in you on the day of your salvation. You started out with spirit, a spiritual history with a history in the other realm. You understand? No, I'm not so sure you do, but let it marinate. That's where you began. You began in God.

There came a place in eternity when eternity intersected with time. That's where you got converted. But that which was the most important part of you, that part of His nature, that He was going to put in you, which was spirit, that intersected with time, touched your spirit and raised it from the dead, and was placed in you, and the two became one. Your first origin, the first time anybody ever noticed you, you were in eternity in God. Say, "Praise the Lord." That's encouraging.

Alright, so we know where God was, and He was Spirit, and He is eternal life, and He was living the Christian life. Now then, we have discovered you in God before the foundation of the world. All of you, not just the most important part of you. Time is a different matter. We haven't come to that yet. Now, then, God, after there was God, and He was the All, then He created. But please notice that He did not create the physical realm first; He created first things first. He created the spiritual realm, the heavenlies. They did not exist. God was all there was, and He is Spirit.

Now, He creates a spiritual realm. No earth, no stars, no sky, no galaxy, another realm preceding our own. Still no molecules, still no matter, still no electrons, no protons. A realm of the spirituals, and He populates it with beings that are spirit. Now what are they called? The angels.

And what else was there? I don't know, but the angels were there, and the archangels were there, and maybe some cherubim and some seraphim. A cherub, a seraph, and a host of others. We don't know what all was there. I know it was a fast-moving place, that is, yeah, really fast.

A scientist reminded me last week, I don't know what this means, but he said, "If something can move faster than the speed of light, then space-time no longer has any relationship with it whatsoever." And this is a realm that's faster than light. This is where everything is going pretty quickly—It is a realm without dimension. Now then, I want to say this to you, and this will be a little difficult for you to grasp, but it is the real realm. The realm we're in is not real. Well, it doesn't mean it doesn't exist, but it means that we live in a realm of types and pictures.

Now, anybody who has studied the Old and New Testaments knows that we are just sitting around here with all sorts of symbols, shadows, types, and figures surrounding us. We learn in Colossians 2, for instance, that the moon is not the real moon, that Jesus Christ is the real moon. We learn in Colossians that the Sabbath is not the real Sabbath, but a picture of Jesus Christ, who is the real Sabbath; that the Jewish festivals were not real festivals, but they were a picture of the real festival, which is Jesus Christ. The book of Hebrews tells us in Hebrews 1 that all of the offerings and all of the priestly garbs, all the whole Jewish presentation was pictures, shadows, and types of the true reality. Even Adam was a picture of the real man, Jesus Christ is the real man; Adam was a foreshadowing of Him.

Now, I don't understand what I just told you. I only tell you that it's in the Bible, it's in the New Testament, that we live in a world that is picturing reality, and reality is in the other realm. I think of the tree of life more than anything else. That is the real tree, and all these things around us out here are shadows of that tree. Real water, that stuff you've been drinking, is not real. It's a picture, a type, and a sign of real water. Real water is Jesus Christ. We drink spiritual water, and that which is spirit is always superior to that which is physical. It preceded it and matches the nature of God. Are you following me? So suddenly, this thing of the spiritual realm becomes very important. The real realm is there; our realm pictured that realm. Now, the poor cows and horses and dogs and cats don't know that, but you and I need to know this.

Now then, we have the spiritual realm created. It's got spiritual beings, real waters there, His name is Jesus Christ. Real food is there; His name is Jesus Christ. The real tree is there, that is the Lord Jesus Christ. For He is the vine. The real light is there, and the light of the Son here is a picture of that—He is the real light. Resurrection is there; He is the resurrection. Truth is there; He is the truth. He is the resurrection, the truth, and the life is there, the real life. We have a picture of that life; real life comes to us on the day of our conversion. Are you following me? If you're going to find reality, you will find it in the other realm.

Now, here comes the most exciting part of all. Let's talk about the creation of man, and let us make a wonderful, glorious discovery. I'm having to move really fast. Throw up a hand if you get bogged down, will you just, I can't take this, Gene. Here we go. Let's watch and see the creation of man. God makes man. He's already the All, but now He has become All, plus the spiritual realm.

So, He's no longer the All. There are other things besides Him. There is the realm of the spirituals. Now I need a blackboard for this; I don't have one. That's all right, we'll get one later. I'll try to draw this for you later. Let's imagine it this way. This is kind of foolish to say, God is the All and draw that because there's no line, He was the All.

Now, the next thing that happened was He marked you off in Him, a portion of His own nature, marked off to be planted in you and to become one with your spirit. Now that's what I'm going to put right there. Is that okay? Because I need the center. That's the second thing that happened. Then the third thing that happened is God made eternity. Now you see eternity. Now, where is eternity? It's inside God. Now then, that's why God knows the end from the beginning. Here's the beginning over here. Okay? There's the end over there. Where's God? He's over here and He's over here. I described this the other day, the best way I know to describe it. There are two things I can say to you. One of them is consider time, it's a term. Consider minutes, seconds, and hours. Minute seconds. Minutes and hours were all created to help us understand that there really aren't seconds, minutes, and hours. There's only now, is that not true? There's now. Now just went. Oh, we got a brand new one now. Oh, it's gone. There's another one. You got it?

How short, how short is it now? It's so infinitely short; you cannot measure it. Is that not true? I mean, there's nothing more brief. The briefest thing there ever is or ever was is now, and it is immeasurably short, and it's gone 10,000 million times since I started saying this. But if you could understand that this is not true of God, His now is bigger than our now. It reaches from eternity to eternity. It reaches from one end of time to the other end of time. Yeah, praise the Lord.

He's now everywhere. He's involved in all of it. There is no beginning or end with Him. He said, "I am the beginning and someday I'll be the end." No, He just as easily could have said, "I am the end and the beginning." I read something the other day that fascinated me. For all we know, God may have started with the consummation of the ages and worked back to the creation. And then let time fly, and here we go. I didn't know this, but scientists really cannot prove that the universe is expanding or collapsing; they know it's one of the two. For all we know, this thing may be running backwards right now. I didn't know that; did you know that? We are so space-time orientated, and no one ever talks to us about spiritual things.

Take these tracts and get out there, boy, and go to work. God wants you to do better than the best you can do. So "here and now" oriented. But anyway, I'm going to try to bring you an article from a scientific magazine that I read a few days ago. It's mind-boggling that there is no explanation as to why we cannot remember the future. We ought to be able to remember the future; that's right, we really should. By all the known laws of space and time, we ought to be able, and that's scientific. Now, they hadn't figured out why, but when I read that article, I thought, well, I know somebody who can remember the future.

God can remember the future. Do not think He cannot remember the future, and I'm just wondering if He didn't create the consummation first, and that's why He can be so confident down here. Do you understand? Is He not a confident God? He just seems to not be worried about how

this is going to work out. And I think, well, wait, maybe He started with the end and then came back to the beginning, then turned it loose and let it start unwinding. And maybe that's why He's so certain everything will work out fine. I'm a little bit more confident it's all in His hands now that I've seen it this way.

Now then, let's look at man who is very definitely the creation of man. He's caught in space-time. Now, see, God creates matter; He creates visible things. This is really late, folks. This is late stuff and very temporary things. So, let's go back to God the All, only there's no end to that. Then one day He creates eternity, but He chose you first. That was set. Then He made space-time, starts here, ends here, very physical, very temporal. The spirituals are here forever; the eternals are here for eternity, but space-time is not going to be here very long. If you're a creationist, maybe less than 10, 15,000 years. If you're an evolutionist, you know, 6, 8, 10 billion years, give or take.

You know, even scientists know it's coming to an end. It will end. It began, and it will end. Well, somewhere in there, your soul and body will get inserted, but that's not all of you. And I do want you to remember that God sees the beginning from the end. He sees the end from the beginning, and He's there, and this little space here, where is it? It's in God. Now, one day, God chose to be in it. Do you understand? And then you see that's where all of this business and Christ in you and you in Christ had its origins in the headquarters of God. First, we were in Him. Later, He was in us, and He came into this space-time continuum here. Now, I realize I'm using a lot of different vocabulary, but I haven't really told you anything new this morning so far. I'm just casting it in a picture, so you can see it really clearly. Now, you knew that before you walked in here, and nobody had ever told you that you knew it. He made space-time.

Now, I love this story, and I repeat it quite frequently. Those of you who've heard me tell it before will just have to forgive me. I understand that Einstein was going somewhere for a lecture. He stepped off the train. A bunch of reporters were there in front of him, and the reporter said to him, "Sir, we don't understand relativity, all this stuff you're talking about. People don't understand it. Could you just say it to us in really simple words?" And his statement was fascinating. He said, "Well, you think of the great abyss, that hollow place we live in, and that it is filled with matter, physical things. And we think that if we were to remove all the molecules and the atoms and all the matter out of the space, that there would still be the great abyss there." He said that is not true. The physical matter makes time. The physical matter also makes space, and if you remove all of the physical matter, then even *nothing* ceases to exist.

Isn't that incredible? And that brings us back to what it looked like before God created physical things. They weren't there. Space-time was not there. There was nothing there but eternity. Now, I know you understood everything I just said really, really clearly. So, we'll go on now. Then, we got space, we got time, we got matter. Matter created time and space. And here we are. We're on the earth, and God takes a piece of soil and He creates a human being. He does not yet bring Him to life.

Now, this human being obviously belongs to this planet, it appears. It also appears that this human being is like the horse, the dog, the cat, and the cow, a soul and a body, and that is absolutely correct, but I want to tell you a story. God created this creature confined to this place, limited by the limits of time and space. This little thing that begins and ends that you can measure and does have dimension, and it looks like man is bound to that realm totally, completely, and forever. But as God finishes molding the clay and before He makes Him alive, God returns into the other realm. And by the way, there's real air in the other realm. Our air is a picture of that air. You know what's in that other realm? Spirit is in that realm.

Now, let's imagine that He breathes the air, the spirit of that realm, locks it into His lungs, and He comes back to earth, into space, into time, into dimension, but He has something of the spiritual realm there in Him. And He exhales. He goes (big exhale), and this, which is the element of the other realm, comes into the nostrils of the man and goes down into his deepest part and ignites life into him and causes the clay to become body. And the combination of the two seems to produce a soul, and man becomes a living soul. He tears himself loose from the soil and stands, but don't you ever forget this as long as you live: he (man) is a hybrid, he is a hybrid, he is of this planet with his soul and his body, but he is of the other realm with his spirit.

Now, if I can get this clear to you that there is part of you that is non-dimensional, that is going to go on forever, and has had a historical past. We'll get clear about this when we get to the Lord Jesus Christ. You have non-dimensional in you. You have another realm in you. You have spirituals in you; you have a spirit. It does not belong to the physical creation; it belongs where God dwells, and the only way you can possibly live the Christian life is by means of that which is of the spirituals, not of the physicals. It is not by your will, nor your strength; there is nothing in your soul that can live the Christian life. And in fact, there's nothing in your spirit without God in your spirit that can live the Christian life. The Christian life is lived only in the other realm. Now hear me. I have called man a hybrid. He is part spirit; he is part of the other realm. He's part of this realm. Do you understand? This is your great-grandfather. You're kin to that man.

Now listen to this. Your natural habitat, where is man's natural habitat? What did God say? Alright. Tell us, brother. You know so much. (laughter) What is man's natural habitat? Oh, I'm talking about Adam. Well, the earth is right? Is the Earth his natural habitat? Brother, I hate to tell you, but that's wrong. Now, I did that to him deliberately. Uh, I'm sorry, Tom, forgive me. I know we all think that our natural habitat is the earth; that is not correct. And our natural habitat is not heaven; that is not correct. Listen to the Lord. He said, "Come and live in the garden." The garden is man's natural habitat, and it was a place where the realm of the spirit and the realm of the physical, the realm of the unseen and the realm of the seen, the realm of the invisible and the realm of the visible. The realm of the spirituals and the realm of the physicals; a place where they joined, a common ground. Angels played there, and so did Adam. God was there and walked in that garden with man. Man could stand there with his living, pulsating spirit and see the unseen. He was in his natural habitat, for he is of both realms, and he was in the garden where he would live forever in a place that matched him. Angels match the heavens, cows match the earth, man matches both, and

God gave him a place to live that was a matching place to him, the spirituals and the physicals. Praise the Lord.

And what is your final destiny? Why, my final destiny is heaven. Gene, your final destiny is that garden. Your final destiny is not the heavens, and your final destiny is not the earth. Take your choice. We're going to die and go to heaven. You're going to be very lonely up there. Oh, and God's going to have a new earth, and we're going to live on earth, make up your mind. Now, are we going to go to heaven or are we going to live on a new earth? Neither one.

Listen, you've always heard heaven described, haven't you? Well, go reread it again. Listen to the words of John the Apostle. He said, "I looked into the heavens, and I saw the new Jerusalem coming down out of the heavenlies, and I saw a new heaven, and I saw a new earth." And that Jerusalem, that new Jerusalem, has in it a tree, the tree of life. What does the garden have in it? A tree of life, it had a river. The garden had a river of life. What has Jerusalem got in it? The River of life, and it goes on and on and on. Their garden became a spiritual city. It descends out of the heavens. I assume it comes to a new earth, and I will not live on that earth, and I will not live in the heavens. I will live in that place that is natural to me, a place where it is both the spirituals and the physicals. And God will dwell in that city, and the Son will dwell in that city, and you will dwell in that city, and I will dwell in that city, and we will be spiritual creatures on this earth and that realm. Are you clear? Praise the Lord. I hope you mean that.

Now, if you can comprehend what I have just said, then you will grasp just a little bit more that you are a being; I can't tell you that you're a spiritual being, but you're part spiritual. Are you there? You understand? This is a history of the deeper Christian life. Isn't this exciting? Then came the fall. Man's spirit died within him. In the Old Testament, God spoke audibly outside of man. Man could no longer see the invisibles. He was cut out of the garden. Do you understand that he was cut out of the garden? He was cut out of the garden because his radio receiver was dead. He could no longer pick up the heavenly places. He was pushed out of the garden into the earth, which is not his natural habitat. Things are bad, folks. Things are bad all over.

One day, His Son came to introduce the deeper Christian life. I'm glad you laughed. You understand what I'm saying? This is all new to Him. You know, none of this has ever happened to Him before. He's just been fellowshipping with the eternal Father for eternity, that's all. He's been living the Christian life for all eternity. He comes to earth; I'm going to clip out the next hundred years, we're going to come back to them later. Actually, about 300 years. What happened to the deeper Christian life after the Lord Jesus and after the apostles? Something very tragic.

Now, I'm in church history. It's really hard to explain what happened; boy, it's a tragic thing and very complex. We think the Christian gospel somehow managed to get through the time when Constantine came to the throne, outlawed all the other religions, and Christianity became a political force, totally became one with paganism, keeping the Christian vocabulary, and we've been fighting that and seeking a restoration back to first things ever since. It's a noble and glorious

history of men who, throughout the ages, have sought to restore that first-century experience, not a New Testament church, first-century relationship, individual and corporate.

Well, let me explain to you what happened for the next thousand years. I'd like for you to see Plato over here, who's a Greek, and he's talking about ascending through stages until you come to the knowledge of the good. Okay, whatever that means. And I want you to look at the Christian experience over here. The one thing that gets lost in early Christian literature after the first century is that you no longer see "in" God. You no longer see "in" Christ and Christ in you, in the spirit; all those words disappear, and we're back to performance. Do it, don't do it. And I want to just stop and pause and tell you, brothers and sisters, these terms being in God and in Christ, which seem to be so mysterious to all of us, those things were not invented by men. This is a description of a relationship that I have just described to you that has an eternal ring to it; it's of the eternals.

It's an effort in human language to describe the things I've just been talking to you about. "In Spirit" is a place, a geographical place. "In Christ" is a geographical place. "Christ in you" is a geographical place. Eternal life is a form of life, a life form in you. A foreign life form from another realm that has come and been placed into you. These are the terms first-century Christians used in order to express the mystery of God. The wonderful mystery hidden from the foundation of the ages is now revealed and made manifest. Now made visible in you. In you. In you.

Well, the tragedy of the fallen church was that man began to think in terms of this escalating scale to God. They picked up Plato's vocabulary and his concept, and today, as we look back in history, it's called Neoplatonism, and the Roman Catholic saints, you know, the old, the old saints, St. Francis of Assisi, you remember him? Do you know that there used to be a sister Therese who lived back in the 1500s, not the one who lives in India, who was this glorious Christian? Have you ever heard of the two Catherines? There were two devout individuals, Michael Molenos, and I'm sorry, my mind fails me, but there were slews and hundreds of them. There was John of the Cross. How do you say it in French? Your hometown. The man. Okay. ... was one of these kinds of people. And there was also the other Francis. All these men were called by the Roman Catholic Church "mystics." Frightening word. It never has a good, clear definition. Frightening word, because there are the mystic religions, all this. It simply meant these mysterious people who seemed to know God, and they had spent their lifetimes praying to get to know Him, and they were trying to use this escalation up. There's meditation, then contemplation, and then there's something else, and then there's finally union, and this takes about 70 years. It's true, and it can only happen to a few special people. This is what the Roman Catholic Church taught and they built these monasteries and these nunneries in order to give people plenty of time to do nothing but sit there and pray and pray and pray and pray hoping they would get out of meditation in the contemplation from contemplation into something else and from there to union, and only a few managed after 50 and 60 and 70 years of beating themselves with ropes and eating almost nothing and stay in these monasteries and some of them never taught for a whole lifetime. Some of them never saw another human being outside those monasteries, seeking to find God. How sad.

That became the deeper Christian life. That is pitiful. Oh man, isn't that a departure? Okay, what happened next? Well, along came the Reformation, and Martin Luther was right up to here with these Catholic mystics, and he said, and this is, you can find this in his writings. I have a copy of it in my home in my files. He said, "We will no longer allow these teachings in the church. We will come to an understanding of scripture." That sounded great, but boy, he tossed out the baby when he tossed out the bath water. He was so determined to keep out Catholic Neoplatonist mysticism that he left the spiritual things out.

From a purely historical viewpoint, the Protestant movement is an intellectual movement. It says basically learn the Bible, learn the doctrines. This is what God wants of you, and this is what you'll get. And that's why you have a few problems. And this is why Pentecostalism just sells like crazy; people want a little reality with their Lord. And they have this ecstatic experience of speaking in tongues, and this gives them a little of that reality. And then a whole doctrine is built around the simple experience, and it's made mysterious and powerful, and all of these other trappings get hung on it when, in my personal judgment, it is simply a way of touching the Lord, and it is not for everybody. And if you just have one way for touching the Lord, it gets worn out in many, many cases, and many of you can verify this through your personal experience, can you not? It really gets worn out.

All right, that was the end of the deeper Christian life right there. Now, since then, there's come up something called the evangelical, but right alongside the evangelical has come the fundamentalist. And so, we have the evangelical, and then we have the fundamentalist evangelical, and we have the charismatic Pentecostal evangelical, and then you have these people with their tongues hanging out. Give me the Lord. Please give me the Lord. Call me anything you want to call me, just give me the Lord. So, we go out and we buy E. M Bounds' book on how to pray. R. A. Torrey's book on how to pray, how to be filled with the Holy Spirit, how to be baptized in the Holy Spirit, how to speak in tongues, and where is the deeper Christian life today? The deeper Christian life is stuck somewhere out here in the ectoplasm. You know, the reason many of us read Nee's books is because there's spiritual content to them, but we're still looking for handles. Lord, how can I grasp for myself, personally, some meaningful reality?

Brothers and sisters, that's about where we are right now. We've got to get back to that first century, but no, we've got to get back further back than that: into the Godhead. We've got to go back where the fellowship of divine life began and begin looking at this. I want to proceed by saying our answer lies - I'll tell you where our answer lies. You might say our answer lies hidden somewhere in the epistles. I just read something out of the epistles. All the riches of heavenly places have been given to you. They are now yours in Christ Jesus. Oh, that's wonderful. Doesn't mean a blooming thing. I mean, I can sit there and I can preach it. I can tell you how rich you are. But something inside me wants just a little modest reality.

One of the things that we've gotten in recent years in the deeper Christian life is positional truth. We are in Christ. We have been crucified. We have risen from the dead. We have been

glorified and sanctified. We have been all these things. That's a wonderful positional truth to grasp intellectually. Would you give me just two minutes of the reality of my position? Just two minutes. Let me have the reality of my position; I don't want positional truth. Take positional truth out and hang positional truth. I want reality to be truth; I want truth that's got reality to it. Now, then, the apostles were writing those books, and they were not writing theory. They were not writing Christian doctrine; they were writing that which was their own experience and an experience which was the experience of those dear brothers and sisters.

Now, let me just clarify here before I oversell. You're not going to leave here today or this week perfectly. You're not going to leave here sinless. You're not going to leave here transformed, transfigured, glorified, sanctified, or petrified. You are going to leave here just about the way you got here, with a little equipment to touch the Lord in reality, in other realms in Him. That's about all you're going to get, but that's a little bit more than most of you have got right now, and it will help you. And if you will pursue it, it'll help you a great deal, and if you don't pursue what little is given to you this week, very practical, very workable, if you don't pursue it, it will stop working. Ain't that amazing? It really will fall on you, your responsibility.

All right. Now then, the epistles, though, brothers and sisters, are really not the place to look because they are a statement of the reality that those men received. But they were, you might call a second motion, a stage two. The place we really need to look, and we have never looked, and why we've never looked, I don't know. The place we need to look is in the Gospels, and find out how Jesus Christ lived the Christian life, how He fellowshiped with the Father on this earth.

The Christian life for us began in Judea. For Him, it began in the Godhead. But instead of looking at His life of those parables and those things, you know, and then you have to walk the second mile, and you have to be more perfect than the Pharisees. Rather than looking at the me part of this, I got to do this, and I got to do that, and God is expecting me to do more. Let's look a little deeper. Do you know the song 'Break Thou the Bread of Life'? It has a term in it that says, "Beyond the sacred page, I seek Thee, Lord. Beyond the sacred page, I seek the Lord." To find Him, to find His way of fellowship, to get involved in His fellowship with the Father; this is what those disciples of old did and came back with this vocabulary expressing their experience. Well, we're going to go back and we're going to clip out those 200 or 300 years and we're going to look at them. And this was the message I meant to bring to you last night.