

Nuggets and Gems from the Bible

SATURATED

WITH

THE WORD

TO LIVE

CHRIST

WITNESS LEE

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SATURATED WITH THE WORD TO LIVE CHRIST

Colossians 3:16 says, “Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, in all wisdom teaching and admonishing one another in psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to God.” Here Paul says that the word of Christ should dwell in us, inhabit us. This implies that the word of Christ is living. In order for something to dwell in us, or to inhabit us, it must be living.

A LIVING PERSON

Paul’s expression in this verse indicates that the word of Christ is very much like a living person. Paul almost personifies the word of Christ; he tells us to let this word inhabit us, as if it were a living person. The word of Christ is actually the living Person of Christ. Moreover, according to the New Testament, the living Person of Christ is the Spirit. Jesus is the name of this Person, and the reality of this Person is the Spirit. For this reason, whenever we call on the name of the Lord Jesus, it is the Spirit who comes.

Furthermore, the Word and the Spirit are one. Hence, when the word of Christ dwells in us, the Spirit inhabits us.

IN ALL WISDOM

In [Colossians 3:16](#) Paul tells us to let the word of Christ dwell in us richly “in all wisdom.” Have you ever considered what it means for the word of Christ to dwell in you in all wisdom? If we would understand the meaning of this expression, we must differentiate between wisdom and knowledge. Knowledge is related primarily to the function of the mind, whereas wisdom is related to the function of our spirit. This means that if the word of Christ is to dwell in us in all wisdom, we need to exercise our spirit. If we use our mind to memorize the Word, the Word will then dwell in us in knowledge. Memorizing Bible verses is a function of the mind related to knowledge, not a function of the spirit related to wisdom. For the Word to dwell in us in all wisdom refers to its indwelling every way possible through the exercise of the spirit. Wisdom is deeper, finer, and more profound than knowledge. It comes from the exercise of the spirit.

The difference between knowledge and wisdom can be illustrated in married life. Suppose

a brother's wife is murmuring and even rebukes him. If he fights back by reasoning with her, he will exercise his mind with its knowledge. In this, there is no wisdom. But suppose while his wife is murmuring, he calls on the name of the Lord Jesus and prays. This is wisdom. To reason is related to knowledge, but to pray is related to wisdom. Pray-reading and singing may also be related to wisdom. The brother may also show wisdom by exercising his spirit to share a helpful testimony he heard recently in a church meeting. The point here is that knowledge involves the exercise of the mind, but wisdom involves the exercise of the spirit by such means as praying, pray-reading, singing, and testifying.

When Paul speaks in [Colossians 3:16](#) of letting the word of Christ dwell in us richly, he does not mention reading, which is an exercise of the mind. Rather, he mentions wisdom, which implies the exercise of the spirit. What issues from exercise of the spirit is wisdom, but what comes through the exercise of the mind is knowledge.

TEACHING AND ADMONISHING

In this verse Paul also speaks of "teaching and admonishing one another in psalms, hymns,

and spiritual songs, singing with grace” in our hearts to God. Here Paul does not speak of teaching and admonishing in an ordinary way, but of teaching and admonishing in psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs. Furthermore, Paul indicates that it is by singing that we let the word of Christ dwell in us richly. We may also teach and admonish by singing.

SINGING TO THE LORD

Nowhere in the New Testament are we told that Christians should gather together and sit quietly, waiting for someone to start the meeting. According to the book of Psalms, when the children of Israel came together for the feasts three times a year, they began their meetings not in the temple, but at the foot of Mount Zion. As they ascended the mountain, they psalmed the songs of ascent ([Psalms 120 through 134](#)). Likewise, the church meetings should begin not in the meeting hall, but either in our homes or on our way to the meeting. The meeting should be an exhibition of our daily life, of the way we live at home, at school, or at work. The meeting should be full of singing and praising because we sing and praise the Lord day by day. I appreciate the chorus of the hymn, “This is my story,

this is my song, praising my Savior all the day long.” But where can you find a Christian who praises the Lord all day long? Many Christians who sing this hymn do not praise their Savior in their daily living. But our daily life should be filled with singing to the Lord.

Many of us have read the Bible for years without realizing that we can receive the Word of God by singing. Is it your practice to take a verse of the Bible not only by reading, but also by singing? Christians have been taught to study the Bible and to read it, but not to sing it. We are thankful for the recovery of pray-reading the Word. Now we must go on to sing-read the Word of God. We need to let the word of Christ dwell in us richly in all wisdom by singing. This is not my teaching; it is the charge given by the Apostle Paul in [Colossians 3:16](#).

Even though we have been reading Colossians for years, we have not paid adequate attention to taking the Word by singing. Many Christians claim to be scriptural. But instead of being wholly scriptural, they may be formal and religious. It certainly is scriptural to sing the Word of God.

We should sing the Word not only in the meetings, but especially in our daily life. In

particular, we should sing the Word at home. When you are alone in your room or with others at the dining table, sing the Word of God. Singing the Word is an excellent way to exercise the spirit. To pray is to exercise the spirit, but to sing is an especially good way to exercise the spirit.

The longest book of the Bible is the book of Psalms, containing one hundred fifty psalms. This book was composed not merely for reading; it was written for singing, even for psalming. Psalming is more elevated than singing. In [Colossians 3:16](#) Paul mentions psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs. Spiritual songs are usually short; hymns, of medium length; and psalms are usually longer compositions. We need to sing and psalm the Word of God. Psalming is higher, deeper, and more profound than singing.

SATURATED WITH THE WORD

If we sincerely desire to be saturated with the living Word so that we may live Christ, we need to follow the practice advocated by Paul in [Colossians 3:16](#). This means that we must let the word of Christ inhabit us in a rich way, not by mere knowledge from the mind, but by

every kind of wisdom from our spirit, including singing and psalming. Oh, we need to sing and psalm the Word of God! To sing the Word is better than reading it, and to psalm the Word is even better than singing it. Psalming the Word includes musing upon it and enjoying it. As we psalm the Word, we dwell upon it, muse on it, and enjoy it, thereby giving more opportunity for the Word to saturate us.

If we only read the Word, there is little opportunity for the portion we read to sink into us and saturate our being. But if we sing the Word, and especially if we psalm it, we open our being more fully to the Word and give it the opportunity to sink into us and saturate us. For example, if we sing [Psalm 1](#), we shall enjoy the riches found in this short psalm. Let us sing and psalm the Word of God not only in the meetings. Let us come to the Word daily to sing and psalm it with our whole being. In singing and psalming the Word of God, let us exercise our voice, our mind, our heart, and our spirit.

I hope that from now on in the church meetings more place will be given to spontaneous singing of the Word. Perhaps in a certain meeting we shall sing or psalm the whole book of Ephesians. No doubt, if we spend an entire

meeting to do this, we shall touch the riches in this Epistle.

It is surprising that in [Colossians 3:16](#) Paul does not mention reading. Instead, he emphasizes singing. It is possible to read the Word without exercising our spirit and without contacting God. But by praying, singing, and psalming, we are ushered into the Spirit. The best way to receive the word of life and to be saturated with the element of Christ is to sing the Word.

FILLED IN SPIRIT

[Ephesians 5:18-19](#) is parallel to [Colossians 3:16](#). In these verses Paul says, “Do not be drunk with wine, in which is dissipation, but be filled in spirit, speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and psalming with your heart to the Lord.” Notice that in [Colossians 3:16](#) Paul tells us to let the word of Christ dwell in us richly, but in [Ephesians 5:18](#) he tells us to be filled in spirit. When we put these verses together, we see that we should be filled in spirit with the word of Christ. These two portions of the Word have the same goal—that we should have our spirit filled with the Word.

We may compare our spirit to an automobile needing gasoline, and the Word, the Bible, to a gas station. When we sense that we are empty, we should come to the Word to be filled. In the Word we have an inexhaustible supply of spiritual gasoline. The way to pump this “gasoline” into us is by singing and psalming the Word. If we are filled in this way, surely we shall speak to one another in psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs. We shall also discover that singing and psalming the Word are higher than pray-reading it.

The more we sing and psalm the Word of God, the more we shall be delivered from the influence of religion, the influence which causes us to come to the meetings in a formal way. Let us build up the habit of singing the Word day by day. Then our meetings will not be formal. Instead of any kind of performance, the meetings will be filled with an exhibition of our daily life. What we exhibit in the church meetings will be the way we live day by day. In particular, we shall sing in the meetings because we sing the Word daily.

Concerning the singing of the Word of God, my main burden is not that the meetings will be enriched; it is that we shall be saturated with the

living Word. We shall participate in the bountiful supply of the Spirit and enjoy the riches of Christ by receiving the Word of God.

In the past I lost many opportunities to be saturated with the Word because I did not know to sing the Word. I spent a great deal of time reading and studying the Bible, filling several Bibles with notes, but I did not realize I could sing or psalm the Word. It is one thing to read [Ephesians 2](#) and another thing to pray-read it. But once again I wish to emphasize that singing the Word is even better than pray-reading. Many of today's Christians exercise only their mind to read and study the Word. They do not sing the Word at all. I am confident that the more we sing and psalm the Word, the more we shall be washed by and saturated with the element of Christ.

RECEIVING THE WORD

Concerning those things necessary for life, what is important is not understanding, but receiving. We may not understand very much about the water we drink and especially about the food we eat, but we need to drink and eat nevertheless. By eating and drinking we receive what is necessary to maintain life. In like manner,

we need to receive the Word into us by eating it. Yes, we can eat the Word by reading it in a proper way. Furthermore, from experience we know that we can take the Word as food by pray-reading it. But now we must go on to see that there is no better way to receive the Word into our being than by singing the Word. The more we sing and psalm the Word of God, the more it will sink into the depths of our being and saturate us. If we take even a little time to sing the Word, we shall sense that we are inwardly filled and saturated with it. Then spontaneously we shall live Christ.

When the element of Christ has been infused into us by our singing and psalming the Word, we live Christ spontaneously and automatically. Sometimes we may read the Word without having any element of Christ infused into our being. But when we sing and psalm the Word, we are saturated with the divine element contained in the Word and conveyed to us through the Word. The more we sing and psalm the Word, the more we give opportunity to the Word to dwell in us, sink into us, and permeate us with the divine element. Then we shall be constituted of the element of Christ. Automatically we shall become what we eat and

live out what we have absorbed. This is the way to live Christ.

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Life-study of Philippians
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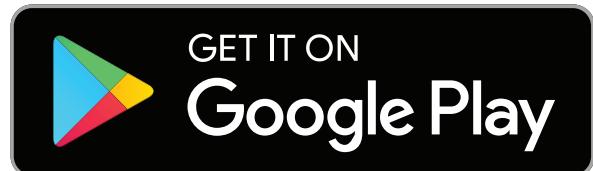
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