

4. THAT GOD MAY BE *ALL* IN ALL

Now, whenever all may be subjected to Him, then the Son Himself also shall be subjected to Him Who subjects all to Him, **that God may be *All* in all.**
(1 Corinthians 15.28 cv)

All.

The eons are made to bring about *the purpose of God* that is summed up in one word—**ALL**. God's purpose is to become *All* in His entire creation. He has purposed to become ***All* in all.**

The Greek word for *all* is *pas*, which means “all, any, every, the whole.” In other words, when *pas* appears in the Greek and is translated as the word *all*, it is a very comprehensive word that encompasses the whole or everything. Nothing is left out with the meaning of *all*. It is not all with exceptions, omissions or deletions.

Obviously, the expression **All in all** is comprised of two *alls*, which in itself makes this expression very comprehensive. The second *all* refers to the whole or to everything, which has to refer to all that God has created through His Son (Colossians 1.16), both the visible and the invisible. Simply, the *all* is the whole of God's creation. The first *all* refers to God the Father in relation to all or to the whole. He is to become **All**; that is, He is to fill **everything** in the whole of creation with His life.

This can mean only one thing; God has purposed that His very life, the essence of who He is, is to fill His whole creation. He is **the God of the living** (Mark 12.27; Luke 20.38), and **His life** will fill the whole creation. **God is love** (1 John 4.8, 16), and **His love** will fill the whole creation. **God is light** (1 John 1.5), and **His light** will fill the whole creation. **God is spirit** (John 4.24), and **His spirit** will fill the whole creation. Not only will His very essence fill all but also everything associated with His essence as well (i.e., His attributes). His glory will fill all. His truth will fill all. His grace and mercy will fill all. His holiness will fill all. His faithfulness will fill all. And ultimately, the very will of God will fill all. In other words, creation will no longer have to wonder what to do or how to live or how to love, for God will so fill His creation that His life manifested throughout creation will be as natural as breathing is for us humans today. His very essence will become the very breath of His creation. His glory will fill all creation. This is the perfection of God manifested in His creation.

When God's plan that is worked out in the eons comes to its rightful conclusion, then the eons will end and God will be *All* in all. With the consummation of the eons, all will be new and all creation will be filled with the glory of God. **God the Father will be the Happy God!** This is the purpose of the eons.

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Can you imagine anything greater than God becoming **All in all**? Let's make this a very personal question: Can you imagine anything greater than God the Father becoming **All in you**? Can you imagine being filled with His love, so that love is so much a part of you that you can do nothing but love? Can you imagine knowing and doing His perfect will without any hesitation, without any failure or doubt? Can you imagine walking in glory forever and ever? Can you imagine never coming short of the glory of God and never being tainted by sin and death ever again? For ones living in bodies of death, who at best are unprofitable servants, it is almost beyond comprehension.

Dear brethren, this is the purpose of God for His creation, especially for all mankind that He created from the soil of the earth.

Meaning of purpose and plan.

In the Greek, the word *purpose* is translated from the word *prothesis*, which means "before-placing" and the word *protithemi*, which means "before-place." The thought conveyed is of a goal set before the mind. In other words, a purpose or goal is established before something is done or planned. These words are respectively found in Matthew 12.4; Mark 2.26; Luke 6.4; Acts 11.23; 27.13; Romans 8.28; 9.11; Ephesians 3.11; 2 Timothy 1.9; 3.10; Hebrews 9.2 [*prothesis*], and in Romans 1.13; 3.25; Ephesians 1.9 [*protithemi*]. Interestingly, the references in Matthew, Mark, Luke and Hebrews literally apply to the cakes of bread in the holy place, the showbread, which points to Christ.

Once a goal is set before the mind, a plan must be established to bring about the goal. A purpose without a plan merely remains in the mind, but a purpose with a plan goes beyond the mind into the realm of action. Another way of stating this is that a purpose is the endpoint of that which has been in view since the inception of a plan. When all is said and done, the purpose remains, for this is what the originator had in mind to bring about. A plan is simply all the details that have to be put into play and worked out to reach the goal or purpose. Once the purpose is achieved, we could say that the plan is history, while the purpose remains.

Generally speaking, a purpose is very simple or straightforward, while a plan is much more involved, with many facets. God's purpose and plan follow the same course. The fact of the matter is that many believers down through the centuries, including many in our day, have gotten caught up in debating and dividing over the details of God's plan and have lost sight of God's purpose.

Although I present a lot of detail to explain what I see in Scripture, my heart is that the Lord's people would grasp the greatness of God's purpose, especially as it relates to the reconciliation or, as some call it, the restoration of all mankind, without exception. Without all mankind coming into God's *all*, God's purpose of becoming **All in all** cannot be achieved.

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Eternal or of the eons?

The good news is that God has established the eons in order to bring about His purpose. The eons or ages are not an aberration as if to correct what happened in the garden nearly 6,000 years ago. No; the eons are made to carry out God's plan to bring about His purpose for all in the heavens and on the earth. In other words, there is a divine purpose to the making of the eons, and that purpose deals with God's ultimate purpose of becoming *All* in all.

Paul has given us the expression *the purpose of the eons*.

In accord with **the purpose of the eons**, which He makes in Christ Jesus, our Lord.... (Ephesians 3.11 cv)

The phrase *the purpose of the eons* may not be familiar to many people because many of the English translations of Scripture express it differently, and it appears that only one uses the word *eon*. Several translations use the word *age*, which is comparable to an *eon*.

Surveying several English Bible translations reveals that Ephesians 3.11 is worded in several ways: *the purpose of the eons* (cv), *the purpose of the ages* (ALT, DNT, YLT, REB), *the purpose which runs through all the ages* (TCNT), *the age-old purpose* (CJB), *the timeless purpose* (JBP), and *the eternal purpose* (ASV, GB, HNV, KJV, LITV, MKJV, NASB, NIV, WAET, WNT).

These variations should be an immediate red flag to all truth seekers, for we discover the use of the words *eons*, *ages*, *timeless* and *eternal*. We know that an eon is not endless, and that eternity is not an age. So which is correct?

The answer lies in the Greek word from which the translators derive the words *eons*, *ages*, *timeless* and *eternal*. The Greek word is actually *aiōn*, which means a long segment or period of time that has a beginning and an end. This fact alone disqualifies the words *timeless* and *eternal*.

The Greek word *aiōn* is a noun; however, many translators have made it an adjective by translating it as *eternal*, which places the emphasis on the eternal aspect of the purpose.¹ It is true that God becoming *All* in all is an eternal verity, and as such, one could say there is an eternal purpose. However, this is not the import of the expression as given to us by Paul. His emphasis is on the eons and God's purpose being worked out in the eons, especially the last two eons and especially through the ecclesia, which is the body of Christ. The context of Ephesians 3.11 is on the multifarious wisdom of God being manifested through the ecclesia but notice that this is *in accord with* the purpose of the eons; it is not the entire purpose of the eons. Paul brought the "church" (as commonly called today)

¹ "Eternal, or everlasting, as generally understood, is an improper translation of *aiōnios*; in fact, we have no proper equivalent in the English language. Being an adjective and derived from the noun, *aiōn*, age, it cannot properly go beyond its meaning." *Diaglott* by Benjamin Wilson, 1942.

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into the picture to emphasize that it was brought forth in accord with God's purpose, but according to Paul's teaching elsewhere, God's purpose extends beyond the church to all mankind.

Now, of the three other phrases—*the purpose of the eons*, *the purpose of the ages*, *the purpose which runs through all the ages*—*the purpose of the eons* seems to be the most accurate and concordantly precise. The word *eon*² is the English equivalent for the Greek word *aiōn*. Although the word *age* is close in meaning, it nevertheless carries some baggage since to some people, and by definition, it can mean a period of time of short duration. *The purpose which runs through all the ages* makes it sound like the ages have little meaning to the purpose.

The phrase *the purpose of the eons* places the emphasis on the eons and the character of these eons, which means that God has a purpose in creating the eons. Another way of stating this is that God created the eons to work out His purpose through His plan, and each eon, no matter how much failure might occur within it, is according to **God who is operating all in accord with the counsel of His will** (Ephesians 1.11 *cv*), **for out of Him and through Him and for Him is all** (Romans 11.36 *cv*). The eons were not some afterthought of God that had to be hastily put into play to remedy the tragedy of sin and death that entered into mankind. No; they were and are in the predetermined will of God.

Thus, the purpose of the eons is to work out the purpose of God. It is through the eons that the plan of God is implemented.

The plan—to gather together all in Christ.

Now, first and foremost, God's plan to achieve His purpose is found in His Son. Actually, the purpose of the eons is two-fold, for it is the Father's purpose that His Son be all in all as well. In fact, the only way for the Father to be *All* in all is for the Son to be all by gathering all things in heaven and on earth to Himself. Paul, the beloved apostle of the nations, called it the secret of His will.

Having disclosed to us the secret [or, mystery, and throughout book] of His will, according to His good pleasure which **He Himself purposed** [*protithemi*] **[or, planned] in Him** with respect to the administration of the fullness [or, completion] of the times, **to gather together** [or, to unify] **all** [things] **in Christ**, the [things] **in the heavens and the things on the earth....** (Ephesians 1.9-10 *ALT*)

God purposed in His Son to gather together all in Him, all in the heavens and all on the earth. Instead of the expression *gather together all*, other translations use the expressions *head up all*, *sum up all*, *bring together everything*, *bring together all things*, and *unite all things*. There is no doubt that all the translators are in

² According to Webster's Dictionary, *eon* is "an extremely long, indefinite period of time; thousands and thousands of years."

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agreement with the fact that *all* encompasses all in the heavens and on the earth; there is nothing excluded in God's plan to gather together, sum up or head up all in Christ.

Paul tells us that Christ is the One who will complete the all in all. In other words, the mission of the Son of God is to bring in the all in all for God the Father.

Jesus is ... **The One completing the all in all** (Ephesians 1.23 cv).

There are so many aspects of God's plan worked out *in, through* and *by* His Son that volumes could be written on the subject and, even then, such an effort would be incomplete. After all, we know so little about gathering together all in Christ in the heavens. Nevertheless, as I considered God's plan worked out in the eons, I came up with sixteen points that provide a very broad overview of God's plan.

The Son creates all.

First, the Son, the visible image of the invisible God (Colossians 1.15), is the Creator of all things, He holds all things together, and He is to have the preeminence in all things. We could say that He is the plan, for nothing exists apart from the Son of God. He is to be first and foremost in all things.

For by Him **all things were created**, both **in the heavens and on earth, visible and invisible**, whether **thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things have been created through Him and for Him**. He is **before all things**, and in Him **all things hold together**. (Colossians 1.16-17 NASB)

For even if they are called "gods," whether in heaven or on earth (just as there are gods many and lords many), but to us [there is] one God, the Father, of whom [are] all [things], and we [exist] for Him; and **one Lord Jesus Christ, through whom** [are] **all** [things], and we [exist] through Him. (1 Corinthians 8.5-6 ALT)

In all things he might have the preeminence. (Colossians 1.18 KJV)

In other words, according to the plan of God, His Son is the Creator of all things, and He is to have the preeminence in all these things. This is the starting point of the purpose and plan of God. **Remove the Son and there is no purpose and plan!**

The Lord creates evil.

Second, the Lord creates evil.

I form the light, and create darkness: I make peace, and **create evil**: I the LORD do all these things. (Isaiah 45.7 KJV)

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I realize that it might seem strange to include evil so early in the plan of God; however, it is essential to our proper understanding of how God plans to achieve His purpose. Many people see evil as something that came into creation through Satan and then Adam. This cannot be so since the Lord is the creator of evil as well as good. We may not like such a thought, for it goes against the traditions of men, but it is the truth according to Scripture. The plan of God requires that His creation experience the contrast of good and evil. It might not even make sense to us at times, but we need to be reminded of Paul's word to the Romans.

On the contrary, who are you, O man, who answers back to God? The thing molded will not say to the molder, "Why did you make me like this," will it? Or does not the potter have a right over the clay, to make from the same lump one vessel for honorable use and another for common use? (Romans 9.20-21 NASB)

Are we wiser than God? Were we with Him when His purpose and plan were being established? We might wonder why He has chosen to do things a certain way; but can we truly match our wisdom with His wisdom? The foolishness of God is wiser than men (1 Corinthians 1.25)!

The Son makes the eons.

Third, the Son makes the eons in order to carry out the plan of God.

In the last of these days speaks to us in a Son, Whom He appoints enjoyer of the allotment **of all, through Whom He also makes the eons...** (Hebrews 1.2 cv)

The eons represent the appointed times set by the Father to carry out His plan in the history of the heavens and the earth in relation to mankind.

The earth is restored.

Fourth, the plan required that the heavens and the earth that were in ruin and waste be restored in six days followed by a seventh day of rest, which sets the pattern for the eons to follow. After 6,000 years, or six 1,000-year days, the kingdom of God will come to reign over the earth.

Thus the heavens and the earth were completed, and all their hosts. By the seventh day God completed His work which He had done, and **He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had done.** Then God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it, because in it He rested from all His work which God had created and made. **This is the account of the heavens and the earth when they were created, in the day that the LORD God made earth and heaven.** (Genesis 2.1-4 NASB)

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How the heavens and the earth fell into ruin in the first place is not clearly explained in Scripture, so we can only surmise that it had to do with the serpent of old that was created an evil adversary not only to challenge God's purpose and plan, but also to be an integral part of His plan.

In our image, in our likeness.

Fifth, during the restoration of the heavens and the earth, on the sixth day, Elohim³ created man from the soil of the earth, making him in the image of Elohim and giving him dominion.

And Elohim said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion.... (Genesis 1.26 TSS)

Man was created to be in the image of God, to be like Him in character, to be a true son of God, **to be conformed to the image of His Son** (Romans 8.29). The words *image* and *likeness* refer to resemblance; that is, these words refer to man resembling God. It does not mean that man becomes God but that he resembles God as a son resembles his father. When we see a son who is just like his father, not only in appearance but mostly in mannerisms, we say that the son is *a chip off the old block*. This is similar to what it means to be in the image of God.

When he was created, Adam was called *the son of God* (Luke 3.38). In order for Christ to become *All* in all, God the Father must have a people in His image where they are truly His sons in the image of His Son. The plan of the Father and the Son is to have a family of many sons who are brought unto glory (Hebrews 2.10).

A helpmate.

Sixth, in order for Adam to have dominion over the earth he needed a helpmate, so God put Adam to sleep and took a rib from his side to form the first woman, bone of his bones and flesh of his flesh.

Then the LORD God said, "It is not good for the man to be alone; **I will make him a helper suitable for him.**" (Genesis 2.18 NASB)

So the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and he slept; then He took one of his ribs and closed up the flesh at that place. The LORD God fashioned into a woman the rib which He had taken from the man, and brought her to the man. The man said, "**This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man.**" For this reason a man shall leave his father and his mother, and be joined to his wife; and they shall become one flesh. (Genesis 2.21-24 NASB)

³ The word *Elohim* is a transliteration from the Hebrew language; considered by some commentators to be the more accurate and appropriate word. *Elohim*, which is in the plural form, means "subjector(s)" and refers to God as well as to lesser subjectors such as judges or false gods.

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The woman fashioned from Adam points to God's plan to have a helpmate for His Son for when He reigns over the earth in the eons of the eons. The Lamb of God will have a bride when He comes to take the scepter of the kingdom over the earth.

Death, sin and corruption.

Seventh, the first man Adam was placed in the garden of Eden and in the midst of the garden was the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. He was given one command in regard to this tree.

The LORD God commanded the man, saying, "From any tree of the garden you may eat freely; but from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat from it you will surely die." (Genesis 2.16-17 NASB)

However, Adam's helpmate, Eve, was tempted and she took of the forbidden tree and Adam followed because the two were one and love demanded that he redeem his wife. This too is in the plan of God, for it pointed to a day 4,000 years later when the Son of God came to this earth to redeem His bride.

We need to realize that Adam's disobedience was part of the plan of God. God intended for Adam to follow his wife. If he had not done so, then he would have broken the much higher law of love. Paul called this a mystery.

So husbands ought also to love their own wives as their own bodies. He who loves his own wife loves himself; for no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as Christ also does the church, because we are members of His body. FOR THIS REASON A MAN SHALL LEAVE HIS FATHER AND MOTHER AND SHALL BE JOINED TO HIS WIFE, AND THE TWO SHALL BECOME ONE FLESH. This mystery is great; but I am speaking with reference to Christ and the church. (Ephesians 5.28-32 NASB)

Adam's one act of disobedience was all in the preordained plan of God. It had to be this way, so that God's Son could come to this earth to reveal the love of God to all mankind and to receive those predestined for the eons of the eons to be His body, which is the ecclesia ("church"). How else is mankind to know the love of God unless His Son manifested it in such a way that it is unquestioned? *We know love by this, that He laid down His life for us* (1 John 3.16 NASB). The Son had to lay down His life for all mankind to reveal the true depths of the love of God.

Adam's one transgression, brought death and sin to his race.

Therefore, even as through one man sin entered into the world, and through sin death, and thus death passed through into all mankind, on which all sinned.... (Romans 5.12 cv)

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This too is in the preordained plan of God. It was not an aberration that required God to change His plan. It was in the plan from the beginning. Not only this, but it was God's intent to bring His entire creation into bondage as well.

For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of Him who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself also will be set free from its slavery to corruption into the freedom of the glory of the children of God. (Romans 8.20-21 NASB)

Notice that the Lord Himself subjected the creation to futility, even against its will. This alone tells us that God planned to bring His creation into futility, which is also translated as *vanity*, which means "emptiness or worthlessness." The creation cannot have any value apart from mankind being in the place of dominion and in the image of God. Thus, creation is a slave to corruption, which is decay and ruin, until the manifestation of the children of God. Creation and mankind are intimately related, just as mankind and the Son of God are intimately related.

Israel and the law.

Eighth, following the great flood of Noah's day, God began a new work through one of Noah's sons and his descendants. Through his son Shem came forth the Hebrews and Abraham, the father of a multitude of nations. Through Abraham's grandchild Jacob, the Lord raised up the nation of Israel in order to introduce the world to His divine law, which is God's righteous standard that defines sin, and to pave the way for the Son of God, who is the Savior of all mankind and the King of all kings.

The nation of Israel was called out of Egypt. The Lord declared to Pharaoh: **"Israel is My son, My firstborn"** (Exodus 4.22). Again, we see the desire of God to have sons. They were then brought to the Lord at Mount Sinai to receive His Ten Commandments (Exodus 20).

This event pointed to the future when after six days (6,000 years), and on the seventh day (the seventh 1,000-year day) the Lord will appear on this earth again to usher in the sabbatical rest for the earth.

Then Moses went up to the mountain, and the cloud covered the mountain. **The glory of the LORD rested on Mount Sinai, and the cloud covered it for six days; and on the seventh day** He called to Moses from the midst of the cloud. And to the eyes of the sons of Israel **the appearance of the glory of the LORD was like a consuming fire** on the mountain top. (Exodus 24.15-17 NASB)

When the Son of Mankind comes to this earth, He will rule in righteousness and justice according to the fiery law of God, which is like a consuming fire. God's glory is like a refiner's fire, for it consumes all the dross and carnal nature of mankind

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(Exodus 24.17; Deuteronomy 4.24, 36; 33.2-3; Jeremiah 23.29; Psalm 18.7-8; 29.7; Malachi 3.2; Hebrews 12.29).

The Lamb of God takes away the sin of the world.

Ninth, the Son of God came to this earth over 2,000 years ago, born of a virgin, and lived a perfect life without sin in all His ways (2 Corinthians 5.21; 1 Peter 2.22). He came to die for the sin of the world and to conquer sin, death and the devil. His death, resurrection, ascension and glorification are the apex of all the eons and the means for the redemption of all mankind. He is the Lamb of God and the last Adam who came to redeem all mankind and to restore all things to God.

“Behold, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!”
(John 1.29 NASB)

Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and that He was buried, and that He was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures, and that He appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve. (1 Corinthians 15.3-5 NASB)

The Son of God appeared for this purpose, to destroy the works of the devil. (1 John 3.8 NASB)

Calling a people for His name.

Tenth, following Pentecost, God continued to call a chosen people out from among the nations in like fashion to when He called the ancient Hebrews out of Egypt. For the last 2,000 years, He has been calling a people chosen and predestined to become part of the ecclesia, the body of Christ, just as Eve was fashioned out of the body of Adam. Christ is the Head of His body.

God first visits the nations, to obtain out of them a people for His name. (Acts 15.14 cv)

[God] gives Him, as **Head over all, to the ecclesia which is His body, the complement of the One completing the all in all.** (Ephesians 1.23 cv)

Notice that the body of Christ is intimately joined with the One who will complete the *all in all* for God the Father. Eve was brought forth as a helpmate in order for Adam and, ultimately, all mankind to have dominion over the earth. This is called the *Dominion Mandate*. In other words, he could not have dominion without a helpmate. In like fashion, the body of Christ, the last Adam's Eve, will be brought forth to be His complement and His helpmate in completing the all in all in the oncoming eons. He cannot reign over the earth and the heavens without a helpmate, for this is in accord with the purpose of the eons.

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The kingdom of our Lord.

Eleventh, at the end of our present eon, it is in the plan of God for His Son to return to this earth as the King of kings and Lord of lords and to take the scepter of the kingdom of the heavens. A day is coming when loud voices in heaven will declare: **“The kingdom of this world became our Lord’s and His Christ’s, and He shall be reigning for the eons of the eons”** (Revelation 11.15 cv).

This glorious event will bring in the eons of the eons in which mankind will progressively move from the court to the holies of the holies, into the very glory of God. The oncoming eon is called the millennial reign of Christ because it will last for 1,000 years. But this is not the end of the plan of God.

The judgment seat of God.

Twelfth, all mankind must appear before the judgment seat of Christ (God). Some will appear at the beginning of the millennial kingdom, the seventh day, but the vast majority of mankind will appear at the end of the millennial kingdom, before the eighth day; they will appear before the great white throne.

For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may be recompensed for his deeds in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad. (2 Corinthians 5.10 NASB)

For we will all stand before the judgment seat of God. (Romans 14.10 NASB)

Then **I saw a great white throne** and Him who sat upon it, from whose presence earth and heaven fled away, and no place was found for them. And I saw the dead, the great and the small, standing before the throne, and books were opened; and another book was opened, which is the book of life; and **the dead were judged from the things which were written in the books, according to their deeds.** And the sea gave up the dead which were in it, and death and Hades gave up the dead which were in them; and **they were judged, every one of them according to their deeds.** (Revelation 20.11-13 NASB)

It is in God’s plan to recompense each and every person that has lived on earth. The reward is with His Son.

“Behold, I am coming quickly, and My reward is with Me, to render to every man according to what he has done.” (Revelation 22.12 NASB)

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All new.

Thirteenth, following the great white throne there will be a new heaven, a new earth and a new Jerusalem.

Then **I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth passed away**, and there is no longer any sea. And **I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, made ready as a bride adorned for her husband**. And I heard a loud voice from the throne, saying, “Behold, **the tabernacle of God is among men, and He will dwell among them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself will be among them**, and He will wipe away every tear from their eyes; and there will no longer be any death; there will no longer be any mourning, or crying, or pain; the first things have passed away.” And He who sits on the throne said, “**Behold, I am making all things new.**” And He said, “Write, for these words are faithful and true.” (Revelation 21.1-5 NASB)

This is *God’s day* in which the Son of God will be making all new. This is not eternity; it is the eighth day of God, the eon of the eons, the last and greatest of the eons. Those who are found worthy to enter into and become part of the *city-bride* of God will no longer experience death. They will enter the holy of holies.

The consummation of the eons.

Fourteenth, a time will come when the eighth day will end and the consummation of the eons will come (1 Corinthians 10.11 cv). In that day there will be no more death for all mankind, not just for those who will enter the joy of the *city-bride*, the new Jerusalem.

Paul explains that the consummation or the end of the eons will come when the Son of God has subjected all His enemies under His feet and has abolished the last enemy, which is death. This is when it will be declared that He has gathered together all in Himself, all in the heavens and on the earth. The eons as we see them in Scripture must end at this point, for the Son of God will have completed the work that His Father has given Him to do.

Thereafter the consummation, whenever He may be giving up the kingdom to His God and Father, whenever He should be nullifying all sovereignty and all authority and power. For He must be reigning until He should be placing all His enemies under His feet. **The last enemy is being abolished: death.** For He subjects all under His feet. Now whenever He may be saying that all is subject, it is evident that it is outside of Him Who subjects all to Him. Now, whenever all may be subjected to Him, then the Son Himself also shall be subjected to Him Who subjects all to Him, **that God may be All in all.** (1 Corinthians 15.24-28 cv)

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When Christ has subjected and gathered all to Himself, then He will subject Himself to His God and Father, so that God may be *All* in all. In that day, He will give up or deliver up the kingdom to the Father, the kingdom that has no end. In these few verses, we can clearly see how God's purpose will ultimately be brought to fruition in His Son.

This is the consummation of God's plan; however, two vital points remain that I have purposely kept for last because they are springboards for understanding the reconciliation and restoration of all things.

The reconciliation of all.

Fifteenth, the blood of His cross is God's plan for the reconciliation of all on the earth and in the heavens.

And through Him **to reconcile all** [things] **to Himself, having made peace through the blood of His cross**, through Him, whether the [things] on the earth or the [things] in the heavens. (Colossians 1.20 ALT)

This is a profound truth that seems to be lost in our day. It is generally taught that this excludes all unbelievers, ones that have not accepted and trusted Christ as their Savior in this age. According to this thinking, reconciliation is potentially for all, but to come into this peace one must believe in this age *only* and most will not believe. However, this is not what this means, nor is it what it states.

As we began with the word *all* and its all-encompassing nature, so we must remain with the word *all*. All on the earth and in the heavens are being reconciled to Christ because peace has been made through the blood of His cross. In other words, the blood of Christ has made peace between all creation and God, which has to include all mankind. If not, then we must redefine the word *all* to be something other than the whole.

Now, it is true that not all have accepted this peace with God, even though God is now at peace with all mankind. Paul tells us so.

Yet all is of God, Who conciliates us to Himself through Christ, and is giving us the dispensation of the conciliation, **how that God was in Christ, conciliating the world to Himself, not reckoning their offenses to them**, and placing in us the word of the conciliation. (2 Corinthians 5.18-19 cv)

But are we to conclude that, through His Son, God is not able to bring all mankind into being reconciled when the word of God declares that all on earth and in the heavens are in the process of being reconciled? Who of us dare to exclude one single person, created to be in the image of the Son of God, from this *all*? The Lord is not tardy as to the promise, but is patient because of you, not intending for any to perish, but *all* to make room for repentance (see 2 Peter 3.8 cv).

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It is the mercy of God that He has set aside 2,000 years to call out a people unto Himself, after which He will set aside another 1,000 years to call out the nations unto Himself, after which He will set aside yet another age to purify the rest of mankind in the lake of fire, so that eventually all will bow the knee to Jesus.

This leads to the last and sixteenth point of this series. Many more points could be added, but I will stop at the number *sixteen* since in God's word it stands for *love*, which is the very heart of the purpose of God.

Christ, all and in all.

Sixteenth, in relation to mankind, in the Son there is no distinction of class or fleshly advantage, for Christ is *all and in all*.

And having put on the new [person], the [one] being renewed in full [or, true] knowledge according to [the] image of the One having created him, where there is not Greek and Jew, circumcision and uncircumcision, foreigner, Scythian, slave, free person, **but Christ** [is] **all** [things] **and in all** [things].
(Colossians 3.10-11 ALT)

The key to understanding this verse is discovered in the words *image of the One having created him*. This leads to Genesis.

As presented earlier, during the restoration of the heavens and the earth, on the sixth day, Elohim created man from the soil of the earth, making him in the image of Elohim and giving him dominion (Genesis 1.26 TSS).

Man was created to be in the image of God, to be like Him in character, to be a true son of God. Man was brought forth to be in the image of the Creator, the Son of God. We were created to be in the image of the One, Christ, who created us. One day, all creation will see the likeness of the Son of God in man.

Beloved, now we are children of God, and it has not appeared as yet what we will be. We know that when He appears, **we will be like Him**, because we will see Him just as He is. (1 John 3.2 NASB)

For our citizenship is in heaven, from which also we eagerly wait for a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ; **who will transform the body of our humble state into conformity with the body of His glory**, by the exertion of the power that He has even to subject all things to Himself. (Philippians 3.20-21 NASB)

Now, I realize that some might say that Colossians 3.10-11 refers to only those who have believed and trusted in Christ in this age, for Paul refers to putting on the new person or the new man. This is true but does this mean that it ends here; that is, does it mean that the rest of mankind is excluded? I contend that according to Scripture it does not.

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This leads back to Paul's defense of the resurrection in 1 Corinthians 15.

Each in his own class.

This discussion started by looking at the last verse of this section of the following Scripture, but now it is time to put it all together by looking at Paul's full thought.

If we are having an expectation in Christ in this life only, more forlorn than all men are we. (Yet now Christ has been roused from among the dead, the Firstfruit of those who are reposing. For since, in fact, through a man came death, through a Man, also, comes the resurrection of the dead. For even as, **in Adam, all are dying**, thus also, **in Christ, shall all be vivified**. Yet **each in his own class: the Firstfruit, Christ** [lit. **a first fruit anointed**]; thereupon those who are **Christ's in His presence; thereafter the consummation**, whenever He may be giving up the kingdom to His God and Father, whenever He should be nullifying all sovereignty and all authority and power. For He must be reigning until He should be placing all His enemies under His feet. **The last enemy is being abolished: death**. For He subjects all under His feet. Now whenever He may be saying that all is subject, it is evident that it is outside of Him Who subjects all to Him. Now, whenever all may be subjected to Him, then the Son Himself also shall be subjected to Him Who subjects all to Him, **that God may be All in all.**) (1 Corinthians 15.19-28 cv)

And each in his **proper order, a first-fruit Christ**, afterwards those who are the Christ's, **in his presence**, then—the end, when he may deliver up the reign to God, even the Father, when he may have made useless all rule, and all authority and power.... (1 Corinthians 15.23-24 YLT)

But each in his **own rank:—A firstfruit Christ**, after that they who are the Christ's **in his Presence**,—afterwards the end— (1 Corinthians 15.23-24 REB)

1 Corinthians 15 is one of the greatest chapters in all Scripture, for it is here that Paul defends the resurrection of Christ and, ultimately, the resurrection into life of all mankind. In the Concordant Version, it is referred to as the vivification (being made alive) of mankind.

Paul starts with Christ as the Firstfruit of all the dead. Christ was raised from among the dead and is now immortal, for death has no more power over Him. As the firstborn from among the dead (Colossians 1.18), Christ is in a class all by Himself.

Then, Paul states that **in Adam all are dying**. Again, here is the word *all*. Can anyone dispute that all born of Adam's race, whether we believe in Christ or not, will one day die, unless we happen to be in the company of believers alive on earth when He comes the second time? All are dying in Adam! Paul makes no exceptions to this death sentence.

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Next, Paul states that **in Christ shall all be vivified** or made alive. Again, here is the word *all*. Who are we to exclude from this all? Paul makes no distinction that one is a believer or an unbeliever. There are no exclusions in this *all*. If all are in Adam, does it not follow that all must be in Christ as well? Of course, logic dictates that it follows. This is God's "life sentence" for all!

But Paul continues by making an important distinction; not all will be made alive at the same time but each in their own order or class.

In the Greek, the word for *proper order* is *tagma*, which refers to "something orderly in arrangement (a troop), that is, (figuratively) a series or succession:-order."

Now, most commentators see *the Firstfruit, Christ* in one of two ways. Some see this as referring to those who were resurrected after Jesus rose from the dead. However, neither Scripture nor the historical record offers proof that this group was raised to mortal life; thus, they died again and did not enter immortal life. Some see this as referring to Christ Himself. However, if we follow Paul's logic, we discover that *each in his own order* refers back to *in Christ shall all be made alive*. In other words, it refers to all mankind that die, not to Christ Himself.

Anointed firstfruits.

It only follows that if Christ Himself is a firstfruit, then there are other firstfruits to follow. During harvest time a farmer picks a crop of several pieces of fruit and declares it to be his firstfruits.

According to the English Sublinear of the Concordant Greek Text, the first group that Paul lists is simply "firstfruit anointed." The word *Christ* can also be translated as the word *anointed*. Thus, the first group could be called "anointed firstfruits." We could say that the cream of the crop is resurrected first from among mankind. There will be a group of believers that will be counted worthy to attain to the oncoming eon to reign with Christ; they are sons of the resurrection (Luke 20.34-36).

This is the *out-resurrection* to which Paul sought to attain (Philippians 3.11), the *first* or *former* resurrection that John saw in his Patmos vision (Revelation 20.5-6), and the *better* resurrection that is accounted to the ones who gained approval through their faith but did not receive what was promised (Hebrews 11.39).

The ones who will be considered worthy of the *first* or *better* resurrection, the *out-resurrection*, are ones who will have conquered while they lived in their bodies of death. How will they have conquered? They will have conquered through grace, faith and love. Hebrews 11 lists the many that walked by faith and conquered in their day. Paul declared: *We are more than conquering through Him Who loves us* (Romans 8.37 *cv*). How do we conquer? We do it through love—love for our God and Savior, love for one another, and love for our enemies. If we love, we also

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forgive, including our enemies that do us much harm, for this is what we are commanded to do (Matthew 5.44; 6.14). If we want to be in the *out-resurrection* we must love, obey and forgive, and this is done by laying down our lives even unto death if necessary.

They conquered him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, for they did not love their lives in the face of death. (Revelation 12.11 HCSB)

These are the ones who overwhelmingly conquer through the One Who loves us and who will be priests of God and of Christ that will reign with Christ for 1,000 years.

God declares the end from the beginning (Isaiah 46.10), and we see that as Adam was a son of God, so will all mankind be sons of God, not all at the same time but all eventually. We see the firstfruits of sonship in *The Unveiling of Jesus Christ*. The conquerors will be firstfruits of our present eon that will become God's sons in the eons of the eons. They are the first called according to the purpose of God to be conformed to the image of His Son (Romans 8.29).

“He who **overcomes** [**conquers**] will inherit these things, and **I will be his God and he will be My son.**” (Revelation 21.7 NASB [CV])

Those who are found worthy to attain to the first resurrection (Revelation 20.5-6) and the eon [age] to come (Matthew 20.34-38) will be the first to be called *sons of God*, even *sons of the kingdom* (Matthew 13.38).

The second group to be resurrected is the rest of mankind that must appear in the presence of Christ. If the *firstfruits resurrection* is the *first resurrection*, and this occurs at the end of our present eon, then there must be a second resurrection that occurs 1,000 years later; a resurrection of the just and the unjust when most of mankind must stand in the presence of the Judge. In other words, this group includes believers (the just) that were not included in the first resurrection or *out-resurrection*. The just will have believed in Jesus but did not conquer through His life; thus, they were not anointed firstfruits. They will be saved, yet so as through fire (1 Corinthians 3.15), and they will enter into immortality. The unbelievers (the unjust) will be cast in the lake of fire and will not enter immortality at this time. They will be brought in at the end or perhaps before.

Those in His presence—the shewbread.

Now, there is something special regarding all appearing in the presence of Christ. As previously presented, in the Greek, the word *purpose* is translated from the word *prothesis*, which means “before-placing.” Also, it has been noted that this word applies to the showbread, the cakes of bread, the hallowed bread that sat on a table across from the golden candlestick in the holy place. The shewbread was a

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type of Christ who is the manna that came down out of heaven, the Bread of Life (John 6.33, 35, 48, 51).

But He said to them, “Have you not read what David did when he became hungry, he and his companions, how he entered the house of God, and they ate **the consecrated** [*prothesis*] **bread**, which was not lawful for him to eat nor for those with him, but for the priests alone?” (Matthew 12.3-4 NASB)

For there was a tabernacle prepared, the outer one, in which were the lampstand and the table and **the sacred** [*prothesis*] **bread**; this is called the holy place. (Hebrews 9.2 NASB)

Some translations refer to the sacred bread as **the bread of the Presence** (ESV, GW, ISV, JMNT, YLT), an expression found in Hebrew Scripture.

So the priest gave him **consecrated bread**; for there was no bread there but **the bread of the Presence** which was removed from before the LORD.... (1 Samuel 21.6 NASB)

The Hebrew word for presence is *paniyim*, which can refer to “the face (as the part that turns).” It also refers to being “purposed by.” Thus, the shewbread is more than a figure of Christ as the Bread of Life; it signifies that the purpose of God for all mankind is to appear before the face of the One who is the very Bread of Life, the One who all will feed upon to receive life. Mankind will progressively move into the *Tabernacles Age*, from the court to **the Holies of the Holies**, to behold the face of Jesus. The first objects that the priest beheld as he entered the Tabernacle (Holy Place) were the Table of Shewbread, which represents Christ as the Bread of Life, and the Golden Candlestick, which represents Christ as the Light of the World. The Son of God is the way into the Most Holy Place, the very presence of God, which is God’s purpose for mankind. Eventually, all will appear before the bread of the Presence, the One who holds the key to life, and who is the Light of the world. All must pass by and through Him, for He alone is the Way to God the Father.

Thereafter the ones subjected.

Paul declared *then comes the end*; literally, *thereafter the consummation*. In other words, at the consummation of the eons, the rest of mankind that did not receive the benefit of immortality from the second resurrection must be transfigured into immortal life when death is abolished. I do not see these ones going through a third bodily resurrection since they were resurrected to appear at the great white throne judgment. What they require is immortality, but to receive this they must be chastened and purified in the lake of fire, which represents God’s divine law, the standard by which their works will be judged. They enter into a second type of death (not physical and definitely not for torture) that is designed to purify them, so that one day they too can enter into immortality. If they are not brought out of this second death, then it cannot be declared that death is abolished. Further,

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Christ will not have accomplished the work given to Him by His Father. Thus, His work of the cross will have been a failure.

But how do we know that the unjust one day will be brought into immortal life? We know it because Paul declared that Christ must reign until He has subjected all things to Himself. The ones being subjected to Christ are the unjust or the wicked.

For HE HAS PUT ALL THINGS IN SUBJECTION UNDER HIS FEET. But when He says, "All things are put in subjection," it is evident that He is excepted who put all things in subjection to Him. When all things are subjected to Him, then the Son Himself also will be subjected to the One who subjected all things to Him, so that God may be all in all. (1 Corinthians 15.27-28 NASB)

In other words, His purpose of reigning is to subject all things in heaven and on earth to Himself, so that He can then subject all things, including Himself, to His Father, so that God may be *All* in all. Notice that the mission of the Son of God is not to destroy all things but to subject all things, *for the Son of Man did not come to destroy men's lives, but to save them* (Luke 9.56 NASB). It is not His purpose to destroy or annihilate the unjust but to subject them, so that the word of God, which does not return void, is fulfilled.

All without exceptions.

Now, I realize that the thought of all mankind being saved, not all at the same time, but all eventually, is repugnant and difficult to accept by many in our day. Perhaps it is time to discard the traditions of men that say otherwise.

We know that God is after sons in the image of His Son (Galatians 3.26; Hebrews 2.10; Revelation 21.7). Does this mean that God's purpose is to bring all mankind into sonship through faith in His Son? Scripture does not state so directly; but perhaps it is so. However, I am convinced that the restoration and reconciliation of all will be fully accomplished at the consummation of the eons; thus the **All of God** includes **all mankind, without exception**. So that you do not lose the import of what you just read, I will state it more emphatically. Every single person of Adam's race that has lived and died on this earth for the last 6,000 years, and that will live and die until the end of the eons, will one day be included in the **All in all**. Simply, God has purposed to bring all mankind without exception into His *All*. Every sinner that has fallen short of the glory of God, which includes 100% of mankind, will one day [not all in the same day] be included in the **All in all of God**, for **in Adam all are dying** but **in Christ shall all be made alive** (1 Corinthians 15.22 cv).

Every knee will bow, every tongue will confess.

One day every knee will bow and every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

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And so God highly exalted Him [or, put Him in the most important position] and gave to Him a Name, the [Name] above every name, so that **at the name of Jesus every knee shall bow, of heavenly [ones] and of earthly [ones] and of [ones] under the earth, and every tongue [fig., person] shall confess that Jesus Christ [is] Lord** to [the] glory of God [the] Father! [cp. Isaiah 45.23] (Philippians 2.9-11 ALT)

This will not be done through brute force, as if to force even the most hardened heart to bow and confess. No; it will be done willingly as hearts will be won by the love of God and through faith in His Son. No one can say *Lord* apart from the Holy Spirit, and all who confess with their mouth *Jesus as Lord* will be saved.

No one can say, “Jesus is Lord,” except by the Holy Spirit. (1 Corinthians 12.3 NASB)

Further, the word *bow* implies that the one doing the bowing is doing it willingly as a sign of honor. In the Greek, the word *confess* is *exomologeomai*, which means to “agree fully.” It is used eleven times in Scripture and in no case does it imply that one must be forced to confess (Matthew 3.6; 11.25; Mark 1.5; Luke 10.21; 22.6; Acts 19.18; Romans 14.11; 15.9; Philippians 2.11; James 5.16; Revelation 3.5). It is a confession of the heart and is often used in reference to praising God.

If you **confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord**, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved; for with the heart a person believes, resulting in righteousness, and **with the mouth he confesses, resulting in salvation.** (Romans 10.9-10 NASB)

As emphasized many times, the above verses declare that God’s purpose to be *All in all* will be achieved through His beloved Son. God’s purpose is worked out in, through and by His Son. Another way of stating this fact is that God has a plan to achieve His purpose, and the plan is found in His Son. There is no other way!

The purpose of God is **ALL**, and it is through the purpose of the eons that all in the heavens and on the earth will be gathered together, summed up or headed up in Christ, to the glory of God the Father. It is the secret of His will that has been revealed to us in these last days.

In closing, consider this rendering of Paul’s word on the heading up of all in Christ. God’s purpose of **ALL** is the restoring of the whole creation to the one Head, Christ.

He made known to us **the secret of His will.** And this is in harmony with **God’s merciful purpose** for the government of the world when the times are ripe for it—**the purpose which He has cherished in His own mind of restoring the whole creation to find its one Head in Christ; yes, things in Heaven and things on earth, to find their one Head in Him.** (Ephesians 1.9-10 WNT)