

# Our Need for Christ<sup>1</sup>

(Continued)

*In a time of tribulation and a world of war and distress, man seeks his redeemer and longs for deliverance from his troubled life. Fr Matta speaks here about an important issue in our life, he experienced it deeply. Enjoy! NB: All quotations are taken from the NKJV, if not otherwise mentioned.*

**W**HO CAN REACH CHRIST, since Christ is unattainable in His stature? He is the pinnacle of all that is in heaven and earth, and He recapitulates everything in His own person. Above all He is the visible image of God, who is invisible. Therefore, who can declare or even try to explicate Him? It is impossible for humanity's eloquent and logical mind to explain the being of God.

Christ alone is capable of declaring Himself. Whenever I feel Him approaching, I put aside my defenses, or rather they fall off their own accord for He alone is the mouthpiece of my truth and faith Who speaks within me or even without. Moreover, for He can reveal Himself in countless ways and with inexpressible ease for the person of Christ is an infinite energy that reveals Itself in us without any effort on our part. Rather our effort is the major impediment for the revelation of Christ. Our one greatest need is to experience His coming to us and to receive Him with all our being, then to leave Him to speak and act within us.

People's discontentment with our Christian way of life is because of the

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<sup>1</sup> A spiritual speech delivered in St Macarius' Church, in his Monastery in *Scetis* on March 3, 1975. Revised translation in 2022.

absence of Christ in our lives, and not at all because of the person of Christ. If Christ in His divinity was ever living in our lives, no one would find fault with the divinity of Christ.

People stumbled from Christ because we placed Christ in our lives equal to other needs and wants such as our daily bread, and moreover, even pleasures, jauntings, sciences, and politics. Due to this, Christ appears within us a thousand times less than His true stature. If Christ is a God, then He must be higher and greater than everything in our life, and moreover, even greater than our life itself.

Our dire need is that our Christian life to be Christ Himself and not our own principles, ambitions, pride, malice or lust for the vain worldly glory that we conceal behind the name of Christ.

People do not hate Christ at all. Christ is beloved and indeed He is called the “Son of Love”— everyone craves all the depths of love but people hate our conducts, behaviors, and false traits that we dishonestly attribute to the name of Christ.

The differentiation between Christianity and Christ has more than ever become apparent in our lives and even it produces an outcry against us. Our behaviors, works, and words outwardly appear as Christian, but they never proceed from Christ since they are devoid of the Spirit of Christ and His aroma. Thus, no wonder why people reject our Christian life.

Our dire need remains to turn once more to the person of Christ so that He may remanifest Himself in our lives. Then emerges a revival where our fallacious deeds are swept away, giving place to the true deeds of Christ, those deeds will witness to Him without any interference by our dead intellect. In fact, people desire Christ Himself and not our earthly persons. Do we accept this fact? The major conundrum that obstructs our way to Christ is that we are steadfast to our ego rather than Christ. When we face times of danger or fatigue it is our ego that appears and not Christ.

Most dangerous in this delusion is that the self appears good in our eyes. Due to this, we do not find reason to relinquish the ego and take hold of Christ; thus, the real Christ remains hidden from the eyes and ears of people. In the instance

that we sometimes live maliciously, unauthentically, and delusional while preaching Christ though He is totally absent from our lives. And moreover, while lacking the needed conviction to take the risk and to die so that Christ may revive us for Himself anew, then our egos are not capable of transformation.

For life in terms of this world is delectable and comforting to the soul that seeks its own glory. Particularly when the ego augments to this various virtuous sayings, it thus forms a fabricated resplendent glory. Only those who possess the true light of Christ can detect this self-seeking ego. When will we believe and live according to the Pauline verse, “For we preach not ourselves but Christ Jesus the Lord, and ourselves your servants of Jesus’ sake” (2 Cor 4:5).

Numerous church servants and preachers presented themselves disguised under the teaching of Christ so that people stumbled at Christ. Blame and disgrace were laid not on them but on the weakened person of Christ within them. The one who witnesses to Christ is bound to receive from Christ and reciprocally give to others. This is the essence and significance of testimony which is enacted through the Holy Spirit’s mediation, Who knows all that belongs to Christ and eagerly and fittingly witnesses for Him in us. How many times have we grieved the Holy Spirit and obstructed His testimony by utilizing the testimony of Jesus for our own glory and interest! We desperately need to be delivered from ourselves. Do we accept this?

Who can read the life of Jesus Christ and not feel in the depth of their heart that Christ is the most magnificent and defined image of God? If God is like Christ, then God is a loving and compassionate Father, who is infinite and omnipotent; for “He that has seen Me has seen the Father” (John 14:8).

Humanity will remain miserable until it finds God, and they would not find God except in Christ. Christ should find in our lives an opportunity to prove His eternal power and Godhead. Therefore, we may believe that He is truly the Son of God, attain salvation as well as eternal life through Him, and truly see the Father in Him. But we are blamed for impeding belief in Christ since we present our egos instead of the true Christ. Consequently, our humanity is glorified at the expense of His divinity.

The telos for the redemptive work of Christ is our becoming like Him, bearing His behaviors and characteristics. When He fills our life and reigns over us, not through teaching and instruction, rather as St Paul teaches, “That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith” (Eph 3:7).

When Christ dwells in us and we consequently adopt His behaviors, this would mean that humanity has transcended itself and bypassed all its impotence, illness, and death, having entered upon its glorified phase that is by no means related to its deadly, earthly heritage. This is our new creation that is coupled with the divine power of Christ to uplift us over the self so that we may surpass the ego through Christ’s power, entering the effective life and divine realm of liberty. Then we would freely, consciously, and joyfully respond to God and all His intimations. This is the future of the new creation in Christ, and this is their new birth. Hence Christ was truly named the Second Adam.

How then can we be born to God without Christ? This is impossible. Let us be mindful of the fact that Christ found His work in us upon the Cross. Although the Cross entered the life of Christ as primarily a redemptive act, He handed it to us as a model of life and behavior. If we do not live or think in terms of the Cross, we shall never realize the glory of Christ that He attained through the Cross, nor shall we understand and value the real significance of His redemption. But if with consciousness and joy we experience and taste the Cross in our life, this will be the mystical entry to the knowledge of Christ and the experience of the greatness of the glory of His power, which is imperceptible to us. Then, through communion in the sufferings of the Cross, we enter with Christ in an eternal covenant as inheritors to all the glories and consolations of the Father in heaven. How wonderful the mystery of Christ, yet, even more so, the mystery of Christ in man!

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