

## KNOWING AND CARING FOR THE CHURCH

(Thursday—First Morning Session)

Message One

### **God's Intention in His Economy— to Head Up All Things in Christ through the Church**

Scripture Reading: Eph. 1:10, 22-23; Rev. 21:1-2, 23-25; 22:1-2a

- I. The church is the vessel used by God to solve His problems and to fulfill His purpose, which is to manifest Himself through man by mingling Himself with man—Eph. 3:9-11.**
- II. God will head up all things in Christ through the church—1:10, 22-23:**
  - A. God's eternal intention is to head up all things in Christ, who has been appointed to be the universal Head—vv. 10, 22:
    1. It is God's eternal purpose that in the economy of the fullness of the times, He might head up all things in Christ—v. 10.
    2. Through the dispensations of God in all the ages, all things will be headed up in Christ in the new heaven and new earth; this will be God's eternal administration and economy—Rev. 21:1-2.
  - B. Satan's goal is to corrupt God's creation and to cause confusion—Rom. 8:19-23:
    1. When Satan injected himself into man, Satan became death and darkness to man; sin brings in death, death brings in darkness, and darkness brings in confusion.
    2. The entire universe is a heap of collapse caused by Satan injecting himself as the factor of death into God's creation—Heb. 2:14; Rom. 8:20-21.
    3. God is working to liberate His creation from bondage and to bring it into liberty by heading up all things in Christ—Eph. 1:22, 10.
  - C. We all need to be delivered from the heap of collapse and to be headed up in Christ—Col. 1:12-13.
  - D. According to the Bible, God's salvation is to save us not only from our fallen, sinful condition but also from the heap of collapse—Eph. 2:1-8, 21-22.
  - E. God will subject all things under Christ by heading up all things in Christ through the church—1 Cor. 15:20-28.
- III. In the Lord's recovery we are being headed up in Christ—Eph. 1:10:**
  - A. The first step in the heading up of all things in Christ is for God to bring His chosen ones, His sons, out of the universal collapse and to place them under the headship of Christ—v. 22; 4:15; 5:23; Col. 1:18; 2:10, 19.
  - B. God is heading up His chosen ones to be the Body of Christ with Christ as the Head—Eph. 1:4, 22-23:
    1. Christ's headship is being transmitted to the church; this means that, in a sense, we can share the headship of Christ over all things.
    2. The church is under nothing but Christ Himself; we are above everything else because we are the Body of the One who is over all things—2:6.

- C. When the church takes the lead to be headed up in Christ, God has a way to head up all other things—1:22-23, 10.
- D. Eventually, the Body with Christ as the Head will be the universal Head over all things—vv. 22-23.
- E. The church life is a life of being headed up—4:15; 1 Cor. 11:3:
  - 1. The church is the heading up of God's chosen ones under the headship of Christ.
  - 2. If we do not know what it is to be headed up in Christ, we cannot know the church.

**IV. We are headed up in Christ through the divine dispensing—1 Tim. 1:4:**

- A. The satanic chaos is in the old creation, and the divine economy is for the new creation; the divine economy is to produce the harmonious new creation out of the chaotic old creation—Eph. 1:10; 2 Cor. 5:17.
- B. Christ as the divine economy has come into us as an administration, arrangement, and plan that puts everything in order—John 1:12-13.
- C. God's economy is to dispense Himself into us and to work Himself into us as life so that we may be full of light—Eph. 3:9, 16-17a; 5:8-9.
- D. God is working Himself into His chosen ones through an administration which is a pleasant dispensing—1:10; 3:2; 1 Tim. 1:4; 3:15:
  - 1. The heading up of all things in Christ does not take place by a governmental administration; rather, it comes about by an intimate stewardship, by a comfortable household arrangement—Eph. 3:2.
  - 2. God's abounding grace will accomplish the heading up of all things in Christ; this abounding grace is working on us so that all things might be headed up in Christ—1:7-8, 10.

**V. We are being headed up by life and light to become the New Jerusalem—Rev. 21:1-2, 23-25; 22:1-2a:**

- A. The heading up in the church life is by life and light—John 1:4; 8:12:
  - 1. God's way of recovery is Christ versus Satan, life versus death, light versus darkness, and order versus confusion.
  - 2. The collapse comes from the factor of death; the heading up comes from the factor of life—Ezek. 34:2-10.
  - 3. If we try to be headed up without growing in life, we will fall into organization.
  - 4. The more we grow in life, the more we will be headed up and the more we will be rescued from the universal collapse—Eph. 4:15; Col. 2:19.
  - 5. When God comes into us as life, the light of life shines within us; when we are full of Christ as life, we are under the light and are controlled by the power of light—John 1:4; Eph. 5:8-9.
- B. In the new heaven and new earth with the New Jerusalem as the center, all things will be headed up in Christ; this will be the complete fulfillment of Ephesians 1:10—Rev. 21:2-3, 23-25; 22:1-2a:
  - 1. In the New Jerusalem everything will be saturated with life and will be under light—v. 1; 21:23.

2. In Revelation 21 we see the Head, the Body surrounding the Head, and all the nations walking in the light of the city; the whole universe will be headed up in the light shown through the transparent city—v. 18.