

## KNOWING AND CARING FOR THE CHURCH

(Friday—First Morning Session)

Message Four

### The Lord's Recovery of the Body-Christ

Scripture Reading: 1 Cor. 12:12-13; Eph. 4:1-6, 16; Col. 2:19

- I. **What we need today is the heavenly, living, up-to-date, and instant vision of the Lord's present recovery; we need to ask the Lord to free us from the "cage" of our religious and natural concepts so that we may soar in a clear sky to see and be recovered back to God's original intention and His central revelation—Acts 26:18; Ezek. 1:1-3, 22, 26; Matt. 2:10, 12:**
  - A. The overcomers in the Lord's recovery experience the Spirit-Christ as the reality of God, the Word-Christ as the speaking of God, and the Light-Christ as the shining of God—Gen. 1:1-3; 2 Cor. 4:6.
  - B. The overcomers in the Lord's recovery experience the hiding God in the intrinsic, divine history within the outward human history—Isa. 45:15; Esth. 2:7; 4:14-16; 10:3; Neh. 2:10; 1 Sam. 4:3, 21-22; Dan. 1:6-8; 2:44-45; 4:17, 26.
  - C. The overcomers in the Lord's recovery have their whole being aimed at the central revelation of God and the goal of God's economy—6:10; 1 Kings 8:48; cf. 2 Kings 22:8-11; 23:25.
- II. **The central revelation of God is the progressive revelation of God in the Bible—the "bachelor" God, the incarnated God, the redeeming God, the indwelling God, and the incorporated God:**
  - A. At the beginning of the Bible there is one single God, the "bachelor" God, and at the end there is the "married" God, the ultimately incorporated God, the corporate God, the New Jerusalem—Gen. 1:1, 26; 2:18; Rev. 21:2, 9-10.
  - B. The Lord's recovery is the recovery of Christ in His full ministry of three stages—incarnation, inclusion, and intensification; the Lord's recovery is God becoming the flesh, the flesh becoming the life-giving Spirit, and the life-giving Spirit becoming the sevenfold intensified Spirit to build up the church that becomes the Body of Christ and that consummates the New Jerusalem:
    1. *God becoming the flesh* is the "bachelor" God becoming the incarnated God and the redeeming God—John 1:14, 29.
    2. *The flesh becoming the life-giving Spirit, and the life-giving Spirit becoming the sevenfold intensified Spirit* is the indwelling God as the compounded God and the intensified God—1 Cor. 15:45b; Rev. 1:4; 3:1; 4:5; 5:6.
    3. *The built-up church that becomes the Body of Christ and that consummates the New Jerusalem* is the incorporated God, the Body-Christ, that consummates the corporate God, the New Jerusalem, the ultimate union, mingling, and incorporation of the processed and consummated Triune God with the processed and consummated tripartite church—John 17:21; Eph. 4:4-6, 16; Col. 2:19; Rev. 19:7-9; 21:2, 9-10.

**III. The Lord's present recovery is the recovery of the Body-Christ ("the Christ") in the church life; the Body-Christ is the incorporated God—1 Cor. 12:12-13; Acts 9:4-5, 15; Col. 2:19; Eph. 4:1-6, 15-16; John 14:23; 17:21:**

- A. First Corinthians 12:12 says, "Even as the body is one and has many members, yet all the members of the body, being many, are one body, so also is the Christ"; "the Christ" in this verse is not the individual Christ but the corporate Christ, Christ incorporated with all His members.
- B. The Lord's recovery is the recovery of "Christification," a recovery purely and wholly of the person of Christ to gain the reality of the Body-Christ in the church life—1 Thes. 5:23; Phil. 1:19-21a; 3:8-14; 2 Cor. 2:10; Col. 3:10-11.
- C. Today the Lord is building the Body-Christ in the church life; in the Body-Christ, Christ is wrought into all His members, and all His members are wrought into Him by the growth in life and transformation in life for the expression of Christ—2:19; Rom. 12:2; 2 Cor. 3:18; 1 Cor. 12:12-13:
  - 1. In the Body-Christ we enjoy Christ as everything—vv. 3b, 13.
  - 2. In the Body-Christ there is the function of all the members—vv. 14-22.
  - 3. In the Body-Christ there is the blending together of the members in the oneness of the Triune God—vv. 23-27; John 17:21; Eph. 4:1-6.

**IV. In order to live in the reality of the Body-Christ, we need to be delivered from the mixture of Judaism—Acts 21:18-26; James 2:2, 8; Rev. 2:9:**

- A. Judaism has earthly promises with earthly blessings, but in the new testament we have the all-inclusive Spirit as the totality of the unsearchable riches of Christ to be our unique blessing for us to bless others—Gen. 12:2; Gal. 3:14; Eph. 3:8; 1:3; Num. 6:23-27; 2 Cor. 13:14.
- B. Judaism has the law of letters, but in the new testament we have the law of the Spirit of life—Rom. 8:2; Heb. 8:10; Rom. 2:28-29; Gal. 5:1-4.
- C. Judaism has mediatorial priests, but in the new testament all the believers are priests of God to be a holy and royal priesthood—Rev. 1:5b-6; 1 Pet. 2:5, 9.
- D. Judaism has a material temple, but in the new testament the temple is a spiritual house, a dwelling place of God in spirit—Eph. 2:21-22; John 4:24; 14:2, 20, 23; 1 Tim. 3:15; Rev. 21:3, 22.

**V. In order to live in the reality of the Body-Christ, we need to be saved from the principle of Babylon—17:1-5; 18:2, 4-5, 7, 13; cf. Zech. 5:5-11:**

- A. The principle of Babylon (Heb. *Babel*) is man's endeavor to build up something from earth to heaven by human ability, by bricks; the building of God is not built with man-made bricks by human labor but with God-created and transformed stones by the divine work—Gen. 11:1-9; 1 Cor. 3:12.
- B. The principle of Babylon is hypocrisy; whenever we put on a "garment" which does not match our actual condition in order to receive glory from man, we are in the principle of Babylon—Rev. 17:4, 6; Matt. 23:25-32; Josh. 7:21; Acts 5:1-11; Matt. 15:7-8; John 5:44; 12:42-43; cf. Matt. 6:6.
- C. The principle of Babylon is that of not considering herself a widow but of glorifying herself and living luxuriously; anything in our living which is in excess is luxury and is in the principle of Babylon—Rev. 18:7; 1 Tim. 6:6-10.

- D. Babylon's purpose is for man to make a name for himself and deny God's name; the church, as the pure virgin espoused to Christ, should have no name other than her Husband's—Gen. 11:4; 2 Cor. 11:2.
- E. Babylon means confusion; in the church we should have only one mind and one mouth under one ministry with one unique teaching in one spirit with one soul, one heart, and one way for the one Body—Gen. 11:6-7; Rom. 15:5-6; 1 Cor. 1:10; Phil. 2:2; 1 Tim. 1:3-4; Jer. 32:39.
- F. With the rebellious people at Babel, there was scattering, but in the Body-Christ in the church life there is gathering and blending into one Body for God's unique testimony—Gen. 11:8; Deut. 12:5; 16:16; Psa. 133; 1 Cor. 12:24.
- G. Babylon is a mixture of the things of God with the things of idols, but in the Body-Christ, Christ is the irreplaceable and unique content as the all-inclusive anointing—2 Chron. 36:6-7; 1 John 2:18-20, 27; 1 Cor. 12:12.