

**Outline of  
the Messages for the Full-time Training  
in the Fall Term of 2023**

-----

**GENERAL SUBJECT:  
THE CRUCIAL POINTS OF THE TRUTH IN PAUL'S EPISTLES—  
FIRST CORINTHIANS**

Message Five

**Being Stewards of the Mysteries of God  
for the Church as God's Cultivated Land and God's Building**

Scripture Reading: 1 Cor. 3:9-12a; 4:1-2; Isa. 22:15, 19-24; Rev. 3:7; Luke 11:5-13

**I. The believers, who have been regenerated in Christ with God's life, are God's cultivated land, a farm in God's new creation to grow Christ that precious materials may be produced for God's building—1 Cor. 3:9-12a:**

- A. The central thought of the entire Scripture is life and building—1 Pet. 1:23; 2:2-5:
  - 1. Life is the Triune God embodied in Christ and realized as the Spirit dispensing Himself into us for our enjoyment, and building is the church, the Body of Christ, God's spiritual house, as the enlargement and expansion of God for the corporate expression of God—Gen. 2:8-9, 22; Matt. 16:18; Col. 2:19; Eph. 4:16.
  - 2. Christ, as the seed of life, is the power of life within us that has granted to us all things which relate to life and godliness for the building up of the church as the rich surplus of life and the expression of life through the growth and development of life—2 Pet. 1:3-4; cf. Acts 3:15.
- B. Since God's building is living, it is growing; the actual building up of the church as the house of God is by the believers' growth in life—Eph. 2:21:
  - 1. In order to grow in life for God's building, we must love the Lord, take heed to our spirit, and guard our heart with all vigilance to stay on the pathway of life—1 Pet. 1:8; 2:2, 5; 3:4, 15; Prov. 4:18-23; Deut. 10:12; Mark 12:30.
  - 2. If we want Christ's life to be unhindered in us, we must experience the breaking of the cross, the killing death of Christ in the all-inclusive Spirit of Christ, so that the following obstacles within us can be dealt with and removed—Exo. 30:22-25; Phil. 1:19; Psa. 139:23-24:
    - a. Being a Christian means not taking anything other than Christ as our aim; the obstacle to this is not knowing the pathway of life and not taking Christ as our life—Matt. 7:13-14; Phil. 3:8-14; Col. 3:4; Rom. 8:28-29.
    - b. The second obstacle is hypocrisy; a person's spirituality is not determined by outward appearance but by how he takes care of Christ—Matt. 6:1-6; 15:7-8; John 5:44; 12:42-43; cf. Josh. 7:21.

- c. The third obstacle is rebellion; we may be very active and zealous in doing things but still imprison and disobey the living Christ within us by ignoring Him—Lev. 14:9, 14-18; 11:1-2, 46-47; Rom. 16:17; 1 Cor. 15:33.
  - d. The fourth obstacle is our natural capabilities; if these natural capabilities remain unbroken in us, they will become a problem to Christ's life—2:14-15; 3:12, 16-17; Jude 19; cf. Lev. 10:1-2.
- C. In order to grow in life for God's building, we must be nourished with the guileless milk of God's word—1 Pet. 2:2:
- 1. By feeding on Christ as the nourishing milk in the word, we grow unto full salvation, unto maturity through transformation for glorification; salvation in 1 Peter 2:2 is a matter of transformation for God's building.
  - 2. We enjoy the "milk-Christ" to nourish us so that we may be transformed with Him as the "stone-Christ" and be built up as the "Body-Christ," as God's spiritual house into a holy priesthood—vv. 2-5; 1 Cor. 12:12-13.

**II. As believers in Christ, we all should be stewards of the mysteries of God for the building of God (4:1-2; Col. 2:2; Eph. 3:4) by being one with Christ as the Steward in God's house, typified by Eliakim (Isa. 22:20-24):**

- A. Christ is the One upon whose shoulder the key of (the treasury of) the house of God (typified by the house of David for the building up of the kingdom of God) is set—vv. 15, 20-22; Rev. 3:7.
- B. God fired Shebna, a steward in the house of the king (Isa. 22:15-19), and replaced him with Eliakim, a type of Christ (vv. 20-24; Rev. 3:7); this reveals that God discharged everyone on the cross, and He is replacing everyone with Christ:
  - 1. When God created us, He hired us, and when He put us on the cross, crucifying us with Christ, He fired us—Gal. 2:20.
  - 2. On the one hand, we are fired, and on the other hand, we are not expelled, for Christ comes to live in us, with us, by us, and through us—v. 20.
  - 3. Whatever or whoever is not Christ, God fires; God has replaced everything in His Old Testament economy with Christ—Mark 1:1-8; Matt. 17:3-5; Col. 2:16-17; Heb. 10:5-10; 11:5-6.
  - 4. The real church life is a life in which all the saints are fired and replaced with Christ, making Christ everything in the church—Col. 3:10-11.
- C. Christ is the One who has the key of David to control the door of God's treasury, in which are the riches of God in Christ for our enjoyment; in order to enjoy His riches, we need to set our mind on the spirit, staying in contact with the Lord according to the sense of life, being poor in spirit and pure in heart—Rev. 3:7-8; Rom. 8:6; Matt. 5:3, 8.
- D. In order to enjoy His riches as the treasure, we need to learn to exercise the keys of denying the self, taking up the cross, and losing the soul-life; all of us are "Shebnas," who should be removed and replaced by Christ for Him to be everything to us and do everything in us, through us, and for us—Isa. 22:15-19; Matt. 16:24-25.
- E. Christ as the Spirit is the Steward in God's house who dispenses Himself as multiplied grace into us to be our moment-by-moment supply and constant enjoyment—John 1:16-17; 2 Cor. 12:9; 1 Pet. 4:10; Eph. 3:2.

- F. The key of David opens the door for us to be transformed into a white stone and built into the house of God as a pillar with the name of God, the name of the New Jerusalem, and the new name of the Lord—Rev. 2:17; 3:12; cf. 21:22.

**III. In order to be dispensing stewards of God for the church as the building of God, we must be men of prayer, who pray ourselves into God:**

- A. To pray is to realize that we are nothing and can do nothing; prayer is the real denial and repudiating of our self so that we may enjoy Christ as everything to us—Col. 4:2; Gal. 2:20; Phil. 3:3; 4:6-7, 11-13.
- B. Prayer means that we pray ourselves into God; to pray ourselves into God is to love Him by setting our entire being absolutely on Him according to Mary's pattern of sitting at the Lord's feet and listening to His word—Luke 10:38-42:
  - 1. Often in our experience we are distracted from God; we do not stay in God—we do not remain in Him; this is why we need to pray ourselves into God.
  - 2. Because we are easily distracted from God, we should spend time every morning with Him, praying ourselves into Him—Psa. 5:3; Isa. 50:4.
- C. When we pray ourselves into God, we receive His riches (represented by the loaves, the fish, and the egg) into our being for our supply—Luke 11:5-13:
  - 1. Loaves represent the riches of the land; fish, the riches of the sea; and eggs, the riches of something both in the air and on the earth; the Holy Spirit is the totality of these riches.
  - 2. When we have prayed ourselves into God to remain in Him, we receive the Holy Spirit as our life supply (signified by the loaves, the fish, and the egg) so that we can feed ourselves and all those under our care—cf. 6:45.
- D. By praying ourselves into God and humbling ourselves before God in prayer, we are empowered in Christ to repudiate ourselves, renounce all our material possessions, and follow the Man-Savior—18:18-30:
  - 1. By our human life this is impossible, but in the New Testament age whenever we touch God and have fellowship with God, all our impossibilities become possibilities, and all our inabilities become abilities—vv. 25-27; Phil. 4:11-13; John 15:5.
  - 2. By praying ourselves into God, we are empowered to overcome the stupefying effect of the self-indulgent living in this age, and we live in the reality of the economy of God to become rich toward God for the church as the building of God—Luke 12:13-21; 2 Cor. 6:10.