Message Six

The Recovery of Enjoying Christ as Life for the Church as God's Building

Scripture Reading: Col. 3:4; 1 Cor. 3:9; Matt. 16:18; Rev. 1:10-12; 4:5; 5:6; 2:7, 17; 3:20

I. Life and building are the two key words in the entire Bible—life is God in Christ as the living content, and building is the corporate expression of the Triune God—Gen. 2:8-12, 22; Matt. 16:18; Eph. 3:8-11, 16-21:

A. Christ is our life (Col. 3:4), and the church is God's building (1 Cor. 3:9).

B. The building up of the church is by the believers' growing in life for their transformation in life—vv. 6-12; Col. 2:19:

1. The growing members are the building members—Eph. 4:15-16.
2. To build up the Body of Christ, the church of God, is to minister Christ as the tree of life to people for their growth in Christ—1 Cor. 3:6:
   a. When the Lord Jesus was on earth, people always brought questions to Him concerning good and evil, right and wrong, and yes and no (John 4:20; 8:5; 9:2; 11:21), but He always pointed them to life (4:21); 8:7; 9:3; 11:25).
   b. "In order to learn to serve God and to work for Him, a Christian must learn to stay away from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.…Only those who touch the tree of life will see their life and work remaining in the New Jerusalem" (*Messages Given during the Resumption of Watchman Nee's Ministry,* vol. 1, pp. 86-87).

C. The intrinsic significance and heavenly reality of the church as the Body of Christ is typified by the golden lampstand, portraying the Triune God as a living, golden tree, growing, branching, budding, and blossoming with resurrection life—Exo. 25:31-40; Rev. 1:10-12; Num. 17:8:

1. When we overcome to return to Christ as our first love, we will enjoy Him as life and shine forth the divine light to keep the testimony of Jesus in our locality; otherwise, the lampstand will be removed from us—Rev. 1:2; 2:4-7.
2. The local churches are the procedure God takes to reach the goal of His eternal economy; we need to be in the local churches so that we can be ushered into the goal of the reality of the Body of Christ (as Zion within Jerusalem) to be the golden lampstands in actuality—Eph. 1:22-23; 4:4; Psa. 102:16; 48:2; 50:2; 51:18; 125:1-2; 128:5:
   a. In order to be in the reality of the Body of Christ, we need to be absolutely in the resurrection life of Christ—1 Pet. 1:3; Eph. 2:6; cf. Gen. 2:21-24.
   b. When we do not live by our natural life but live by the divine life within us, we are in resurrection; the issue of this is the Body of Christ—Phil. 3:10-11; 1 Cor. 3:12.

D. In the New Jerusalem, God's ultimate building, there is the river of life flowing for us to drink and the tree of life growing in the river of life for us to eat; this shows that for us to partake of God's building, there is no other way but by life and with life—Rev. 22:1-2.

II. The sevenfold intensified organic salvation of God in Christ's heavenly ministry is to bring the degraded church back to the enjoyment of Christ as life for the building up of the Body of Christ to consummate the New Jerusalem as God's ultimate building in life, the city of life—1:4; 3:1; 4:5; 5:6; 22:1-2:

A. The sevenfold intensified life-giving Spirit works to save the believers in the church in Ephesus from the formal church life, which has lost the first love to the Lord, the shining capacity of the lampstand, and the enjoyment of Christ as life, to become overcomers so that they will be rewarded to eat of the tree of life in the Paradise of God—the New Jerusalem in the kingdom age—2:1-7.

B. The sevenfold intensified life-giving Spirit works to strengthen the suffering believers in the church in Smyrna to overcome the persecution by being martyred so that they will be rewarded not to taste the second death during the kingdom age—vv. 8-11.

C. The sevenfold intensified life-giving Spirit works to sanctify the believers in the church in Pergamos from the union with the world and from the teachings of Balaam and the Nicolaitans to be the overcomers so that they may be rewarded to eat the hidden manna and to have a white stone upon which a new name will be written in the kingdom age—vv. 12-17.

D. The sevenfold intensified life-giving Spirit works to rescue the believers in the church in Thyatira from idol worship, fornication, demonic teaching, and the deep things of Satan to be the overcomers so that they may be rewarded with the authority over the nations in the kingdom age—vv. 18-29.

E. The sevenfold intensified life-giving Spirit works to revive the believers in the church in Sardis from their dead and dying condition to be the overcomers so that they may be rewarded with walking with the Lord in white and with not having their names erased from the book of life but confessed by the Lord before the Father and His angels in the kingdom age—3:1-6.

F. The sevenfold intensified life-giving Spirit works to encourage the believers in the church in Philadelphia to hold fast what they have that no one take their crown to be the overcomers so that they may be rewarded to be a pillar in the temple of God with the name of God and the name of the New Jerusalem and the new name of the Lord written upon them in the kingdom age—vv. 7-13.

G. The sevenfold intensified life-giving Spirit works to awake the believers in the church in Laodicea from their lukewarm and Christless condition, exhorting them to pay the price for the refined gold, white garments, and eyesalve and to open their door to the knocking Lord to be the overcomers so that they may be rewarded to sit on the throne of the Lord in the kingdom age—vv. 14-22.

III. The Lord's recovery is for producing the overcomers to build up the Body of Christ for the initial consummation of the New Jerusalem in the kingdom age (Rev. 2:7) and for the full consummation of the New Jerusalem in the new heaven and new earth (21:1-2):

A. The overcomers enjoy Christ as life for God's building by having an ear to hear what the Spirit says to the churches—2:7.

B. The overcomers enjoy Christ as life for God's building by living in their spirit—1:10.

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