

## Message Six

### **A Genuine Church in the Focus of the Lord's Recovery**

Scripture Reading: 1 Cor. 1:2-9; 12:12, 24; 10:17

#### **I. First Corinthians unveils to us a genuine church in the focus of the Lord's recovery, which is the focus of God's economy; Paul, in the opening of his Epistle to the Corinthians, presents a beautiful, marvelous, and excellent portrait of the church of God—1:2-9:**

- A. "The church of God"—this is a church that is not only being possessed by God but also has God as its nature and essence, which are divine, general, universal, and eternal—v. 2a.
- B. "The church...in Corinth"—this is a church in a city that remains in a definite locality and takes it as its standing, ground, and jurisdiction for its administration in business affairs, and that is physical, particular, local, and temporal in time—v. 2b.
- C. "The church...sanctified in Christ Jesus"—this is a church that has been sanctified, made holy, in Christ, having Christ, who is the embodiment of the processed Triune God in His fullness, as its element and sphere—v. 2c.
- D. The church being composed of the "called saints"—this is the assembly of the saints, the sanctified ones, who have been called out of the satanic world—v. 2d.
- E. "With all those who call upon the name of our Lord Jesus Christ in every place"—this long phrase indicates that the church that is genuine is related with all the saints who call upon the name of the Lord Jesus Christ in every place around the globe—v. 2e.
- F. The Lord Jesus Christ being "theirs and ours"—this indicates that the church that is genuine has the Lord Jesus Christ as "their" portion, "their" possession of the divine inheritance, for "their" enjoyment—v. 2f.
- G. "Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ"—this indicates that the church that is genuine is under the dispensing of "grace" (the embodiment of the processed Triune God for the enjoyment of Him as grace by His called ones), from God the Father as the source of the Divine Trinity, from the Lord Jesus Christ as the course of the flow of the Divine Trinity, and from the Holy Spirit as the reaching of the flow of the Divine Trinity (not mentioned in word but implied in denotation—2 Cor. 13:14)—1 Cor. 1:3.
- H. "Based upon the grace of God which was given to you in Christ Jesus"—this indicates that the church that is genuine has the grace of God given to it in Christ, not the condition in itself, as its base—v. 4.
- I. "In everything you were enriched in Him...so that you do not lack in any gift"—this indicates that the church that is genuine is enriched in everything in Christ, so that it is not lacking in any gift, the inward initial gift issuing from grace, such as the eternal life and the Holy Spirit (Rom. 6:23; Acts 2:38; Heb. 6:4), not the outward miraculous gifts—1 Cor. 1:5-7a.
- J. "Eagerly awaiting the revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ"—this indicates that the church that is genuine should have a normal sign, that is, eagerly awaiting the revelation (the appearing) of our Lord Jesus Christ—v. 7b.
- K. "Who [referring to God in verse 4] will also confirm you until the end unreprouvable in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ"—this indicates that the church that is genuine

needs to grow in life (as mentioned in 3:6) after its initial receiving of grace, so that it will be unreprouvable in the day of Christ's coming—1:8.

- L. "God is faithful, through whom you were called into the fellowship of His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord"—this indicates that the church that is genuine has been called by God the Father, who is faithful, into the fellowship of, the participation in, His Son Jesus Christ, who is the consummated, all-inclusive, indwelling, life-giving, and dispensing Spirit (15:45b; 2 Cor. 3:17-18), as its divine portion for its enjoyment of the consummated Triune God—1 Cor. 1:9.

## **II. First Corinthians unveils to us a genuine church in the focus of the Lord's recovery—a meal-offering church life:**

- A. The meal offering first typifies Christ in His God-man living and our Christian life as a duplication of His God-man living—Lev. 2:1-16; Psa. 92:10; 1 Pet. 2:21; Rom. 8:2-3, 11, 13:
  - 1. Fine flour, the main element of the meal offering, signifies Christ's humanity, which is fine, perfect, tender, balanced, and right in every way, with no excess and no deficiency; this signifies the beauty and excellence of Christ's human living and daily walk—Lev. 2:1; John 18:38; 19:4, 6b; Luke 2:40; 23:14; Isa. 53:3.
  - 2. The oil of the meal offering signifies the Spirit of God as the divine element of Christ—Lev. 2:1; Luke 1:35; 3:22; 4:18; Heb. 1:9.
  - 3. The mingling of fine flour with the oil in the meal offering signifies that Christ's humanity is mingled with the Holy Spirit and that His human nature is mingled with God's divine nature, making Him a God-man, possessing the divine nature and the human nature distinctly, without a third nature being produced—Lev. 2:4-5; Matt. 1:18, 20.
  - 4. The frankincense in the meal offering signifies the fragrance of Christ in His resurrection; that the frankincense was put on the fine flour signifies that Christ's humanity bears the aroma of His resurrection—Lev. 2:1-2; cf. Matt. 2:11; 11:20-30; Luke 10:21:
    - a. As portrayed in the four Gospels, Christ lived a life in His humanity mingled with His divinity and expressing resurrection out from His sufferings—cf. John 18:4-8; 19:26-27a.
    - b. Christ's Spirit-filled and resurrection-saturated living was a satisfying fragrance to God, giving God rest, peace, joy, enjoyment, and full satisfaction—Lev. 2:2; Luke 4:1; John 11:25; Matt. 3:17; 17:5.
  - 5. Salt, with which the meal offering was seasoned, signifies the death, or the cross, of Christ; salt functions to season, kill germs, and preserve—Lev. 2:13:
    - a. The Lord Jesus always lived a life of being salted, a life under the cross—Mark 10:38; John 12:24; Luke 12:49-50.
    - b. Even before He was actually crucified, Christ daily lived a crucified life, denying Himself and His natural life and living the Father's life in resurrection—John 6:38; 7:6, 16-18; cf. Gal. 2:20.
    - c. The basic factor of God's covenant is the cross, the crucifixion of Christ, signified by salt; it is by the cross that God's covenant is preserved to be an everlasting covenant—cf. Heb. 13:20.

6. That the meal offering was without leaven signifies that in Christ there is no sin or any negative thing—Lev. 2:4-5, 11a; 2 Cor. 5:21; Heb. 4:15; 1 Pet. 2:22; Luke 23:14; cf. 1 Cor. 5:6-8.
  7. That the meal offering was without honey signifies that in Christ there is no natural affection or natural goodness—Lev. 2:11b; Matt. 10:34-39; 12:46-50; Mark 10:18.
  8. If we eat Christ as the meal offering, we will become what we eat and live by what we eat—John 6:57, 63; 1 Cor. 10:17; Phil. 1:19-21a.
  9. By exercising our spirit to touch the Spirit consolidated in the Word, we eat the human life and living of Jesus, we are constituted with Jesus, and the human living of Jesus becomes our human living—Eph. 6:17-18; Jer. 15:16; Gal. 6:17.
- B. Christ's life and our individual Christian life issue in a totality—the church life as a corporate meal offering; the meal-offering church life is seen in 1 Corinthians—Lev. 2:1-2, 4; 1 Cor. 12:12, 24; 10:17:
1. Christ is the man given to us by God—1:2, 9, 30.
  2. Paul's charge to the Corinthians—"be a man" (16:13, lit.)—means that we should have the high, uplifted humanity of Jesus (9:26-27; 13:4-7).
  3. The church life is a life of humanity oiled by and with the Spirit and joined to the Spirit—2:4, 12; 3:16; 6:17.
  4. The grace of God, which we are enjoying today, is the resurrected Christ as the life-giving Spirit—15:10, 45b:
    - a. We must die with Christ to self daily so that we may live with Christ to God daily—vv. 31, 36; John 12:24-26.
    - b. We must demonstrate the reality of resurrection by being one with God and having God with us in the state in which we were called—1 Cor. 7:24, 21-22a, 10-13.
    - c. We must labor not by our natural life and natural ability but by the Lord as our resurrection life and power—15:10, 58.
  5. We must enjoy the crucified Christ as the solution to all the problems in the church—1:9, 18, 22-23a; cf. Mark 15:31-32a.
  6. We must enjoy Christ as our unleavened banquet—1 Cor. 5:6b-8.
  7. In the church life, the natural life must be killed by the salt, by the cross of Christ—15:10; 12:31; 13:8a; 2 Cor. 5:16.
  8. God desires that every local church be a meal offering to satisfy Him and fully supply the saints day by day; this means that we will eat our church life, for the church life will be our daily supply.