

Message Six

Eight Aspects of the Church as the Testimony of Jesus

Scripture Reading: Rev. 19:10; 1:1-2, 10-13; 19:7-9, 14-19; 20:4-6; 21:9, 3, 22

I. The testimony of Jesus (Rev. 19:10) is the seven golden lampstands—divine in nature, shining in darkness, and identical with one another (1:1-2, 10-13; 2:1):

- A. The golden lampstand symbolizes the Triune God—the Father as the substance is embodied in the Son, the Son as the embodiment is expressed through the Spirit, the Spirit is fully realized and expressed as the churches, and the churches are the testimony of Jesus—Exo. 25:31-40; Zech. 4:2-10; Rev. 1:10-12.
- B. In the divine thought the golden lampstand is actually a living and growing tree with calyxes and almond blossoms; thus, the lampstand portrays the Triune God embodied in Christ as a living, golden tree of resurrection—growing, branching, budding, and blossoming in us, with us, by us, and out of us as the fruit of the light, which is good in nature, righteous in procedure, and real in expression, so that God may be expressed as reality in our daily walk—Exo. 25:31, 35; Eph. 5:8-9.
- C. To experience the golden lampstands as the testimony of Jesus, the corporate expression of Jesus (Acts 9:4-5; 1 Cor. 12:12), we must be filled with the Spirit of Jesus (Acts 16:7) by calling on the name of the Lord Jesus continually (1 Cor. 12:3; Rom. 10:12-13; Lam. 3:55-56) to bear the brands of Jesus (Gal. 6:17) as brothers and fellow partakers in the tribulation, kingdom, and endurance in Jesus (Rev. 1:9-10).

II. The testimony of Jesus is the great multitude serving God in the temple, the whole Body of God's redeemed, who have been raptured to the heavens to enjoy God's care and the Lamb's shepherding with all the spiritual blessings in the heavens and in Christ that can be enjoyed today—7:9-17; Eph. 1:3; Gal. 3:14; Gen. 12:2; cf. Rev. 21:3-4; 22:3-5; Isa. 49:10:

- A. The great multitude consists of those who have been purchased by the blood of the Lamb from every nation, tribe, people, and tongue to be the constituents of the church—Rev. 7:9a; 5:9; Rom. 11:25; Acts 15:14, 19; 1 Cor. 6:19-20.
- B. The Lamb who is in the midst of the throne will shepherd us and guide us to springs of waters of life—Rev. 7:17a:
 1. Shepherding includes feeding; under the shepherding of Christ, "I will lack nothing"—Psa. 23:1.
 2. We can never improve ourselves, and we need a shepherd to feed us all the time; He feeds the lambs with His experience as the Lamb of God, who is on the throne of God in and for the house of God—vv. 2-6; Rev. 22:1.

III. The testimony of Jesus is the bright woman, representing the whole Body of God's redeemed, with her man-child, representing the overcomers as the stronger part of God's people—12:1-17:

- A. The people of God who produce the overcomers (the man-child) are full of light, showing that God's overcoming people are light-bearers, shining through all generations—vv. 1-5; S. S. 6:10; John 8:12; Matt. 5:14; Prov. 4:18; cf. Gen. 1:16-17.
- B. The man-child signifies the overcomers who cooperate with Christ to fight against His enemy and usher in God's kingdom—Rev. 12:5-10:
 1. The way to become the man-child is for us to be strengthened into the inner man, to be empowered to experience the riches of Christ, and to be strong through putting

on the armor of God by pray-reading the killing word—Eph. 3:16, 18; 6:10-11, 17-18; Rev. 1:16; 19:13-15.

2. “They overcame him because of the blood of the Lamb and because of the word of their testimony, and they loved not their soul-life even unto death”—12:11.

IV. The testimony of Jesus is the firstfruits, signifying the overcomers raptured before the great tribulation, and the harvest, signifying the majority of the believers raptured at the end of the great tribulation—14:1-5, 14-16:

- A. At His first coming to the earth, the Lord sowed Himself into His believers; all the believers since that time, who have received Him as the seed of life, have become God’s farm, His crop, on the earth—Matt. 13:3-8, 24; 1 Cor. 3:9:
 1. The overcomers as the first ripe ones in God’s field will be reaped (raptured) before the great tribulation to be firstfruits to God and to the Lamb—Rev. 14:1-5.
 2. The majority of the believers will ripen with the help of the sufferings in the great tribulation and will be reaped at the end of the great tribulation—v. 15.
- B. The rapture is not mainly for our enjoyment but for God’s enjoyment; we need to make ourselves ready to be raptured not for our happiness but for the fulfillment of God’s purpose—12:5, 7-11; 14:1, 4b; 19:7.
- C. The meaning of rapture is to be taken into the Lord’s presence; in order to be taken into the Lord’s presence, we must be in His presence today—2 Cor. 2:10; 1 John 1:3.
- D. The rapture of the overcomers is for defeating the enemy and satisfying God; the Lord needs the man-child to fight against His enemy, but He needs the firstfruits even more for His satisfaction—Rev. 14:1, 4b; cf. S. S. 8:6, 13-14.

V. The testimony of Jesus is the victorious ones standing on the glassy sea, signifying the late overcomers who will pass through the great tribulation and overcome Antichrist and the worshipping of Antichrist—Rev. 15:2-4:

- A. The late overcomers sing the song of Moses (indicating God’s triumphant judgment over the enemy of His people) and the song of the Lamb (indicating Christ’s redemption experienced by God’s people in the presence of their enemy)—v. 3a; Exo. 15:1-18.
- B. The late overcomers praise God for His works and His ways, that is, for His acts and His principles; God’s ways are righteous in His principles and true in His promises, while His works are great in manifestation and wonderful in nature—Rev. 15:3b-4; Psa. 103:7; cf. 107:10-20.

VI. The testimony of Jesus is the bride of Christ—the overcomers who are the co-kins of Christ during the millennium—Rev. 19:7-9; 20:4, 6:

- A. The Lord’s recovery is for the preparation of the bride of Christ—19:7-9; 21:2.
- B. Ultimately, we will be conformed to be the wonderful Shulammitte, who, as the duplication of Solomon, is the greatest and ultimate figure of the New Jerusalem as the counterpart, the bride, of Christ—S. S. 6:13; Rev. 21:2, 9-10; 22:17a.
- C. The Shulammitte is likened to the dance of two camps, or two armies (Heb. *mahanaim*), in the sight of God; after Jacob saw the angels of God, the two armies of God, he named the place where he was Mahanaim and divided his wives, children, and possessions into “two armies”—S. S. 6:13; Gen. 32:2:
 1. The spiritual significance of the two armies is the strong testimony that we more than conquer, we “super-overcome,” through Him who loved us, according to the principle of the Body of Christ—Rom. 8:37; 12:5; Deut. 32:30; Eccl. 4:9-12.
 2. God does not want those who are strong in themselves; He wants only the feeble ones, the weaker ones, the women and children; those who are counted worthy to be

overcomers will be the weaker ones who depend on the Lord—1 Cor. 1:26-28; 2 Cor. 12:9-10; 13:3-5; S. S. 8:6.

VII. The testimony of Jesus is the bridal army, who fights together with Christ, the embodiment of God, to defeat Antichrist, the embodiment of Satan, with his armies—Rev. 19:14-19; 17:14:

- A. In Ephesians 5 and 6 we see the church as the bride and the warrior; in Revelation 19 we also have these two aspects of the church—Eph. 5:25-27; 6:10-20; Rev. 19:7-9, 11-16:
 - 1. Before Christ descends to earth to deal with Antichrist and the totality of human government, He will have a wedding, uniting His overcomers (who have been fighting the battle against God's enemy for years) to Himself as one entity—vv. 7-9; cf. Dan. 7:25; 6:10; Eph. 6:12.
 - 2. After His wedding Christ will come with His newly married bride to destroy Antichrist, who with his army will fight against God directly—Rev. 19:11-16.
- B. In Ephesians 5 the word is for the nourishment that leads to the beautifying of the bride for God's expression, and in Ephesians 6 the word is for the killing that enables the church as the corporate warrior to engage in spiritual warfare for God's dominion, thus fulfilling God's original intention—5:26-27; 6:17-18; Gen. 1:26.

VIII. Ultimately, the testimony of Jesus is the New Jerusalem as the ultimate consummation of the tabernacle and temple—the eternal divine-human incorporation, the eternal building, of God and man—Rev. 21:9, 3, 22:

- A. We can live out and work out the New Jerusalem as the divine-human incorporation by taking the Lord as our abode for us to be His abode—John 15:4-5:
 - 1. When we love the Lord Jesus, He manifests Himself to us, and the Father comes with Him to make an abode with us for our enjoyment; this abode is a mutual abode, in which the Triune God abides in us and we abide in Him—14:23.
 - 2. We abide in Christ that He may abide in us by dealing with the constant word in the Scriptures that is outside of us and the present word as the Spirit within us; when we abide in the Lord and let His words abide in us, we are one with Him in actuality—5:39-40; 6:63; 2 Cor. 3:6; Rev. 2:7; John 8:31; 15:7.
- B. The overcoming believers as the constituents of God's building, the New Jerusalem, are signified by jasper and other precious stones—Rev. 21:9-11, 18-21; 1 Cor. 3:12a:
 - 1. Jasper signifies the appearance of God shining with the glory of God as the light of the New Jerusalem for the expression of God—Rev. 4:3; 21:11, 18-19.
 - 2. The other precious stones signify the riches of the beauty of Christ in different aspects for the foundation of God's eternal dwelling—vv. 19-21.
 - 3. By the judging Spirit, the burning Spirit, and the flowing Spirit—the Lord Spirit—we are being transformed by the experiences of the riches of Christ as the God of resurrection gained through sufferings, consuming pressures, and the killing work of the cross—Isa. 4:4; 11:2; John 4:14b; 2 Cor. 1:8-9.
 - 4. By our growth in the divine life in Christ as the living stone, we are being transformed into precious stones; through the process of transformation, the Triune God is being wrought into and structured together with us to the praise of the glory of His grace with which He graced us in the Beloved for us to become the New Jerusalem as the ultimate testimony of Jesus and the good news to the entire universe—1 Pet. 2:4; Rev. 21:18-21; Eph. 1:3-6; cf. Luke 4:18-19.