

THE UNIQUENESS OF THE LORD'S RECOVERY

Message Two

(Friday—Second Morning Session)

The Purity of the Glorious Church versus the Mixture of the Great Harlot

Scripture Reading: Matt. 13:31-33; Rev. 2:12-17; 17:1-6; John 14:30; 17:14-21; 1 Cor. 5:6-8

I. God's goal is to gain a pure and glorious church, a God-expressing church, but Satan's strategy is to corrupt the church by bringing her into union with the world—Eph. 5:27; Rev. 2:13; 1 John 5:19; 2:15-16:

- A. The church in Pergamos prefigures the church that entered into a marriage union with the world and became a high fortified tower (Rev. 2:12-17), equivalent to the great tree prophesied by the Lord in the parable of the mustard seed (Matt. 13:31-32):
1. In the history of the early church, Satan changed his strategy from trying to destroy the church through persecution to welcoming the church as the state religion; thus, the "church" became monstrously great, Babylon the Great, the great harlot—Rev. 17:1-6.
 2. Babylon is a great tree, the lodging place of many evil persons and things, but the genuine church is a small mustard plant, an herb that produces food—Matt. 13:31-32.
 3. Since the degraded church entered into union with the world, she dwells where Satan's throne is—Rev. 2:13.
 4. Since the church as a chaste bride is espoused to Christ, her union with the world is considered spiritual fornication in the eyes of God—cf. Jer. 2:2, 13; 3:1, 14; John 4:10-18; Rev. 17:5.
 5. The worldly church has the teachings of Balaam and of the Nicolaitans:
 - a. The issue of not caring for the unique teaching of God's eternal economy is different teachings which dethrone Christ, enthrone Satan, and ruin God's testimony—1 Tim. 1:3-4; Rev. 2:13a; cf. Deut. 22:9.
 - b. The teaching of Balaam distracts believers from the person of Christ to idolatry and from the enjoyment of Christ to spiritual fornication, thus disregarding Christ as the Head—Rev. 2:14.
 - c. The teaching of the Nicolaitans destroys the function of believers as members of the Body of Christ, thus annulling and destroying the Lord's Body as His expression—v. 15.
- B. We need to be today's Antipas, who stood against all of the mixture that the worldly church brought in and practiced—v. 13:
1. Satan is the ruler of this world, but in Christ he has nothing (no ground, no chance, no hope, and no possibility in anything)—John 12:31; 14:30; cf. 15:5.
 2. Instead of being joined to the world, we need to be incorporated into the New Jerusalem by eating Christ as the hidden manna—Rev. 2:17:
 - a. The New Jerusalem is both the tabernacle and the temple of God; we are the tabernacle for God to dwell in, and God is the temple for us to

dwell in; thus, the New Jerusalem as the mutual abode of God and man is a divine-human incorporation—21:3, 22.

b. The way to be incorporated into this universal incorporation is to eat Christ as the hidden manna—2:17; Exo. 16:32-34:

(1) Christ as the hidden manna is in God the Father as the golden pot; the Father is in Christ as the ark with His two natures, divinity and humanity; and Christ as the indwelling Spirit lives in our regenerated spirit to be the reality of the Holy of Holies—cf. John 14:16-20; 2 Tim. 4:22.

(2) The more we eat Christ as the hidden manna, the more we will be incorporated into this universal incorporation; instead of going out to the world, we need to enter into the Holy of Holies to enjoy the hidden Christ as our special portion for our daily supply—John 6:57.

C. God's living and sanctifying word works in the believers to separate them from anything worldly so that they may enjoy the Triune God as the factor of their oneness—17:14-21:

1. Satan is the prince of the mixed up world, but our God is the God of purity.
2. The world is very mixed, but God's word of reality sanctifies us, makes us pure, and prepares us to be His bride—v. 17; Eph. 5:26-27; Rev. 19:8.
3. The more a person is in the word of God, the purer he becomes; a man who is not in God's word but is in the world is complicated and impure—cf. Psa. 12:6; 119:140.

II. God's goal is to gain the church as a pure loaf of unleavened bread, the reality of the meal offering, but Satan's strategy is to fully leaven the church with evil things and evil doctrines—Matt. 13:33; 1 Cor. 5:6-8; 10:17:

A. Such leavening is absolutely against the Scriptures, which strongly forbid putting any leaven into the meal offering; leaven is something added to the fine flour in order to make the bread easier to take—Lev. 2:4-5, 11:

1. Satan leavened the initial church with hypocrisy—Acts 5:1-11.
2. Satan leavened the church in Corinth with the gross sin of fornication—1 Cor. 5:1-8.
3. Satan leavened the church with different teachings, that is, with teachings other than the economy of God—1 Tim. 1:3-4.
4. Satan leavened the early church with Judaism, Gnosticism, and asceticism—Col. 2:16; Acts 15:1-2; Gal. 6:15; Acts 11:2-3; Gal. 2:12-13; 1:14; Col. 2:8, 20-23.
5. Satan leavened the church with Catholicism in the papal system, hierarchy, heresies, idolatry, and pagan practices—Rev. 2:18-29.
6. Satan leavened the church with Protestantism in hierarchy, being living in name but dead in actuality, different teachings, traditions, modernism, worldliness, and divisions—3:1-6.
7. Satan leavened the church with nationalism, racialism, socialism, liberalism, and politics—cf. Col. 3:10-11.

8. Satan leavened the church with the believers' natural man, flesh and its lust, sin in their nature and sins in their deeds, and all the evil things listed in Galatians 5:19-21.
- B. The only way to eliminate the sin of leaven is for us to daily eat Christ as the crucified, resurrected, and sinless life for the entire period of our Christian life—1 Cor. 5:6-8; Exo. 12:17-20.

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