

SHEPHERDING THE CHURCH OF GOD AS A SLAVE OF GOD

(Saturday—First Morning Session)

Message Four

Shepherding the Flock of God as a Slave of God by Living and Proclaiming Christ as the Jubilee of Grace

Scripture Reading: Lev. 25:8-17; Isa. 61:1-3; Luke 4:16-22; Acts 26:16-19

I. Christ is the year of jubilee, the year of grace, to fallen man—Luke 4:16-22; Acts 26:18; Eph. 1:14; Col. 1:12:

- A. The acceptable year of the Lord is the New Testament age of grace, typified by the year of jubilee, the fiftieth year, in which all the slaves were liberated and every man's inheritance was restored to him—Lev. 25:8-17; Isa. 61:1-3.
- B. The New Testament age of grace is a time when God accepts the returned captives of sin (Luke 15:17-24; 2 Cor. 6:2) and when those oppressed under the bondage of sin can enjoy the release of God's salvation (Rom. 7:14—8:2).
- C. We must receive the Lord Jesus as the real jubilee in us; if we have Him, we have God as our possession and can be delivered from the bondage of sin and Satan to have real freedom and rest—1 Pet. 1:8; John 8:32, 36; Matt. 11:28-30.

II. The living of the jubilee is a living in the enjoyment of Christ, a living of enjoying God as our real inheritance and real freedom; this corporate living of the jubilee is the reality of the Body of Christ:

- A. To be in the jubilee is to eat the Lord Jesus as the real produce of the good land, take Him as our dwelling place for our rest, and be freed from the slavery of sin and from the bondage of law and religion—John 6:57; Deut. 8:7-10; Col. 1:12; John 15:5; Psa. 16:5; 90:1; Rom. 6:6-7; Gal. 5:1.
- B. In the jubilee all things are pleasant and satisfying to our heart, and we are free from anxiety, at ease, and exultant; hence, everything is to our satisfaction—Isa. 30:15a; 33:21-22; 61:1-2; 66:12; Psa. 46:4; John 4:10, 14.
- C. The secret of a Christian's enjoyment of rest is his gaining Christ, the eternal God, as his enjoyment; if we have God, everything is to our satisfaction:
 - 1. Paul learned the secret of living in the jubilee, the secret of gaining Christ in any kind of environment—Phil. 4:5-7, 11-13.
 - 2. Everything can be satisfying to us only after we have gained the all-inclusive Christ as our enjoyment; it is not outward persons, matters, or things but Christ within us who enables us to be calm and free of worries as we face all kinds of situations—John 16:33.
 - 3. When we receive Christ as our Savior and life, He comes into us to be our jubilee, but unless we allow Him to live in us and unless we live by Him, we are not practically living in the jubilee—8:11-12.
 - 4. If our heart is set on any person, thing, or matter other than the Lord, this is idolatry, and the end is wretchedness—1 John 5:21; cf. Ezek. 14:3, 5; 6:9.
- D. The living of the jubilee is a life in which we take God Himself, Christ Himself, in every situation; then He becomes the primary factor and center in us to lead us and overrule all the troubles of human life—John 6:16-21; Col. 1:17b, 18b.

- E. Our possession is God, and our freedom comes from our enjoyment of God; freedom means release, to be freed from all bondage, all heavy burden, all oppression, and all enslavement—1 Cor. 6:12:
 1. Christ as the jubilee frees us from our poverty, captivity, blindness, and oppression—Eccl. 1:2, 14; 3:11; Phil. 3:8; 2 Pet. 2:22; Luke 12:21; Rev. 3:17.
 2. We can be released and have real freedom only by enjoying Christ as the life-giving Spirit, the law of the Spirit of life—Rom. 7:24; 8:2.
 3. Only those who enjoy God do not practice sin and are really free—John 8:11-12, 24, 28, 31-36.
 4. If we do not enjoy God sufficiently, we will still be in bondage to many things; making up our mind will not work; we must learn to contact our living Lord to enjoy Him—cf. 4:24; 1 Cor. 1:9.
 5. The only way to be released from the three kinds of labor in human life—the labor to be a good person, the labor of anxiety, and the labor of suffering—is to take Christ as our enjoyment, satisfaction, and rest—Rom. 7:24—8:2; Phil. 4:5-7; 2 Cor. 12:9.
- F. The Christian life should be a life full of enjoying the Lord, a life full of joy and praises; when we enjoy the Lord fully, He becomes our jubilee:
 1. The tone of an overcoming living is the tone of rejoicing, thanking, and praising God continually—1 Thes. 5:16-18.
 2. The overcoming life can survive only in an environment of thanksgiving and praise—v. 18; Col. 3:17; Psa. 106:12; 2 Chron. 20:20-22.

III. Our preaching of the gospel is our blowing of the trumpet of God's complete salvation to proclaim to the world, "Behold, now is the well-acceptable time; behold, now is the day of salvation," the year of jubilee—2 Cor. 6:2; Acts 26:16-19:

- A. The word *jubilee* in Leviticus 25:10 means "a time of shouting" or "a time of the trumpeting of the ram's horn"; the trumpeting of the ram's horn signifies the preaching of the gospel as the proclaiming of liberty in the New Testament jubilee to all the sinners sold under sin that they may return to God and God's family, the household of God, and may rejoice with shouting in the New Testament enjoyment of God's salvation—1 Pet. 1:8; Isa. 11:2-3.
- B. Announcing the gospel to the poor, proclaiming release to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, and sending away in release those who are oppressed are the freedoms and blessings of the jubilee—Luke 4:18-19:
 1. To announce the gospel to the poor is to preach the gospel to those who are without God, to those who are poor in heavenly, spiritual, and divine things; people who live in the world without God do not have hope—12:21; Rev. 3:17; Eph. 2:12.
 2. To proclaim release to the captives is to impart Christ as the Emancipator into those who are prisoners of war, exiles, and prisoners under Satan's bondage; we can be released and have real freedom only by enjoying Christ as the liberating, life-giving Spirit—1 Cor. 15:45b; 2 Cor. 3:17-18.
 3. To proclaim recovery of sight to the blind is to open the eyes of those who are fallen and turn them from darkness to light so that they may see the

divine things in the spiritual realm; to see these things requires spiritual sight and divine light—Acts 26:18.

4. To send away in release those who are oppressed is to bring those who are being oppressed under Satan in sickness or sin into the enjoyment of Christ as the release of God's salvation—Luke 13:11-13; John 8:34, 36.

IV. The believers' enjoyment and proclaiming of Christ as the jubilee of God's grace will issue in the full enjoyment of Christ as the jubilee in the millennium and in the fullest enjoyment of Christ in the New Jerusalem in the new heaven and new earth—Psa. 36:8-9; Rom. 14:17; Rev. 22:1-5.