

**Outline of  
the Messages for the Full-time Training  
in the Spring Term of 2009**

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**GENERAL SUBJECT:  
THE INTRINSIC SIGNIFICANCE OF THE CHURCH  
AS THE TEMPLE OF GOD—THE GOAL OF GOD’S ETERNAL ECONOMY**

Message Sixteen

**The Changing of Death into Life  
for the Building Up of the Mystical Body of Christ as the Temple of God**

Scripture Reading: John 2:1-22

- I. The Lord within us is aspiring to go on from the tabernacle church life in the wilderness of the soul to the temple church life with Christ, the all-inclusive Spirit, as the reality of the good land in our spirit—Heb. 6:1a; Josh. 3:14-17; Deut. 8:7-8; Eph. 2:21-22; Col. 1:12; 2:6-7; Rom. 1:9; 8:16:**
  - A. The tabernacle typifies God’s church on earth, His church in the localities, whereas the temple signifies the church as the reality of the Body of Christ; the local churches are the precious procedure to bring us to the reality of the Body as the glorious goal of God’s economy—Eph. 1:22-23; cf. Rev. 21:10-11.
  - B. The testimony of the reality of the Body of Christ is God’s final recovery—with Christ being everything to us, with the reality of the oneness of the Body of Christ, and with all the members of His Body functioning—Eph. 1:17; 3:16—4:6, 16.
- II. God’s thoughts and ways to build up the church as the temple of God are higher than ours; we need to forsake our thoughts and our ways and return to Jehovah our God to eat His word and drink the water in His word so that we may be filled, strengthened, renewed, sanctified, transformed, and conformed to His image for the building up of the Body of Christ—Isa. 55:1-11; 57:20 and footnote 1; John 2:19; 3:34; 6:63; 17:17; Eph. 5:26; 2 Cor. 3:16-18; Rom. 8:28-29.**
- III. The Gospel of John reveals that Christ is our life for God’s building and that the changing of death into life (life’s principle) is for the building up of the mystical Body of Christ as the temple of God (life’s purpose)—2:1-22:**
  - A. The Gospel of John is a book of signs, which are symbols with spiritual significance, used to signify the matter of life—v. 11; 20:30-31:
    1. Both the changing of the water into wine and the raising up of the Lord’s destroyed body are signs—2:1-11; Matt. 12:38-42; cf. John 2:18-19; Hosea 6:1-3.
    2. The changing of death into life is the principle, the means, and the way that we experience Him as resurrection for the building up of the church as His temple.
    3. Christ as the real Jonah was buried in the heart of the earth for three days and resurrected so that we could be one with Him to go out like a dove and preach the gospel of peace—Jonah 1:1; Matt. 12:38-41; Eph. 2:17.
    4. Christ as the real Solomon became the life-giving Spirit as the reality of resurrection in our spirit to build up the church as the temple of God by prophesying through His members to speak the word of wisdom for the building up of the

church as His Body—Matt. 12:42; 1 Kings 10:23-24; Matt. 16:18; Eph. 4:16; 1 Cor. 8:1-3; 12:7-8; 14:4b, 12, 31.

**IV. The fact that the Lord came to a wedding feast in Cana of Galilee on the third day indicates that He comes to us in resurrection—John 2:1-11; 3:3, 5-6; 4:10, 14; 11:25, 41-44; cf. 2 Kings 2:19-22:**

- A. Cana, as a land of reeds, signifies the Lord's coming into a world full of weak and fragile people—John 2:1; Isa. 42:3; Matt. 12:20; 11:7.
- B. Marriage signifies the continuation of human life, and a wedding feast signifies the enjoyment of human life; to say that every day is a wedding and that human life is a wedding feast means that we hope, or expect, good things to happen to us.
- C. During the course of the wedding feast in Cana, "the wine ran out"—John 2:3:
  - 1. The wine, the life juice of the grape, signifies human life, and the wine running out signifies that our human life with its enjoyment (such as our health, our money, our possessions, our natural relationships, etc.) will always run out.
  - 2. The Lord Jesus as our resurrection life never runs out—*Hymns*, #523, stanza 4.
- D. The Lord Jesus told the people to fill the six stone waterpots with water, and they filled them up to the brim—John 2:6-7:
  - 1. The six waterpots signify the created man, who was created by God on the sixth day (Gen. 1:26-27, 31); the water here signifies death (vv. 2, 6; Exo. 14:21; Matt. 3:16).
  - 2. The changing of water into wine, the changing of death into life, is transformation; the Christian life is not a character-changing life or a behavior-improving life but a matter of changing our death into life—John 2:8-11.
  - 3. Even as the master of the feast discovered that the new wine was better than the former wine (vv. 9-10), we too will find that the life we received through regeneration is much better than our natural life.

**V. The principle of life for the purpose of life is carried out through our experience of the crucified and resurrected Christ as the seed of God growing within us; this can be seen in the geographical position of the good land and the six cities of refuge—v. 19; 1 John 3:9; Num. 34:12; 35:6, 15-16, 25:**

- A. The best part of the good land is surrounded by two seas—the Mediterranean Sea and the Dead Sea—and a river—the Jordan; this indicates that the enjoyment of the resurrected and ascended Christ (the elevated, uplifted land) must be in the sphere, the territory, of His death—34:12; John 12:24-26; Phil. 3:7-11; Col. 3:1-4.
- B. The cities of refuge typify the all-inclusive Christ as the embodiment of the redeeming God, into whom mistake-making sinners can flee for refuge—Num. 35:6:
  - 1. The cities of refuge were set up for any person who killed another person unintentionally (vv. 15-25); if any sinner repents, God will regard him as a mistaken sinner who can flee into Christ as his refuge and receive His forgiveness—Luke 24:47; 1 Cor. 2:8; 1 John 1:7, 9.
  - 2. There were six cities of refuge, three on each side of the Jordan; the number six signifies mistake-making man who was created on the sixth day—Gen. 1:26-31.
  - 3. The number three signifies the Triune God as the refuge for the man who makes mistakes; the number two (the two sets of three cities each) signifies a testimony standing in the universe that the Triune God is living on earth among human beings to be their city of refuge—Num. 35:13-14.
  - 4. That the cities of refuge were to be not only for the children of Israel but also for

the strangers and sojourners among them signifies that the Triune God as the refuge for mistake-making man is for all mankind; furthermore, the distribution of the six cities of refuge in different places indicates that Christ, the embodiment of the Triune God, is near and available; He has spread among men, to the very place where we are, to be a city of refuge for all those who make mistakes—v. 15; Psa. 2:12; 16:1-3; 17:7-8; 18:1-2; 36:7-8; 57:1; 91:1-2; 143:8-10; Isa. 32:1-2.

**VI. The purpose of life is declared in the Lord's words: "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up"—John 2:19:**

- A. Through His death, the destruction of His physical body on the cross, the Lord bore our transgressions and iniquities to redeem and justify us, and His death was for the healing of our diseases—Isa. 53:4-6; Rom. 3:23-26; 1 Pet. 2:24.
- B. The destruction of the Lord's physical body was also the destruction of the devil, who had the power of death; when He died on the cross, the old creation, the old man, the flesh, Satan, sin, sins, and the world were crucified on the cross; thus, in the eyes of God, after Christ's crucifixion the entire universe has been cleared up—Heb. 2:14; Rom. 6:6; Gal. 2:20; 5:24; John 1:29; 3:14; 6:70-71; 12:31; Matt. 16:23; 1 Cor. 15:3.
- C. The destruction of the Lord's physical body and His being raised up in three days were also His dying as a grain of wheat and resurrecting to release and dispense the divine life of God as the divine fire of God into His many believers to make His many believers the reproduction of God—John 12:24; Luke 12:49-51.
- D. Through Christ's death and resurrection, His physical body has been increased to be His corporate and mystical Body, which is the church as the temple of God, the house of God—1 Cor. 3:16-17; 1 Tim. 3:15; 1 Pet. 2:5; Eph. 2:21-22.
- E. The many abodes are the many members of the Body of Christ, which is God's temple—John 14:2, 23; Rom. 12:5; 1 Cor. 3:16-17.
- F. As the many grains produced by Christ's life-releasing death and the many abodes produced by Christ's life-dispensing resurrection, we must be those who love Him to the uttermost by our living a crucified life for the manifestation of the resurrection life by the power of the treasure in the earthen vessels—John 14:21, 23; Rom. 8:28-29; 2 Cor. 4:7-18; 12:7-9.

**VII. The seven words spoken by the Lord on the cross reveal that His death by the shedding of His blood was for our judicial redemption and that His death for the releasing of His life was for our organic salvation—John 19:34; 12:24:**

- A. "Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing"—Luke 23:34.
- B. "Truly I say to you, Today you shall be with Me in Paradise"—v. 43.
- C. "Woman, behold, your son...Behold, your mother"—John 19:26-27.
- D. "My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?"—Matt. 27:46.
- E. "I thirst"—John 19:28.
- F. "It is finished!"—v. 30.
- G. "Father, into Your hands I commit My spirit"—Luke 23:46.

**VIII. The Lord's death on the cross finished His work of redemption, but He is still working within us and through us to accomplish His organic salvation; He changes all our death into life to build us up to be the temple of God, making us the one new man as the masterpiece and goal of His eternal economy—John 5:17; 1 Cor. 15:58; 16:10; Rom. 5:10; Eph. 2:10, 15.**