

VITAL FACTORS FOR THE RECOVERY OF THE CHURCH LIFE

(Friday—First Morning Session)

Message One

The Factor of Cooperating with the Lord to Bring In a New Revival That Will End This Age

Scripture Reading: Hab. 3:2; Acts 26:19, 22; Matt. 14:19, 22-23; Phil. 1:19-22, 25; John 21:15-17

I. Among God's elect there has always been an aspiration to be revived—Hab. 3:2; Hosea 6:2; Rom. 8:20-22; Psa. 119:25, 50, 107, 154; John 6:57, 63; 2 Cor. 3:3, 6.

II. We can enter into a new revival by arriving at the highest peak of the divine revelation given to us by God—the revelation of the eternal economy of God (1 Tim. 1:3-4; 1 Cor. 9:17; Acts 26:19, 22); this is the great answer to the great question concerning God's purpose in His creation of man and in His dealing with His chosen people (Gen. 1:26; Job 10:13; cf. Eph. 3:9):

- A. The mystery hidden in God's heart is God's eternal economy (1:10; 3:9; 1 Tim. 1:4), which is God's eternal intention with His heart's desire to dispense Himself in His Divine Trinity as the Father in the Son by the Spirit into His chosen people to be their life and nature that they may be the same as He is as His duplication (Rom. 8:29; 1 John 3:2) to become an organism, the Body of Christ as the new man (Eph. 2:15-16), for God's fullness, God's expression (1:22-23; 3:19), which will consummate in the New Jerusalem (Rev. 21:2—22:5).
- B. God becoming man that man might become God in life and in nature but not in the Godhead for the producing and building up of the Body of Christ to consummate the New Jerusalem is the essence of the entire Bible, the "diamond" in the "box" of the Bible, the eternal economy of God—Gen. 1:26; John 12:24; Rom. 8:29:
 1. God became man through incarnation by participating in man's humanity; man becomes God in life and nature but not in the Godhead through transformation by participating in God's divinity—John 1:14; 2 Cor. 3:18; Col. 3:4; 2 Pet. 1:4; Phil. 2:5; Rom. 8:29; Heb. 2:10; Eph. 1:5; Rom. 8:19; 1 John 3:2; John 1:12-13.
 2. This divine-human romance is the subject of the entire Bible, the content of God's economy, and the secret of the entire universe—S. S. 1:1; 6:13; cf. Hab. 1:1; 2:4; Rom. 1:17:
 - a. Christ is divine and human, and His transformed lover is human and divine; they are the same in life and nature, perfectly matching each other.
 - b. The Triune God consummated to be the Husband and the tripartite man transformed to be the bride are to be one couple, a corporate, great God-man—Rev. 21:2, 9; 22:17a.
- C. The central revelation of God and of the Lord's recovery is God becoming the flesh (John 1:1, 14), the flesh becoming the life-giving Spirit (1 Cor. 15:45b), and the life-giving Spirit becoming the sevenfold intensified Spirit (Rev. 1:4; 3:1; 4:5; 5:6) to build up the church (Matt. 16:18) that becomes the Body of Christ (Eph. 4:15-16) and that consummates the New Jerusalem (Rev. 21:2, 9; 22:17a; cf. Gen. 2:22; John 19:34).
- D. God and man will become one entity, and that one entity is the mingling of divinity with humanity, which will consummate in the New Jerusalem as the conclusion of the entire Bible—Rev. 21:3, 22, 2, 9; cf. Lev. 2:4-5; Psa. 92:10.
- E. "I hope that the saints in all the churches throughout the earth, especially the co-workers and the elders, will see this revelation and then rise up to pray that God would give us

a new revival—a revival which has never been recorded in history”—*Life-study of 1 and 2 Chronicles*, p. 15.

III. If we practice living the life of a God-man, which is the reality of the Body of Christ, spontaneously a corporate model will be built up, a model living in the economy of God; this model will be the greatest revival in the history of the church to bring the Lord back—Psa. 48:2 and footnote 1; Rev. 3:12, 21:

- A. God needs a corporate people to be raised up by His grace through the high peak of the divine revelation to live a life according to this revelation; a revival is the practice, the practicality, of the vision we have seen.
- B. The followers of Christ (Matt. 5:1; 28:19) were disciplined through Christ’s human living on the earth, as the model of a God-man—living God by denying Himself in humanity (John 5:19, 30), revolutionizing their concept concerning man (Phil. 3:10; 1:21a).
- C. Our life should be a copy, a reproduction, of the model of the life of Christ, the first God-man—1 Pet. 2:21; Matt. 11:28-29; Eph. 4:20-21; John 17:4; 5:17; Phil. 1:19-22, 25.
- D. The Spirit of life and reality who was breathed into the disciples would guide them into all the reality of what they had observed of the Lord when they were with Him for three and a half years—John 16:13; 20:22:
 - 1. At the commencement of the first God-man’s ministry, He was baptized to fulfill all righteousness, recognizing that according to His flesh (His humanity—1:14; Rom. 1:3; 8:3), He was good for nothing but death and burial—Matt. 3:15-17.
 - 2. He trained His disciples to learn from Him (11:29) in the miracle of feeding five thousand people with five loaves and two fish; His “looking up to heaven” to bless the five loaves and two fish (14:19) indicates His realizing that the source of blessing was not Him, the sent One, but the Father, the sending One (John 10:30; 5:19, 30; 7:6, 8, 18).
 - 3. The Lord did not remain in the issue of the miracle with the crowds but went away from them to be with the Father privately on the mountain in prayer—Matt. 14:22-23; Luke 6:12.
 - 4. The Lord lived a life of contacting God (Mark 1:35; Luke 5:16; 6:12; 9:28; Heb. 7:25), living in the presence of God without ceasing (Acts 10:38c; John 8:29; 16:32), and of contacting people, ministering God into them to bring them into the jubilee of God’s New Testament economy (Luke 4:18-19; Heb. 8:2; cf. Gen. 14:18; Acts 6:4).
 - 5. He was a man in whom Satan, the ruler of the world, had nothing (no ground, no chance, no hope, no possibility in anything)—John 14:30b, cf. v. 20; 2 Cor. 12:2a; Col. 1:27; 2 Tim. 4:22; John 3:6b; 4:23-24; 1 John 5:4, 18.
- E. The only way to live the life of a God-man according to the Lord’s model is to set our entire being on the mingled spirit, walking, living, and having our being according to the mingled spirit—Rom. 8:2, 4, 10, 6, 11, 16; 1 Cor. 6:17; Rom. 10:12; Gal. 5:25; Eph. 6:17-18; 1 Thes. 5:16-20; 1 Tim. 4:6-7; 2 Tim. 1:6-7.
- F. “We should all declare that we want to live the life of a God-man. Eventually, the God-men will be the victors, the overcomers, the Zion within Jerusalem. This will bring in a new revival which has never been seen in history, and this will end this age”—*Life-study of 1 and 2 Chronicles*, p. 28.

IV. We can enter into a new revival by participating in Christ’s heavenly ministry to feed His lambs and shepherd His sheep in order to take care of God’s flock, which is the church that issues in the Body of Christ; this is to incorporate the apostolic ministry with Christ’s heavenly ministry—John 21:15-17; 1 Pet. 2:25; 5:1-4; Heb. 13:20-21; Rev. 1:12-13:

- A. We need to shepherd people according to the pattern of the Lord Jesus in His ministry for carrying out God's eternal economy—Matt. 9:36; John 10:11; Heb. 13:20; 1 Pet. 5:4:
1. The content of God's entire New Testament economy in His complete salvation is Christ as the Son of Man cherishing us by redeeming us from sin, accomplishing His judicial redemption through His death (1 Tim. 1:15; Eph. 1:7), and Christ as the Son of God nourishing us to impart the divine life into us abundantly, carrying out His organic salvation in His resurrection (John 10:10; 1 Cor. 15:45b; Eph. 5:29).
 2. Our not having the Father's loving and forgiving heart and the Savior's shepherding and seeking spirit are the reason for our barrenness—Luke 15:1-24.
 3. We need to cherish people (to make them happy and to make them feel pleasant and comfortable) in the humanity of Jesus (Matt. 9:10; Luke 7:34); we need to nourish people (to feed them with the all-inclusive Christ in His ministry of three stages) in the divinity of Christ—Matt. 24:45-47.
 4. Christ had to pass through Samaria, purposely detouring to Sychar to gain one immoral woman, cherishing her by asking her to give Him something to drink in order to nourish her with the flowing Triune God as the river of water of life—John 4:3-14; Rev. 22:1.
 5. As the One without sin, He did not condemn the adulterous woman but cherished her for the forgiveness of her sins judicially and for the setting free from her sins organically (John 8:1-11, 32, 36); it is also significant that the first one saved by Christ through His crucifixion was a robber sentenced to death (Luke 23:42-43).
 6. The Lord went to Jericho just to visit and gain one person, a chief tax collector, and His preaching was a shepherding (19:1-10); He also cherished the parents by laying His hands on their children (Matt. 19:13-15).
- B. We need to shepherd people according to the pattern of the apostle Paul, who shepherded the saints as a nursing mother and an exhorting father in order to take care of God's flock—1 Thes. 2:7-8, 11-12; 1 Tim. 1:16; Acts 20:28:
1. Paul shepherded the saints in Ephesus by teaching them “publicly and from house to house” (v. 20) and by admonishing each one of the saints with tears for three years (vv. 31, 19), declaring to them all the counsel of God (v. 27).
 2. Paul had an intimate concern for the believers (2 Cor. 7:2-7; Philem. 7, 12), and he came down to the weak ones' level so that he could gain them (2 Cor. 11:28-29; 1 Cor. 9:22; cf. Matt. 12:20).
 3. He was willing to spend what he had, referring to his possessions, and to spend what he was, referring to his being, for the sake of the saints (2 Cor. 12:15); he was a drink offering, one with Christ as the wine producer, sacrificing himself for others' enjoyment of Christ (Phil. 2:17; Judg. 9:13; Eph. 3:2).
 4. Paul walked by the Spirit to honor God so that he could minister the Spirit to honor man—2 Cor. 3:3, 6, 8; Gal. 5:16, 25; Judg. 9:9.
 5. Paul indicated in his teaching that the church is a home to raise up people, a hospital to heal and recover them, and a school to teach and edify them—Eph. 2:19; 1 Thes. 5:14; 1 Cor. 14:31.
 6. He revealed that love is the most excellent way for us to be anything and to do anything for the building up of the Body of Christ—8:1; 12:31; 13:4-8a; Eph. 1:4; 3:17; 4:2, 15-16; 5:2; 6:24; Rev. 2:4-5; Col. 1:18b; 1 Thes. 1:3.
- C. “I hope that there will be a genuine revival among us by our receiving this burden of shepherding. If all the churches receive this teaching to participate in Christ's wonderful shepherding, there will be a big revival in the recovery”—*The Collected Works of Witness Lee, 1994–1997*, vol. 5, “The Vital Groups,” p. 92.