

Message Seven

**The Spirit Speaking to the Churches,
the One Who Has the Key of David,
and the One Who Will Dine with the Overcomers**

Scripture Reading: Rev. 3:7-22

I. In Revelation 2 and 3 Christ is the Spirit who speaks to all the churches:

- A. In Revelation 2 and 3 the speaking of the unlimited, life-releasing, sevenfold intensified, pneumatic Christ to the seven churches at the beginning of each epistle respectively (2:1, 8, 12, 18; 3:1, 7, 14) becomes the speaking of the sevenfold intensified, all-inclusive life-giving Spirit to all the seven churches at the end of each epistle universally (2:7, 11, 17, 29; 3:6, 13, 22).
- B. Thus, the speaking Christ becomes the speaking Spirit, the Spirit who speaks to all the churches; Christ speaks to a particular local church, and the Spirit speaks to the universal Body.
- C. This not only indicates that the Spirit is the Lord and that the Lord is the Spirit, but it also emphasizes that in the darkness of the church's degradation the Spirit is vitally important, as indicated by the sevenfold intensified Spirit in 1:4.
- D. The seven epistles in Revelation 2 and 3 are words spoken by the Lord Jesus, but today when we read them, the seven Spirits of God speak these words to us in our spirit for the purpose of God's economy; the Lord's word at the beginning of each epistle is to a certain local church, but when the people from all the ages read it, it becomes the Spirit's speaking to all the churches.
- E. The speaking of the Spirit always turns us to the infusing of Christ; the Spirit's speaking is Christ's infusing—cf. 2 Cor. 3:16-18:
 1. Whenever we listen to the speaking of the seven Spirits of God to the churches, we are immediately under a precious, sweet, and dear transfusing, an infusing that changes us, transforms us, makes us the proper material, and builds us into God's building.
 2. Whatever must go to the lake of fire is burned away by the seven lamps (Rev. 4:5), and now we are under the seven eyes (5:6), being infused with all that Christ is in order that we may become a part of the New Jerusalem.
- F. Even though the believers in the churches are in a position to hear the Spirit's speaking and thus can easily have ears to hear, not all of them will closely follow His speaking; hence, there is the call for the overcomers.
- G. Those who have an ear to hear what the Spirit says to the churches should hear, and those who hear will be overcomers:
 1. The Lord always wants to open our ears to hear His voice so that we may see things according to His economy—Job 33:14-16; Isa. 50:4-5; Exo. 21:6.
 2. The heavy ears need to be circumcised—Jer. 6:10; Acts 7:51.
 3. The sinners' ears need to be cleansed with the redeeming blood and anointed with the Spirit—Lev. 14:14, 17, 28.
 4. To serve the Lord as priests, we must have our ears cleansed with the redeeming blood—Exo. 29:20; Lev. 8:23-24.
 5. As the Spirit is speaking to the churches, we all need an opened, circumcised, cleansed, and anointed ear to hear the Spirit's speaking.
- H. The Spirit's speaking is regarding the seven kinds of churches in church history: the initial church (Ephesus), the suffering church (Smyrna), the worldly church (Pergamos),

the apostate church (Thyatira), the reformed church (Sardis), the recovered church (Philadelphia), and the degraded recovered church (Laodicea):

1. The last four kinds of churches will all remain until the Lord comes back.
2. Undoubtedly, only the recovered church can fulfill God's eternal purpose, and only she is what the Lord is after; we must take the Lord's choice.
3. Laodicea is a distorted Philadelphia, having lukewarmness and spiritual pride—Rev. 3:14-17:
 - a. Laodicea means to know everything but in reality to be fervent about nothing; in name it has everything, but it cannot sacrifice its life for anything; it remembers its former glory but forgets its present condition before God.
 - b. If we want to continue in the way of Philadelphia, we must remember to humble ourselves before God—cf. vv. 7-22; Isa. 57:15; 66:1-2.

II. In the recovered church (Philadelphia), Christ is seen as the One upon whose shoulder the key of (the treasury of) the house of God (typified by the house of David for the building up of the kingdom of God) is set—22:22; Rev. 3:7:

- A. To the recovered church, Christ is the One who has the key of David, the key of the kingdom, with authority to open and to shut; the Lord has given the recovered church in the one accord an opened door that no one can shut—v. 8; cf. Ps. 133.
- B. The key of David opens the door for us to be transformed into a white stone and built into the house of God as a pillar with the name of God, the name of the New Jerusalem, and the new name of the Lord—Rev. 2:17; 3:12:
 1. For us to be built into God, become a constituent of the New Jerusalem, and become a part of the new Christ is humanly impossible, but the law of the Spirit of life within us contains an element that deals with impossibility—Rom. 8:2; Rev. 3:7-13; cf. Gen. 28:12-19; John 1:51.
 2. Christ has the key to control the door of God's treasury, in which are the riches of God in Christ for our enjoyment; we have experienced both His opening and His shutting up of these riches to us—Eph. 4:30; 1 Thes. 5:17; 1 John 1:7, 9:
 - a. In order to enjoy His riches as the treasure, we need to remain in the touch with the Lord, staying in contact with the Lord according to the sense of life, to be poor in spirit and pure in heart—2 Cor. 2:10; Rom. 8:6; 10:12-13; Col. 3:16; Matt. 5:3, 8.
 - b. In order to enjoy His riches as the treasure, we need to learn to exercise the keys of denying the self, taking up the cross, and losing the soul-life; all of us are "Shebnas," who should be removed and replaced by Christ for Him to be everything in us and to us and do everything through us and for us—Isa. 22:15-19; Matt. 16:24-25.

III. In the degraded recovered church, Christ is seen as the One who will dine with the overcomers and give the overcomers to sit with Him on His throne, as He overcame and sat with His Father on His throne—Rev. 3:20-21:

- A. "Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if anyone hears My voice and opens the door, then I will come in to him and dine with him and he with Me"—v. 20:
 1. The door is not the door of the hearts of individuals but the door of the church; the Lord as the Head of the church is standing outside the degraded church, knocking at her door.
 2. The door is the door of the church, but the door is opened by individual believers; the church in Laodicea has knowledge but does not have the Lord's presence.
 3. In the eyes of the Lord the degraded recovered church is (1) wretched because she is proud of being rich in the vain knowledge of doctrine but in reality is sorely poor in

the experience of the riches of Christ; (2) miserable because she is naked, blind, and full of shame and darkness; (3) poor because she is poor in the experience of Christ and in the spiritual reality of God's economy; (4) blind because she lacks true spiritual insight in the genuine spiritual things; and (5) naked because she does not live by Christ or live Christ as her subjective righteousness, as the second garment in her daily walk—vv. 15-17; cf. Psa. 45:1, 9-14.

4. The Lord is dealing with the whole church, but the acceptance of the Lord's dealing must be a personal and subjective matter.
 5. To dine with the Lord is not merely to eat one item of food but to partake of the riches of a meal, a feast; this may imply the fulfillment of the type of the children of Israel eating the rich produce of the good land of Canaan—Josh. 5:10-12.
 6. Through our enjoyment of Christ as the tree of life, the hidden manna, and the feast, we will be mingled with Him in our constitution as one entity in order to express Him as the New Jerusalem—Rev. 2:7, 17; 3:20.
- B. "He who overcomes, to him I will give to sit with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat with My Father on His throne"—v. 21:
1. To sit with the Lord on His throne will be a prize to the overcomer, that he may participate in the Lord's authority and be a co-king with Him in ruling over the whole earth in the coming millennial kingdom—Luke 19:11-27; Matt. 25:21, 23.
 2. God's intention is to work Himself into man and to work on man in order that man can be on the throne; His desire is to make us people of the throne—Rev. 2:26-27; 3:21; 22:5; cf. Isa. 14:12-14.
 3. Through His crucifixion, resurrection, and ascension, the Lord Jesus was brought to the throne; a real man whose name is Jesus is on the throne (Ezek. 1:26); now today the Lord of heaven and earth, the Lord of the universe, is a man; this is why we declare, "Jesus is Lord," and this is why we call, "O Lord Jesus."
 4. The Lord Jesus led the way to the throne; He was the Pioneer, the Forerunner (Heb. 6:20; 2:6-9), cutting the path to the throne; He has cut the path and taken the lead so that we may follow (vv. 10-12).
 5. Now we are marching to the throne, for God intends to bring us into glory and to set us on the throne; God desires to manifest Himself through man, and He desires to reign, to administrate, through man; God's intention is to cast Satan down and to redeem many of those taken captive by Satan and bring them to His throne.
 6. We have been called to be sons of God, and we are destined to be kings, but we need God to work in us and on us to qualify us for kingship—Rom. 5:17, 21; cf. Ezek. 1:22, 26; Matt. 8:9.