

# THE VISION AND EXPERIENCE OF THE CORPORATE CHRIST, THE BODY CHRIST, AS THE TESTIMONY OF JESUS TO USHER IN THE KINGDOM OF GOD

## Message One

### The Lord's Recovery of the Corporate Christ – the Body-Christ

Scripture Reading: 1 Cor. 12:12-13; Eph. 4:1-6, 16; Col. 2:19

- I. **What we need today is the heavenly, living, up-to-date, and instant vision of the Lord's present recovery; we need to ask the Lord to free us from the "cage" of our religious and natural concepts so that we may soar in a clear sky to see and be recovered back to God's original intention and His central revelation—Acts 26:18; Ezek. 1:1-3, 22, 26; Matt. 2:10, 12:**
  - A. The overcomers in the Lord's recovery experience the Spirit-Christ as the reality of God, the Word-Christ as the speaking of God, and the Light-Christ as the shining of God—Gen. 1:1-3; 2 Cor. 4:6.
  - B. The overcomers in the Lord's recovery experience the hiding God in the intrinsic, divine history within the outward human history—Isa. 45:15; Esth. 2:7; 4:14-16; 10:3; Neh. 2:10; 1 Sam. 4:3, 21-22; Dan. 1:6-8; 2:44-45; 4:17, 26.
  - C. The overcomers in the Lord's recovery have their whole being aimed at the central revelation of God and the goal of God's economy—6:10; 1 Kings 8:48; cf. 2 Kings 22:8-11; 23:25.
- II. **The central revelation of God is the progressive revelation of God in the Bible—the "bachelor" God, the incarnated God, the redeeming God, the indwelling God, and the incorporated God:**
  - A. At the beginning of the Bible there is one single God, the "bachelor" God, and at the end there is the "married" God, the ultimately incorporated God, the corporate God, the New Jerusalem—Gen. 1:1, 26; 2:18; Rev. 21:2, 9-10.
  - B. The Lord's recovery is the recovery of Christ in His full ministry of three stages—incarnation, inclusion, and intensification; the Lord's recovery is God becoming the flesh, the flesh becoming the life-giving Spirit, and the life-giving Spirit becoming the sevenfold intensified Spirit to build up the church that becomes the Body of Christ and that consummates the New Jerusalem:
    1. *God becoming the flesh* is the "bachelor" God becoming the incarnated God and the redeeming God—John 1:14, 29.
    2. *The flesh becoming the life-giving Spirit, and the life-giving Spirit becoming the sevenfold intensified Spirit* is the indwelling God as the compounded God and the intensified God—1 Cor. 15:45b; Rev. 1:4; 3:1; 4:5; 5:6.
    3. *The built-up church that becomes the Body of Christ and that consummates the New Jerusalem* is the incorporated God, the Body-Christ, that consummates the corporate God, the New Jerusalem, the ultimate union, mingling, and incorporation of the processed and consummated Triune God with the processed and consummated tripartite church—John 17:21; Eph. 4:4-6, 16; Col. 2:19; Rev. 19:7-9; 21:2, 9-10.

**III. The Lord's present recovery is the recovery of the Body-Christ ("the Christ") in the church life; the Body-Christ is the incorporated God—1 Cor. 12:12-13; Acts 9:4-5, 15; Col. 2:19; Eph. 4:1-6, 15-16; John 14:23; 17:21:**

- A. First Corinthians 12:12 says, "Even as the body is one and has many members, yet all the members of the body, being many, are one body, so also is the Christ"; "the Christ" in this verse is not the individual Christ but the corporate Christ, Christ incorporated with all His members.
- B. The Lord's recovery is the recovery of "Christification," a recovery purely and wholly of the person of Christ to gain the reality of the Body-Christ in the church life—1 Thes. 5:23; Phil. 1:19-21a; 3:8-14; 2 Cor. 2:10; Col. 3:10-11.
- C. Today the Lord is building the Body-Christ in the church life; in the Body-Christ, Christ is wrought into all His members, and all His members are wrought into Him by the growth in life and transformation in life for the expression of Christ—2:19; Rom. 12:2; 2 Cor. 3:18; 1 Cor. 12:12-13:
  - 1. In the Body-Christ we enjoy Christ as everything—vv. 3b, 13.
  - 2. In the Body-Christ there is the function of all the members—vv. 14-22.
  - 3. In the Body-Christ there is the blending together of the members in the oneness of the Triune God—vv. 23-27; John 17:21; Eph. 4:1-6.

**IV. The divine revelation in the Bible eventually shows us the New Jerusalem, which is a corporate entity, an incorporation of God and all His redeemed, where God is in Christ, and Christ is in all of us—Rev. 21:1-2, 11, 12-23:**

- A. We will be one with God in life, nature, element, and appearance—v.11; cf. 4:3.
- B. Every believer will become a part of the incorporated God—vv. 12-21.
- C. God's eternal purpose is to produce this corporate entity composed of all that God is, contained in, mingled with, and expressed through humanity.

## Message Two

### **Being Saved from the Crooked and Perverted Generation to Be the Testimony of Jesus—the Corporate Christ as Today’s Ark**

Scripture Reading: Rev. 1:1-2, 9, 11-13, 20; Gal. 1:4; Acts 2:40; 1 Cor. 12:12; Phil. 2:12-13, 15-16; Heb. 11:7; 1 Pet. 3:20-21

#### **I. The book of Revelation presents the testimony of Jesus, which is the church as the corporate expression of Christ—1:2, 9, 11-13, 20:**

- A. Revelation is an unveiling of Christ, and Christ is expressed through the church; therefore, the church is the testimony of the Jesus revealed in this book—vv. 1, 13, 20; 19:10b:
  - 1. The testimony of Jesus is the church as the expression, testimony, and revelation of Jesus in a corporate way—22:16.
  - 2. The testimony of Jesus is the expression of Jesus, who is expressed in the local churches today and eventually in the New Jerusalem in the millennium and in eternity—21:2, 10-11.
- B. God’s goal in His creation of man was to have a corporate expression, a testimony, of Himself, and according to this goal, man was made in the image of God in order to be His testimony—Gen. 1:26:
  - 1. The living person of Jesus is the image, expression, and testimony of God, and the church today is the testimony of Jesus, His corporate expression—2 Cor. 4:4; Col. 1:15, 18; 3:10-11, 15.
  - 2. As believers in Christ, we all are reproductions, “photographs,” of Jesus; therefore, God has a corporate expression—the church—which is the testimony of Jesus, who is the expression of God—John 1:14, 18; 12:24; 2 Cor. 3:18; Eph. 1:22-23; 4:16.
  - 3. The corporate God-man living, the living of the many God-men as reproductions of the first God-man, is the genuine church life—the testimony of Jesus—1 Cor. 1:2; 12:27; Rev. 1:2, 11, 20.

#### **II. In order to be the testimony of Jesus, we must be rescued out of the present evil age, be saved from the crooked and perverted generation, and shine as luminaries in the world—Gal. 1:4; Acts 2:40; Phil. 2:15:**

- A. Jesus Christ “gave Himself for our sins that He might rescue us out of the present evil age according to the will of our God and Father”—Gal. 1:4:
  - 1. The present evil age here refers to the religious world, the religious course of this world, the Jewish religion—6:14-15.
  - 2. Through His death on the cross, the Lord Jesus gave Himself for our sins in order to rescue us from, to pluck us out of, the present evil age, the religious world; the principle is the same both with the believers in Paul’s time and with us today—1:4.
- B. “Be saved from this crooked generation”—Acts 2:40:
  - 1. The crooked generation here refers to the perverted Jews in that age who rejected Christ and were considered by God as the present evil age—v. 36.
  - 2. The result of being saved from the crooked generation was an entrance into a new generation—the church; the saved ones were separated from Jewish society unto the church—vv. 42-47.

- C. "That you may be blameless and guileless, children of God without blemish in the midst of a crooked and perverted generation, among whom you shine as luminaries in the world"—Phil. 2:15.

**III. If we would be the testimony of Jesus—the corporate expression of Christ in the church life—we need to be today’s “family of Noah” building the corporate Christ as the ark that will deliver us from the crooked and perverted generation and usher us into the coming age of the kingdom of God—Gen 6:8—8:3; 1 Cor. 12:12; Phil. 2:12-13; 1 Pet. 3:20-21:**

- A. The ark built by Noah is a type of Christ as the salvation of God’s elect; the ark that we are building today is the corporate Christ, the church, as our salvation from today’s crooked, perverted, and evil generation—vv. 20-21; 1 Cor. 12:12, 27.
- B. The church life is today’s ark to terminate the present age and bring in God’s kingdom—1:2; 12:12, 27; 1 Thes. 1:1, 9-10:
  - 1. The Lord desires “the family of Noah” to build the ark and testify against the trend of the age so that He can use them to terminate the age and bring in the kingdom age—Heb. 11:7; Rev. 11:15.
  - 2. What we are building in the church life is the corporate Christ as the ark for our salvation and for the salvation of the ones under our care—1 Cor. 12:12; 14:26; Phil. 2:12-13.
- C. The salvation in Philippians 2:12 is the salvation that saves us from the crooked and perverted generation; this salvation is the church as the corporate Christ whom we are building as today’s ark—1 Cor. 1:2; 12:12; Eph. 2:21-22:
  - 1. To have the proper church life is not only to stand on the ground of oneness but also to build the ark to save ourselves from the present evil generation and bring us into a new age—4:3, 16.
  - 2. We need a salvation that is built not by God directly but by our daily cooperating with His inward operation—Phil. 2:12-13.
- D. God wants the church, the ark, where we can be saved from today’s evil generation—Acts 2:40-47:
  - 1. God wants to save us—through this ark—from the crooked generation and usher us into God’s kingdom to fulfill His eternal purpose—Matt. 6:33; 13:43; Luke 12:32; Rev. 11:15.
  - 2. God cares for whether or not we are in the ark, the proper church life; He wants us to be a part of the corporate Christ, part of the testimony of Jesus—1 Cor. 12:12; Rev. 1:2, 9, 11, 20; 22:16.
- E. We need not only to preach the individual Christ but also to build the corporate Christ, the church, which is today’s ark; through this corporate Christ we are saved from the crooked and perverted generation—Acts 8:35; 1 Cor. 12:12:
  - 1. While the apostles were preaching the individual Christ, they were building up the corporate Christ, the ark in which they will enjoy God’s full salvation—Acts 8:1, 4-5, 35; 13:1; 14:23.
  - 2. We should be faithful to do the same thing—preaching the gospel and building the ark, preaching Christ and building Christ—1 Thes. 1:1, 8; 1 Cor. 12:12; 14:4-5, 12, 26.
- F. When this ark is built up, the Lord Jesus will return—Rev. 19:7; 22:7, 12, 20:
  - 1. The Lord has not come back yet because He is still waiting for the ark to be built—Matt. 16:18, 27.
  - 2. When the testimony of the church in the Lord’s recovery is matured, the Lord Jesus will return—Rev. 19:7; 22:7, 12, 20.

## Message Three

### **The Golden Lampstands Signifying the Churches as the Testimony of Jesus, the Corporate Christ, Shining and Burning for God's Move in His Administration**

Scripture Reading: Rev. 1:1-2, 12, 20; 6:1-2; Matt. 24:14; Isa. 11:9; Dan. 11:32b; 1 Chron. 12:32a; Eph. 5:16-17; Judg. 5:15-16

#### **I. The testimony of Jesus is the seven golden lampstands—golden (divine) in nature, shining in darkness, and identical with one another—Rev. 1:1-2, 9-20:**

- A. The golden lampstand symbolizes the Triune God—the Father as the substance is embodied in the Son, the Son as the embodiment is expressed through the Spirit, the Spirit is fully realized and expressed as the churches, and the churches are the testimony of Jesus—Exo. 25:31-40; Zech. 4:2-10; Rev. 1:9-12.
- B. In the divine thought, the golden lampstand is actually a living and growing tree with calyxes and almond blossoms; thus, the lampstand portrays the Triune God embodied in Christ as a living, golden tree of resurrection—growing, branching, budding, and blossoming in us, with us, by us, and out of us as the fruit of the light, which is good in nature, righteous in procedure, and real in expression, that God may be expressed as reality in our daily walk—Exo. 25:31-35; Eph. 5:8-9.
- C. The golden lampstands signify the churches as the embodiment and expression of the Triune God shining forth, with the sevenfold intensified Spirit of God as the lamps, to be the testimony of Jesus—Rev. 1:20; 4:5:
  1. The local churches as lampstands bear the testimony of Jesus Christ in separate cities, shining locally yet collectively—1:2, 9, 20; 20:4.
  2. Every local church is a golden lampstand, having the sevenfold intensified Spirit of God as the lamps and shining the testimony of Jesus from its locality in this dark age—2:1, 5.
- D. The sign of the lampstands in Revelation 1 indicates that the churches should be identical in essence, appearance, and expression—1:20:
  1. The substance of every local church should be God the Father, and the form, the appearance, of every church should be Christ, the embodiment and expression of the Triune God—2 Pet. 1:4; John 1:1, 14; Col. 2:9.
  2. All the local churches should be the same and bear the same testimony—the testimony of the Son with the Father by the Spirit—John 14:10-11, 17.
  3. “I do expect that the day will come when all the local churches look alike, and I believe that when that day comes, the Lord will return” (*The Church—the Reprint of the Spirit*, p. 30).
- E. Our enjoying Christ as love, life, and light will enable us to keep the testimony of Jesus as the shining of the lampstand in our locality—Rev. 12:17b:
  1. We will testify of Christ's person as God and as man and of Christ's human living, crucifixion, resurrection, ascension, descension, and second appearing.
  2. The shining of the light is a testimony in the dark night of the church age.

#### **II. The seven lamps on the golden lampstand are the seven lamps of fire burning before the throne of God—1:12, 4; 4:5:**

- A. The throne of God is the center of His administration where He executes His eternal policy and eternal purpose—1:4; 4:5
- B. The seven lamps are related to God's administration, economy, and move—4:5; 5:6.

- C. The throne of God is in the church, and the seven lamps before the throne are burning here, not only to illuminate and burn us, but even more to motivate us, to impel us.
- D. When the lamps of fire shine on us and burn us, we will be impelled to move and rise up to take action—Dan. 11:32b:
  - 1. The gospel of the kingdom, signified by the white horse of the first seal in Revelation 6:1-2, will be preached in the whole earth for a testimony to all the nations before the end of this age, the time of the great tribulation—Matt. 24:14.
  - 2. We are not preaching a partial gospel but the full gospel that encompasses everything from Matthew through Revelation—the gospel of God’s eternal economy to dispense Himself in Christ as the Spirit into His chosen ones through His judicial redemption and by His organic salvation for the building up of His Body in the local churches to consummate the New Jerusalem as His bride, His wife, for His eternal expression—1 Tim. 1:3-4; Rom. 1:1; 5:10; Rev. 1:10-11; 21:2-3, 9-11; 22:1-2.
  - 3. God’s unique purpose in this age is to have the gospel preached so that the church as the Body of Christ might be built up to consummate the New Jerusalem—Eph. 3:8-11.
  - 4. We should seize the opportunity and try our best to preach the gospel and bring the testimony of the church as the golden lampstand to different cities, towns, and villages; this is our responsibility—Eph. 5:15-17; Matt. 28:19; Acts 6:7; 12:24; 19:20; 9:31.
  - 5. May the Lord burden us to learn the divine truths of the gospel and to spread them everywhere for His recovery—Isa. 11:9; Dan. 11:32b-33; 2 Tim. 2:21.

**III. Today we must become vitalized by answering the Lord’s call to be an overcomer; an overcomer is a vital person—one who is living and active—Psa. 119:88, 159; Dan. 11:32b:**

- A. We must be those who know the age according to the present world situation and the condition of God’s people—cf. Jer. 8:7; Matt. 16:3; 1 Chron. 12:32; Rom. 13:11-12.
- B. To be vitalized, we need to have close, intimate, and thorough fellowship with the Lord and with the seeking saints; we need the Lord to lead us to some companions, with whom we can labor, just as Daniel had three companions—Dan. 1:6.
- C. Within today’s church life (typified by Jerusalem), we must be the Lord’s overcomers (typified by Zion); this is to be in the age of the overcomers according to the Lord’s calling—Rev. 2:7, 11, 17, 26-28; 3:5, 12, 20-21; 21:7.
- D. We have to make a resolution to be the overcomers, the vitalized ones; an overcomer is one who overcomes anything that is replacing Christ or that is against Christ—Judg. 5:15-16; 1 John 2:18-20, 27.

## Message Four

### **The Church as the New Man, the Corporate Christ, Engaging in Spiritual Warfare to Defeat God's Enemy and to Bring In the Kingdom of God**

Scripture Reading: Gen. 1:26-28; Eph. 1:9, 11; 2:15-16; 3:9; 4:22-24; 6:11, 13; Rev. 12:1-4, 7-9, 13, 17; Eph. 2:6; S.S. 4:8; Acts 2:36; Matt. 18:18; Rev. 21:9, 3, 22

#### **I. The church as the new man accomplishes God's eternal purpose—Eph. 1:9, 11; 2:15-16; 3:9; 4:22-24:**

- A. God's intention in His creation of man was to have a corporate man to express Him and represent Him—Gen. 1:26, 28.
- B. God created a corporate man to represent Him by having dominion over all things—vv. 26, 28:
  - 1. God's intention in giving man dominion is for him to subdue God's enemy, Satan, to recover the earth, and to exercise God's authority over the earth in order that the kingdom of God may come to the earth, the will of God may be done on earth, and the glory of God may be manifested on earth—vv. 26, 28; Matt. 6:10, 13b.
  - 2. God's intention that man would have dominion over all things will be fulfilled by the church as the new man—Eph. 2:15; Col. 3:10-11.
- C. The church as the corporate new man is the corporate warrior to defeat God's enemy and to bring in the kingdom of God—Eph. 4:24; 6:11, 13:
  - 1. According to Dan. 2, when Christ appears as the God-cut stone, He with His overcomers—the corporate Christ—will strike the ten kings with Antichrist (Rev. 19:11-21), thereby crushing the great image from the toes to the head (Dan. 2:35).
  - 2. After coming to defeat Antichrist and to crush the aggregate of human government, the corporate Christ—Christ with His overcoming bride—will become a great mountain to fill the whole earth, making the whole earth God's kingdom; this kingdom will consummate in the New Jerusalem—the ultimate and consummate step of the divine history— Rev. 20:4, 6; 21:10.

#### **II. Revelation 12 presents a great vision concerning the war in heaven—the warfare in the universe between God and His enemy; the vision in this chapter unveils the true situation in the universe—the view that God's enemy is fighting against Him—vv. 1-4, 7-9, 13, 17:**

- A. It is crucial for us to see that behind the physical scene a spiritual struggle, a struggle not seen with human eyes, is taking place.
- B. In our fighting we deal not with things that appear on the surface but with the power of darkness behind these things—Eph. 2:6; 6:12; S. S. 4:8.
- C. We need to engage the fighting prayers which can defeat the devil in the air and bring down God's authority; such prayers are expressed in the heavenly realm and from the throne of God—S.S. 4:8.
- D. The prayer of the age is the prayer of the church as the Body of Christ, the prayer that exercises the authority of Christ as the ascended Lord and Head of the Body, for the fulfilling of God's economy:
  - 1. After His resurrection and ascension, the individual Christ has become the corporate Christ; thus, before God today not only is the individual Christ praying, but the corporate Christ, the Head with the Body, is praying as well—1 Cor. 12:12; Acts 12:5, 12.
  - 2. We need to see the meaning of the ascension of Christ:

- a. The ascension of Christ indicates that the entire work of redemption has been completely accomplished—Heb. 1:3; 10:12.
- b. The ascension of Christ indicates that the lordship of Christ has been established—Acts 2:36.
- 3. We need to see the church's position as the Body of Christ; because the church is the Body of Christ, the position of the church is exactly the same as that of Christ; since the Body is one with the Head, the position of the Body is exactly the same as that of the Head—1 Cor. 12:12, 27; Eph. 5:30.
- 4. We need to see the authority of the church as the Body of Christ:
  - a. The authority of the Body is the authority of the Head exercised by the Body; thus, the authority of the Body is the authority of the Head.
  - b. As the church, the Body of Christ, we need to assume the authority of Christ—Matt. 28:18b-19a; Luke 10:19.
  - c. The prayer of authority has two aspects—binding and loosing—Matt. 18:18.
- 5. To fully enter into this kind of prayer, the prayer of the church as the Body of Christ, and be able to exercise the authority given by the Head to the Body, there are two things that we must realize:
  - a. We must realize that we are members of the Body, and we must live, act, and move in the Body.
  - b. In our daily life we must always put off the old man and put on the new man by being renewed in the spirit of our mind; the new man is composed of the Head with the Body, Christ with the church—Eph. 4:22-24; 2:15-16.

**III. The ultimate consummation of the new man, the corporate Christ, is the New Jerusalem as the eternal kingdom of God to be the ultimate consummation of the tabernacle and temple—the eternal divine-human incorporation, the eternal building, of God and man—Rev. 21:9, 3, 22:**

- A. The New Jerusalem is a constitution of God and man and man and God, who are constituted into one; it is divinity expressed in humanity and humanity glorified in divinity—Rev. 22:1, 4; 21:3; 11-23.
- B. Divinity and humanity become a mutual dwelling place—the One who is God yet man dwells in the one who is man yet God, and the one who is man yet God dwells in the One who is God yet man—v. 3; John 15:4a.
- C. We can live out and work out the New Jerusalem as the divine-human incorporation by taking the Lord as our abode for us to be His abode—John 15:4-5:
  - 1. When we love the Lord Jesus, He manifests Himself to us, and the Father comes with Him to make an abode with us for our enjoyment; this abode is a mutual abode, in which the Triune God abides in us and we abide in Him—14:23.
  - 2. We abide in Christ that He may abide in us by our dealing with the constant word in the Scriptures that is outside of us and the present word as the Spirit within us; when we abide in the Lord and let His words abide in us, we are one with Him in actuality—John 5:39-40; 6:63; 2 Cor. 3:6; Rev. 2:7; John 8:31; 15:7.
  - 3. By our growth in the divine life in Christ as the living stone, we are being transformed into precious stones; through the process of transformation, the Triune God is being wrought into and structured together with us to the praise of the glory of His grace with which He graced us in the Beloved for us to become the New Jerusalem as the ultimate testimony of Jesus and the good news to the entire universe—1 Pet. 2:4; Rev. 21:18-21; Eph. 1:3-6; cf. Luke 4:18-19.