

CONCERNING THE LORD'S RECOVERY
MESSAGE ONE

AN OVERVIEW OF THE LORD'S RECOVERY
ACCORDING TO THE BIBLE

Scripture Reading: Gen. 1:26; 4:2; 4:26; 5:22-24; 6:8-22; 12:1; 17:19; 32:25-30; 41-41, 57; Neh. 5:4-19; 8:1-18; 1 Pet. 2:5; 2 Cor. 11: 2-3; Eph. 1:22-23; Rev. 21:2

- I. The term *recovery* means that something which existed in a normal state has been ruined or lost so that there is the need to bring that thing back to its original condition.**
 - A. Most Christians consider the Lord's recovery only as a recovery of doctrine, practices, and spiritual experiences that have been damaged or lost.
 - B. These doctrines, practices, and experiences may include justification by faith, a life of holiness, baptism by immersion, or even various aspects of the church life.
 - C. While all these may be items of the Lord's recovery, they are not the central matter.

- II. To know the main item of the Lord's recovery, we need to see the complete revelation of the Bible.**
 - A. In both the Old Testament and the New Testament God's purpose, intention, and goal is to have man as His expression (Gen. 1:26).
 - B. The entire Bible is a record of God's purpose, God's accomplishment according to that purpose, Satan's work to destroy what God accomplished, and God's coming in to regain what Satan has destroyed.
 - C. This regaining of what Satan has destroyed is the basic matter of the Lord's recovery; God is a God of purpose, and nothing can change His mind and nothing can stop Him.

- III. God's purpose to have man as His expression is firstly revealed in the Old Testament as a model, type, or prefigure of the real thing.**
 - A. The model in the Old Testament reveals the same thing as the reality in the New Testament.
 - B. The nine great men in Genesis reveal and prefigure God's predestination, God's selection, God's calling, God's redemption, God's justification and God's salvation.
 - C. The temple with the priestly service and the nation of Israel reveal God's intention to have a collective group of people to express Him.
 - D. Satan corrupted the people of God by leading Solomon away to pagan idolatry and rotten immorality. This corruption resulted in the people of God being carried away to Babylon.
 - E. The return from the Babylonian captivity resulted in a higher standard of quality, purity, and morality as evidenced by Ezra and Nehemiah (Neh. 5:4-19; 8:1-18).
 - F. This Old Testament recovery reveals the need today for God's people to come out of the religious Babylon and return to the proper church life.

IV. The New Testament reality of the Old Testament model is the church with the saints as the living, functioning priests (1 Pet. 2:5).

- A. Throughout the centuries Satan has worked to corrupt the purity of the church and to lead God's people away from the reality of God's expression on the earth (2 Cor. 11:2-3).
- B. Just as many vessels and utensils were carried away from the temple to the idol houses in Babylon, so also have many New Testament utensils—Christ as our life and Christ as our righteousness—been lost (Ezra 1:6-11).
- C. Today, the Lord not only wants to call His people out of Babylon and back to the proper church ground, but also to recover and bring back all the different aspects of Christ that have been lost.
- D. This corporate entity which is the church as the Body of Christ will be consummated in the New Jerusalem as His loving bride and the ultimate expression of the Triune God for eternity (Eph. 1:22-23; Rev. 21:2).

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MESSAGE TWO

THE RECOVERY OF GOD'S EXPRESSION
AND THE CONTENTS OF GOD'S EXPRESSION
IN ITS MODEL

Scripture Reading: Gen. 1:26a, 27; 28:16-19; Exo. 25:8-9; 40:1, 34-35; 1 Kings 7:51; 8:10-11; Ezra 1:3, 5; John 1:14; 2:19-20; Eph. 1:22-23; 2:19-22; 1 Tim. 3:15-16; Rev. 21:2-3

I. The Bible is a record of God's expression.

II. The central line in God's revelation is that God wants to be expressed; the Triune God desires to express Himself in humanity (Gen. 1:26-27).

- A. In Genesis, God had nine men (Adam, Abel, Enosh, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph) who expressed Him in a limited way; then in Exodus, God got a collective people who became His expression in a full way.
- B. In the New Testament Jesus Christ was God becoming a man, and He became a tabernacle (John 1:14); the Jews destroyed Him through crucifixion but He raised Himself up in an enlarged way as the temple, the church (2:19, 21).
 - 1. Ephesians tells us that we are builded together into a temple of God to express God, and that the church is the Body of Christ, the fullness of the One who fills all in all (2:21-22; 1:23).
 - 2. The church is the house of the living God, the pillar and base of the truth, and the manifestation of God in the flesh (1 Tim. 3:15-16); although we are flesh, we overflow God, and this manifestation is the expression of God.

III. God's enemy, Satan, hates God's expression.

- A. In the Old Testament, after God reached His goal to have His expression, the completion of the building up of the temple, the enemy of God came in to ruin God's people from within (1 Kings 8:10-11; 11:1-8).
- B. In the New Testament, the individual Jesus was the tabernacle, which through His death and resurrection was increased (John 12:24), so that on the day of Pentecost, the church was the enlarged tabernacle; now God's expression is not by one individual, but by a corporate body – the Body of Christ.
 - 1. After a short time, even while John, Peter, and Paul were still living, the church was ruined from within (2 Tim. 3:1; 4:3; 1 John 4:1-6; 2 Pet. 1:3, note 1).
 - 2. The church became a captive; so there is the need of recovery.

IV. God created man in His own image with the intention that man might express Him by the way of life.

- A. God wants to be man's food and man's drink to enable man to partake of Himself as life.
 - 1. After the creation of man, God brought man to the tree of life, indicating that man should eat of the tree of life (Gen. 2:8-9).

2. In Exodus the items of the lamb, the manna, the living water, and all the offerings clearly tell us that God wants His people to eat Him, to receive Him into them to become their life and life supply.
 3. In the New Testament the Lord Jesus indicated that He was food for us to eat and water for us to drink; He is the bread of life (John 6:35), the living bread (6:51), and the living water (7:38).
 4. In Revelation, the Lord Jesus promised that the overcomers would eat of the tree of life (2:7), of the hidden manna (2:17) and of the feast (3:20).
 5. In Revelation 22:1 the river flows out of the throne of God; the tree of life grows on the two sides of the river; the tree of life is something coming out of the Triune God to be our life and life supply.
- B. The Lord came that we might have life and have it abundantly (John 10:10), and this indwelling life unites us.

V. The central recovery of the Lord is to recover the divine life within us that God may have His expression among His people; as long as the life matter is lost, the expression of God is gone; the Lord recovery is just to recover the expression of God.

- VI. Exodus 40:17-33 gives a description of the model of God's expression – the tabernacle.**
- A. From God's side the erection of the tabernacle begins from the west end where the ark is; from our side it begins at the east end where the altar is.
 1. The altar deals with our sin and our sins – the sin offering to deal with our sinful nature and the trespass offering to deal with our trespasses, transgressions, faults, offenses, and wrongdoings.
 2. The altar also includes the burnt offering and meal offering (Exo. 40:29).
 - B. The contents of the tabernacle comprise not only the altar and laver in the outer court but also the showbread table, the lampstand, the ark with the Testimony, the budding rod, and the hidden manna, as well as the incense altar; each item of these contents portray our experience of Christ for our participation in God's expression.
 1. Many Christians, after their conversion at the cross enjoyed Christ for a time, but then went back to the world; they would not go forward to enter into the tabernacle, that is, to enter into God's expression.
 2. At the altar our experience of Christ is mostly objective; but when we enter into the tabernacle and come to the table, we experience Christ altogether subjectively.
 3. The real experience of Christ is the way for us to enter into God's expression; this is what God wants to recover today.

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MESSAGE THREE

THE CONTENTS OF GOD'S EXPRESSION IN ITS REALITY

Scripture Reading: Heb. 1:3; Zech. 12:1; Gen. 1:26; Col. 1:15, 27; Eph. 2:5-6; John 1:1, 14, 18, 29; 2:19; 12:24; Eph. 4:6

- I. The entire universe was created for God's expression; God desires to express Himself through some clay vessels that are made in His image.**
 - A. God made us in His image with a spirit to receive Him so that He could come into us to be our life and content; the spirit of man was meant to be filled with the Spirit of God so that God could be expressed through man (Zech. 12:1; Gen. 1:26).
 - B. Satan sought to corrupt man resulting in four negative things that oppose God's expression: human culture, religion, ethics and tradition; these four things have replaced God in human society.
 - C. Human culture, religion, ethics and tradition are four layers upon our eyes to veil God's people from seeing Christ and His enlargement as the reality of God's expression.

- II. In the Old Testament model, God firstly gained nine great men in Genesis, then proceeded to gain a collective group of people who would firstly build a tabernacle that later became enlarged to be His temple; Genesis through Malachi is a record of God's dwelling place among His people; yet this structure was the model and not the reality.**

- III. The reality of God's expression and dwelling place is revealed fully in the New Testament, firstly with an individual, and then a corporate entity.**
 - A. God's expression begins with the God-Man Jesus Christ, who tabernacled among men to declare the unseen, invisible God (John 1:1, 14, 18).
 - B. Even though the God-Man Jesus Christ performed many miracles and gave a lot of teachings, He mainly expressed God here on earth for thirty-three and a half years (Heb. 1:3; Col. 1:15).
 - C. God was not satisfied to have with just one man as His tabernacle, so the Lord Jesus told his disciples that He was going to die and be raised up that He might be enlarged and increased (John 12:24).
 - D. When Jesus Christ was resurrected He was raised with all His believers, to be no more an individual tabernacle but an enlarged temple.(Eph. 2:5-6; 1Pet. 1:3; John 2:19).
 - E. This increased, enlarged Christ is Christ Himself as the Head with the church as His Body; the one Person's expression of God was increased to be the corporate expression that God purposed to have from the beginning.

- IV. Through two steps of becoming, the invisible God firstly became visible in incarnation and then became invisible again through death and resurrection.**
- A. First the word became flesh and dwelt among men to be the Lamb of God to take away the sin of the world.
 - B. Next, as the last Adam, He became the life-giving Spirit.
 - C. By these two wonderful becomings man is redeemed and saturated with the Spirit to be recovered back to God as His corporate expression (1 Cor. 15:45b; John 1:14, 29).
 - D. After resurrection, the Lord appeared and disappeared to train the disciples to realize and experience His invisible presence (John 20:19, 26, 29; 21:1, 4, 7, 14).
- V. The reality of the Triune God dwelling in us must be recovered today for the Lord to have His corporate expression now and for eternity.**
- A. Romans 8:9-11 tells us that the Spirit of God is in us, the Spirit of Christ is in us and the Spirit of the One who raised up Jesus from among the dead is in us.
 - B. Colossians 1:27 tells us that Christ the Son is in us and Ephesians 4:6 tells us that the Father is in us.
 - C. The Lord is working to recover the Triune God wrought into our being and living in us, with us, and through us for His expression; this expression is the church life today that produces the reality of the Body of Christ and consummates the New Jerusalem for eternity.

CONCERNING THE LORD'S RECOVERY

Message Four

Walking in the Truth of the Economy of God, Realizing the Recovery of the Lord, and Staying Away from Death and Division

Scripture Reading: Acts 26:16-19; 1 Tim. 1:3-6; 6:3-4; 2 Cor. 11:2-3; Rom. 16:17; 2 Tim. 4:22

I. We must walk in the truth of the heavenly vision of God's economy, the mark of God's economy, and the goal of God's economy; this vision must be renewed in us day by day to be the controlling vision of all our living, work, and activity—Prov. 29:18a; Acts 26:16-19; 1 John 1:7; 3 John 3-4:

A. God's economy is His plan to dispense Himself into His chosen, predestinated, and redeemed people as their life, their life supply, and their everything to produce, constitute, and build up the organic Body of Christ—1 Tim. 1:3-6; 6:3-4; 2 Cor. 11:2-3; Titus 1:9; Col. 2:19.

B. The mark of God's economy, the strategic and central point of God's economy, is the indwelling, subjective Christ as the Spirit in our spirit, our mingled spirit—2 Cor. 3:17; 2 Tim. 4:22; Rom. 8:16; 1 Cor. 6:17:

1. We must be narrowed down and even zeroed in to the all-inclusive divine Spirit in our human spirit so that we may be kept from missing the mark of the divine economy—1 Tim. 1:6; Mal. 2:15-16; Rom. 1:9; 8:4, 6; Gal. 5:25; Phil. 3:3; 2 Cor. 2:13.
2. In the "blueprint" of God's original intention, man is the center of the entire universe, and the center of man is his spirit—Gen. 2:7; Prov. 20:27:
 - a. The heavens are for the earth, the earth is for man, and man was created by God with a spirit so that he may contact God, receive God, contain God, worship God, live God, fulfill God's purpose for God, express God, and be one with God—Zech. 12:1; John 4:24.
 - b. Without God being the Spirit and without our having a spirit to contact God, to be one with God, the whole universe is empty and we are nothing—Eccl. 1:2; 3:11; Job 32:8; cf. Rom. 9:21, 23; 2 Cor. 4:7.
3. Christ as the life-giving Spirit can be everything to us when we live in and exercise our spirit; to live in our soul is to live in the principle of antichrist—Zech. 4:6; 12:1; 1 Cor. 15:45b; 6:17; 1 John 2:18-19.
4. The Lord's recovery is the recovery of the oneness in our spirit; to be in our spirit is to be in Jerusalem, the place of simplicity and oneness, whereas to be in our mind is to be in Babylon, the place of confusion and division—John 4:24; Eph. 2:22; Rom. 1:9; 2 Tim. 1:6-7.
5. Our spirit is a "country" of grace to swallow up race for the one new man; our mind is a "country" of quarreling; to enjoy the Lord as the Spirit in our spirit is to have grace with us; when this is lost, the degradation of the church is present—4:22; Gal. 6:18; 5:15; Col. 3:10-11.

C. The goal of God's eternal economy is the reality of the organic Body of Christ, consummating in the New Jerusalem—Eph. 1:22-23; Rev. 21:2-3, 9-10:

1. Without the local churches, there is no practical expression of the Body of Christ and there can be no reality of the Body of Christ—1:10-13; 2:7.
2. God's eternal economy is to obtain the Body of Christ; any work outside of this is not in the central lane of God's economy—Eph. 4:1-6, 11-16.
3. We must follow the footsteps of the apostle Paul to bring all the saints into the blending life of the entire Body of Christ—1 Cor. 12:24; Rom. 16:1-20.
4. For the Lord's recovery in this age, we must cooperate with the Lord to be the overcomers as today's Zion in today's Jerusalem (the church life) for the building up of the Body of Christ to consummate the New Jerusalem—Rev. 3:21-22; 14:1-5; Judg. 5:15-16, 31.

D. Teachings that differ from the unique and healthy teaching of God's economy, the teaching of the apostles, separate us from the genuine appreciation, love, and enjoyment of the precious person of the Lord Jesus Christ Himself as our life and our everything—1 Tim. 1:3-4; Acts 2:42; 2 Cor. 11:2-3.

E. Today we can be in one accord because we have only one vision, the vision of the eternal economy of God—Acts 1:14; 1 Cor. 1:9-10; Jer. 32:39.

II. God's economy was unveiled through the apostles, but because the believers lost the proper understanding of God's economy, there is the need for it to be recovered by the Lord:

- A. The words recovery and economy refer to one thing as seen from two different viewpoints—with God it is a matter of economy; with us it is a matter of recovery—1 Tim. 1:4; Eph. 1:10; 3:9.
- B. Recovery means to go back to the beginning; we need to go back to the beginning, receiving the Lord's grace to go back to God's original intention, to what God ordained in the beginning—Matt. 19:8.
- C. There is a strong and solid principle that whenever the majority of the people of God fail to carry out God's purpose, God comes in to have a recovery; His recovery is always with the minority, with a remnant of overcomers, not with the majority—2 Kings 22:8; Ezra 1:3-11; Neh. 2:11, 17; Rev. 3:21; 18:4.
- D. Our vision should be governed not by the present situation nor by traditional practice but by God's original intention and standard as revealed in the Scriptures according to the present advance of His recovery:
 1. The Lord's recovery is the recovery of Christ as our center, reality, life, and everything—Col. 1:17b, 18b; Rev. 2:4, 7, 17; 3:20; Psa. 80:1, 15, 17-19.
 2. The Lord's recovery is the recovery of the oneness of the Body of Christ—John 17:11, 21-23; Eph. 4:3-4a; Rev. 1:11.
 3. The Lord's recovery is the recovery of the function of all the members of the Body of Christ—Eph. 4:15-16; 1 Cor. 14:4b, 26, 31.
- E. We in the Lord's recovery must have a clear vision of God's economy and then be governed, controlled, and directed by this vision, for we are here to carry out God's economy in His recovery—Acts 26:18-19; Prov. 29:18a.

III. In order to realize the recovery of the Lord for the carrying out of the economy of God, we must stay away from division and death:

- A. We must stay away from death and be swallowed up by Christ as life; everything in the church must be in the nature of life, with the content of life, and in the flow and imparting of life—Num. 6:1-9; Lev. 5:2; 2 Cor. 5:4; John 7:38; 1 John 5:16a.
- B. We must reject any kind of division (1 Cor. 1:10), stand against any wind of teaching and any spreading of spiritual death (Eph. 4:14; 2 Tim. 2:16-17), and mark and turn away from those who make divisions and causes of stumbling contrary to the teaching of God's economy (Rom. 16:17; Titus 3:10).
- C. Leviticus reveals that the first thing that we as God's priests need to deal with is our listening; our moving (feet) and working (hands) are always under the direction of our hearing—8:23-24; 14:14-17:
 1. If we do not take care of our hearing but give ear to negative speaking, our deeds and our work will be affected in a negative way.
 2. If any church would stop hearing negative things, that church would be very healthy and living; the church that is the weakest and the most deadened is the one that is full of criticism, gossip, and reasoning.
 3. Because we often hear unclean things, things that are unhealthy and contagious, we need to wash our ears with the blood of Christ; after the washing of the blood, we will enjoy the anointing of the Spirit.
 4. Positive listening will rescue us from negative listening; if we listen to God's word from morning to evening, we will not have an ear to listen to any negative speaking—Rev. 2:7; John 10:3-5, 16, 27; S. S. 2:8, 14.
- D. In order to enjoy Christ as our meal offering to live a meal-offering church life, we must be purified from any leaven (ambition for leadership) and honey (natural affection)—Lev. 2:11:
 1. Ambition and natural affection go together; a person who is ambitious will love anyone who helps him to gain what he desires, but whoever hinders him from fulfilling his ambition will be regarded as his enemy—3 John 9.
 2. We should neither take the way of the Lord's recovery nor leave this way because of any person; we are following the vision of God's economy in the realization of the Lord's recovery—Acts 26:19; 2 Tim. 1:15; 2:1-15.
- E. For us to live a holy life for the church life, we must be careful about the kind of people we contact; in Leviticus 11 all the animals signify different kinds of people, and eating signifies our contacting of people—cf. Acts 10:9b-15, 27-29:
 1. To eat is to contact things outside of us and to receive them into us with the result that they eventually become our inner constitution; whatever we contact we will receive, and whatever we receive will reconstitute us, making us a different person from what we are now.
 2. "Do not be deceived: Evil companions corrupt good morals"—1 Cor. 15:33.
 3. "He who walks with wise men will be wise, / But the companion of fools will be troubled"—Prov. 13:20.
 4. "Avoid profane, vain babblings, for they will advance to more ungodliness, and their word will spread like gangrene, of whom are Hymenaeus and Philetus, who concerning the truth have misaimed...But flee youthful lusts, and pursue righteousness, faith, love, peace with those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart"—2 Tim. 2:16-18, 22.