

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.

VITAL FACTORS FOR THE RECOVERY OF THE CHURCH LIFE

(Friday—Evening Session)

Message Three

The Factor of the Church Being in the Triune God, the Local Churches Being Expressions of the Body of Christ, and the Believers Practicing the Church Life in the Consciousness of the Body

Scripture Reading: 1 Thes. 1:1; 2 Thes. 1:1; Matt. 16:18; 18:17; 1 Cor. 1:2; 12:12-27

I. The church is in the Triune God—"the church of the Thessalonians in God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ"—1 Thes. 1:1:

- A. In 1 Thessalonians 1:1 we have the revelation of the tremendous fact that the church is in the unique God and that this God is our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ:
 - 1. The church is not only of God and of Christ; the church is also in God and in Christ.
 - 2. It is important for us to see that the church in our locality is of God and in God, of Christ and in Christ.
- B. The church is composed of human beings, but they, the believers, are in the Triune God—v. 1; 2 Thes. 1:1.
- C. The church is a group of human beings who have been born of God the Father with His life and nature and who have been brought into the organic union with Christ:
 - 1. For the church to be in God, God must become our Father, and we must have a life relationship with Him—1 John 3:1a:
 - a. In 1 Thessalonians 1:1 the word *Father* indicates a relationship in life; in God the Father, we have been born again, regenerated, and now, as His children, we have a life relationship with Him—John 1:12-13.
 - b. The church being in God the Father implies that the church is in God's purpose, plan, selection, and predestination—Eph. 1:4-5.
 - c. The church in God the Father is the church in the One who is the unique Initiator and Originator—Rom. 11:36; 1 Cor. 8:6; Matt. 15:13.
 - 2. To be in the Lord Jesus Christ is to be united with Christ organically in all that He is and has done—1 Thes. 1:1; 1 Cor. 1:30:
 - a. In the Lord Jesus Christ we have the termination of everything of the old creation, for to be in Christ is to be in His death, the death that terminates all negative things—Rom. 6:4.
 - b. The title *Christ* in 1 Thessalonians 1:1 denotes all the riches of resurrection; thus, to be in Christ is to be in resurrection—Rom. 8:10-11.
- D. The church is in the processed Triune God—the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit—the One who has become the life-giving Spirit with the Father and the Son—1 Cor. 15:45b; John 14:17, 23.

II. A local church is an expression of the Body of Christ in a certain locality—1 Cor. 1:2; 10:32b, 17; 12:12-13, 20, 27:

- A. The unique Body of Christ is expressed in many local churches in the divine oneness as it is with the Triune God and in the divine nature, element, essence, expression, function, and testimony; there are many churches, yet they have one divine nature, one divine element, one divine essence, one divine expression, one divine function, and one divine testimony because they are one Body—Rev. 1:11; John 17:11, 21, 23.
- B. The church revealed in Matthew 16:18 is the universal church, the unique Body of Christ, whereas the church revealed in 18:17 is the local church, the expression of the unique Body of Christ in a certain locality.
- C. The one universal church—the Body of Christ—becomes the many local churches—local expressions of the Body of Christ—Rom. 12:4-5; 16:16.
- D. The unique Body of Christ is expressed in many localities as the local churches—Eph. 4:4; Rev. 1:4, 11:
 - 1. The Body of Christ is the source of the local churches—Eph. 1:22-23; 2:21-22.
 - 2. The universal Body is like the father to all the churches, and all the churches are like the children to the father—Rom. 12:4-5; 16:4.
- E. Every local church is a part of the unique, universal Body of Christ, a local expression of this Body—Eph. 4:4; 1 Cor. 1:2; 12:27:
 - 1. Universally, all the local churches are one Body, and locally, every local church is a local expression of the universal Body; therefore, a local church is not the Body but only a part of the Body, an expression of the Body.
 - 2. The universal Christ has a part of Himself in every local church; every local church is a part of Christ, and all these parts constitute the Body—Eph. 1:23; 2:22.
- F. The local ground of the church is basically the unique oneness of the Body of Christ practiced in the local churches—4:4; 1 Thes. 1:1:
 - 1. Both the universal Body of Christ and the local churches are uniquely one.
 - 2. There is one unique Body in the whole universe, and there is one unique local church in each locality respectively.
 - 3. This unique oneness is the basic element in the church life—Acts 1:14; 2:46; 1 Cor. 1:10; Phil. 1:27; 2:1-2.
- G. The churches in different localities are for the universal expression of Christ—Eph. 1:23; Rev. 1:4, 11; 22:16a:
 - 1. A local church that makes everything local and that expresses only its locality has become a local sect, a local division.
 - 2. All the basic things for the Body are not local—the Spirit, Christ, God, the Bible, the apostles' teaching, and the apostles' fellowship.
- H. In our consideration the Body should be first and the local churches should be second—Matt. 16:18; 18:17; Eph. 4:4, 16; 2:21-22; 1 Cor. 12:12; 1:2:
 - 1. Local churches are the procedure God takes to reach the goal of His economy—the Body of Christ—Rom. 16:1, 4, 16; 12:4-5.
 - 2. We should consider our local church as a part of the Body of Christ—1 Cor. 1:2; 10:16-17; 12:12-13, 20, 27.

III. In practicing the church life, we need to have the consciousness of the Body—vv. 12-27:

- A. In order to have the Body life, we must be full of feeling for the Body, taking the feeling of the Head as our own feeling—Rom. 12:15; 1 Cor. 12:26-27; Acts 9:4-5:
 - 1. If we as members have the feeling of the Head in everything and care for the Body, we will take the Body as the rule in our mind, thoughts, words, and actions—Eph. 4:15-16; Col. 2:19.
 - 2. We should deny ourselves and identify ourselves with the Body (Matt. 16:24; Rom. 12:4-5, 15; 1 Cor. 1:2; 12:12-27); if we do this, the life we live will be the Body life, and the Lord will gain the expression of the Body—Eph. 4:15-16; 1:22-23.
 - 3. Our enjoyment of Christ causes us to become conscious of the Body of Christ—Col. 2:16-17, 19.
- B. Whatever we do involves the Body; therefore, whenever we do something, we must have a proper consideration of the Body—2 Cor. 8:21; Eph. 4:16:
 - 1. We should not do anything without taking care of the Body—1 Cor. 12:12-27.
 - 2. We need to consider how the Body would feel about what we are doing and how the Body, the recovery, will react.
 - 3. How we behave ourselves depends upon the degree of our seeing the Body.
 - 4. If we are in one accord only in our local church and do not care for the other churches, this kind of one accord is a sect, a division—Acts 1:14; 15:25.
 - 5. If we take care of the Body and are concerned for the Body, there will be no problems—Eph. 4:4, 16.
- C. Among all the churches that compose the one universal Body of Christ, there is no organization, but there is the fellowship of the Body of Christ—Acts 2:42; 1 John 1:3; 1 Cor. 1:9; 10:16-17; 11:29:
 - 1. All the churches on earth are one Body, and within this one Body there is the circulation of the divine life—the fellowship of the Body—1 John 1:3.
 - 2. Fellowship is related to oneness; the circulation of the divine life in the Body brings all the members of the Body into oneness—Eph. 4:3-4; Rom. 16:1-23.
 - 3. The local churches should fellowship with all the genuine local churches on the whole earth to keep the universal fellowship of the Body of Christ.
 - 4. Although the administration of the church is local (Acts 14:23), the fellowship of the church is universal (2:42); there are churches in many cities, but there is one fellowship in the entire universe.

VITAL FACTORS FOR THE RECOVERY OF THE CHURCH LIFE

(Saturday—Second Morning Session)

Message Five

The Factor of the Genuine One Accord

Scripture Reading: Acts 1:14; 2:46; 4:24; 5:12; 15:25; Rom. 15:6

I. The genuine one accord in the church is the practice of the oneness of the Body, which is the oneness of the Spirit—Eph. 4:3-6:

- A. From Ephesians 4:4-6 we can see that our practice of the oneness is based upon the attribute of the oneness of the church: one Spirit, one Lord, one God, one Body, one faith, one baptism, and one hope.
- B. The practice of the genuine one accord in the church is the application of the oneness—Acts 1:14; 2:46.
- C. The practice of the oneness is with the one accord; when the oneness is practiced, it becomes the one accord—15:25:
 - 1. In John the Lord emphasized oneness, but in Acts the one accord is emphasized—John 10:30; 17:11, 21-23; Acts 1:14; 2:46; 4:24; 15:25.
 - 2. The landmark that divides the Gospels and the Acts is the one accord among the one hundred and twenty—1:14:
 - a. They had become one in the Body, and in that oneness they continued steadfastly with one accord in prayer—Eph. 4:3-6; Acts 1:14.
 - b. When the apostles and the believers practiced the church life, they practiced it in one accord—2:46; 4:24; 5:12.
- D. The one accord is the heart, the kernel, the nucleus, of the oneness—Eph. 4:3; Acts 4:24; Rom. 15:6:
 - 1. Oneness is like the physical body, and one accord is like the heart within the body.
 - 2. Our spiritual sickness is like a sickness in the heart within the body; the sickness among us is that we do not have the one accord adequately, and thus we maintain oneness with a sick “heart.”

II. The one accord refers to the harmony in our inner being, in our mind and will—Acts 1:14:

- A. In Acts 1:14 the Greek word *homothumadon* is used to signify the one accord:
 - 1. The word comes from *homo*, “same,” and *thumos*, “mind, will, purpose (soul, heart)” and denotes a harmony of inward feeling in one’s entire being.
 - 2. We should be in the same mind and the same will with the same purpose around and within our soul and heart; this means that our entire being is involved.
- B. In Matthew 18:19 the Greek word *sumphoneo* is used to signify the one accord:
 - 1. The word means “to be in harmony, or accord” and refers to the harmonious sound of musical instruments or voices.
 - 2. The one accord, or the harmony of inward feeling among the believers, is like a harmonious melody.

3. When we have the one accord, we become a melody to God; we become a poem not merely in writing but in sound, in voice, in melody.

III. The holding factor of the one accord is the apostles' teaching—Acts 2:42, 46:

- A. The practice of the oneness—the one accord—is according to the apostles' teaching—v. 42.
- B. Acts tells us that there was one accord among the believers and that all those who were in one accord continued steadfastly in the apostles' teaching.
- C. The apostles taught the same thing to all the saints in all the places and in all the churches—1 Cor. 4:17; 7:17; 11:16; 14:33b-34:
 1. We must also teach the same thing in all the churches in every country throughout the earth—Matt. 28:19-20.
 2. There is no thought in the New Testament that a teaching is good for one church but not for the other churches; rather, the New Testament reveals that all the churches were the same in receiving the teachings—Titus 1:9.

IV. When we practice the one accord, we must learn to be in one spirit with one soul—Phil. 1:27:

- A. We need to turn to our spirit and then enter into our soul with one spirit that we may be in one accord—2:2, 5; 4:2.
- B. If we would have the factor of genuine one accord, we need to “be attuned in the same mind and in the same opinion”—1 Cor. 1:10; 7:25, 40:
 1. The problem in the local church life that keeps us from realizing the one accord is our opinion—Matt. 16:22-25; Phil. 2:2; 4:2.
 2. In the Lord's work, in the church life, and in the spiritual life, the greatest damaging factor is our opinion—1 Cor. 1:10-13a.
 3. Opinions are a sign of darkness (John 11:9-10); whenever we express an opinion that is contrary to the Lord's will, that opinion signifies that we are walking in darkness.
 4. The Lord never acts on the basis of anyone's opinion; He always acts according to His own will, and He will never be moved according to our opinion, including a prayer according to our opinion—1 John 5:14-15.
- C. To be in one accord is to be one in our whole being, and this results in our being one in our outward speaking—Rom. 15:5-6:
 1. To have one mind and one mouth means that we have only one Head—Christ—because only the Head has a mind and a mouth; we should think with the mind of Christ and speak with the mouth of the Head—Col. 1:18a; Phil. 2:2, 5; 4:2.
 2. Whenever we are in one accord, we speak the same thing; we speak with one mouth.
 3. The only way to be with one accord and one mouth is to allow Christ the room to be everything in our heart and in our mouth that God may be glorified—Eph. 3:17a, 21.

V. The one accord is the master key to every blessing in the New Testament—Acts 1:14; Eph. 1:3; Rom. 15:29:

- A. We need to treasure God's blessing and realize that in the church life everything depends on God's blessing—Eph. 1:3.
- B. We all want to see the churches receive God's commanded blessing—Psa. 133:3.
- C. In our practice of the church life, we need to know the way for the church to be under "the fullness of the blessing of Christ"—Rom. 15:29:
 - 1. It is crucial for us to realize that God's blessing can come only upon a situation of one accord, for God will bless only the one accord—Acts 2:46.
 - 2. In order to receive God's blessing, we must practice the oneness, and the way to practice the oneness is by the one accord—4:24; 15:25; Rom. 15:6.

VITAL FACTORS FOR THE RECOVERY OF THE CHURCH LIFE

(Lord's Day—Second Morning Session)

Message Eight

The Factor of Living an Overcoming Life in the Recovered Church to Consummate the Divine Economy and Become the New Jerusalem

Scripture Reading: Rev. 3:7-8, 11-12, 21; 19:7; 21:2, 9-11

- I. The overcomers are produced by the overcoming Christ as the sevenfold intensified Spirit, and they are burdened for the building up of the Body of Christ as the preparation of the bride of Christ—Eph. 4:16; Rev. 5:6; 19:7-9:**
 - A. The overcomers are for the building up of the Body of Christ to consummate the New Jerusalem—Eph. 4:12, 16; Rev. 2:7b; 3:12, 21:
 1. Without the overcomers the Body of Christ cannot be built up, and unless the Body of Christ is built up, Christ cannot come back for His bride—19:7-9.
 2. The overcomers produced by Christ as the sevenfold intensified, life-giving Spirit build up the Body in this age for the initial consummation of the New Jerusalem in the kingdom age and eventually for the full consummation of the New Jerusalem in the new heaven and new earth—1:4; 2:7; 4:5; 5:6; 3:12; 21:2.
 - B. The Lord's promises at the end of each of the seven epistles in Revelation 2 and 3 refer both to the present enjoyment of the overcomers and to the reward given to them in the coming millennial kingdom—2:7b, 11b, 17b, 26-28; 3:5, 12, 21:
 1. In order to enter into the Lord's joy and receive the Lord as our exceedingly great reward in the next age, we need to gain Him and faithfully enjoy Him today in this age—Matt. 25:21b, 23b; Phil. 3:8-9; Gen. 15:1.
 2. If we do not faithfully enjoy and experience Christ as the reality of His promises today, we will not participate in their fulfillment in the kingdom age; the principle is that what we are will become our reward—1 Cor. 9:24-27.
- II. As a sign, the church in Philadelphia prefigures the recovered church—Rev. 3:7:**
 - A. The church in Philadelphia prophetically depicts the church of brotherly love, that is, the proper church life—v. 7.
 - B. One outstanding feature of the church in Philadelphia is that she keeps the Lord's word—vv. 7-8.
 - C. In Revelation 3:8 the Lord says that the church in Philadelphia has not denied His name; the Lord's word is His expression, and the Lord's name is the Lord Himself—Col. 3:16-17; Matt. 18:20.
 - D. The return to the pure word from all heresies and traditions and to the exaltation of the Lord's name by abandoning every other name is the most inspiring testimony in the recovered church—Rev. 3:8.
 - E. To the recovered church, the Lord is the One who has the key of David, the key of the kingdom, with authority to open and to shut—v. 7; Isa. 22:22:

1. This is the key of the treasury of the house of God, which is typified by the house of David for the building up of the kingdom of God—39:2; 2 Sam. 7:16.
2. The key of David is for the keeping of all the treasures of the house of God, which are all the riches of Christ for our enjoyment—Eph. 3:8.
3. The key of David opens the whole universe for God—Isa. 22:22; Rev. 3:7:
 - a. David represents God in establishing God's kingdom on earth and has the key of God's dominion—Isa. 22:22.
 - b. As the real David, the greater David, Christ has built up the house of God, the real temple, and He has set up the kingdom of God, the dominion in which He exercises full authority to represent God; therefore, He holds the key of David—Matt. 1:1; 12:3-8; 16:18-19.
 - c. The fact that Christ has the key of David signifies that He is the center of God's economy; He is the One who expresses God and represents Him, the One who holds the key to open everything in God's dominion—Col. 1:15-18.

III. The Lord Jesus will make the overcomer in the recovered church a pillar built into the temple of God—Rev. 3:11-12a:

- A. The Lord makes us pillars by transforming us, that is, by carrying away our natural element and replacing it with His divine essence—Rom. 12:2; 2 Cor. 3:18:
 1. The meaning of *make* in Revelation 3:12 is to constitute us into something, to construct us in a creative way.
 2. In the church life today, the Lord is working Himself into us and making us, constituting us, into pillars in the temple of God.
- B. In Revelation 21:22 we see that in the New Jerusalem the Triune God Himself will be the temple:
 1. For the overcomers to be pillars in the temple means that they will be pillars in the Triune God—3:12a.
 2. This involves being mingled with the Triune God and constituted with Him—Eph. 3:16-17a.
- C. Even in today's church life, the overcoming saints are pillars in the Triune God—Rev. 3:12a; Gal. 2:9:
 1. These saints sometimes have the consciousness that the church is actually nothing other than the Triune God, as indicated by the golden lampstands as a symbol of the church—Rev. 1:12, 20.
 2. The pillars in the church today are pillars in the Triune God; in the coming age these overcoming believers will be pillars in the temple of God, which is God Himself—3:12a; 21:22.
 3. From this we see that being made pillars involves the Triune God being mingled with and constituted into the faithful believers—2 Cor. 13:14.
- D. To overcome in the church in Philadelphia is to keep what we have received in the Lord's recovery to the end; if we do this, the Lord will make us a pillar in the temple of God—Rev. 3:11-12a.

IV. The overcomer in the recovered church is constituted with the processed and consummated Triune God and becomes the New Jerusalem, "the bride, the wife of the Lamb"—v. 12b; 21:2, 9-11:

- A. The governing vision of the Bible is the Triune God working Himself into His chosen and redeemed people in order to saturate their entire being with the Divine Trinity for the producing and building up of the church as the Body of Christ, consummating in the New Jerusalem—Eph. 4:4-6; Rev. 21:2, 9-10.
- B. The New Jerusalem is a composition of divinity and humanity mingled, blended, and built up together as one entity; all the components have the same life, nature, and constitution and thus are a corporate person—John 14:20, 23; Rev. 21:2-3, 9-23:
 - 1. The New Jerusalem is the consummation of the central vision of God's economy and of the high peak of the divine revelation—vv. 2, 9-11.
 - 2. The New Jerusalem is a composition of God's chosen, redeemed, regenerated, sanctified, renewed, transformed, conformed, and glorified people who have been deified—John 3:6; Heb. 2:11; Rom. 12:2; 8:29-30:
 - a. For us to be deified means that we are being constituted with the processed and consummated Triune God so that we may be made God in life and nature to be His corporate expression for eternity—Rev. 21:11.
 - b. The deification of the believers is a process that will consummate in the New Jerusalem; this is the highest truth and the highest gospel—Rom. 1:1, 3-4; 5:10; Rev. 21:2; 3:12.
- C. "I will write upon him [the overcomer] the name of My God and the name of the city of My God, the New Jerusalem, which descends out of heaven from My God, and My new name"—v. 12b:
 - 1. The fact that the name of God, the name of the New Jerusalem, and the Lord's new name are written upon the overcomer indicates that the overcomer is possessed by God, by the New Jerusalem, and by the Lord; that God Himself, His city (the New Jerusalem), and the Lord Himself all belong to him; and that he is one with God, with the New Jerusalem, and with the Lord.
 - 2. The name of God denotes God Himself, the name of the New Jerusalem denotes the city itself, and the name of the Lord denotes the Lord Himself—v. 12b.
 - 3. That the name of God, the name of the New Jerusalem, and the name of the Lord are written on the overcomer indicates that what God is, the nature of the New Jerusalem, and the person of the Lord have all been wrought into the overcomer—John 14:19-20, 23; Eph. 3:16-17.
 - 4. The mentioning of the New Jerusalem as a prize to the overcomer indicates that this promise will be fulfilled in the millennial kingdom; the New Jerusalem in the millennium will be a prize only to the overcomers—Rev. 3:12b.