

2007 Labor Day Conference

GENERAL SUBJECT: A CALL TO LIFE

Message One: Loving God

Scripture reading:

- 1 John 4:7-8 Beloved, let us love one another, because love is of God, and everyone who loves has been begotten of God and knows God. He who does not love has not known God, because God is love.
- 1 John 4:16 And we know and have believed the love which God has in us. God is love, and he who abides in love abides in God and God abides in him.
- 1 John 4:19 We love because He first loved us.
- Eph. 2:4 But God, being rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us.
- Mark 12:30 And you shall love the Lord your God from your whole heart and from your whole soul and from your whole mind and from your whole strength.
- 1 Cor. 2:9 But as it is written, "Things which eye has not seen and ear has not heard and which have not come up in man's heart; things which God has prepared for those who love Him."
- Rev. 2:4 But I have one thing against you, that you have left your first love.

I. **God is love and God loves us with His abundantly great love—1 John 4:8, 16; Eph. 2:4:**

- A. The expression "God is love" means that in His nature God is love; love is the nature of God's essence, love is the inner substance of God, and love is an essential attribute of God—1 John 4:8; cf. 1 Cor. 13:4-7.
- B. That God is love means that God's disposition is love and that He cannot be other than love; that is the way He is.
- C. The love of God is the source of His eternal salvation—John 3:16; Eph. 1:4-5; 2:4; 5:2; 1 John 4:9-10; Rom. 5:5; 8:28, 35-39; 2 Cor. 13:14.

II. **God is seeking lovers and God infuses us with His love so that we may love Him—1 John 4:19; 2:15; John 14:23; cf. Deut. 10:12:**

- A. The great commandment in both the Old and New Testaments is that we should love the Lord our God with all our heart and with all our soul and with all our mind and with all our strength—Matt. 22:37-38; Mark 12:30; cf. Deut. 6:5; 10:12.
- B. We love God because He first loved us; to love Him with such a love is to love Him with the love with which He has loved us and which is enjoyed by us—1 John 4:19; 2:15.
- C. To realize and participate in the deep and hidden things God has prepared for us requires us to love Him—1 Cor. 2:9:
 1. To fear God, to worship God, and to believe in God are all inadequate; to love Him is the indispensable requirement—cf. Exo. 21:5-6.
 2. To love God means to set our entire being absolutely on Him, that is, to let our entire being be occupied by Him and lost in Him, so that He becomes everything to us and we are one with Him practically in our daily life—Mark 12:30.
 3. In this way we have the closest and most intimate fellowship with God, and we are able to enter into His heart and apprehend all its secrets—Psa. 73:25; 25:14.
 4. Thus, we not only realize but also experience, enjoy, and fully participate in these deep and hidden things of God—1 Cor. 2:10.

III. We must love the Lord with the first love, the best love, to overcome the degradation of the church—Rev. 2:4:

- A. The degradation of the church begins with our leaving the first love toward the Lord; nothing but love can keep us in a proper relationship with the Lord—2:1-7.
- B. To overcome the degradation of the church we need to exercise our spirit of love and pursue love with those who seek the Lord out of a pure heart—2 Tim. 1:7; 2:22.
- C. In Paul's epistles to Timothy and Titus seven kinds of lovers are mentioned: (1) lovers of self, (2) lovers of money, (3) lovers of pleasure, (4) lovers of God, (5) lovers of good, (6) lovers of husbands, and (7) lovers of children—3:2, 4, 1 Tim. 6:10; Titus 1:8; 2:4.
 - 1. Whether there would be a day of glory in the church's victory or grievous days of the church's decline depends altogether on what kind of lovers we are—cf. Matt. 24:12.
 - 2. To maintain the victorious standard of the church, we must be lovers of God and lovers of the good that pertains to God's economy—2 Tim. 3:4; Titus 1:8.
- D. The final word of warning from John, the aged apostle, to all his little children was to guard ourselves from idols, which are anything that replace the genuine and real God—1 John 5:21.
- E. We all must daily tell the Lord, "Lord Jesus, I still love You. I may change in everything else, Lord, but I would never change in loving You. Rather, I want my love for You to increase all the time."—cf. 1 Pet. 1:8.

IV. God's love must be perfected in us and manifested in us by our loving one another—1 John 2:5; 3:10; 4:7, 11-12, 21:

- A. Loving one another is a sign that we have passed out of death into life and that we belong to Christ—3:14; John 13:34-35.
- B. The recovered church, as typified by the church in Philadelphia, is the church of brotherly love—Rev. 3:7.
- C. God's commandment for us to love one another is both old and new: old, because the believers have had it from the beginning of their Christian life; new, because in their Christian walk it dawns with new light and shines with new enlightenment and fresh power again and again—1 John 2:7-8.
- D. God's love is perfected and completed in its manifestation when we express it in our living by habitually loving one another with it—4:11-12.
- E. If we love one another with the love of God as He loved us, we express Him in His essence, so that others may behold Him in us in what He essentially is—4:12.

V. "Give yourself to love the Lord. No other way is so prevailing, and no other way is so safe, so rich, and so full of enjoyment. Just love Him. Do not care for anything else. Teachings, doctrines, gifts, and power do not mean much. We must continually tell the Lord, 'Lord, keep me in Your love! Attract me with Yourself! Keep me all the time in Your loving presence!'"—*Life and Building as Portrayed in the Song of Songs, p. 24.*

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GENERAL SUBJECT: A CALL TO LIFE

Message Two: Dealing with Sin

Scripture reading:

- 1 John 1:7-9 But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus His Son cleanses us from every sin. If we say that we do not have sin, we are deceiving ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.
- 1 John 2:1 My little children, these things I write to you that you may not sin. And if anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the Righteous.
- 1 John 3:9 Everyone who has been begotten of God does not practice sin, because His seed abides in Him; and he cannot sin, because he has been begotten of God.
- 1 John 5:18 We know that everyone who is begotten of God does not sin, but he who has been begotten of God keeps himself, and the evil one does not touch him.
- Psa. 51:2 Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity, and from my sin cleanse me.
- Psa. 51:7 Purge my sin with hyssop, and I will be clean; wash me, and I will be whiter than snow.
- Prov. 28:13 He who covers his transgressions will not prosper, but whoever confesses and forsakes them will obtain mercy.
- John 8:11b And Jesus said, Neither do I condemn you; go, and from now on sin no more.

- I. Sin and sins are a serious problem concerning our enjoyment of the divine fellowship, for they cause our fellowship with the Triune God to be frustrated and broken—1 John 1:3, 5, 7-9:**
- A. The New Testament deals with the problem of sin by using both the word “sin” in the singular and the word “sins” in the plural—John 1:29; 1 John 1:7-9.
- B. “Sin” is the evil nature of Satan, who injected himself into man through Adam’s fall and has now become the sinful nature of lawlessness that is dwelling, acting, and working as a law in fallen man—1:7-8; 3:4; Rom. 5:12; Psa. 51:5:
1. Sin is an evil element dwelling in our flesh that enters, reigns, lords, covets, works death, deceives, kills and is something quite alive—Rom. 5:12, 21; 6:14; 7:8, 13, 11, 17-23.
 2. Sin is the basic factor of blindness, darkness and death—John 8:24, 51-52; 9:2; Rom. 6:23; 1 John 1:6, 8; 5:16-17.
- C. “Sins” refer to the sinful deeds, works, offenses, trespasses, transgressions, and lawlessness which are the fruits of the indwelling sin—Psalm 103:3, 12; Eph. 2:1, 5; 1 John 1:9; 2:1; 3:4; 5:17:
1. Among all the difficulties which must be dealt with, sins are the crudest, the most defiling and the most evident—1 John 1:9; 2 Cor. 7:1; cf. Prov. 28:13.
 2. The contamination of sin is savage, rough and ugly, defiling our purged conscience and needing to be cleansed away by the blood of the Lord in our fellowship with God—1 John 1:7-10; Heb. 9:14; James 3:6; Jude 8.
- D. If a person sins after a person is saved, there are three consequences:
1. If we sin we will immediately lose our fellowship with God—1 John 1:3; 2:1; cf. Isa. 59:2.
 2. We will suffer in this life the consequence of our sins—1 Cor. 5:5; John 9:2; 1 John 5:16.
 3. If we do not deal with sin properly in this age, we will have to deal with it in the coming age—Matt. 16:27; 2 Cor. 5:10.

II. Psalm 51 shows us a person repenting, confessing his sins to God, and asking God for His purging:

- A. The title of Psalm 51 is significant: “A Psalm of David, when Nathan the prophet came to him, after he had gone in to Bath-sheba” (2 Sam. 11:1—12:14) indicating that this psalm was composed after David's great sin in murdering Uriah and robbing him of his wife Bath-sheba.
- B. David begged God to blot out his transgressions, wash him thoroughly from his iniquity, cleanse him from his sin, and purge his sin with hyssop, indicating that his repentance and confession were thorough and that his asking for forgiveness was genuine—Psa. 51:1-2, 7, 9.
- C. For each of us, there needs to be a period of time, perhaps lasting for several days, in which we thoroughly repent, confess our sins to God, and plead with Him to deal with our sins and with our sinful nature—cf. Isa. 1:16, 18-19.

III. Because we still have sin in us and because we still sin, we need to make confession to the Lord, which is the first condition to restore our fellowship with Him—1 John 1:7-9; 2:1:

- A. It is very important for us to realize that the believers' relationship in life with God is unbreakable, but our fellowship with Him is breakable—John 10:28-30; 1 John 1:6.
- B. John's words in 1 John 2:1 “if anyone sins” indicate strongly that sin is not eradicated from our being and that we can still sin after we are saved—1:8, 2:1; cf. 3:9; 5:18.
- C. When we first believed in the Lord Jesus, we received the application of His blood to us as the blood of the sin offering and the trespass offering abolishing the record of our sin before God and cleansing us once for all—John 1:29; 2 Cor. 5:21; Rom. 8:3; Heb. 9:26; 1 Pet. 2:24; 1 Cor. 15:3; Heb. 9:28.
- D. In our practical Christian experience, we must offer Christ as our daily sin offering and trespass offering “shower” for our continual cleansing; many times throughout the day we need to apply the blood of Christ to our case—1 John 1:7.
- E. Whenever we are under the divine light in fellowship and sense that we are wrong in certain matters or with certain persons, we must immediately confess our sins to our righteous Father who is ready to forgive us—vv. 7, 9; 2:1.
- F. The cleansing of the blood of Jesus the Son of God solves the problem of separation from God, the problem of guilt in our conscience, and the problem of accusations from Satan, thus enabling us to have a daily life full of God's presence—Psa. 103:1-4, 12-13; 32:1-2; Rev. 12:10-11.

IV. Once we are saved we should not continue in sin but should forsake our sins and depart from unrighteousness by cooperating with the Lord Jesus not only to deal with the past record of sin but the present committing of sin—Prov. 28:13; 2 Tim. 2:19, 22:

- A. As saved ones the Lord has charged us to “go and sin no more”—John 5:14; 8:11.
- B. When we received the Lord Jesus, He as the great I AM, the Emancipator, entered into us as our indwelling life which now shines within us to gradually and spontaneously set us free from the bondage of sin—John 8:12; Eph. 5:8-9; Rom. 8:2, 4.
- C. On our part, we must be active to flee youthful lusts, idolatry, fornication and escape the corruption which is in the world by lust—2 Tim. 2:22; 1 Cor. 10:14; 6:18; 2 Pet. 1:4; cf. Gen. 19:17.
- D. By our being subject to God, we withstand the devil and cause him to flee from us—James 4:7.
- E. If we cooperate with Him to walk according to the sense of this life and live by this life, we will not sin because we have God's holy life within us as an overcoming law which does not sin, cannot tolerate any trace of sin, and is sensitive to sin—6:14; 8:2, 4; 1 John 3:9; 5:18.

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GENERAL SUBJECT: A CALL TO LIFE

Message Three: Keeping the Word

Scripture reading:

- John 14:23 Jesus answered and said to him, if anyone loves Me, he will keep My word, and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make an abode with him.
- 1 John 2:5 But whoever keeps His word, truly in this one the love of God has been perfected. In this we know that we are in Him.
- 1 John 2:14 I have written to you, fathers, because you know Him who is from the beginning. I have written to you, young men, because you are strong and the word of God abides in you and you have overcome the evil one.
- Rev. 3:8 I know your works; behold, I have put before you an opened door which no one can shut, because you have a little power and have kept My word and have not denied My name.
- 1 Tim. 4:6 If you lay these things before the brothers, you will be a good minister of Christ Jesus, being nourished with the words of faith and of the good teaching which you have closely followed.
- Eph. 6:17-18 And receive the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which Spirit is the word of God, by means of all prayer and petition, praying at every time in spirit and watching unto this in all perseverance and petition concerning all the saints.

I. If we love the Lord and desire Him to make His abode with us, we must keep His word—John 14:15, 21, 23; 15:4-5, 7; 1 John 2:3-5, 14; cf. Exo. 20:6:

- A. In 1 John 2:3-5, “keeping His word” in v. 5 is synonymous with keeping His “commandments” in vv. 3-4; thus, to keep His word is to keep His commandments—vv. 3-5.
- B. We all must learn one thing—that keeping His word and obeying the Lord’s commandments depend upon our love towards Him—John 14:23; 15:10.
- C. Whenever we listen to His speaking and keep His commandments, His presence is immediately intensified and becomes so sweet, precious, watering, strengthening, enlightening and nourishing—Psa. 119:72, 103, 127, 130; Isa. 50:4; Jer. 15:16.
- D. The Lord will manifest Himself to whoever loves Him and keeps His commandments, visiting us to make us His abode and to make Him our abode—John 14:23; cf. Exo. 33:11, 14; Psa. 90:1.
- E. The building of God’s habitation and His abode today is altogether dependent upon the experience of our loving the Lord, being in His presence and keeping His word—John 14:23; Rev. 3:12.

II. To keep the Lord’s word is not a matter of keeping Old Testament commandments but of receiving His words as the divine supply into us to transform us and to abide in us—John 15:7; Col. 3:16; 1 John 2:14, 24; Rom. 12:2:

- A. In order to keep the Lord's word we must do two things: on the positive side we need to receive all that He is into us, and, on the negative side, we need to kill all our concepts and opinions—Eph. 6:17; 2 Tim. 3:16-17; cf. Jer. 23:29.
- B. When we heard the gospel and received the Lord as our Savior it was by His words—Rom. 10:17.
- C. According to the same principle, if we want to allow the Lord to abide in us, we must let His words abide in us to bear remaining fruit to glorify the Father—John 15:7-8, 16.
- D. To keep the word of the Lord is actually to be transformed by receiving the word of the Lord into us and to keep it—Rom. 12:2; 1 Pet. 2:2; Heb. 5:13-14.

III. To keep the Lord's word means not to turn away from the word of the apostles' teaching, the healthy teaching of God's economy, which is the highest peak of the divine revelation—Rev. 3:8; 1 Tim. 1:3-4:

- A. The Lord appreciated the overcomers in Philadelphia because they kept the word absolutely, indicating that the church in Philadelphia did not leave the word of Paul's ministry, which was his teaching to all of the churches in Asia—Rev. 3:8; cf. 2 Tim. 1:15.
- B. Because most of the churches mentioned in Revelation 2 and 3 received different teachings, they did not keep the word of the apostle and consequently, fell into degradation—Rev. 2:14-15, 20; 1 Tim. 6:3-4; 2 Tim. 3:7; 4:3-4, 10.
- C. The church in Philadelphia kept the teaching of God's eternal economy which Paul had brought to them, keeping themselves in the special seeing of the all-inheriting vision of the age to be built into God and to have God built into them to become pillars in the temple of God—Rev. 3:12.

IV. To keep the Lord's word is to care solely for the word of God by saying "Amen" to God's word, to be nourished with the words of the faith, to receive the God-breathed Scripture by means of all prayer, and to keep the word of His endurance—Rev. 3:8, 10; 1 Tim. 4:6-7; 6:3; 2 Tim. 3:14-17; Eph. 6:17-18.

- A. To keep His word is to care solely for the word of God by saying "Amen" to God's word—Deut. 27:1, 15; 1 Chron. 16:36; cf. Exo. 21:6:
 - 1. We have to learn to say "yes" to the Father and "no" to the devil all the time—cf. *Hymns 880*.
 - 2. If we say Amen to God's word, we are saying, "Lord, may it happen to me according to your word"—Luke 1:37-38.
- B. To keep the Lord's word is to be nourished and supplied with God as the word by reading it—Psa. 119:17, 57; Matt. 4:4:
 - 1. Whenever we come to the Bible we should not come for mere teachings but to touch, assimilate, and gain God Himself as the Word—John 1:1; 5:39-40; 6:63; Rev. 19:13.
 - 2. When we come to the Bible we should open our whole being to the word by opening our eyes to see, our mind to understand, our heart to love, and our spirit to pray and realize—Matt. 13:16; Luke 24:31; 45; Psa. 119: 47, 97; Eph. 1:17-18.
- C. To keep the Lord's word we must receive the God-breathed Scripture by means of all prayer:
 - 1. Our reading of the Bible should be our inhaling of God to receive life and our teaching of the Bible should be our exhaling of God to impart life—John 6: 63; Acts 6:4; 2 Tim. 3:16-17.
 - 2. To keep the Lord's word is to keep it stored in our being by pray-reading so that His word becomes our constituent—Eph. 6:17-18; Psa. 119:11.
 - 3. The more we take the word of God by means of all prayer, the more the negative elements in our being, including Satan our adversary, are slain—cf. 2 Thes. 2:8; Rev. 1:16; 2:16.
- D. To keep the Lord's word is to keep the word of Christ's endurance that we may be kept by Him out of the hour of trial which will come on the whole inhabited earth, to try those who dwell on the earth—Rev. 3:10:
 - 1. Even though the word of God is greatly opposed, we must be exceedingly bold to speak the word of God without fear—Phil. 1:14, 28; cf. Matt. 5:11-12.
 - 2. We have to prepare ourselves for His coming by loving Him and keeping His word so that we can grow in Him and be matured for His appearing—2 Tim. 4:2-3, 6-8; 1 Pet. 4:13.

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GENERAL SUBJECT: A CALL TO LIFE

Message Four: Obeying the Anointing

Scripture reading:

- 1 John 2:20 And you have an anointing from the Holy One, and all of you know.
- 1 John 2:27 And as for you, the anointing which you have received from Him abides in you, and you have no need that anyone teach you; but as His anointing teaches you concerning all things and is true and is not a lie, and even as it has taught you, abide in Him.
- Luke 4:18 The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, because He has anointed Me to announce the gospel to the poor; He has sent Me to proclaim release to the captives, and recovery of sight to the blind, to send away in release those who are oppressed.
- Phil. 1:19 For I know that for me this will turn out to salvation through your petition and the bountiful supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ.
- Rom. 8:13-14 For if you live according to the flesh, you must die, but if by the Spirit you put to death the practices of the body, you will live. For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God.
- Phil. 2:12-13 So then, my beloved, even as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only but now much rather in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God who operates in you both the willing and the working for His good pleasure.

- I. The anointing is the moving and working of the indwelling compound Spirit—1 John 2:20, 27:**
- A. The Triune God, after passing through the processes of incarnation, human living, crucifixion, resurrection, and ascension, has become the all-inclusive, life-giving compound Spirit—John 1:14; 1 Cor. 15:45b; Phil. 1:19; cf. Exo. 30:23-25.
 - B. By such a process, Christ, the anointed One, became the life-giving Spirit and entered into us at the time of our regeneration to become the anointing One and even the anointing itself—Luke 4:18; 1 John 2:27; cf. 2 Cor. 1:21; Psa. 133.
 - C. The Spirit as the anointing is now moving, working, acting, operating, and energizing within us to add God Himself to our inner being; the purpose of the anointing is that we may be fully mingled with Him for His corporate expression—cf. Lev. 2:4.
- II. The teaching of the anointing is not an outward teaching by words but an inward teaching by anointing, through our inner spiritual consciousness—1 John 2:27:**
- A. The teaching by the anointing adds the divine elements of the Trinity, which are the elements of the compound Spirit, into our inner being.
 - B. It is like the repeated painting of some article: the paint not only indicates the color, but also by coat upon coat being added, the elements of the paint are added to the thing painted.
 - C. It is in this way that the Triune God is transfused, infused, and added into all the inward parts of our being that our inner man may grow in the divine life with the divine elements—2 Cor. 4:16.
 - D. The simple and practical way to realize the anointing is to keep ourselves in fellowship with the Lord by exercising our spirit; it is in our spirit that the Holy Spirit dwells and communicates with us—1 Cor. 6:17; Rom. 8:16; 2 Tim. 4:22.
 - E. We often do not have the sense of the inner anointing because we are too active; if we would quiet ourselves a little, right away we will sense the inner anointing—cf. 1 Kings 19:12; Matt. 3:16.

F. We also need to spend time in the Word to accumulate biblical knowledge so that we will become spiritually qualified and prepared to understand the teaching of the anointing—2 Tim. 3:15.

III. We must learn to obey the anointing, the inner working of God, that our fellowship with God may be maintained—1 John 2:3-4, 20, 27:

- A. After we receive the Lord in His word and have His anointing, we must be obedient to His leading to abide in Him and maintain our fellowship with Him—cf. John 9:6-7.
- B. We must learn to walk according to the spirit, set our mind on the spirit, and care for the inner sense of life and peace—Romans 8:4-6.
- C. In order to take care of the inner anointing, we need to definitely and specifically apply the cross in particular matters to an adequate extent—Romans 8:13; Gal. 5:24-25; cf. Rev. 3:18.
- D. As we obey the inward sense of life, we spontaneously display a mark which tells people that we are different from the devil's children, that we have the life of God within us which makes us sons of God—Rom. 8:14; cf. 1 John 5:19.
- E. We need to work out our own salvation with fear and trembling by obeying the inner operating God, who operates in us both the willing and the working for His good pleasure—Phil. 2:12-13.

IV. A life of abiding in the Lord and enjoying His life is a life in which we constantly experience the cleansing of the blood and enjoy the anointing moment by moment:

- A. The thought of 1 John 1-2 is that first the blood cleanses us and then the ointment anoints us; in this way we obtain not only forgiveness through the blood but also God Himself by the anointing—1 John 1:7, 9; 2:27.
- B. If we do not have the cleansing of the blood, we do not have the ground for the Holy Spirit to anoint us—cf. Exo. 29:20-21; Lev. 14:25-28.
- C. The anointing of the Holy Spirit brings light and revelation to us and even brings us into the presence of the Lord to be exposed; it is when we are exposed that the blood is so prevailing, dear, and precious to us.

V. We need to consecrate ourselves to care for the inner anointing for our growth in life:

- A. To go along with the inner anointing is simply to follow the Lord, obey the Lord, submit to the Lord, and always keep ourselves in the presence of the Lord—cf. Exo. 33:14-15.
- B. The Christian life is a life under the anointing, the Christian walk is a walk guided by this anointing, and Christian service must be a service guided by this anointing; this anointing takes care of all the matters of the Christian life, walk, work, and service—Col. 1:9-10.
- C. Our power, impact, and even authority in our life and service depend upon these dealings in life and our caring for the inner anointing—cf. Acts 19:15.
- D. Let us have a real consecration, telling the Lord, “Lord, in these days I consecrate myself to You to learn all the lessons of life. Moreover, I wish to pay any price to go along with the inner anointing”; if we do this, we cannot tell how far the Lord will go through us, and we do not know what wondrous things will come out through us in these last days—cf. Matt 25:9; Rev. 3:18.

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Message Five: Overcoming the World

Scripture reading:

- 1 John 2:15-17 Do not love the world nor the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, love for the Father is not in him; because all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the vainglory of life, is not of the Father but is of the world. And the world is passing away, and its lust, but he who does the will of God abides forever.
- 1 John 4:4 You are of God, little children; and you have overcome them because greater is He who is in you than he who is in the world.
- 1 John 5:4-5 For everything that has been begotten of God overcomes the world; and this is the victory which has overcome the world—our faith. And who is he who overcomes the world except him who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?
- 1 John 5:19 We know that we are of God, and the whole world lies in the evil one.
- Acts 26:18 To open their eyes, to turn them from darkness to light and from the authority of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and an inheritance among those who have been sanctified by faith in Me.
- James 4:4 Adulteresses, do you not know that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? Therefore whoever determines to be a friend of the world is constituted an enemy of God.
- Rom. 12:2 And do not be fashioned according to this age, but be transformed by the renewing of the mind that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and well pleasing and perfect.

- I. The whole world comprised of the satanic world system (1 John 2:15) and the fallen human race (4:1), “lies in the evil one”, remaining passively in the sphere of Satan’s influence, control, usurpation and manipulation—1 John 5:19:**
- A. The Greek word rendered “evil one” is *poneros*, which means pernicious, harmfully evil, and affecting and influencing others to be evil and vicious—vv. 18-19.
 - B. Satan is an evil “surgeon” and the people of the world are the “patients” lying on his “operating table” with no consciousness of what is happening as he “operates” on them—cf. Matt. 24:38.
 - C. Satan uses the world to both contaminate and possess man—James 1:27; 4:4.
 - D. According to the Bible, the world is against the Father (1 John 2:15), the Devil is against the Son (3:8) and the flesh is against the Spirit (Gal. 5:16-17)—cf. Exo. 3:2, 16; Heb. 11:24-27.
 - E. The world is Satan’s mask that he uses to deceive us and cheat us—cf. Exo. 3-11.
- II. The world (Gk. *kosmos*) in 1 John 2:15-17 refers to the anti-God world system formed, arranged, ordered and set up by Satan to usurp the man created by God for the fulfillment of His purpose by systematizing every thing, every one and every matter—1 John 2:15-17:**
- A. The components and contents of the world are “the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes and the vainglory of life”—v. 16; cf. Gen. 3:6:
 - 1. The lust of the flesh refers to the passionate desire of the body—Gal. 5:24; Rom. 8:13.
 - 2. The lust of the eyes refers to the passionate desire of the soul—1 John 2:16.
 - 3. The vainglory of life refers to the empty pride, boast, confidence, assurance and display of material things of the present life—v. 16.
 - B. According to the Bible, the world has at least three aspects: the aspect of rebellion and idolatry, signified by Babel; the aspect of sinfulness, signified by Sodom; and the aspect of enjoyment and pleasure, signified by Egypt—Gen. 11:9; 13:13; 18:20; 42:1-2; Num. 11:5; Exo. 1:11-14.

- C. The modern appearance, present course and practical part of the world system which we contact and live in is the age of this world—Rom. 12:2; Eph. 2:2.
 - 1. Satan is the deceiver, the ruler of the present age, who dominates today's world and hunts for man's worship by blinding his mind and his thoughts—2 Cor. 4:4.
 - 2. We should not be friends with this world by being fashioned, conformed, constituted, and molded according to the present evil age with its particular pattern, characteristics, fashions, styles, and trends—James 4:4; Rom. 12:2; Gal. 1:4; cf. 1 Cor. 6:11; 2 Cor. 6:14-18.
 - 3. We should not be assimilated into the world to the extent that we who have been separated from the world unto God have the same image as this age—1 Pet. 4:4.
 - 4. We should not be fashioned according to this age but transformed by the renewing of our mind by having an organic element wrought into our being to produce a metabolic change inwardly—Rom. 12:2; 2 Cor. 3:18.

III. The regenerated believers have the capability of the divine life to overcome the world, the powerful satanic world system—1 John 5:4-5; 2:15:

- A. Exercising our regenerated spirit empowers the regenerated believers to overcome the world—5:4; Eph. 5:18-19.
- B. Loving God supremely causes us to deal with the world—1 John 2:15:
 - 1. When our love for God causes us to meet God who is light, He enlightens and exposes the world, shining away the world in us—1 John 1:5; cf. Song of Songs 1:2-4, 9.
 - 2. Not loving the world is the ground for us to overcome the evil one; loving the world even just a little gives the evil one the ground to defeat and occupy us—1 John 4:4; cf. Josh 7:19-21.
- C. Being nourished, strengthened and sustained by the word of God which abides in us and operates in us enables us to overcome the evil one and his world—1 John 2:14b-17:
 - 1. God's living and sanctifying word works in the believers to separate them from anything worldly so that they may enjoy the Triune God—John 17:14-21.
 - 2. The more a person is in the word of God, the purer he becomes; a man who is not in God's word but is in the world is complicated and impure—cf. Psa. 12:6; 119:140.
- D. Growing in life will deepen our inner feeling towards the world and deepen our knowing of the world, thus forming the basis for further severe dealings with the world—1 Pet. 2:2; 1 John 5:21.
- E. Having our eyes opened by God to expose a vivid picture of the nature, meaning, and consequence of living in the world and being unveiled to how the world usurps, occupies and possesses us will cause us to spontaneously loathe the world, flee from it, and be gathered unto God for His purpose and the accomplishment of His will on the earth—Acts 26:18; cf. Exo. 5-11.

IV. The world which is passing away, and its lust, are against the will of God, which is God's intention in His economy to dispense Christ with all of His riches into His believers for the constitution and building up of the Body of Christ, the church, to consummate the New Jerusalem as God's ultimate building for the full expression of the processed Triune God—1 John 2:17; Rom. 12:2, 4-5; Eph. 3:8-10:

- A. God's goal is to gain a pure and glorious church, a God-expressing church, but Satan's strategy is to corrupt the church by bringing her into union with the world—5:27; Rev. 2:13.
- B. Since the church as a chaste bride is espoused to Christ, her union with the world is considered spiritual fornication in the eyes of God—cf. Jer. 2:2; 3:1, 14.
- C. The world is against God's building, and God's building is opposed to the world—John 15:18; 1 John 2:17.
- D. God's desire that we build a dwelling place for Him on earth can be fulfilled only if we have been delivered from the world and have nothing besides God Himself—Exo. 25:8; Psa. 73:25-26; Eph. 2:1-12.

2007 Labor Day Conference

GENERAL SUBJECT: A CALL TO LIFE

Message Six: The Lord's Recovery of Life, by Life, and unto Life

Scripture reading:

- 1 John 1:1-2 That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we beheld and our hands handled, concerning the Word of life (and the life was manifested, and we have seen and testify and report to you the eternal life, which was with the Father and was manifested to us).
- Psal 36:9 For with You is the fountain of life; in Your light we see light.
- Gen. 2:9 And out of the ground Jehovah God caused to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for food, as well as the tree of life in the middle of the garden and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.
- John 10:10b I have come that they may have life and may have it abundantly.
- John 4:14b But the water that I will give him will become in him a spring of water gushing up into eternal life.
- Rev. 22:1-2a And he showed me a river of water of life, bright as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb in the middle of its street. And on this side and on that side of the river was the tree of life.
- Matt. 7:13-14 Enter in through the narrow gate, for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leads to destruction, and many are those who enter through it. Because narrow is the gate and constricted is the way that leads to life, and few are those who find it.

- I. The Lord's recovery is first the recovery of the divine life in the understanding and experience of the believers—1 John 1:1-2:**
- A. The Lord's recovery is the recovery of the divine truths as revealed in the holy Scriptures, the holy Word of God—2 Tim. 3:16.
 - B. The truths as revealed in the Scriptures have been lost, missed, misunderstood, misinterpreted, and wrongly taught throughout the ages; hence, there is the need of the Lord's recovery—cf. Matt. 19:8.
 - C. The crucial points of the Lord's recovery include the Triune God, the all-inclusive Christ, the consummated Spirit, the eternal life, the church, the oneness of the Body of Christ, the local ground of the church, and the human spirit—Matt. 28:19; Rev. 22:17; 1 John 1:1-3; Eph. 1:22-23; 4:4; Rev. 1:11; 1 Thes. 5:23.
 - D. According to 1 John 1:1-2, what was with God in the beginning in eternity was the Word of life, life itself; hence, we may say that the Lord's recovery is first to recover the matter of life—cf. Psa. 36:9a; Jer. 2:13.
 - E. Without life there is no economy of God, no purpose of God, no church, no experience of Christ, no Body of Christ, no recovery, no bride, no kingdom, and no New Jerusalem; everything depends on life being recovered in our experience—cf. 1 Pet. 1:3.
- II. The Lord's recovery is a recovery by life because life is the way to fulfill God's purpose—Gen. 2:9; John 10:10b:**
- A. God's desire and purpose are to have a corporate man to express Him in His image and to represent Him with His authority—Gen. 1:26.
 - B. The means by which God fulfills His purpose is life as shown by God placing man before the tree of life—Gen. 2:9, 16.

1. The tree of life typifies Christ who imparts life to man and who pleases and satisfies man—v. 9; John 14:6a; 10:10b; 15:1.
 2. Only by eating Christ as the tree of life is it possible for us to live God out and to express God—cf. 6:57.
 3. Life conforms the believers to the image of Christ as the firstborn Son of God and brings us into glory—Romans 8:2, 6, 29; Col. 3:4.
 4. Resurrection life gives authority—Num. 17:8; Rev. 20:4.
- C. The work that the Lord needs to produce and increase the church is the overflow and outflow of the inner life, not the endeavor of outward activity—John 7:37-39; 12:23-26; cf. 1 Cor. 3:12-15.
 - D. Eating the tree of life, that is, enjoying Christ as our life supply, should be the primary matter in the church life today—Rev. 2:7.
 - E. All God's redeemed people will enjoy the tree of life, which is Christ with all the divine riches, as the redeemed's eternal portion for eternity—22:2, 14, 19.

III. The Lord's recovery is a recovery unto life because the eternal life is the destination of the flowing Triune God—John 4:14b; cf. Rom. 5:17, 21:

- A. The Gospel of John portrays a flowing Triune God; the Father is the fountain, the Son is the spring, and the Spirit is the river—John 4:14b; 7:38.
- B. This flowing Triune God is “into eternal life”—4:14b.
 1. “Into” is rich in meaning and speaks of destination and also means “to become” or “to be.”
 2. The eternal life will eventually be the New Jerusalem; the New Jerusalem is the totality of the divine life, the totality of the life of God—Rev. 22:1-2.
 3. Thus, “into eternal life” means “into the New Jerusalem.”
- C. John 6 and 7 reveal Christ as the Feast of Passover and the Feast of Tabernacles for us to eat Him and drink Him; these feasts are the enjoyment of the flowing, triune, processed God.
- D. Whatever we eat and drink gets into us and is mingled and blended with our entire being; this enjoyment causes us to be transformed and built up to become the New Jerusalem—2 Cor. 3:18; 2 Pet. 1:4; Rev. 21:18-21; 22:1-2.

IV. We must consecrate ourselves to take the way of the Lord's recovery, which is the narrow and constricted way that leads to life—Matt. 7:13-14:

- A. As ones in the Lord's recovery, we must be able to say that we are not taking the way of Christianity, but the way of constriction according to the pattern of the Lord's life and ministry—John 4:34; 5:19, 30; 7:6, 18; 14:10, 24; 17:4.
- B. If we live and work according to our human concepts and natural ways, our living and work will be founded on sinking sand; this is to enter the wide gate and walk on the broad way that leads to destruction—Matt. 7:24-27.
- C. The constricted way in the Lord's recovery is the way of the heavenly Father's will according to His life and nature; we must run the Christian race between the constricting lines of the divine life and divine nature to be approved by the Lord at His judgment seat—vv. 21-23; 1 Cor. 9:24-27; 2 Cor. 5:9-10.
- D. The way that leads to a living reward in life is the Way (Acts 9:2, 19:9, 23; 22:4; 24:22)—the way of the truth, the straight way, the way of righteousness (2 Pet. 2:2, 15, 21), the way of peace (Luke 1:79; Rom. 3:17), the way of salvation (Acts 16:17), the way of God (Matt. 22:16; Acts 18:26), and the way of the Lord (John 1:23; Acts 18:25).
- E. We must stay on the way of life, the line of life, and in the maintenance of life by enjoying Christ as the tree of life in the flow of life for God's building in life by our growth in life—John 10:10b; 6:57; Rev. 22:1-2; Eph. 4:16; 2:21-22.
- F. We in the Lord's recovery must walk in our spirit; walking in spirit restricts us, causing us to live a normal, Christian life and making us vital, healthy believers who fulfill the goal of God's calling us to life—Rom. 8:4; Gal. 5:16, 22-23; 1 Thes. 5:16-18; Gal. 5:25.

2007 Labor Day Conference

GENERAL SUBJECT: A CALL TO LIFE

Message Seven: Abiding in Christ

Scripture reading:

- John 14:23 Jesus answered and said to him, if anyone loves Me, he will keep My word, and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make an abode with him.
- John 15:4-5 Abide in Me and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself unless it abides in the vine, so neither can you unless you abide in Me. I am the vine; you are the branches. He who abides in Me and I in him, he bears much fruit; for apart from Me you can do nothing.
- 1 John 3:24 And he who keeps His commandments abides in Him, and He in him. And in this we know that He abides in us, by the Spirit whom He gave to us.
- 1 John 4:13 In this we know that we abide in Him and He in us, that He has gives to us of His Spirit.
- John 6:56-57 He who eats My flesh and drinks My blood abides in Me and I in him. As the living Father has sent Me and I live because of the Father, so he who eats Me, he also shall live because of Me.
- John 15:6 If one does not abide in Me, he is cast out as a branch and is dried up; and they gather them and cast them into the fire, and they are burned.

I. **The revelation of abiding in Christ is a wonderful mystery for us to experience—1 John 2:24, 27; John 15:4-5:**

- A. Before we were saved, we were under condemnation in Adam; when we were regenerated, God transferred us out of Adam and into Christ, in whom we have no condemnation—Rom. 8:1-2; 1 Cor. 1:30; cf. Rom. 5:12-21.
- B. To be “in Christ” is factual and positional and refers to the fact of our having entered into Christ to partake of Him and to be joined to Him—2 Cor. 5:17.
- C. To “abide in Christ” is practical and experiential and refers to our experience of remaining in Christ to fellowship with and enjoy Him—John 15:5; 1 John 1:2-3; 2:24.
- D. The real Christian life is not to work for Christ or do anything for Christ, but simply to abide in Christ in uninterrupted fellowship and to enjoy Him as our God-given portion; in this abiding, every spiritual blessing is ours and we enjoy all that He has accomplished—John 15:4-5, 7; 1 Cor. 1:9; cf. Phil. 4:13.

II. **As we abide in Christ and take Him as our abode, He abides in us to be the Dweller within us; He and we, we and He, become a mutual abode—John 15:4-5; 14:23; 1 John 4:16:**

- A. To abide in Christ is to dwell in Him, to be deeply rooted in Him, and to take Him as our habitation and everything—Acts 17:28; Col. 2:7; Deut. 33:27a; Psa. 90:1; 91:9.
- B. To have Christ abide in us is to allow Him to dwell in us, saturate us, and to make His home in our hearts and to become everything to us—John 15:4-5; 14:23; Eph. 3:17.
- C. To abide in Christ, and to allow Him to abide in us, means that we become a mutual abode; this is the reality of the universal, divine-human incorporation—John 14:2, 20; 15:1, 4-5; 1 John 4:16.
- D. The Lord’s abiding in us and our abiding in Him are altogether a matter of Him being the life-giving Spirit in our spirit; by the bountiful, immeasurable Spirit in our spirit, we know with full assurance that we and God are one and that we abide in each other—1 Cor. 15:45b; Rom. 8:16; 1 Cor. 6:17; Phil. 1:19; John 3:34; 14:17; 1 John 3:24; 4:13.
- E. Ultimately, and for eternity, the New Jerusalem will be the consummation of the mutual abode and will fulfill the Lord's brief word in John 15:4: “Abide in Me and I in you”—Rev. 21:3, 22.

III. The practice of abiding in Christ is a fine, sensitive, and tender matter requiring us to remain in the fellowship of the divine life:

- A. To abide in Christ we must first purify our conscience by making a thorough confession; with a purified conscience there will be a flow of the Lord within our whole being—1 John 1:6-9.
- B. To abide in Christ this flow of the divine life must be maintained daily by spending time in the Lord's presence to check whether we are in life, in the fellowship of life, under the shining of the light of life, and fully under the cleansing of the blood—1:3, 5-9; John 8:12.
- C. To abide in Christ we must care for the inward teaching of the all-inclusive anointing—1 John 2:27.
- D. To abide in Christ we must eat His flesh and drink His blood; this is to eat, digest, and assimilate Him into us so that we become one with Him and live because of Him—John 6:56-57.
- E. To abide in Christ we must love the Lord; eventually the lovers of the Lord Jesus become the abodes in God's house—14:23; cf. Psa. 84:1
- F. To abide in Christ we must let the Lord abide in us; the Lord should not have any limitation within our being and we must allow Him to spread into every corner and avenue of our inner being—John 15:4-5; Eph. 3:17.
- G. To abide in Christ we must allow the Lord's words to abide in us; we must be submissive and obedient to the living rhema that He is speaking now within us—John 15:7; 6:63.

IV. If we do not abide in Christ, we may become separated from Christ and cast out as a branch—John 15:6; cf. Gal. 5:4:

- A. To be cast out is not to lose our salvation; it is to be cut off from the enjoyment of the riches of the life of the vine tree—cf. Rom. 11:17.
- B. To be cast out also means to be cut off from the fellowship of the branches; many Christians today are like this and have no fellowship in life with other Christians—John 15:2.
- C. To be cast out also means to be separated from the expression of the Son with the Father; many Christians today cannot have the expression of the Son with the Father because they are branches that have been cut off from the vine—14:10-11, 16-17.
- D. To be cast out also means to be cut off from the divine purpose; the divine purpose for God the Father to cultivate the Son as the vine tree is to express the fullness of the Godhead and to be the organism of the Triune God—15:1; 1 Cor. 3:9; Col. 2:9; Eph. 1:23; 3:19.

V. "Stay in this divine place, involving the two spirits. Worship here. Receive the instant word of the Lord. As you live in Him and He dwells in you, there is a mutual abode. In this place you are holy. Your Christ will be no longer merely doctrinal. He will be your experience all the time. You will be able to testify that you are one with Him and He with you, even that you are abiding in this oneness....The Lord's recovery needs this. There is the need of this abiding life that the church life may be enriched."—*Life Messages, p. 97.*

