

Messages Three and Four

**Taking the God-ordained Pathway for the Church—the Way of Philadelphia—
according to the Lord's Up-to-date and Ultimate Recovery
to Bring Us into a New Revival to Turn the Age**

Scripture Reading: Rev. 3:7-22

- I. We need to see, live, and practice “the present truth,” the “up-to-date” truth, in order to change the age and bring Christ back; we need to hear what the Spirit is speaking to the churches, the voice of God in the present hour—2 Pet. 1:12; Rev. 2:7; Matt. 16:18; Gen. 2:22; Eph. 5:25-27; cf. John 1:23; S. S. 8:13-14:**
- A. All the truths are in the Bible, but through man's foolishness, unfaithfulness, negligence, disobedience, and degradation, many truths were lost and hidden from man—cf. 2 Kings 22:8-11; 23:24-25.
 - B. These freshly revealed truths are not God's new inventions; rather, they are man's new discoveries; every worker of the Lord should inquire before God as to what the present truth is—Eph. 1:17; Ezek. 1:1-3; Rev. 1:10; 21:10.
 - C. God's truths are cumulative; later truths do not negate the former ones; what we see today are the cumulative revelations of God; today we are living in the tide of God's will, which is a continuation of all the past works of God in the previous ages; may God be gracious to us so that we do not become castaways of “the present truth”—1 Cor. 9:27; cf. 2 Cor. 3:3, 6, 8-9; 5:18-21.
 - D. The present truth of the Lord's up-to-date and ultimate recovery is to bring us into a new revival to turn the age by our choosing to take the way of Philadelphia; only the recovered church, the church of brotherly love, signified by the church in Philadelphia, can fulfill God's eternal purpose and satisfy His heart's desire—Rev. 1:1-3; 3:7-13; *Hymns*, #880.
- II. The characteristic of the overcomers in Philadelphia (vv. 7-13) is their aspiration to arrive at the highest peak of the divine revelation of God's economy—this highest peak is God becoming man to make man God in life and in nature but not in the Godhead so that the Body of Christ can be produced, the bride can be prepared, and the New Jerusalem can be consummated:**
- A. Even though the churches in Asia, in a general sense, had turned away from the apostle Paul's ministry (2 Tim. 1:15), one church was unique and was highly appraised by the Lord—the church in Philadelphia; the Lord highly appraised them and even appreciated them because they kept His word, which means that they did not turn away from the word of the apostle Paul's healthy teaching of God's economy, the highest peak of the divine revelation—Rev. 3:8; 1 Tim. 1:3-4; 6:3:
 - 1. God's eternal economy is to make man the same as He is in life and nature but not in the Godhead and to make Himself one with man and man one with Him, thus to be enlarged and expanded in His expression, that all His divine attributes may be expressed in human virtues.
 - 2. God's eternal 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—1:3-6; 6:3-4; 2 Cor. 11:2-3; Titus 1:9; Col. 2:19.
 - B. Those in Philadelphia are “rich toward God” (Luke 12:21) by pray-reading and musing upon His word to treasure up His word in their heart (Eph. 6:17-18; Psa. 119:11, 15); they lift up their hands unto the word of God, indicating that they receive it warmly and gladly and that they say Amen to it (v. 48; Neh. 8:5-6).
 - C. For the overcomers to be pillars in the temple means that they will be pillars in the Triune God, for the temple is “the Lord God the Almighty and the Lamb”; God is built into them to make them living and precious stones, and they are built into God to make them pillars of stone in God for their incorporation with God as the mutual abode of God and man—Rev. 3:12a; 21:22, 3; Psa. 90:1; John 14:23; cf. 1 Kings 7:17.

- D. 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 and that God Himself, His city (the New Jerusalem), and the Lord Himself all belong to him.
- E. That the name of God, the name of the New Jerusalem, and the Lord's new name are written upon the overcomers indicates that what God is, the nature of the New Jerusalem, and the person of the Lord have all been wrought into them, labeling them with the Triune God as their "name badge" and making them God in life and in nature but not in the Godhead—Rev. 3:12b; 22:4b.

III. The characteristic of the overcomers in Philadelphia is their endeavoring to enter into the God-man living by enjoying the riches of Christ as their indwelling treasure—Eph. 3:8; 2 Cor. 4:7:

- A. In Isaiah 22 God fired Shebna, a steward in the house of the king (vv. 15-19), and replaced him with Eliakim, a type of the all-inclusive Christ as the Steward in God's house, the One upon whose shoulder the key of the house of God is set (vv. 20-25; Rev. 3:7-8); Christ has the key to control the door of God's treasury, in which are the riches of God in Christ for our enjoyment (1 Thes. 5:16-19; 1 John 1:7, 9; cf. Ezek. 1:22, 26):
 - 1. When God created us, He hired us, and when He put us on the cross, crucifying us with Christ, He fired us—Gal. 2:20.
 - 2. Whatever or whoever is not Christ, God fires; God has replaced everything in His Old Testament economy with Christ—Mark 1:1-8; Matt. 17:3-5; Col. 2:16-17; Heb. 10:5-10; 11:5-6.
 - 3. The real church life is a life in which all the saints are fired and replaced with Christ, making Christ everything in the church; all of us are Shebnas, who should be removed and replaced by Christ as the real Eliakim to make us His duplication as stewards of the mysteries of God and the varied grace of God—Col. 3:10-11; 1 Cor. 4:1; 1 Pet. 4:10.
 - 4. In the New Testament Christ's replacing of us is altogether a matter of a grafted life; as wild olive branches, we have been grafted into Christ as the cultivated olive tree (Rom. 11:17, 24); thus, we are united with Christ, and in this union Christ replaces us.
 - 5. Because we have been joined to Christ, and Christ joined Himself to us, uniting Himself with us, when He died on the cross, we died with Him and were terminated; now in our organic union with Christ, He replaces us by living in us, with us, by us, and through us—6:6; Gal. 2:20; Phil. 1:19-21a; Rom. 8:16; 1 Cor. 6:17.
 - 6. We live, yet not we, but Christ lives in us, and we live by the faith of the Son of God; this indicates a union with Christ; on the one hand, we are fired, and on the other hand, we are not expelled, for Christ comes to live in us, with us, by us, and through us (Gal. 2:20); thus, the all-inclusive Christ as Immanuel (Isa. 7:14) replaces everything and becomes everything in God's economy (Col. 3:10-11).
- B. In order to enjoy the riches of God in Christ as the treasure, we need to remain in the touch with the Lord, staying in contact with the Lord according to the sense of life and exercising ourselves to be poor in spirit and pure in heart—2 Cor. 2:10; Rom. 8:6; 10:12-13; Col. 3:16; Matt. 5:3, 8.
- C. In order to enjoy the riches of God in Christ as the treasure, we need to use the "keys" of denying the self, taking up the cross, and losing the soul-life—Rev. 3:7; Isa. 22:15-24; Matt. 16:18-19, 24-25; 17:5, 8.
- D. The Lord's using the key of David to open the door for the spread of His recovery is objective to us, but Christ is also using the key of David to subjectively open the door in our inner being for us to be transformed and built into the house of God as a pillar with the name of God, the name of the New Jerusalem, and the new name of the Lord—Rev. 2:17; 3:12; cf. 21:22:
 - 1. *The name of My God* indicates that the pillar is God; *the name of the city of My God* indicates that the pillar is the New Jerusalem; and *My new name* indicates that the pillar is Christ in a new significance; the overcomer as a pillar becomes God in life and in nature but not in the

Godhead, he becomes a constituent of the New Jerusalem, and he becomes Christ in a new experiential sense—3:12.

2. The New Jerusalem is the new Christ; as God's enlargement and expansion, we are Christ in a new sense as the New Jerusalem; the new Christ is not the same as He was in the four Gospels; the bride, who is the increase of the Bridegroom, is the New Jerusalem, including all of God's regenerated ones—John 3:29-30; Rev. 21:9-10.
 3. For us to be built into God, become a constituent of the New Jerusalem, and become a part of the new Christ is humanly impossible, but the law of the Spirit of life within us contains an element that deals with impossibility—Rom. 8:2; Luke 18:27; cf. Gen. 28:12-19; John 1:51.
- E. The overcomers in Philadelphia pay more attention to life than to work, caring more about quality than quantity (cf. 1 Cor. 3:12); they have "a little power" with the realization that what pleases the Lord is not their doing much for Him but their doing their best for Him with what they have (Rev. 3:8; Mark 14:8).
- F. The overcomers in Philadelphia do not deny the Lord's name; they have abandoned all names other than that of the Lord Jesus Christ, and they call upon the name of the Lord, who is rich to all who call upon Him (Rom. 10:9-10, 12-13); they openly confess that "Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father" (Phil. 2:11), and they do not preach themselves but Christ Jesus as Lord, and themselves as the believers' slaves for Jesus' sake (2 Cor. 4:5).

IV. The characteristic of the overcomers in Philadelphia is their brotherly love; love prevails among them so that they shepherd people according to God (1 Pet. 5:2) by cherishing them with the cheering presence of God and nourishing them with the healthy teaching of the economy of God (Eph. 4:11; 5:29; Acts 20:28):

- A. The Lord's recovery with Philadelphia is a recovery in quality, a recovery of the original substance of the church, the inner substance of God, which is love (1 John 4:8); to stand on the genuine ground of oneness, the ground of the church, is to choose to love all the brothers (Rev. 3:7a; cf. 2:4, 7).
- B. The Lord's recovery is a recovery of loving the Lord Jesus; the overcomers in Philadelphia stand on the genuine ground of oneness and keep themselves in the love of God to love the Lord and love all the brothers—Jude 20-21; 2 Cor. 5:14; John 12:3; Luke 7:47; 1 John 3:14-16; cf. Psa. 133.
- C. The overcomers in Philadelphia keep the Lord's word in His unique New Testament ministry (Rev. 3:8), which brings them into the genuine appreciation, love, and enjoyment of the precious person of the Lord Jesus Christ Himself as their life and everything (2 Cor. 11:2-3).
- D. In order to minister life to others and maintain our victory for the building up of the church, we must have a revived living and a labor in shepherding that flow out from our love for the Lord and for the brothers—John 21:15-17.
- E. "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 4:7-8.
- F. "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"—v. 16.
- G. God first loved us in that He infused us with His love and generated within us the love with which we love Him and the brothers—vv. 19-21.
- H. Brother Lee's intention for the international elders' conference in April 1997:
1. Do not lord it over the flock of God that has been allotted to you; the churches are God's possession, allotted to the elders as their allotment, their portion, entrusted to them by God for their care—1 Pet. 5:2-3.
 2. Be willing to be a slave to the saints—Matt. 20:26-27; Mark 10:42-45.
 3. The elders should shepherd one another and love one another to be a model of the Body life.

4. The elders should take care of the saints in everything and in every way for the dispensing of Christ into them.
 5. The elders should contact and visit the saints and invite them to their homes for meals.
- I. Brother Lee's final word to the elders in Anaheim: "The elders need to love one another, their wives need to love one another, and they need to love one another's children."
- V. In order to continue in the way of Philadelphia, we must be saved from the way of Laodicea, which is a degraded and distorted Philadelphia—Rev. 3:14-22:**
- A. Laodicea still remembers its history but has lost its former life; we must always remember that all that matters is God's present presence—Exo. 33:14; 2 Cor. 2:10.
 - B. Laodicea means to know everything but in reality to be fervent about nothing; in name it has everything, but it cannot sacrifice its life for anything; it remembers its former glory but forgets its present condition before God; formerly, it was Philadelphia, but today it is Laodicea, full of lukewarmness and spiritual pride—Rev. 3:15-17.
 - C. If we want to continue in the way of Philadelphia, we need to humble ourselves before God and pay the price to gain more of the Triune God as gold, white garments, and eyesalve; then we can be one with the Lord as the leading Overcomer within us in order to sit with Him on His throne in the millennial kingdom—vv. 18, 21.