

**GENERAL SUBJECT:  
ENJOYING THE RICHES OF CHRIST  
FOR THE BUILDING UP OF THE CHURCH AS THE BODY OF CHRIST**

Message One

**The Lord's Desire for Us to Enjoy Him  
for the Building Up of the Church as the Body of Christ**

Scripture Reading: Gen. 2:7-9; Psa. 27:4; 36:8-9; 43:4; 51:12; Isa. 61:10; Jer. 15:16; Phil. 4:11-13

**I. The Lord humbled Himself to be our enjoyment; He became the same as we are that we might enjoy Him to become the same as He is—Phil. 2:8-11; cf. 2 Cor. 5:21:**

- A. While He is high and lofty, the Lord of glory and holiness, He also loves to dispense Himself into us, and He wants us to draw near to Him; He has made Himself available to us for our enjoyment so that we can receive Him, gain Him, and experience Him as our everything—Psa. 43:4; 1 Cor. 15:45b; James 4:7-8a.
- B. The romance in Song of Songs portrays the process through which the seeker of Christ passes in order to become the Shulammite, a duplication of Solomon and a figure of the New Jerusalem—1:1 (read footnote 1, Recovery Version); 6:13.

**II. The Lord is our life for our enjoyment—Gen. 2:7-9; Rev. 22:2, 14; John 14:6a; 10:10; 1 Cor. 15:45b; Col. 3:4:**

- A. The life of God is the life of Christ, and the life of Christ has become our life—John 5:26; Col. 3:4:
  - 1. For Christ to be our life means that He is subjective to us to the uttermost—John 1:4; 14:6a; 10:10b; 1 Cor. 15:45b; Rom. 8:10, 6, 11.
  - 2. With Christ as the believers' life, there are three characteristics that distinguish it from the natural life:
    - a. This life is a crucified life—Gal. 2:20.
    - b. This life is a resurrected life—John 11:25.
    - c. This life is a life hidden in God—Col. 3:3; Matt. 6:1-6, 16-18.
- B. That Christ is our life is a strong indication that we are to take Him as life and live by Him, that we are to live Him in our daily life—Col. 3:4a:
  - 1. Christ must be our life in a practical and experiential way; day by day we need to be saved in His life, which is to reign in the divine life—v. 4; 1 Cor. 15:45b; Rom. 5:10, 17.
  - 2. The new man is the spontaneous issue of our taking Christ as our life and living Him—Col. 3:3-4, 10-11; Eph. 2:15; 4:22-24.
- C. As we go on to maturity in our Christian life, we progress from the joy of salvation to the joy of the church, to the joy of the Body, and finally to the joy of the one new man.
- D. When Christ as the infinite God enters into us and becomes the highest life within us, we become persons of an infinitely high standard—Luke 6:35; Dan. 3:26:
  - 1. We possess a nobleness and a holiness that no mere human being possesses.
  - 2. A person with Christ as life is a high person, an unlimited person; he has the highest life, which is the immeasurably high God Himself—cf. Phil. 1:19-21.
  - 3. Because Christ as the Spirit of life is the Holy Breath (John 20:22), He is available to us for our enjoyment wherever we are and no matter what the time (Lam. 3:55-56; 1 Cor. 1:2; 1 Thes. 5:17); our calling upon Him is our spiritual breathing.

**III. The Lord is our Husband for our enjoyment:**

- A. The Bible begins and ends with life; the second thing spoken of after life is marriage; just as Adam married Eve, Christ as the Lamb of God marries His redeemed people—Rev. 21:2, 9.
- B. The Lamb of God (John 1:29) is the Bridegroom, who is making us His bride (3:29; Eph. 5:25-27).
- C. Our being joined to the Lord (1 Cor. 6:17) is the same as a wife being joined to her husband (Isa. 54:5; 62:5; 2 Cor. 11:2).
- D. Since Christ is our Husband, we need to give ourselves to love Him; no other way is so prevailing, so safe, so rich, and so full of enjoyment; when we love Him, He is our satisfaction, we are His satisfaction, and we cooperate with Him in His heavenly ministry to feed and shepherd His people—John 14:21, 23; 21:15-17; cf. Heb. 13:20; 1 Pet. 2:25; 5:4.

#### **IV. The Lord is our food and drink for our enjoyment:**

- A. Christ is the reality of the manna that came down out of heaven to feed His chosen people; He is the bread of life and the living bread that came down out of heaven for us to eat Him and live because of Him—Exo. 16:14-18; John 6:31-35, 48-51, 57, 63, 67-68.
- B. The spiritual rock in the wilderness typifies Christ, who was smitten and cleft by God to flow out the water of life (Exo. 17:6; John 19:34) to satisfy the thirst of His believers; the living water that flowed out of the cleft rock typifies the Spirit, who flowed out of the crucified and resurrected Christ as our all-inclusive drink (7:37-38; 1 Cor. 12:13).
- C. At the Lord's table, the Lord said concerning the bread, "Take, eat; this is My body" (Matt. 26:26); then concerning the cup, He also said, "Drink of it, all of you, for this is My blood of the covenant, which is being poured out for many for forgiveness of sins" (vv. 27-28):
  - 1. The Lord seemingly was saying, "You must take Me into you as your enjoyment; the real remembrance of Me is the enjoyment of Me."
  - 2. He seemingly said, "When you allow Me to be your food and drink, you are remembering Me; I long to enter into you to be everything to you"—cf. Psa. 36:8-9.

#### **V. The Lord is our habitation for our enjoyment:**

- A. "O Lord, You have been our dwelling place / In all generations"—to take God as our habitation, our eternal dwelling place, is the highest and fullest experience of God—90:1.
- B. "He who dwells in the secret place of the Most High / Will abide in the shadow of the Almighty"—91:1.
- C. We are the Lord's habitation, and He is our habitation; therefore, the Bible says that we abide in Him and He abides in us—John 15:4; cf. Eph. 2:21-22.
- D. When we abide in Him, we enjoy all that He is; when He abides in us, He enjoys all that we are—John 15:4; 8:31; 15:7.

#### **VI. The Lord is our light of life for our enjoyment:**

- A. "I am the light of the world; he who follows Me shall by no means walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life"—8:12.
- B. "God is light and in Him is no darkness at all"—1 John 1:5.
- C. This means that apart from Him, or severed from Him, we are in darkness; light is the presence of God.

#### **VII. The Lord is our strength, love, joy, comfort, and guidance for our enjoyment:**

- A. "I love You, O Jehovah, my strength. / Jehovah is my crag and my fortress and my Deliverer; / My God, my rock, in whom I take refuge; / My shield and the horn of my salvation, my high retreat"—Psa. 18:1-2; cf. Gen. 15:7.

- B. God is love (1 John 4:8); He is also our joy and comfort (Neh. 8:10; Isa. 51:12); what He is meets our every need.
- C. When we touch Him, we have guidance and direction, and we have a way to go on; we can be led by the Spirit of God and take God's presence as the map for our traveling—Rom. 8:14; Heb. 11:8.

### **VIII. Fruit-bearing is to enjoy the Lord:**

- A. Although the branches of a fruit-bearing tree may bear much fruit, none of the fruit is the result of the work of the branches; the branches simply absorb the sap, the riches of the tree, and fruit is produced and grows.
- B. Being branches of the divine vine and bearing fruit to express the divine life are matters of joy, and they also issue in a joyful life—John 15:11.
- C. Philippians is concerned with the experience and enjoyment of Christ, which issue in joy in order to live Christ for His magnification to those around us; it is a book filled with joy and rejoicing—1:4, 18, 25; 2:17-18, 28-29; 3:1; 4:1, 4; cf. Lev. 1:1.

### **IX. Prayer is to enjoy the Lord:**

- A. If we want to enjoy the Lord, we should turn to our inner being, because He is within us—Col. 1:27; 2 Tim. 4:22; Rom. 8:6.
- B. The best prayer is one that absorbs the Lord—Col. 2:7:
  1. Prayer has nothing to do with how many words we utter; it is a matter of finding a quiet time to turn our busy heart to the inner chamber in order to fellowship with God and to absorb His very being in our spirit—cf. Luke 10:38-42.
  2. In this way God abides in us and becomes our all; we can then realize that He is everything to us and that He is the answer to whatever we need; this is the meaning of being a Christian.
- C. We need to allow adequate time for prayer, which will enable us to absorb more of the riches of Christ as the all-inclusive land—Col. 1:12; 2:6-7; 4:2:
  1. We need to take time to absorb the Lord, contacting Him in a definite and prevailing way—Luke 8:13; Matt. 14:22-23; 6:6.
  2. To meet with God in the morning is not only to meet with Him early in the day; it is also to meet with God in a situation that is full of light; we should go to God alone, without any persons, matters, or things to distract or occupy us—Prov. 4:18; Exo. 33:11a; 34:3-4; Mark 1:35.
  3. When we pray, coming forward to the throne of grace, grace will become a river flowing in us and supplying us—Heb. 4:16; cf. Rev. 22:1.
- D. In order to fight on God's side against Satan, we need to persevere in prayer—Col. 4:2; Dan. 6:10:
  1. As those who take sides with God, we find that the whole fallen universe is against us and, in particular, against our prayer; resistance to prayer lies not only outside of us but even within us—Matt. 26:41.
  2. To pray is to go against the current, the trend, in the fallen universe—Luke 18:1-8.
- E. We need to set aside definite times for prayer; our attitude should be that prayer is our most important business and that nothing should be allowed to interfere with it—Dan. 6:10; Acts 12:5, 12.
- F. We need to remain in an atmosphere of prayer by continually exercising our spirit—Eph. 6:18; 1 Tim. 4:7; 2 Tim. 1:7; Col. 1:3, 9:
  1. We need to pray without ceasing, to persevere in prayer, keeping ourselves intimately connected to the Lord—1 Thes. 5:17; Matt. 26:41; Col. 2:19.

2. Even in the smallest details we need to inquire of the Lord; to do this is to persevere in prayer and thereby to live Christ—cf. Josh. 9:14; Phil. 4:6-8.

#### **X. Ministering the word and preaching the gospel are to enjoy the Lord:**

- A. To minister God's word and to preach the gospel to others are to fulfill the stewardship of the grace of God, which is God in Christ as the Spirit for our enjoyment—Eph. 3:2.
- B. The first prerequisite for ministering God's word and preaching the gospel is to love the Lord to the uttermost—S. S. 1:4.
- C. "We will continue steadfastly in prayer and in the ministry of the word"—Acts 6:4:
  1. To pray is not only to entreat the Lord to do things for His move but also to cause our spirit to be exercised and strengthened.
  2. Hence, prayer should precede the ministry of the word, just as the apostles practiced; without such prayer the ministry of the word will not be enlivened and empowered.
- D. To minister the word and to preach the gospel, we must inhale God's word by prayer and exhale God's word into others by prophesying; this is the essence of praying, studying, reciting, and prophesying—2 Tim. 3:16.
- E. If we want to preach the gospel, we should first spend half an hour or an hour contacting the Lord, beholding His glory, fellowshiping with Him, and praising Him:
  1. After absorbing the Lord and being filled with Him, we will not be the one speaking when we contact people; rather, the Lord whom we have absorbed will be the One who is speaking through us.
  2. The words that we speak will be the very Lord whom we have absorbed, and it will be impossible for people not to be blessed—cf. Exo. 33:11; 34:29, 35.

#### **XI. Receiving leading is to enjoy the Lord:**

- A. In order to receive the Lord's leading, we should forget about everything and simply contact the Lord, absorb Him, and enjoy Him; as we absorb Him and enjoy Him, we will have His presence, which is His leading.
- B. As long as we do not have His presence, we do not have His leading; just as the pillar of cloud and of fire with God's presence led the children of Israel, the Spirit of the Lord as the presence of God leads us to run the Christian race—13:21-22; 14:19-20.
- C. Everything depends upon whether we have God's presence; with His presence, everything is right; without His presence, everything is wrong.

#### **XII. The secret of the Christian life for the church life is to enjoy the Lord:**

- A. God's only desire is to give Himself to us to be our enjoyment—cf. Psa. 36:8-9; 16:11; Jer. 15:16; Psa. 51:12; Isa. 61:10.
- B. The secret of the Christian life is not how much we do for Him or how much we work for Him but how much we enjoy Him; we must learn this secret—Phil. 4:11-13.
- C. No matter what our circumstances are, we should simply behold the beauty of the Lord and enjoy and absorb Him again and again (Psa. 27:4; 2 Cor. 3:18); if we do this, we will be filled with God, and our face will shine; we will be full of the Lord's presence; what a glory this will be!