BANNERS FOR THE 2013 MEMORIAL DAY CONFERENCE

If we would be those who complete the word of God,
we must minister Christ as the life-giving Spirit
and stand with the church as the living expression of Christ
on the proper ground of locality;
this is our burden, our ministry, and our warfare.

The central vision of Paul's completing ministry is
God in us as our contents,
Christ as the mystery of God,
and the church as the mystery of Christ.

The most precious result of our faith in Christ is
that we receive Him into us and
that He, as the life-giving Spirit, now dwells in our spirit
for us to experience and enjoy as the secret of the Christian life.

We need to be one with the Lord in pursuing the growth in life
through the transformation of our soul
for the building up of the Body as the one new man.

Outline of the Messages for the Memorial Day Conference

May 24-27, 2013

GENERAL SUBJECT: THE COMPLETING MINISTRY OF PAUL

Message One

Hymns 542, 824

The Vision and the Commission

Scripture Reading: Col. 1:25-26; Acts 9:4-6; 22:14; 26:16, 18-19

Col 1:25 Of which I became a minister according to the stewardship of God, which was given to me for you, to complete the word of God,

Col 1:26 The mystery which has been hidden from the ages and from the generations but now has been manifested to His saints;

Acts 9:4 And he fell on the ground and heard a voice saying to him, Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me?

Acts 9:5 And he said, Who are You, Lord? And He said, I am Jesus, whom you persecute.

Acts 9:6 But rise up and enter into the city, and it will be told to you what you must do.

Acts 22:14 And he said, The God of our fathers has previously appointed you to know His will and to see the righteous One and to hear the voice from His mouth;

Acts 26:16 But rise up and stand on your feet; for I have appeared to you for this purpose, to appoint you as a minister and a witness both of the things in which you have seen Me and of the things in which I will appear to you;

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.

Acts 26:19 Therefore, King Agrippa, I was not disobedient to the heavenly vision,

I. "I became a minister…to complete the word of God"—Col. 1:25:

A. The word of God is the divine revelation, which had not been completed before the New Testament was written.

B. In the New Testament the apostles, especially the apostle Paul, completed the word of God in regard to the mystery of God, which is Christ, and the mystery of Christ, which is the church—v. 25; 2:2; Eph. 3:3-4.

Col 1:25 Of which I became a minister according to the stewardship of God, which was given to me for you, to complete the word of God,

Col 2:2 That their hearts may be comforted, they being knit together in love and unto all the riches of the full assurance of understanding, unto the full knowledge of the mystery of God, Christ,

Eph 3:3 That by revelation the mystery was made known to me, as I have written previously in brief,

Eph 3:4 By which, in reading it, you can perceive my understanding in the mystery of Christ,

C. In Colossians 1:26 the mystery is in apposition to the word of God in verse 25:

Col 1:26 The mystery which has been hidden from the ages and from the generations but now has been manifested to His saints;

Col 1:25 Of which I became a minister according to the stewardship of God, which was given to me for you, to complete the word of God,

1. This mystery concerns Christ and the church, the Head and the Body—Eph. 5:32.

Eph 5:32 This mystery is great, but I speak with regard to Christ and the church.

2. The unveiling of this mystery through the apostle Paul is the completing of the word of God as the divine revelation—Col. 1:25.

Col 1:25 Of which I became a minister according to the stewardship of God, which was given to me for you, to complete the word of God,

D. Concerning the revelation of Christ as the mystery of God and the church as the mystery of Christ, Paul completed the word of God and revealed to us God's economy in a full way—Eph. 1:10; 3:9; 1 Tim. 1:4.

Eph 1:10 Unto the economy of the fullness of the times, to head up all things in Christ, the things in the heavens and the things on the earth, in Him;
Eph 3:9 And to enlighten all that they may see what the economy of the mystery is, which throughout the ages has been hidden in God, who created all things,
1 Tim 1:4 Nor to give heed to myths and unending genealogies, which produce questionings rather than God's economy, which is in faith.

E. In our experience today, to complete the word of God is to experience Christ subjectively in our daily living so that the proper church life may come forth for the expression of the Triune God in Christ—Gal. 2:20; Eph. 3:17a; 1:22-23.

Gal 2:20 I am crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but it is Christ who lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live in faith, the faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me.
Eph 3:17a That Christ may make His home in your hearts through faith, …
Eph 1:22 And He subjected all things under His feet and gave Him to be Head over all things to the church,
Eph 1:23 Which is His Body, the fullness of the One who fills all in all.

F. If we would be those who complete the word of God, we must minister Christ as the life-giving Spirit and stand with the church as the living expression of Christ on the proper ground of locality; this is our burden, our ministry, and our warfare—1 Cor. 15:45b; 1:2; 12:12-13, 27.

1 Cor 15:45b … the last Adam became a life-giving Spirit.
1 Cor 1:2 To the church of God which is in Corinth, to those who have been sanctified in Christ Jesus, the called saints, with all those who call upon the name of our Lord Jesus Christ in every place, who is theirs and ours:
1 Cor 12:12 For even as the body is one and has many members, yet all the members of the body, being many, are one body, so also is the Christ.
1 Cor 12:13 For also in one Spirit we were all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free, and were all given to drink one Spirit.
1 Cor 12:27 Now you are the body of Christ, and members individually.

II. "Who are You, Lord?"—Acts 22:8:

A. "When it pleased God…to reveal His Son in me"—Gal. 1:15a, 16a:

1. The desire of God's heart is to reveal His Son in us so that we may know Him, receive Him as our life (John 17:3; 3:16), and become the sons of God (1:12; Gal. 4:5-6).

John 17:3 And this is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Him whom You have sent, Jesus Christ.
John 3:16 For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that everyone who believes into Him would not perish, but would have eternal life.
John 1:12 But as many as received Him, to them He gave the authority to become children of God, to those who believe into His name,
Gal 4:5 That He might redeem those under law that we might receive the sonship.
Gal 4:6 And because you are sons, God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into our hearts, crying, Abba, Father!

2. Nothing is more pleasing to God than the unveiling, the revelation, of the living person of the Son of God in us—1:15a, 16a; 2 Cor. 3:14-18; 4:3-6.

Gal 1:15a But when it pleased God, …
Gal 1:16a To reveal His Son in me that I might announce Him as the gospel among the Gentiles, …
2 Cor 3:14 But their thoughts were hardened; for until the present day the same veil remains at the reading of the old covenant, it not being unveiled to them that the veil is being done away with in Christ.
2 Cor 3:15 Indeed unto this day, whenever Moses is read, a veil lies on their heart;
2 Cor 3:16 But whenever their heart turns to the Lord, the veil is taken away.
2 Cor 3:17 And the Lord is the Spirit; and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom.
2 Cor 3:18 But we all with unveiled face, beholding and reflecting like a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, even as from the Lord Spirit.

2 Cor 4:3 And even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled in those who are perishing,
2 Cor 4:4 In whom the god of this age has blinded the thoughts of the unbelievers that the illumination of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God, might not shine on them.
2 Cor 4:5 For we do not preach ourselves but Christ Jesus as Lord, and ourselves as your slaves for Jesus' sake.
2 Cor 4:6 Because the God who said, Out of darkness light shall shine, is the One who shined in our hearts to illuminate the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

3. The focal point of the Bible is the living person of the Son of God, who is the embodiment of the Triune God realized as the all-inclusive Spirit in our spirit for us to enjoy Him, partake of His riches, and live Him—1 Cor. 15:45b; 2 Cor. 3:17; Phil. 1:19; Gal. 6:18.

1 Cor 15:45b … the last Adam became a life-giving Spirit.
2 Cor 3:17 And the Lord is the Spirit; and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom.
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,
Gal 6:18 The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit, brothers. Amen.

B. "Why are you persecuting Me?…I am Jesus, whom you persecute"—Acts 9:4b, 5b:

1. This "Me" is corporate, comprising Jesus the Lord and all His believers.
2. This was a unique revelation in the universe, for by it Saul began to see that the Lord Jesus and His believers are one great person—the wonderful "Me."
3. The revelation of the corporate "Me" must have impressed and affected Saul for his future ministry concerning Christ and the church as the great mystery of God and laid a solid foundation for his future ministry—Eph. 5:32.

Eph 5:32 This mystery is great, but I speak with regard to Christ and the church.

C. "I have appeared to you for this purpose, to appoint you as a minister and a witness both of the things in which you have seen Me and of the things in which I will appear to you"—Acts 26:16:

1. A minister is for the ministry, and a witness is for the testimony:
   a. The ministry is related mainly to the work, to what a minister does—13:2; 14:26.

Acts 13:2 And as they were ministering to the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, Set apart for Me now Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them.
Acts 14:26 And from there they sailed away to Antioch, where they had been commended to the grace of God for the work which they fulfilled.

   b. A testimony is related to the person, to what a witness is—1:8; 23:11.

Acts 1:8 But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you, and you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria and unto the uttermost part of the earth.
Acts 23:11 But in the night following, the Lord stood by him and said, Take courage, for as you have solemnly testified to the things concerning Me in Jerusalem, so also you must testify in Rome.

2. Christ did not reveal things to Paul without Himself as the content of those things; thus, in all the visions Paul saw Christ; the Lord indicated that He would reveal more things to Paul, and in those things the Lord Himself would appear to him—22:14-15; Eph. 1:17.

Acts 22:14 And he said, The God of our fathers has previously appointed you to know His will and to see the righteous One and to hear the voice from His mouth;
Acts 22:15 For you will be a witness to Him unto all men of the things which you have seen and heard.
Eph 1:17 That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to you a spirit of wisdom and revelation in the full knowledge of Him,

D. "The God of our fathers has previously appointed you to know His will" (Acts 22:14); the will of God is to obtain a Body for Christ to be His fullness, His expression—Rom. 12:2, 5; Eph. 1:5, 9, 11, 22-23.

Acts 22:14 And he said, The God of our fathers has previously appointed you to know His will and to see the righteous One and to hear the voice from His mouth;

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.

Rom 12:5 So we who are many are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another.

Eph 1:5 Predestinating us unto sonship through Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will,

Eph 1:9 Making known to us the mystery of His will according to His good pleasure, which He purposed in Himself,

Eph 1:11 In whom also we were designated as an inheritance, having been predestinated according to the purpose of the One who works all things according to the counsel of His will,

Eph 1:22 And He subjected all things under His feet and gave Him to be Head over all things to the church,

Eph 1:23 Which is His Body, the fullness of the One who fills all in all.

III. "What shall I do, Lord?"—Acts 22:10:

A. "Rise up and enter into the city, and it will be told to you what you must do" (9:6); this is related to Saul's knowledge concerning the Body of Christ—Col. 1:24.

Col 1:24 I now rejoice in my sufferings on your behalf and fill up on my part that which is lacking of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh for His Body, which is the church;

B. "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"—Acts 26:18:

1. To turn from darkness to light is to have a transfer from darkness into light, and to turn from the authority of Satan to God is to be transferred out of the authority of Satan into God—v. 18a; Col. 1:13:

Acts 26:18a To open their eyes, to turn them from darkness to light and from the authority of Satan to God, …

Col 1:13 Who delivered us out of the authority of darkness and transferred us into the kingdom of the Son of His love,

a. The authority of Satan is Satan's kingdom, which belongs to darkness—Matt. 12:26; John 12:31.

Matt 12:26 And if Satan casts out Satan, he is divided against himself. How then will his kingdom stand?

John 12:31 Now is the judgment of this world; now shall the ruler of this world be cast out.

b. To be transferred into God is to be transferred to the authority of God, which is God's kingdom, belonging to light—3:5; 1 John 1:5.

John 3:5 Jesus answered, Truly, truly, I say to you, Unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.

1 John 1:5 And this is the message which we have heard from Him and announce to you, that God is light and in Him is no darkness at all.

2. Forgiveness of sins is the base of all the blessings of the New Testament jubilee—Acts 26:18b.

Acts 26:18b … that they may receive forgiveness of sins and an inheritance among those who have been sanctified by faith in Me.

3. As the result of having our eyes opened and of being transferred from the authority of Satan to God, we receive an inheritance; this inheritance is the Triune God with all that He has, all that He has done, and all that He will do for His redeemed people—v. 18c; Col. 1:12; Eph. 1:13-14; 1 Pet. 1:4.

Acts 26:18c … an inheritance among those who have been sanctified by faith in Me.

Col 1:12 Giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified you for a share of the allotted portion of the saints in the light;

Eph 1:13 In whom you also, having heard the word of the truth, the gospel of your salvation, in Him also believing, you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of the promise,

Eph 1:14 Who is the pledge of our inheritance unto the redemption of the acquired possession, to the praise of His glory.

1 Pet 1:4 Unto an inheritance, incorruptible and undefiled and unfading, kept in the heavens for you,

4. The divine inheritance is among those who have been sanctified by faith in Christ; this sanctification is both positional and dispositional—Acts 26:18d; Matt. 23:17, 19; Rom. 6:19, 22.

Acts 26:18d … among those who have been sanctified by faith in Me.

Matt 23:17 Fools and blind men, which is greater, the gold or the temple which sanctifies the gold?

Matt 23:19 Blind men, which is greater, the gift or the altar which sanctifies the gift?

Rom 6:19 I speak in human terms because of the weakness of your flesh. For just as you presented your members as slaves to uncleanness and lawlessness unto lawlessness, so now present your members as slaves to righteousness unto sanctification.

Rom 6:22 But now, having been freed from sin and enslaved to God, you have your fruit unto sanctification, and the end, eternal life.

IV. "I was not disobedient to the heavenly vision" (Acts 26:19); this was a vision in which the apostle saw the divine things concerning the dispensing of the Triune God into His chosen, redeemed, and transformed people for the building up of the Body of Christ according to God's eternal economy—Rom. 8:11; Eph. 4:16; 1:10; 3:9.

Rom 8:11 And if the Spirit of the One who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who indwells you.

Eph 4:16 Out from whom all the Body, being joined together and being knit together through every joint of the rich supply and through the operation in the measure of each one part, causes the growth of the Body unto the building up of itself in love.

Eph 1:10 Unto the economy of the fullness of the times, to head up all things in Christ, the things in the heavens and the things on the earth, in Him;

Eph 3:9 And to enlighten all that they may see what the economy of the mystery is, which throughout the ages has been hidden in God, who created all things,