THE MINISTRY OF THE WORD AND GOD'S DISPENSING FOR GOD'S ECONOMY

(Lord's Day—Second Morning Session)

Message Eight

The Dispensing of the Triune God as Life into the Tripartite Man according to His Righteousness, through His Holiness, and unto His Glory

EM *Hymns*: 593

Scripture Reading: Rom. 1:17; 6:19, 22; 8:2, 6, 10-11, 18, 21; 9:23; 11:36; 12:1-5; 16:27

Rom 1:17 For the righteousness of God is revealed in it out of faith to faith, as it is written, "But the righteous shall have life and live by faith."

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.

Rom 8:2 For the law of the Spirit of life has freed me in Christ Jesus from the law of sin and of death.

Rom 8:6 For the mind set on the flesh is death, but the mind set on the spirit is life and peace.

Rom 8:10 But if Christ is in you, though the body is dead because of sin, the spirit is life because of righteousness.

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.

Rom 8:18 For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the coming glory to be revealed upon us.

Rom 8:21 In hope that the creation itself will also be freed from the slavery of corruption into the freedom of the glory of the children of God.

Rom 9:23 In order that He might make known the riches of His glory upon vessels of mercy, which He had before prepared unto glory,

Rom 11:36 Because out from Him and through Him and to Him are all things. To Him be the glory forever. Amen.

Rom 12:1 I exhort you therefore, brothers, through the compassions of God to present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, well pleasing to God, which is your reasonable service.

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 12:3 For I say, through the grace given to me, to everyone who is among you, not to think more highly of himself than he ought to think, but to think so as to be sober-minded, as God has apportioned to each a measure of faith.

Rom 12:4 For just as in one body we have many members, and all the members do not have the same function,

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

Rom 16:27 To the only wise God through Jesus Christ, to Him be the glory forever and ever. Amen.

I. God's eternal economy is to dispense Himself as the law of the Spirit of life into man so that His divine attributes of righteousness, holiness, and glory would become man's human virtues for God's corporate expression as the reality of the Body of Christ in the local churches to consummate the New Jerusalem as the city of righteousness, holiness, and glory—Gen. 2:9; John 10:10b; 14:6a; 1 Cor. 15:45b; Rom. 8:2; 2 Pet. 3:13; Rev. 21:2, 9-11:

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 14:6a Jesus said to him, I am the way and the reality and the life; …
1 Cor 15:45b … the last Adam became a life-giving Spirit.
Rom 8:2 For the law of the Spirit of life has freed me in Christ Jesus from the law of sin and of death.
2 Pet 3:13 But according to His promise we are expecting new heavens and a new earth, in which righteousness dwells.
Rev 21:2 And I saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.
Rev 21:9 And one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls full of the seven last plagues came and spoke with me, saying, Come here; I will show you the bride, the wife of the Lamb.
Rev 21:10 And he carried me away in spirit onto a great and high mountain and showed me the holy city, Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God,
Rev 21:11 Having the glory of God. Her light was like a most precious stone, like a jasper stone, as clear as crystal.

A. God's desire is to work Himself into us to the extent that He becomes us and we become Him, that we and He become completely identical in life, nature, and image; this is the pinnacle of His economy—John 1:12-13; 2 Pet. 1:4; 2 Cor. 3:18.

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,
John 1:13 Who were begotten not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.
2 Pet 1:4 Through which He has granted to us precious and exceedingly great promises that through these you might become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption which is in the world by lust.
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.

B. Man was created in the image of God as a living vessel to receive and contain God as life for the reproduction, the duplication, of God in life—Gen. 1:26; 2:7; Rom. 9:21, 23; 2 Cor. 4:7; John 12:24.

Gen 1:26 And God said, Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of heaven and over the cattle and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth.
Gen 2:7 Jehovah God formed man from the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living soul.
Rom 9:21 Or does not the potter have authority over the clay to make out of the same lump one vessel unto honor and another unto dishonor?
Rom 9:23 In order that He might make known the riches of His glory upon vessels of mercy, which He had before prepared unto glory,
2 Cor 4:7 But we have this treasure in earthen vessels that the excellency of the power may be of God and not out of us.
John 12:24 Truly, truly, I say to you, Unless the grain of wheat falls into the ground and dies, it abides alone; but if it dies, it bears much fruit.

II. Christ died on the cross to satisfy the requirements of God's righteousness, holiness, and glory and was resurrected to become the life-dispensing Spirit as the reality of the tree of life to be our righteousness, holiness, and glory—Gen. 3:24; 1 Cor. 15:45b; 1:30; cf. Eph. 5:25-27:

Gen 3:24 So He drove the man out, and at the east of the garden of Eden He placed the cherubim and a flaming sword which turned in every direction to guard the way to the tree of life.
1 Cor 15:45b … the last Adam became a life-giving Spirit.
1 Cor 1:30 But of Him you are in Christ Jesus, who became wisdom to us from God: both righteousness and sanctification and redemption,
Eph 5:25 Husbands, love your wives even as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself up for her
Eph 5:26 That He might sanctify her, cleansing her by the washing of the water in the word,
Eph 5:27 That He might present the church to Himself glorious, not having spot or wrinkle or any such things, but that she would be holy and without blemish.

A. The life of the Triune God dispensed into our tripartite being makes us men of life to be God's sons and the members of Christ to constitute the Body of Christ for His expression, thus fulfilling God's original intention—Gen. 2:7, 9; Rom. 8:14; 12:5:

Gen 2:7 Jehovah God formed man from the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living soul.

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.

Rom 8:14 For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God.

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

1. "The law of the Spirit of life [Gk. *zoe*] has freed me in Christ Jesus from the law of sin and of death"—8:2.
2. "If Christ is in you, though the body is dead because of sin, the spirit is life [Gk. *zoe*] because of righteousness"—v. 10.
3. "The mind set on the spirit is life [Gk. *zoe*] and peace"—v. 6.
4. "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 [Gk. *zoe*] to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who indwells you"—v. 11.

B. The three primary colors of the rainbow around God's throne are blue (the color of the sapphire throne, which signifies God's righteousness—Ezek. 1:26; Psa. 89:14), red (the color of the sanctifying fire, which signifies God's holiness—Ezek. 1:4, 13, 27; Heb. 12:29), and yellow (the color of the glowing electrum, which signifies God's glory—Ezek. 1:4, 27; Heb. 1:3).

Ezek 1:26 And above the expanse that was over their heads was the likeness of a throne, like the appearance of a sapphire stone; and upon the likeness of the throne was One in appearance like a man, above it.

Psa 89:14 Righteousness and justice are the foundation of Your throne; / Lovingkindness and truth go before Your face.

Ezek 1:4 And I looked, and there came a storm wind from the north, a great cloud and a fire flashing incessantly; and there was a brightness around it, and from the midst of it there was something like the sight of electrum, from the midst of the fire.

Ezek 1:13 As for the likeness of the living creatures, their appearance was like burning coals of fire, like the appearance of torches; the fire went to and fro among the living creatures, and the fire was bright; and out of the fire went forth lightning.

Ezek 1:27 Then I saw something like the sight of electrum, like the appearance of fire encased all around, from the appearance of His loins and upward; and from the appearance of His loins and downward, I saw something like the appearance of fire. And there was brightness all around Him.

Heb 12:29 For our God is also a consuming fire.

Heb 1:3 Who, being the effulgence of His glory and the impress of His substance and upholding and bearing all things by the word of His power, having made purification of sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high;

C. The rainbow around God's throne signifies that God is the covenanting God, the faithful God, who will keep His new covenant to impart the newness of life into His chosen ones to make them the New Jerusalem while executing His judgment upon the earth—Gen. 9:8-17; Rev. 4:3; 21:2; Rom. 6:4; Ezek. 1:26-28; 36:26-27:

Gen 9:8 Then God spoke to Noah and to his sons with him, saying,

Gen 9:9 And I Myself now establish My covenant with you and with your seed after you

Gen 9:10 And with every living animal that is with you: the birds, the cattle, and every animal of the earth with you, of all that came out of the ark, every animal of the earth.

Gen 9:11 And I establish My covenant with you, that never again will all flesh be cut off by the waters of the flood, and never again will there be a flood to destroy the earth.

Gen 9:12 And God said, This is the sign of the covenant which I am making between Me and you and every living animal that is with you, for perpetual generations:

Gen 9:13 I set My bow in the clouds, and it shall be for a sign of a covenant between Me and the earth.

Gen 9:14 And when I bring clouds over the earth, and the bow is seen in the clouds,
Gen 9:15 I will remember My covenant which is between Me and you and every living animal of all flesh, and never again will the waters become a flood to destroy all flesh.
Gen 9:16 And the bow will be in the clouds, and I will look upon it to remember the everlasting covenant between God and every living animal of all flesh that is upon the earth.
Gen 9:17 And God said to Noah, This is the sign of the covenant which I have established between Me and all flesh that is upon the earth.
Rev 4:3 And He who was sitting was like a jasper stone and a sardius in appearance, and there was a rainbow around the throne like an emerald in appearance.
Rev 21:2 And I saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.
Rom 6:4 We have been buried therefore with Him through baptism into His death, in order that just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so also we might walk in newness of life.
Ezek 1:26 And above the expanse that was over their heads was the likeness of a throne, like the appearance of a sapphire stone; and upon the likeness of the throne was One in appearance like a man, above it.
Ezek 1:27 Then I saw something like the sight of electrum, like the appearance of fire encased all around, from the appearance of His loins and upward; and from the appearance of His loins and downward, I saw something like the appearance of fire. And there was brightness all around Him.
Ezek 1:28 Like the appearance of the rainbow that is in the cloud on a day of rain, such was the appearance of the brightness all around. This was the appearance of the likeness of the glory of Jehovah. And when I saw it, I fell on my face and I heard the voice of someone speaking.
Ezek 36:26 I will also give you a new heart, and a new spirit I will put within you; and I will take away the heart of stone out of your flesh, and I will give you a heart of flesh.
Ezek 36:27 And I will put My Spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes, and My ordinances you shall keep and do.

1. The rainbow is a sign of God's faithfulness in keeping His covenant that there will be no more judgment of death; we must live under the new covenant and not believe in any failure, weakness, darkness, or negative thing; we are the covenanted people, who have a verse of promise to meet every situation—Lam. 3:22-23; Rom. 8:1; 2 Cor. 12:9; 2 Tim. 1:10; 2:1; Jude 24; 1 John 1:9; 1 Cor. 1:9.

Lam 3:22 It is Jehovah's lovingkindness that we are not consumed, / For His compassions do not fail;
Lam 3:23 They are new every morning; / Great is Your faithfulness.
Rom 8:1 There is now then no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus.
2 Cor 12:9 And He has said to me, My grace is sufficient for you, for My power is perfected in weakness. Most gladly therefore I will rather boast in my weaknesses that the power of Christ might tabernacle over me.
2 Tim 1:10 But now has been manifested through the appearing of our Savior Christ Jesus, who nullified death and brought life and incorruption to light through the gospel,
2 Tim 2:1 You therefore, my child, be empowered in the grace which is in Christ Jesus;
Jude 24 But to Him who is able to guard you from stumbling and to set you before His glory without blemish in exultation,
1 John 1:9 If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.
1 Cor 1:9 God is faithful, through whom you were called into the fellowship of His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

2. We may be assured and at peace in the church life, for there is no more death; the more we say, "No more," the more we realize that we have no death, no failure, no weakness, and no darkness because we are living under God's covenant, not under our feelings, our convictions, or any environment.
3. We are secured, guaranteed, and protected by the great and precious promises in God's covenant (2 Pet. 1:4); God's covenant declares that whenever the sky is cloudy,

we must call God's faithfulness to come, which means that we "call out the rainbow."

2 Pet 1:4 Through which He has granted to us precious and exceedingly great promises that through these you might become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption which is in the world by lust.

4. God is faithful to His Word, and His Word is the testament, the covenant (1 Cor. 1:9; 1 John 1:9); the church people are a people under the covenant; thus, we can actually be called "the church of the covenant."

1 Cor 1:9 God is faithful, through whom you were called into the fellowship of His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

1 John 1:9 If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

D. The spiritual reality of this rainbow should be manifest in the church today; we need to allow God to fill us with His righteous presence by giving Him the full opportunity to work in us as the sanctifying fire for His radiant expression of glory through our coordination as the corporate Christ—Ezek. 1:5-14, 26-28.

Ezek 1:5 And from the midst of it there came the likeness of four living creatures. And this was their appearance: They had the likeness of a man.

Ezek 1:6 And every one had four faces, and every one of them had four wings.

Ezek 1:7 And their feet were straight feet, and the sole of their feet was like the sole of a calf's foot; and they sparkled like the sight of burnished bronze.

Ezek 1:8 And the hands of a man were under their wings on their four sides. And the four of them had their faces and their wings thus:

Ezek 1:9 Their wings were joined one to another; they did not turn as they went; each went straight forward.

Ezek 1:10 As for the likeness of their faces, they had the face of a man; and the four of them had the face of a lion on the right side, and the four of them had the face of an ox on the left side, and the four of them had the face of an eagle.

Ezek 1:11 And thus their faces were. And their wings were spread out upward; two wings of each were joined one to another, and two covered their bodies.

Ezek 1:12 And each went straight forward; wherever the Spirit was to go, they went; they did not turn as they went.

Ezek 1:13 As for the likeness of the living creatures, their appearance was like burning coals of fire, like the appearance of torches; the fire went to and fro among the living creatures, and the fire was bright; and out of the fire went forth lightning.

Ezek 1:14 And the living creatures ran to and fro like the appearance of a lightning bolt.

Ezek 1:26 And above the expanse that was over their heads was the likeness of a throne, like the appearance of a sapphire stone; and upon the likeness of the throne was One in appearance like a man, above it.

Ezek 1:27 Then I saw something like the sight of electrum, like the appearance of fire encased all around, from the appearance of His loins and upward; and from the appearance of His loins and downward, I saw something like the appearance of fire. And there was brightness all around Him.

Ezek 1:28 Like the appearance of the rainbow that is in the cloud on a day of rain, such was the appearance of the brightness all around. This was the appearance of the likeness of the glory of Jehovah. And when I saw it, I fell on my face and I heard the voice of someone speaking.

E. Christ Himself, signified by the rainbow of righteousness, holiness, and glory, is the covenant of God given to His people for their "Christification," which is to make them exactly the same as He is in life, nature, and expression but not in the Godhead—Isa. 42:6; Heb. 8:10-12.

Isa 42:6 I am Jehovah; I have called You in righteousness; / I have held You by the hand; / I have kept You and I have given You / As a covenant for the people, as a light for the nations;

Heb 8:10 For this is the covenant which I will covenant with the house of Israel after those days, says the Lord: I will impart My laws into their mind, and on their hearts I will inscribe them; and I will be God to them, and they will be a people to Me.

Heb 8:11 And they shall by no means each teach his fellow citizen and each his brother, saying, Know the Lord; for all will know Me from the little one to the great one among them.

Heb 8:12 For I will be propitious to their unrighteousnesses, and their sins I shall by no means remember anymore."

F. Christ is wisdom to us from God, transmitting Himself into us as righteousness (that we might be reborn in our spirit), sanctification (that we might be transformed in our soul), and redemption (that we might be glorified in our body)—1 Cor. 1:30; Rom. 8:10; 12:2; 8:23; Phil. 3:21.

1 Cor 1:30 But of Him you are in Christ Jesus, who became wisdom to us from God: both righteousness and sanctification and redemption,

Rom 8:10 But if Christ is in you, though the body is dead because of sin, the spirit is life because of righteousness.

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 8:23 And not only so, but we ourselves also, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan in ourselves, eagerly awaiting sonship, the redemption of our body.

Phil 3:21 Who will transfigure the body of our humiliation to be conformed to the body of His glory, according to His operation by which He is able even to subject all things to Himself.

G. The transmission of Christ, as the multifarious wisdom of God, into our being makes us the masterpiece of the Triune God as the wise exhibition of all that He is, a poem expressing His infinite wisdom and divine design—1 Cor. 1:30; Eph. 2:10; 3:9-11.

1 Cor 1:30 But of Him you are in Christ Jesus, who became wisdom to us from God: both righteousness and sanctification and redemption,

Eph 2:10 For we are His masterpiece, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand in order that we would walk in them.

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,

Eph 3:10 In order that now to the rulers and the authorities in the heavenlies the multifarious wisdom of God might be made known through the church,

Eph 3:11 According to the eternal purpose which He made in Christ Jesus our Lord,

H. In eternity as the New Jerusalem (a city whose foundations have the appearance of a rainbow—Rev. 21:19-20), we will be a rainbow to testify of God's faithfulness to carry out His new covenant in making us exactly the same as He is as righteousness, holiness, and glory—vv. 10-11.

Rev 21:19 The foundations of the wall of the city were adorned with every precious stone: the first foundation was jasper; the second, sapphire; the third, chalcedony; the fourth, emerald;

Rev 21:20 The fifth, sardonyx; the sixth, sardius; the seventh, chrysolite; the eighth, beryl; the ninth, topaz; the tenth, chrysoprase; the eleventh, jacinth; the twelfth, amethyst.

Rev 21:10 And he carried me away in spirit onto a great and high mountain and showed me the holy city, Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God,

Rev 21:11 Having the glory of God. Her light was like a most precious stone, like a jasper stone, as clear as crystal.

III. Romans reveals that in every church there must be the base of God's righteousness (God's procedure), the process of God's holiness (God's nature), and the goal of God's glory (God's expression) to bring us into the heart of God to have the reality of the Body of Christ through the local churches — 1:17; 8:10; 6:19, 22; 8:18, 21; 9:23; 11:36—12:5; 16:27:

Rom 1:17 For the righteousness of God is revealed in it out of faith to faith, as it is written, "But the righteous shall have life and live by faith."

Rom 8:10 But if Christ is in you, though the body is dead because of sin, the spirit is life because of righteousness.

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.
Rom 8:18 For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the coming glory to be revealed upon us.
Rom 8:21 In hope that the creation itself will also be freed from the slavery of corruption into the freedom of the glory of the children of God.
Rom 9:23 In order that He might make known the riches of His glory upon vessels of mercy, which He had before prepared unto glory,
Rom 11:36 Because out from Him and through Him and to Him are all things. To Him be the glory forever. Amen.
Rom 12:1 I exhort you therefore, brothers, through the compassions of God to present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, well pleasing to God, which is your reasonable service.
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 12:3 For I say, through the grace given to me, to everyone who is among you, not to think more highly of himself than he ought to think, but to think so as to be sober-minded, as God has apportioned to each a measure of faith.
Rom 12:4 For just as in one body we have many members, and all the members do not have the same function,
Rom 12:5 So we who are many are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another.
Rom 16:27 To the only wise God through Jesus Christ, to Him be the glory forever and ever. Amen.

A. Romans reveals the tabernacle of God as the Body life realized in the church life (chs. 12—16) with the basic structure of righteousness (3:21—5:11), holiness (v. 12—8:13), and glory (vv. 14-39):

Rom 12~16 be omitted.
Rom 3:21~8:13 be omitted.

1. Justification through Christ's redemption is in the outer court, sanctification is in the Holy Place, and glorification is in the Holy of Holies.
2. The church life is the Triune God mingled with His chosen people, who are justified, sanctified, glorified, and built together to be the tabernacle, the reality of the Body of Christ in the local churches to consummate in the New Jerusalem, the ultimate tabernacle of God—Rev. 21:3.

Rev 21:3 And I heard a loud voice out of the throne, saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will tabernacle with them, and they will be His peoples, and God Himself will be with them and be their God.

3. The dispensing of the Triune God is according to His righteousness, through His holiness, and unto His glory; the ultimate goal of the dispensing of the Triune God as life is glory, the expression of God in and through the church as the Body of Christ—Rom. 5:17; 6:19-23; 8:18, 21; 16:27; Eph. 3:16-21.

Rom 5:17 For if, by the offense of the one, death reigned through the one, much more those who receive the abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness will reign in life through the One, Jesus Christ.
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 6:20 For when you were slaves of sin, you were free with regard to righteousness.
Rom 6:21 What fruit then did you have at that time? Things of which you are now ashamed, for the end of those things is death.
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.
Rom 6:23 For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.
Rom 8:18 For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the coming glory to be revealed upon us.

Rom 8:21 In hope that the creation itself will also be freed from the slavery of corruption into the freedom of the glory of the children of God.
Rom 16:27 To the only wise God through Jesus Christ, to Him be the glory forever and ever. Amen.
Eph 3:16 That He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with power through His Spirit into the inner man,
Eph 3:17 That Christ may make His home in your hearts through faith, that you, being rooted and grounded in love,
Eph 3:18 May be full of strength to apprehend with all the saints what the breadth and length and height and depth are
Eph 3:19 And to know the knowledge-surpassing love of Christ, that you may be filled unto all the fullness of God.
Eph 3:20 But to Him who is able to do superabundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power which operates in us,
Eph 3:21 To Him be the glory in the church and in Christ Jesus unto all the generations forever and ever. Amen.

B. Christ's death is for God's righteousness, Christ's resurrection is for God's holiness, and Christ's ascension is for God's glory; when Christ comes back, the glorification of His saints will be consummated.

C. As our Substitute, Christ died on the cross for us in order to fulfill God's righteous requirements for our justification so that He could dispense Himself as life into us—John 19:34; Rom. 1:17; 3:23-25; 5:18; Rev. 22:14:

John 19:34 But one of the soldiers pierced His side with a spear, and immediately there came out blood and water.
Rom 1:17 For the righteousness of God is revealed in it out of faith to faith, as it is written, "But the righteous shall have life and live by faith."
Rom 3:23 For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,
Rom 3:24 Being justified freely by His grace through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus;
Rom 3:25 Whom God set forth as a propitiation place through faith in His blood, for the demonstrating of His righteousness, in that in His forbearance God passed over the sins that had previously occurred,
Rom 5:18 So then as it was through one offense unto condemnation to all men, so also it was through one righteous act unto justification of life to all men.
Rev 22:14 Blessed are those who wash their robes that they may have right to the tree of life and may enter by the gates into the city.

1. A proper Christian is one who has died with Christ and who conducts himself daily according to this fact; if a believer lives in a natural way, he will be unrighteous, but if he experiences the death of the cross, he will be righteous in everything, with everyone, and in every way—Gal. 2:20; 2 Cor. 3:9.

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.
2 Cor 3:9 For if there is glory with the ministry of condemnation, much more the ministry of righteousness abounds with glory.

2. Only the death of Christ and our death with Christ fulfill the requirements of God's righteousness and give God the ground to righteously dispense Himself as the divine life into our entire being so that we may be swallowed up by life to be the city of life—Rom. 8:10, 6, 11; 2 Cor. 5:4.

Rom 8:10 But if Christ is in you, though the body is dead because of sin, the spirit is life because of righteousness.
Rom 8:6 For the mind set on the flesh is death, but the mind set on the spirit is life and peace.
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.

2 Cor 5:4 For also, we who are in this tabernacle groan, being burdened, in that we do not desire to be unclothed, but clothed upon, that what is mortal may be swallowed up by life.

3. To live and serve as a minister of the new covenant is to take the way of righteousness, the living out and genuine expression of Christ, by recognizing that we do not have any qualification to be a servant of God, that as a man in the flesh we are good for nothing except death and burial—Matt. 3:13-17; 21:32.

Matt 3:13 Then Jesus came from Galilee to the Jordan to John to be baptized by him.
Matt 3:14 But John tried to prevent Him, saying, It is I who have need of being baptized by You, and You come to me?
Matt 3:15 But Jesus answered and said to him, Permit it for now, for it is fitting for us in this way to fulfill all righteousness. Then he permitted Him.
Matt 3:16 And having been baptized, Jesus went up immediately from the water, and behold, the heavens were opened to Him, and He saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and coming upon Him.
Matt 3:17 And behold, a voice out of the heavens, saying, This is My Son, the Beloved, in whom I have found My delight.
Matt 21:32 For John came to you in the way of righteousness, and you did not believe him, but the tax collectors and the harlots believed him. And you, when you saw it, did not later regret it to believe him.

D. Sanctification is the subjective activity of holiness; it is holiness in action:

1. Sanctification is the resurrected Christ as "the Spirit the Holy," the sanctifying Spirit in our spirit, working Himself as God's holy nature into our being to make us the holy city—1 Thes. 5:23; Rom. 6:19, 22; 15:16; 8:4.

1 Thes 5:23 And the God of peace Himself sanctify you wholly, and may your spirit and soul and body be preserved complete, without blame, at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.
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.
Rom 15:16 That I might be a minister of Christ Jesus to the Gentiles, a laboring priest of the gospel of God, in order that the offering of the Gentiles might be acceptable, having been sanctified in the Holy Spirit.
Rom 8:4 That the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us, who do not walk according to the flesh but according to the spirit.

2. The divine sanctification is the holding line in the carrying out of the divine economy, the process of God's organic salvation as God's move to deify man, making man God in life and in nature but not in the Godhead—Heb. 2:10-11; Eph. 1:4-5; Rev. 21:2.

Heb 2:10 For it was fitting for Him, for whom are all things and through whom are all things, in leading many sons into glory, to make the Author of their salvation perfect through sufferings.
Heb 2:11 For both He who sanctifies and those who are being sanctified are all of One, for which cause He is not ashamed to call them brothers,
Eph 1:4 Even as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world to be holy and without blemish before Him in love,
Eph 1:5 Predestinating us unto sonship through Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will,
Rev 21:2 And I saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.

3. To live and serve as a minister of the new covenant is to walk in newness of life and serve in newness of spirit as a laboring priest of the gospel of God in order to present the saved sinners to God as an acceptable offering sanctified in the Holy Spirit—Rom.

6:4; 7:6; 15:16.

Rom 6:4 We have been buried therefore with Him through baptism into His death, in order that just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so also we might walk in newness of life.

Rom 7:6 But now we have been discharged from the law, having died to that in which we were held, so that we serve in newness of spirit and not in oldness of letter.

Rom 15:16 That I might be a minister of Christ Jesus to the Gentiles, a laboring priest of the gospel of God, in order that the offering of the Gentiles might be acceptable, having been sanctified in the Holy Spirit.

E. The ultimate goal of the dispensing of the Triune God is that God would be expressed through the Body of Christ for His glory in the church—Eph. 3:20-21; Rom. 8:19, 21, 28-30; 16:27:

Eph 3:20 But to Him who is able to do superabundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power which operates in us,

Eph 3:21 To Him be the glory in the church and in Christ Jesus unto all the generations forever and ever. Amen.

Rom 8:19 For the anxious watching of the creation eagerly awaits the revelation of the sons of God.

Rom 8:21 In hope that the creation itself will also be freed from the slavery of corruption into the freedom of the glory of the children of God.

Rom 8:28 And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose.

Rom 8:29 Because those whom He foreknew, He also predestinated to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the Firstborn among many brothers;

Rom 8:30 And those whom He predestinated, these He also called; and those whom He called, these He also justified; and those whom He justified, these He also glorified.

Rom 16:27 To the only wise God through Jesus Christ, to Him be the glory forever and ever. Amen.

1. The oneness in John 17 is the church; when the oneness is realized in a thorough way, by the full denial of the self, the Son glorifies the Father in the church—vv. 1, 21-23.

John 17 be omitted.

John 17:1 These things Jesus spoke, and lifting up His eyes to heaven, He said, Father, the hour has come; glorify Your Son that the Son may glorify You;

John 17:21 That they all may be one; even as You, Father, are in Me and I in You, that they also may be in Us; that the world may believe that You have sent Me.

John 17:22 And the glory which You have given Me I have given to them, that they may be one, even as We are one;

John 17:23 I in them, and You in Me, that they may be perfected into one, that the world may know that You have sent Me and have loved them even as You have loved Me.

2. This indicates that wherever there is the proper church life, there is the glorification of the Father, for the church life expresses the Father.

3. To live and serve as a minister of the new covenant is to do all to the glory of God for the exaltation of Christ—Rom. 11:36; 1 Cor. 10:31; Phil. 1:20; 2 Cor. 4:5.

Rom 11:36 Because out from Him and through Him and to Him are all things. To Him be the glory forever. Amen.

1 Cor 10:31 Therefore whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.

Phil 1:20 According to my earnest expectation and hope that in nothing I will be put to shame, but with all boldness, as always, even now Christ will be magnified in my body, whether through life or through death.

2 Cor 4:5 For we do not preach ourselves but Christ Jesus as Lord, and ourselves as your slaves for Jesus' sake.

F. The dispensing of the Triune God as life according to His righteousness, through His holiness, and unto His glory is for us to become the New Jerusalem with Christ as our solid foundation of righteousness, our pure constituent of holiness, and our radiant expression of

glory—Rev. 21:2, 9-11.

Rev 21:2 And I saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.

Rev 21:9 And one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls full of the seven last plagues came and spoke with me, saying, Come here; I will show you the bride, the wife of the Lamb.

Rev 21:10 And he carried me away in spirit onto a great and high mountain and showed me the holy city, Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God,

Rev 21:11 Having the glory of God. Her light was like a most precious stone, like a jasper stone, as clear as crystal.

G. Thus, the Spirit, as the processed and consummated God, and the bride, as the processed and consummated church, are joined to become a loving pair of one entity in life for eternity—22:17a; cf. 1 Cor. 6:17.

Rev 22:17a And the Spirit and the bride say, Come! …

1 Cor 6:17 But he who is joined to the Lord is one spirit.

Excerpts from the Ministry:

HAVING A RAINBOW

At this point the four living creatures are not only for the manifestation of the Lord and not only for the move of the Lord but also for the administration, the government, of the Lord. The Lord is among them and above them for His manifestation, move, and government. This is truly wonderful.

As a result of having a clear sky with the throne and of experiencing a man who has the appearance of electrum and a consuming fire, we will have the appearance of a rainbow. Ezekiel 1:28 says, "Like the appearance of the rainbow that is in the cloud on a day of rain, such was the appearance of the brightness all around. This was the appearance of the likeness of the glory of Jehovah." A rainbow is the brightness around the man who is sitting on the throne. This brightness signifies the splendor and glory around the Lord on the throne.

In order to understand the significance of the rainbow, we need to remember the rainbow at the time of Noah. A flood had destroyed the whole earth, and only eight people were spared from that judgment. After that, when people saw storm clouds in the sky, they might have been afraid of being destroyed. Therefore, God made a covenant in which He promised never again to destroy all living things by a flood, and He set the rainbow in the cloud as a sign of this covenant. "I set My bow in the clouds, and it shall be for a sign of a covenant between Me and the earth. And when I bring clouds over the earth, and the bow is seen in the clouds, I will remember My covenant which is between Me and you and every living animal of all flesh, and never again will the waters become a flood to destroy all flesh. And the bow will be in the clouds, and I will look upon it to remember the everlasting covenant between God and every living animal of all flesh that is upon the earth" (Gen. 9:13-16). The rainbow, therefore, was a sign of God's faithfulness and promise not to destroy the fallen human race with a flood.

In His judgment and destruction of the fallen human race at the time of Noah, God spared some by His faithfulness. This also is our situation as believers in Christ. We need to realize that we have been spared by God. We all are fallen and deserve to be destroyed, but God has spared us. Praise the Lord that we have been spared by His faithfulness! Now we have a rainbow as a sign of God's faithfulness. Although God is a holy God and a consuming fire and none can exist in His presence, by His faithfulness we have been spared.

In the rainbow there are several different colors, but the basic colors are only three—red, yellow, and blue. When these colors are shining and blending, they produce other colors, such as orange, green, and violet. It is very significant that the three primary colors of the rainbow are red, yellow, and blue because they correspond to what we have already seen in Ezekiel. The throne looks like a blue sapphire stone; the electrum is yellow; the fire is red. By their shining and refracting, these three colors

combine to make a rainbow.

Now we need to see the spiritual significance of these three colors. Blue signifies the throne. According to Psalm 89:14, the foundation of God's throne is righteousness. This indicates that the blue throne signifies the righteousness of God. Fire signifies the sanctifying, separating, and consuming fire. This means that red here refers to God's holiness. Yellow signifies God's glory in the glowing electrum. Therefore, here we have God's righteousness, holiness, and glory, signified by the colors blue, red, and yellow.

God's righteousness, holiness, and glory are three divine attributes that keep sinners away from God. Before we were saved, we were kept away from God by His righteousness, holiness, and glory. But the Lord Jesus came, died on the cross to satisfy the requirements of God's righteousness, holiness, and glory, and was resurrected, and He is now our righteousness, sanctification, and redemption (1 Cor. 1:30). He is also now our glory. In ourselves we are short of God's glory (Rom. 3:23), we are under God's righteous judgment, and we are kept away by God's holiness. But now, as believers, we are in Christ, and He has become our righteousness, holiness, and glory. Moreover, because we are in Christ, we even bear Christ as righteousness, holiness, and glory. Because we are in Christ, in the sight of God we look like righteousness, holiness, and glory.

This should not be simply a doctrine or a teaching to us. We need to experience Christ in such a way that when others contact us, they can sense righteousness, holiness, and glory. This means that they should be able to sense that we have a clear sky, that we have a throne, and that we are righteous and proper, not careless or loose in any way. We should also have the electrum, glowing, shining, and weighty. Then we will have the appearance of a rainbow, and the angels, the demons, and Satan will be able to see it. This rainbow is the sign of God's faithfulness in sparing us, the fallen ones. As those who were fallen but who have now been saved, we have become a testimony of God's faithfulness in saving us. Every local church should bear the testimony of such a rainbow.

Even the New Jerusalem has the appearance of a rainbow. The foundation stones of the New Jerusalem are of twelve layers, with each layer being a different color (Rev. 21:19-20). Some time ago I read an article which stated that the twelve layers of the foundation stones have the appearance of a rainbow in color. From this we see that the holy city, New Jerusalem, looks like a rainbow. This rainbow signifies that the city is built upon and secured by God's faithfulness in keeping His covenant. This rainbow will declare for eternity that when God judged sinners according to His righteousness, He did not destroy everyone but saved many from destruction as a testimony of His faithfulness. In eternity we, the aggregate of the saved ones, will be a rainbow testifying forever that our God is righteous and faithful.

We, God's spared ones, will be this holy city. By His righteousness, holiness, and glory, we will have the appearance of a rainbow declaring to the whole universe God's saving faithfulness. At the end of the Bible is a city whose foundation has the appearance of a rainbow surrounding the eternal God as His strong testimony. The experience of the Christian life and of the church life will consummate in such a rainbow.

When this rainbow appears, God will have the fulfillment of His heart's desire. Throughout the ages, God has been judging fallen man according to His righteous throne, His holy fire, and His glorious nature. Nevertheless, God has saved some to such an extent that they have become a bright rainbow reflecting His glory and testifying of Him and His faithfulness forever. The appearing of this rainbow indicates that heaven and earth have been connected and that God and man have been joined. Around the throne in the New Jerusalem, there will be a group of people who have received salvation because of God's faithfulness, and for eternity they will be a rainbow reflecting the brightness of God's righteousness, holiness, and glory. At this point, God's eternal plan will have been accomplished.

Although this rainbow will be manifested in eternity, the spiritual reality of this bright rainbow should be manifest in the church today. In the church life we need to allow God to work in us, and we

need to receive grace to the extent that everything becomes pure, just, and holy. This means that God's holy fire must burn away everything that does not match God so that God's nature is manifested as bright gold in and through the humanity of the brothers and sisters. Then the church will be filled with God's righteousness, holiness, and glory. These three characteristics will combine and reflect one another to form a bright rainbow expressing God and testifying for Him.

Once again I say that this should not be merely a teaching to us. Rather, the reality of this rainbow must be wrought into us so that, as God's spared ones, we will bear the appearance of a rainbow, bearing God's testimony and declaring God's faithfulness to the entire universe. This means that we will bear God's righteousness, holiness, and glory.

Ezekiel says that what he saw was the appearance of the glory of the Lord. "When I saw it, I fell on my face and I heard the voice of someone speaking" (Ezek. 1:28b). If we want to hear the word of the Lord in the following chapters of Ezekiel, we all need to come to the same point—under a clear sky in front of the throne with a man sitting on it and bearing the shining and reflecting rainbow. This is the place where we can hear the voice from above. Being here positions us to hear the voice speaking from the heavens. I hope that every one of us will come to this point, and I also hope that all the local churches will also be here. Then the Lord will have a way to speak to us. (*Life-study of Ezekiel,* pp. 133-137)

Living under God's Covenant
No More Judgment through Death's Waters

Then God made a covenant with Noah, with his seed, and with every living animal (Gen. 9:8-11). This covenant was mainly of one aspect—that never again would death come through the judgment of the death waters. The covenant here mainly typifies that in the church life there is no longer death but life. The eight persons lived under that covenant. Since we do not share their background, it is difficult for us to understand their feelings upon leaving the ark. Suppose you were one of Noah's daughters-in-law. After coming out of the ark, you would still have been fearful, thinking that after awhile the flood might come again. Perhaps you would have said to yourself, "Before the flood I had assurance. I looked at the sky, and it was clear. I was filled with assurance because the sky was clear. I had no fear. Now, through the experience of the flood, I have no assurance at all. The sky is clear, but perhaps the flood will come again." The people had no assurance; they were threatened and fearful. This signifies that even after we have been saved and brought into the church life, we are still under the threatening of death. Many are threatened by besetting sins and the possibility of losing their temper. They hate their temper. Two weeks ago their sky was clear, but suddenly there was thunder and a great downpour—that was the loss of the temper. Whenever this happens, they are frightened. Many saints have told me, "Brother, it is so good in the church life. But we don't have the faith or assurance that every day will be the same. I am kind toward my wife today, but perhaps after two days I will lose my temper and be bankrupt. I have no assurance and no peace. I am full of fear." Some sisters have no peace with their husbands or with themselves. They are under the fear that the flood will come again, that the death waters will come once more.

Because of this sense of threatening that Noah and the others were under, God made a covenant with them. God seemed to say, "Be at peace and be assured. No flood will come. There will be no more waters of death." This signifies that we may be assured and at peace in the church life, for there is no more death. Now in Christ there is no condemnation (Rom. 8:1), no death water. We are in Romans 8 where there is no condemnation, no flood, no death, and no judgment. The more we say, "No more," the more we realize that we have no death. Do not believe your feelings and do not listen to your convictions. Your convictions are not dependable; they are lies. You must live under God's covenant. Do not live under your feelings, your convictions, or any environment. God's covenant declares that whenever the sky is cloudy, God will send a rainbow. When you see the rainbow, you know that the flood will not come. If your wife or husband has been so pleasant for two weeks and suddenly the sky becomes cloudy, do not believe it. You must say, "Lord, send the rainbow." Do not

believe that your husband is going to lose his temper, but say, "Lord, You are faithful. You can take away the cloud and send the rainbow." If you say this, the sky will be clear.

Do not believe that you are weak. That is the lie of Satan. Do not believe that you will lose your temper, that you will fall. If you believe something negative and speak that thing, it will come to pass. Such prophecies are certainly fulfilled. If you are afraid of something and prophesy regarding that thing, it will happen. Do not believe your weaknesses. Do you believe them? Are you now living under your weaknesses, or are you under God's covenant? The whole New Testament is called a new testament. A testament is even better than a covenant. We have a twenty-seven-book testament, a twenty-seven-book covenant. This covenant says, "There is now then no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus" (Rom. 8:1). This covenant also says, "My grace is sufficient for you, for My power is perfected in weakness" (2 Cor. 12:9). Do you believe this? If we believe it, we should say a strong Amen. The covenant also says, "Christ…nullified death" (2 Tim. 1:10). Do you believe this? Do not look at yourself—look at Christ. Whenever you look at yourself, you will be trembling. We should not live under ourselves but under God's covenant. We have a covenant! The covenant that God made with Noah was very short, at the most only half a chapter in length. But our covenant has twenty-seven books. Are you weak? You must say, "No, I am no longer weak, because the covenant tells me that I can 'be empowered in the grace which is in Christ Jesus' (2 Tim. 2:1), and I can 'boast in my weaknesses that the power of Christ might tabernacle over me' (2 Cor. 12:9)." Spiritually speaking, I like the song that I learned as a child: "Jesus loves me—this I know, for the Bible tells me so." We may also say, "I am strong in the grace—this I know, for the Bible tells me so." We can declare, "I will be kept from stumbling—this I know, for the Bible tells me so" (Jude 24). Some of you may not have the faith to say this. You may think that this is too much and ask, "How can you say, 'I will be kept from stumbling—this I know'? I dare not say this. If I were to say it tonight, surely I would fall tomorrow." Yes, you would fall simply because you prophesied that you would. You would fall because you are living under your feelings, not under God's covenant.

In His covenant God says, "No more flood, no more judgment by water." If you had been there at the time, would you have said Amen? I would have said Amen over and over again. When Noah saw the clouds, he had no need to be afraid, because he knew that the rainbow would come. So, when the cloud of temper arises, you can say, "Lord, I will not lose my temper. Send the rainbow. I don't care about the cloud—I care about the rainbow. The sky is dark and the cloud is great, but a colorful rainbow is coming. Look at the rainbow." When you say this, you call things not being as being through faith. This faith is not according to your imagination; it is according to the twenty-seven books of God's written covenant.

After the flood the eight persons became people of the covenant. They were a covenant people. In the church life, in Christ's resurrection, we are the covenant people. We have a covenant. We are not living under any of our convictions, considerations, or lies; we are living under God's covenant. We are now living under the New Testament. Are you weak? Are you going to lose your temper, hit your wife, or love the world? You can say, "No, for the Bible tells me so." We are secured, guaranteed, and protected by the promises in God's covenant. These promises are great and precious, by which we may become partakers of God's divine nature and escape the corruption that is in the world by lust (2 Pet. 1:4).

The Rainbow as the Sign of God's Faithfulness in Keeping His Covenant

What is the significance of the rainbow that God set in the cloud as a sign of the covenant (Gen. 9:12-17)? It signifies God's faithfulness. God's faithfulness is the rainbow. In the last book of the Bible, the book of Revelation, the apostle John saw God sitting upon a throne, and around the throne there was a rainbow (4:3). As the closing book of the Bible, Revelation always brings us back to the beginning of the Bible. In the first book of the Bible there was a rainbow, and in the last book of the Bible we still find a rainbow. God's faithfulness remains forever. He cannot deny Himself (2 Tim. 2:13). Once He has spoken, He keeps His word. He Himself is faithfulness. First Corinthians 1:9 says,

"God is faithful, through whom you were called into the fellowship of His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord," and 1 John 1:9 says, "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness." God is faithful.

To what is God faithful? He is faithful to what He says. He is faithful to His word, and His word is the testament, the covenant. The covenant is simply God's word. God is faithful in whatever He says. This is the rainbow. Whenever a cloud comes, you must call God's faithfulness to come. That means that you call out the rainbow. Whenever you feel that you are weak, you must call for God's faithfulness, saying, "O God, You are faithful. I am weak, but You must make me strong according to Your word." We are all living under the covenant with God's faithfulness as the sure sign that the flood will not come. This is the church life.

Our Christian life and church life are absolutely a covenant life. We are under the covenant. In verse after verse of the New Testament, we find God's promises. I want to give you one of them, which I have experienced very much. "No temptation has taken you except that which is common to man; and God is faithful, who will not allow that you be tempted beyond what you are able, but will, with the temptation, also make the way out, that you may be able to endure it" (1 Cor. 10:13). There is a verse for every circumstance that you face. If you hold on to God's covenant, I can promise you that, regardless of what happens to you, there is a verse as a living promise for you to rely upon and live by. We all need to learn how to live under God's covenant. We should not be threatened or frightened by the clouds of our convictions, feelings, and environments. We are under God's covenant, fully under His blessing. There is no more condemnation, no more judgment, no more curse. Death has been abolished. In the church we continually enjoy life. Everything is life. Do not be frightened about losing your job or your health. Do not be threatened by any dark or negative thing. We are the covenanted people, and we have a verse of promise to meet every situation. We must stand under the covenant and not believe in any failure, weakness, darkness, or negative thing. Our destiny is under the blood-sprinkled covenant. Hallelujah, we are the covenant people! There is no cloud and no flood—only life. There is no curse—only blessing. The church life is such a life, and the church people are a people under the covenant. We can actually be called the church of the covenant. (*Life-study of Genesis,* pp. 433-437)

THE REQUIREMENTS OF GOD'S RIGHTEOUSNESS, HOLINESS, AND GLORY

Three of the divine attributes—righteousness, holiness, and glory—place requirements upon us. Righteousness is versus sin. I believe that we all are aware of the requirement of God's righteousness. But we may not be aware of the demands of God's holiness and glory; we may have no realization that glory is one of God's requirements. In Romans 3:23 Paul points out that we all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God. This means that we have not fulfilled the requirement of God's glory.

Genesis 3:24 indicates that as soon as man fell, he could not meet the requirements of God's righteousness, holiness, and glory. This verse says that at the east of the garden of Eden God "placed the cherubim and a flaming sword which turned in every direction to guard the way to the tree of life." The sword signifies God's righteousness; the flame, God's holiness; and the cherubim, God's glory. The sword kills, the fire consumes, and the cherubim observe. Because man had fallen and had become sinful, the way to the tree of life was barred by God's righteousness, holiness, and glory. Praise the Lord that through Christ's redemption the requirements of God's righteousness, holiness, and glory have been fulfilled, and the way to the tree of life has been opened once again. In order for man to have a proper relationship with God, these three requirements had to be fulfilled.

THREE SECTIONS

God's righteousness, holiness, and glory form the basic structure of the book of Romans. Romans can be divided into several sections. After the introduction (1:1-17) and the section on condemnation (v. 18—3:20), there are sections on justification (v. 21—5:11), sanctification (v. 12—8:13), and glorification (vv. 14-39). These sections are related respectively to God's righteousness, holiness, and

glory. Therefore, these three divine attributes are related to the very structure of the book of Romans.

In which of these three sections are we today? The correct answer is that we are in the section of sanctification. We have passed through justification, but we are not yet in glorification. We all are destined to spend the whole of our Christian life on earth in the section on sanctification. I have been in this section for more than fifty years. Do not be disappointed by the length of time you must spend in this section. The time may seem long to you, but it is not to the Lord, with whom a thousand years are like one day (2 Pet. 3:8).

Although we are not yet in the section on glorification, we may nonetheless enjoy something of glorification while we are in the section of sanctification. We may enjoy the foretaste, or firstfruits, of glorification. Sometimes when I am alone with the Lord, I experience a foretaste of the glorification to come. Every proper Christian should have experiences like this.

God's dispensing must be according to His righteousness. If Christ had not become a man with flesh and blood and if He had not died on the cross to take away our sins, it would have been impossible for God to dispense Himself into us. When some hear this, they may argue, "To say this is to be too legal and strict. Don't you know that God is love? He is not that strict and legal. Because God the Father loves me, He can simply come to me and dispense Himself to me, no matter how sinful I may be." Such a concept ignores the fact that God is a God of righteousness. As such a righteous One, He is more strict and more legal than any of us.

Yes, God is the Father, and He does love us. However, according to the parables in Luke 15, we cannot come directly to the Father. The prodigal needs the shepherd (the Son) to seek him and to find him, and he needs the woman (the Spirit) to enlighten him so that he can wake up, repent, and decide to come home to the Father. Only through the Son's seeking and finding and through the Spirit's enlightening can sinners return to the Father. Without the Son's redemption and the Spirit's enlightenment, we cannot come home to Him. Furthermore, if the Son had not died for us, the Father would not have the ground to receive us. However, because of the redemptive death of His Son, the Father has the ground to receive all who come to Him through Christ. This indicates that the Father's receiving of us must be according to His righteousness. Apart from the incarnation and crucifixion of Christ, there is no way for the righteous God to receive us and to impart Himself into us. If God were to dispense Himself into us without the requirement of His righteousness being fulfilled, He would place Himself in an unrighteous position. Therefore, the dispensing of the Triune God must be according to His righteousness.

God's righteousness required that we die because of our sin. However, if we had died, we would have perished. Because God does not want us to perish, He provided Christ as our Substitute. Christ died on the cross for us according to God's righteousness to fulfill God's requirements. The purpose of Christ's death on the cross was not to enable us to go to heaven when we die; it was to fulfill God's righteous requirements so that He could dispense Himself into us.

Suppose you would like to dispense juice into a glass, but you find that the glass is not clean. If you fill a dirty glass with juice, the juice will not be fit to drink. Hence, before dispensing the juice into the glass, you must first cleanse the glass. In like manner, before God could come into us, His Son became a man and died on the cross for us, shedding His blood to wash us from our sins. This enabled us to become cleansed vessels, ready to be filled with the Triune God. Before God could dispense Himself into us, we had to be washed in the blood of Christ. This is according to God's righteousness.

BECOMING RIGHTEOUS BY DYING

We have pointed out that Christ died on the cross to fulfill God's righteous requirements. Now we must go on to see that God desires that we also go to the cross and die. If we are not crucified on the cross, God's righteous requirements cannot be fulfilled in us in a practical way. In the eyes of the righteous Father, nothing is more righteous than for us to die on the cross. If we die, we are righteous in every way. However, if we refuse to die, we have no righteousness in our relationships with others and even with material things. We may treat people unfairly, and we may fail to handle our material

possessions properly. Therefore, to be righteous before God, we not only need to be washed—we also need to die. When we die, we are spontaneously justified. A proper Christian is one who has died with Christ and who conducts himself daily according to this fact. If a believer lives in a natural way, he will be unrighteous. But if he experiences the death of the cross, he will be righteous in everything, with everyone, and in every way.

GOD DISPENSING HIMSELF ONLY INTO THOSE WHO HAVE DIED

We have laid stress on the fact that God's righteousness requires the death both of Christ and of ourselves. We were involved in the death of Christ. When He died, we died also, for we died in Him. This all-inclusive death was for the fulfillment of God's righteous requirements. Because God's righteousness has been satisfied, God is justified in dispensing Himself into His redeemed and crucified people.

God cannot dispense Himself into persons still living in their natural life but can only dispense Himself into those who have died. If you are still alive in a natural way, still living in sin and in the world, God has no position to dispense Himself into you. Only the death of Christ and your death with Christ fulfills the requirement of His righteousness and gives God the ground righteously to impart Himself into you. This applies not only to the time we were saved but also to our daily experience with the Lord. If we want to experience the dispensing of the Triune God, we must take our standing before Him as crucified persons. We must believe and declare the fact of our death with Christ on the cross. Since we are then dead with Christ in a practical way, God will have the position to dispense Himself into us with all His riches. This is God's dispensing according to His righteousness.

HOLINESS AND RESURRECTION

In Romans 6:19 Paul speaks of "righteousness unto sanctification." This indicates that righteousness ushers us into holiness, into sanctification. The dispensing of the Triune God takes place through His holiness. God's holiness is related to the process of His dispensing. Just as the death of Christ is for righteousness, so the resurrection of Christ is for holiness. In fact, the resurrected Christ is the very element of holiness within us. This holiness germinates us, generates us, and sanctifies us. This is wholly a matter of life.

Romans 8:11 says, "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." Notice that in this verse Paul first speaks of Jesus and then of Christ. The name *Jesus* is related to His death, and the title *Christ* is related to resurrection and the impartation of life. Thus, death is related to Jesus, and the giving of life is related to Christ.

The death of Jesus was for the fulfillment of God's righteousness, but the resurrection of Christ was for God's holiness. Righteousness is God's procedure, His way of doing things, whereas holiness is God's nature. God's righteous procedure is upheld by the death of Christ, but God's nature is imparted into us through the resurrection of Christ. When God's righteousness is upheld through the death of Christ, God is in a position to impart Himself into us through the resurrection of Christ. As the resurrected Christ comes into us, He imparts God's nature into us. This holy nature then germinates us, generates us, and sanctifies us. The resurrected Christ within us is the element of holiness that enlivens us. This element germinates us, enlivens us, and then sanctifies us. This is sanctification. Sanctification involves a long process that begins when we are saved and continues throughout our Christian life. In this process we are transformed and even conformed to the image of the firstborn Son of God.

Sanctification takes place through the process of resurrection. I have the assurance that we all have the resurrected Christ within us and that we are undergoing the process of sanctification through resurrection. This process is actually a person, the resurrected Christ Himself. Christ in resurrection is both our holiness and our sanctification. The difference between holiness and sanctification is that holiness denotes the very element of Christ, whereas sanctification denotes the action of that element. Hence, we are not only under the process of holiness but also under the process of sanctification. The

holy element is moving and active within us to sanctify us.

ASCENSION AND GLORIFICATION

Romans covers not only the attributes of righteousness and holiness but also the attribute of glory. Glorification began at the time of Christ's ascension, and it will consummate at His coming back. Christ's ascension is for glory. Therefore, Christ's death is for God's righteousness, His resurrection is for God's holiness, and His ascension is for God's glory. When Christ comes back, the glorification of His saints will be consummated.

This thought is found in Romans 8. In verse 17 Paul says that if we suffer with Christ, we will be glorified with Him. In verse 18 he goes on to say, "I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the coming glory to be revealed upon us." The whole creation is eagerly waiting to "be freed from the slavery of corruption into the freedom of the glory of the children of God" (v. 21). In verse 30 Paul says that those whom God has predestinated, called, and justified, He has also glorified. As we are being sanctified, we are also being glorified. With sanctification we enjoy a foretaste of glorification.

We have pointed out that glorification began with Christ's ascension. As believers in Christ, we are ascended with Christ and seated with Him in the heavenlies (Eph. 2:6). Christ is both in us subjectively and in the heavenlies objectively. Christ has brought us into the heavenlies, and He has brought the heavenlies into us. When we realize the fact that we share in Christ's ascension, we experience not only sanctification but also glorification. To be in ascension is to be in glory.

THE SUBJECTIVE EXPERIENCE OF RIGHTEOUSNESS, HOLINESS, AND GLORY

We need the subjective experience of God's righteousness, holiness, and glory. To be crucified with Christ is to experience righteousness, and to have Christ live in us is to experience holiness. According to His righteousness and through His holiness, the Triune God is dispensed into us in a full way unto His glory. This means that the result of God's dispensing is glory. When people contact us or visit our homes, they should be able to sense that we have died with Christ and that Christ is living in us. If this is our situation, then we will exhibit God's righteousness, holiness, and even His glory.

How we praise the Lord for opening the depths of this book to us! In Romans 3 and 4 we see that Christ died for us, and in Romans 6, that we died in Christ. This death was according to God's righteousness and for His righteousness. In Romans 6 through 8 we see that we are being sanctified through the living, acting, moving, and working of the resurrected Christ within us. After the resurrected Christ germinates us and generates us, He sanctifies us. Sanctification includes transformation and conformation. As the process of sanctification takes place within us, we begin to experience God's glorification. The issue of the dispensing of the Triune God into us is glory. If we daily take our stand of having died with Christ, we will have the subjective experience of righteousness. Then if we allow Christ to live in us, we will have the subjective experience of holiness. The result will be glory, the expression of God from within us.

THE ULTIMATE GOAL OF THE TRIUNE GOD IN HIS DISPENSING

Just as righteousness is God's procedure and holiness is God's nature, so glory is God's expression. The ultimate goal of the dispensing of the Triune God is that God be expressed through the Body of Christ. When the Body of Christ has become the expression of God's glory, that will be the time of full glorification. As Romans 8 reveals, the universe is eagerly awaiting this time, anxiously waiting to enter into the freedom of the glory of the children of God. In this glory God will be expressed in a full way. This will be the ultimate issue of the dispensing of the Triune God.

Every local church today should be a miniature of such a glorious expression of the Triune God. We in the churches should be able to say, "Satan, look at the church. Here you can see God's righteousness, holiness, and glory." When Satan sees this, he will be forced to admit that this is the issue of the dispensing of the Triune God. Because we all have died in Christ and are therefore righteous in the eyes of God, there is no ground for Satan to accuse us or to condemn us. Now Christ is

living in us to sanctify us, to transform us, and to conform us to the image of Christ. The issue of this process is glory. This should be the testimony borne by every church in the Lord's recovery. In every church there must be the base of God's righteousness, the process of God's holiness, and the goal of God's glory. This is the dispensing of the Triune God according to His righteousness, through His holiness, and unto His glory as revealed in the book of Romans. (*Life-study of Romans,* pp. 616-624)

THE LIFE OF THE TRIUNE GOD DISPENSED INTO OUR WHOLE BEING

Now we come to the very precious matter of the life of the Triune God dispensed into the tripartite man. How marvelous that God is triune and that we are tripartite!

Romans 8:2 speaks of the life of the Triune God. Verse 10 reveals that this life has been dispensed into our spirit and has caused our spirit to become life. Furthermore, according to verse 6, this life can be dispensed into our mind and can cause our mind to be life also. Ultimately, as verse 11 discloses, the divine life can even be imparted into our mortal body. In these verses we see the three parts of man: the spirit, the soul (represented by the mind), and the body. The spirit is the center, the body is the circumference, and the mind is in between. From the center through the middle to the circumference, the life of the Triune God is being dispensed into our entire being.

THE LIFE THAT IS DISPENSED INTO US

The life that is to be dispensed into the three parts of man is the life of the Triune God. In 8:2 Paul speaks of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus. In this phrase the Triune God is implied. The Spirit and Christ, the Son, are mentioned explicitly, whereas God the Father is implied by the fact that the Spirit is the Spirit of God. Hence, here we have God, Christ, and the Spirit. However, the main point is not the Triune God but life. To speak of the Spirit of life is actually to say that the Spirit is life. The life here is the very life of the Triune God.

When we were regenerated, we received another life, a life in addition to our natural life. There are various kinds of life: plant life, animal life, human life, and divine life. As humans, we all have a physical life and a psychological life. The physical life and the psychological life are indicated by the Greek words *bios* and *psuche* respectively. When Paul speaks of life in Romans 8, however, he uses still another Greek word, the word *zoe.* In the Bible *zoe* denotes God's life, the divine, infinite, uncreated, eternal life. This is the life we receive by believing in the Lord Jesus. As John 3:36 says, "He who believes into the Son has eternal life." In verses 2, 6, 10, and 11 of Romans 8, Paul uses this Greek word for *life* to indicate that the dispensing of God is to dispense zoe into our being. In other words, God desires to dispense Himself as zoe into all three parts of man's being.

The dispensing of the divine zoe into us began when we were regenerated. According to 8:2, this life is the Spirit, and it is in Christ Jesus. But now, through God's dispensing, it also has something to do with us. Without this life we are doomed to perish. Praise the Lord that when we were regenerated, zoe was dispensed into our spirit!

A LONG PROCESS

In order for the divine life to be dispensed into us, this life first had to pass through a long process involving incarnation, human living, crucifixion, burial, resurrection, ascension, and descension. The life dispensed into us is actually the processed Triune God. In Genesis 1:1 this life could not be dispensed into man, for it had not yet passed through the necessary stages. But now it is fully possible for such a wonderful life to be dispensed into us. This life is present and available, and we can receive it simply by calling on the name of the Lord Jesus.

OUR SPIRIT BEING LIFE

Romans 8:10 says, "If Christ is in you, though the body is dead because of sin, the spirit is life because of righteousness." That the spirit in this verse is not the Holy Spirit is proved by the fact that here Paul contrasts the body with the spirit. Paul says that the body is dead but that the spirit is life. We would expect him to say that the spirit is living. Instead, he says that the spirit is life, or zoe. When we

call on the name of the Lord Jesus, this zoe gets into our spirit and causes our spirit to become zoe. Now not only the Triune God is life, but our spirit is also life.

If we see this, we will have the boldness to declare to the whole universe and especially to Satan that our spirit is life. We will proclaim that at least one part of our being, our spirit, is zoe. Oh, how we all need this revelation! May we see not only that we are saved and regenerated but also that the innermost part of our being has become life.

Knowing that our spirit is zoe will be a great help to us in our daily living. When you are tempted to lose your temper, do not suppress your anger. Instead, simply declare, "My spirit is zoe!" Likewise, if your wife or husband gives you a difficult time, do not argue, but tell the one troubling you that your spirit is zoe. Saying this enables us to resist Satan's temptations. Praise the Lord, our spirit is zoe!

The reason that I am so lively and energetic is that my spirit is zoe. However, I spent years in organized Christianity, and no one told me that my spirit is zoe. I was instructed in various religious practices, but I was not told that my spirit is life. But now I know that the divine zoe has been dispensed into my spirit, into the center of my being. Now I know that my spirit has become zoe!

NOT THE BRIGHT VIRTUE BUT THE TRIUNE GOD AS LIFE

Confucius was a great ethical philosopher who taught his disciples to develop what he called the inner bright virtue. What he called the bright virtue is actually the conscience. The disciples of Confucius may have a bright virtue, but we have the divine life. In fact, the very Divine Being Himself has come into us to be our life. There is no comparison between the bright virtue and the Triune God as the divine life.

Because we realized that our spirit was life, we were able to convince a number of philosophical teachers in China to believe in the Lord Jesus. They boasted that they knew how to develop the bright virtue within. After listening to them for a while, we would tell them that what they had was nothing in comparison to what we had. Some of them were very surprised and inquired honestly about this. We explained that as Christians, we have the Triune God in us as our life. We told them that what they have may be a bright virtue, something created by God, but what we have is the very Creator of this bright virtue. We helped them see that this Creator has passed through incarnation, human living, crucifixion, and resurrection. Now He is both in ascension and available to come into anyone who calls on His name. As a result of such a testimony, many of those philosophical teachers opened to the Lord, called on His name, and received Him into them to be their life. Then they themselves testified about the difference between the bright virtue and the divine life. By preaching the gospel on a high level in this way, we brought a good number of professors, doctors, nurses, and lawyers to the Lord.

OUR MIND BECOMING LIFE

We have emphasized the fact that our spirit has become life because Christ dwells within us. But what about our soul and body? Consider verse 6: "The mind set on the flesh is death, but the mind set on the spirit is life and peace." Here we see that our mind can also be zoe. When we set our mind on the spirit, our mind, which represents our soul, becomes zoe. We do not need to follow the way of Confucius to cultivate the bright virtue. Instead, we simply set our mind on the spirit, and our mind becomes zoe. This is the dispensing of the divine life into our soul.

In our daily living, we need to practice turning our mind to the spirit. Are you about to gossip? Turn your mind to the spirit. Are you tempted to lose your temper? Turn your mind to the spirit. Drop the ethical and religious teachings and come back to God's living Word, which reveals that the life of the Triune God is dispensed into our spirit to make our spirit life and also reveals that the mind set on the spirit is life. We have something higher than bright virtue, ethics, and morality—we have the Triune God dispensed into us. What can compare with this? This is not philosophy or religious teaching. It is the zoe life dispensed into our spirit and into our mind.

LIFE IMPARTED INTO OUR MORTAL BODIES

Verse 11 reveals even more of God's dispensing. Here Paul says, "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." I marvel at the indirectness of this verse. This verse reveals that zoe can be imparted through the Spirit into our mortal bodies. Therefore, not only are both our spirit and our mind zoe, but even our body can be full of zoe.

SEEING THE VISION

We all need to see the vision of the dispensing of the life of the Triune God into the three parts of our being. If we see this divine vision, our natural concept of ethics and morality will be shattered. We need to say to the Lord, "Lord, I thank You. Since You came into me, my spirit has become life. Now if I set my mind on my spirit, my mind also will be life. O Lord, how I praise You! Through Your indwelling Spirit, Your zoe life can be dispensed even into my mortal body. Lord, I worship You for this, I enjoy this, and I am one with You in this dispensing." This is the dispensing of the life of the Triune God into the tripartite man. Through such a dispensing, the Triune God becomes one with the tripartite man, and the tripartite man becomes one with the Triune God. It is through this dispensing of the divine life that we become sons of God. Furthermore, it is by this dispensing that we are transformed and conformed to the image of Christ. This is the Christian life and the church life.

MEN OF LIFE

Let us turn from religious, ethical, and philosophical teachings and come back to the simple yet profound revelation in the holy Word concerning God's economy. Our God is the Triune God who has passed through incarnation, crucifixion, resurrection, and ascension. Now He is the all-inclusive Spirit to be the divine zoe for our participation, experience, and enjoyment. First, He dispenses Himself into our spirit, the center of our being. From the center He spreads into our mind and saturates it with zoe. Then He expands into our mortal body and thereby makes our whole being zoe. In this way we become men of zoe. Hallelujah, we are not men of religion, morality, or ethics—we are men of life! (*Life-study of Romans,* pp. 628-632)

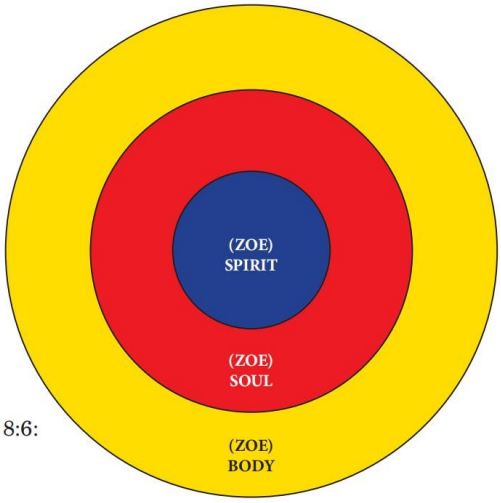
Handout for Message Eight:

THE MASTERPIECE OF THE TRIUNE GOD—Eph. 2:10, 15; 3:10-11
THE ONE NEW MAN—A NEW INVENTION OF GOD

I) THE PROCESSED ZOE:
- Gen. 2:9
- John 1:4a
  - 14:6a
  - 10:10b
  - 12:24
- Luke 12:49-50
- 1 Cor. 15:45b
- Col. 3:4
- 2 Cor. 4:10-12

II) THE DISPENSING OF ZOE:
- Rom. 8:2
  - 8:10
  - 8:6
  - 8:11

III) THE ENJOYMENT OF ZOE—Rom. 8:6:
- –Prov. 4:18; John 21:15, 17
- –2 Cor. 3:6; John 3:34; 6:63
- –Rom. 6:4; 5:10, 17, 21
- –Ezek. 1:22, 26; Rev. 22:1



IV) WE BECOME THE NEW JERUSALEM AS A RAINBOW OF RIGHTEOUSNESS, HOLINESS, AND GLORY—Ezek. 1:26-28; Rev. 21:19-20:
1) Blue – the sapphire throne = God's righteousness
2) Red – the color of fire = God's holiness
3) Yellow – the color of electrum = God's glory

THIS ALL EQUALS:
- 1 Cor. 1:30 and
- Eph. 3:10-11
- 5:25-27