

**Outlines for the Online International Blending Conference in Poland
1-3 May 2020**

GENERAL SUBJECT: THE WILL OF GOD

Message One

**The Mystery of God's Will in the Universe
Ultimately Being to Head Up All Things in Christ
through the Church as the Body of Christ**

Scripture Reading: Eph. 1:5, 9-11; 3:11; 5:17; Col. 1:9; Rev. 4:11; 21:1-2, 9-11

- I. We need to understand what the will of the Lord is—Eph. 5:17; Col. 1:9.**
- II. God's will is what He wants and what He intends to accomplish—Eph. 1:5, 9, 11:**
- A. God has an eternal will, which is the source of His eternal purpose—v. 11; 3:11.
 - B. Since God is eternal, without beginning or ending, His will is also eternal; it lies at the heart of the origin of the universe—Rev. 4:11.
 - C. God created all things for His will so that He might accomplish and fulfill His purpose—Eph. 3:11.
 - D. The will of God is concentrated in Christ and is for Christ to have the first place in all things; Christ is everything in God's eternal will—Col. 1:15-18; 3:4, 10-11.
 - E. God wants to have Christ with the church; the will of God is to obtain the church as the Body of Christ—Eph. 5:32; 1:9, 22-23; 2:21-22; 4:16.
 - F. God in Christ as the Spirit is now working within us to accomplish His eternal will to have the New Jerusalem—the wife of the Lamb filled with the glory of God for His eternal expression in the new heaven and new earth—Phil. 2:13; Eph. 3:14-21; Rev. 21:1-2, 9-11.
- III. According to the good pleasure of His will, God predestinated us unto sonship—Eph. 1:5:**
- A. God has a will, in which is His good pleasure; God's good pleasure is of His will and is embodied in His will, so His will comes first—vv. 5, 9, 11.
 - B. God's good pleasure is what makes God happy—it is the desire of His heart; the living, loving, and purposeful God surely has a heart's desire—v. 5.
 - C. God predestinated us to be His sons according to His pleasure, according to the desire of His heart—v. 5:
 - 1. Before the foundation of the world, God chose us to be holy; to be made holy—to be sanctified by God through His dispensing Himself into us and then mingling His nature with us—is the process, the procedure—v. 4.
 - 2. To be sons of God is the aim, the goal, and is a matter of our being joined to the Son of God and conformed to the image of the firstborn Son of God so that our whole being may be "sonized" by God—v. 5; Rom. 8:29; Col. 1:15.

IV. We have been “predestinated according to the purpose of the One who works all things according to the counsel of His will”—Eph. 1:11:

- A. God’s will is His intention, and God’s counsel is His consideration of the way to accomplish His will, His intention.
- B. According to His will, a council was held by the Trinity before the foundation of the world to make a counsel, a decision, which is His determined will—1 Pet. 1:20; Rev. 13:8; Eph. 1:11.

V. God’s will was hidden in Him as a mystery, so Ephesians 1:9 speaks of “the mystery of His will”:

- A. In eternity God had a will, but this will was hidden in Him; hence, it was a mystery—v. 9; 3:3-5, 9.
- B. In the pleasure of His heart and in His wisdom and prudence, God made this hidden mystery known to us through His revelation in Christ, that is, through Christ’s incarnation, crucifixion, resurrection, and ascension—1:9; John 1:14; Rom. 1:3-4; 4:25; 8:3, 34.

VI. Ultimately, God’s will in the universe is to head up all things in Christ through the church as the Body of Christ—Eph. 1:10, 22-23; Rev. 21:1-2:

- A. God’s eternal intention is, in the economy of the fullness of the times, to head up all things in Christ, who has been appointed to be the universal Head—Eph. 1:10, 22.
- B. Through the dispensations of God in all the ages, all things will be headed up in Christ in the new heaven and new earth; this will be God’s eternal administration and economy—Rev. 21:1-2.
- C. Satan’s goal is to corrupt God’s creation and to cause confusion—Rom. 8:19-23:
 - 1. The entire universe is a heap of collapse caused by Satan injecting himself as the factor of death into God’s creation—Heb. 2:14; Rom. 8:20-21.
 - 2. God is working to liberate His creation from bondage and to bring it into liberty by heading up all things in Christ—Eph. 1:22, 10.
 - 3. We all need to be delivered from the heap of collapse and headed up in Christ—Col. 1:12-13.
 - 4. God’s salvation is to save us not only from our fallen, sinful condition but also from the heap of collapse—vv. 12-13; Eph. 2:1-8, 21-22.
- D. God will subject all things under Christ by heading up all things in Christ through the church as the Body of Christ—1 Cor. 15:20-28:
 - 1. God is heading up His chosen ones to be the Body of Christ with Christ as the Head—Eph. 1:4, 22-23:
 - a. Christ’s headship is being transmitted to the church; this means that, in a sense, we can share the headship of Christ over all things.
 - b. The church is under nothing but Christ Himself; we are above everything else because we are the Body of the One who is over all things.
 - c. The first step in the heading up of all things in Christ is for God to bring His chosen ones, His sons, out of the universal collapse and to place them under the headship of Christ—v. 22; 4:15; 5:23; Col. 1:18; 2:10, 19.

2. When the church takes the lead to be headed up in Christ, God has a way to head up all other things—Eph. 1:22-23, 10:
 - a. The church is the vessel used by God to solve His problems and to fulfill His purpose, which is to manifest Himself through man by mingling Himself with man—3:9-11.
 - b. Eventually, the Body with Christ as the Head will be the universal Head over all things—1:22-23.
3. The church life is a life of being headed up—4:15; 1 Cor. 11:3:
 - a. In the proper church life we are being headed up in Christ.
 - b. If we do not know what it is to be headed up in Christ, we cannot know the church.
 - c. In the church life we are taking the lead to be headed up in Christ; for this we need to grow in life—Eph. 4:15.
 - d. We are headed up through the divine dispensing—1 Tim. 1:4; 3:15; Eph. 1:1; 3:2, 9, 16-17.
 - e. God is working Himself into His chosen and redeemed ones through an administration that is a sweet dispensing, an intimate stewardship, a comfortable household arrangement—1:10; 3:2; 1 Tim. 1:4; 3:15.
- E. The heading up in the church life is by life and light—John 1:4; 8:12:
 1. God's way of recovery is Christ versus Satan, life versus death, light versus darkness, and order versus confusion.
 2. The collapse comes from the factor of death; the heading up comes from the factor of life—Ezek. 37:4-10.
 3. God's way to recover the oneness among His creation is to impart Himself into us as life—Rom. 8:6, 10-11, 19-21.
 4. In order to be delivered from the heap of collapse in a practical way, we need to grow in life; the more we grow in life, the more we will be headed up and the more we will be rescued from the universal collapse—Eph. 4:15; Col. 2:19.
 5. When God comes into us as life, the light of life shines within us—John 1:4; Eph. 5:8-9:
 - a. This life swallows death, and this light dispels the darkness—John 8:12.
 - b. If we are in the life and under the light, we will be delivered out of confusion and brought into order, harmony, and oneness.
- F. In the new heaven and new earth with the New Jerusalem as the center, all things will be headed up in Christ; this will be the complete fulfillment of Ephesians 1:10—Rev. 21:2-3, 23-25; 22:1-2a:
 1. In the New Jerusalem everything will be saturated with life and will be under light—v. 1; 21:23.
 2. In Revelation 21 we see the Head, the Body surrounding the Head, and all the nations walking in the light of the city; the whole universe will be headed up in the light shown through the transparent city—v. 18.

Message Two

The Will of God—Our Sanctification

Scripture Reading: Heb. 2:10-11; 12:10, 14; Eph. 1:4-5; 5:26; 1 Thes. 4:3a; 5:23-24; John 17:17

- I. The will of God is our sanctification; to be sanctified is to be made holy, which is to be separated unto God and saturated with God as the Holy One, the One who is different, distinct, from everything that is common—1 Thes. 4:3a; 1 Pet. 1:15-16; Eph. 1:4-5; 5:25-27.**
- II. Ephesians 1:4-5 and Hebrews 2:10-11 show that sanctification is for sonship; actually, sanctification is God's "sonizing":**
 - A. We were chosen in eternity past "to be holy...unto [for, or, resulting in] sonship"—Eph. 1:4-5; Rev. 21:2, 9-11.
 - B. The resurrected Christ is the Captain of our salvation, leading many sons into glory by sanctifying them—Heb. 2:10-11.
- III. There are three aspects of sanctification in the Scriptures:**
 - A. There is the Spirit's sanctification in seeking the God-chosen people before they repent and believe—1 Pet. 1:2.
 - B. There is the positional sanctification by the blood of Christ at the time of the believers' believing—Heb. 13:12; 9:13-14; 10:29.
 - C. There is the Spirit's dispositional sanctification in the believers' full course of their Christian life—1 Thes. 5:23-24; Rom. 15:16b; 6:19, 22; cf. 5:10; Rev. 22:14; 2 Pet. 1:4.
- IV. The divine sanctification for the divine sonship is the center of the divine economy and the central thought of the revelation in the New Testament:**
 - A. The divine sanctification is the holding line in the carrying out of the divine economy to sonize us divinely, making us sons of God that we may become the same as God in His life and in His nature (but not in His Godhead), so that we may be God's expression.
 - B. We say that sanctification is the holding line because every step of God's work with us is to make us holy—John 17:17; Eph. 5:26-27; 1 Cor. 6:11; 12:3b; Heb. 12:4-14; Rom. 8:28-29; Eph. 4:30; 1 Thes. 5:19; Rev. 2:7a; Psa. 73:16-17, 25-26:
 1. The seeking sanctification, the initial sanctification, is unto repentance to bring us back to God—1 Pet. 1:2; Luke 15:8-10, 17-21; John 16:8-11.
 2. The redeeming sanctification, the positional sanctification, is by the blood of Christ, to transfer us from Adam to Christ—Heb. 13:12.
 3. The regenerating sanctification, the beginning of dispositional sanctification, renews us from our spirit to make us, the sinners, sons of God—a new creation with the divine life and nature—John 1:12-13; 2 Cor. 5:17; Gal. 6:15.
 4. The renewing sanctification, the continuation of dispositional sanctification, renews our soul from our mind through all the parts of our soul to make our soul a part of God's new creation—Rom. 12:2b; 6:4; 7:6; Eph. 4:23; Ezek. 36:26-27; 2 Cor. 4:16-18.
 5. The transforming sanctification, the daily sanctification, reconstitutes us with the element of Christ metabolically to make us a new constitution as a part of the organic Body of Christ—1 Cor. 3:12; 2 Cor. 3:18.
 6. The conforming sanctification, the shaping sanctification, shapes us in the image of the glorious Christ to make us the expression of Christ—Rom. 8:29.

7. The glorifying sanctification, the consummating sanctification, redeems our body by transfiguring it to make us Christ's expression in full and in glory—Phil. 3:21; Rom. 8:23.

C. The divine, dispositional sanctification is carried out by Christ as the sanctifying Spirit in our spirit—15:16b; 8:4.

V. In order to live a holy life for the church life, we need the Lord to establish our heart blameless in holiness—1 Thes. 3:13:

A. Our heart is a composition of all the parts of our soul—the mind, the emotion, and the will (Matt. 9:4; Heb. 4:12; John 14:1; 16:22; Acts 11:23)—plus one part of our spirit—the conscience (Heb. 10:22; 1 John 3:20).

B. The heart is the entrance and exit of life, the “switch” of life; if the heart is not right, life in the spirit is hindered, and the law of life cannot work freely and without obstruction to reach every part of our being; though life has great power, this great power is controlled by our small heart—Prov. 4:23; Matt. 12:33-37; cf. Ezek. 36:26-27.

C. God is the unchanging One, but according to our natural birth, our heart is changeable, both in our relationship with others and with the Lord—cf. 2 Tim. 4:10; Matt. 13:18-23.

D. There is no one who, according to his natural, human life, is steadfast in his heart; because our heart changes so easily, it is not at all trustworthy—Jer. 17:9-10; 13:23.

E. Our heart is blamable because it is changeable; an unchanging heart is a blameless heart—Psa. 57:7; 108:1; 112:7.

F. In God's salvation the renewing of the heart is once for all; however, in our experience our heart is renewed continually because it is changeable—Ezek. 36:26; 2 Cor. 4:16.

G. Because our heart is changeable, it needs to be renewed continually by the sanctifying Spirit so that our heart can be established and built up in the state of being holy, separated unto God, occupied by God, possessed by God, and saturated with God—Titus 3:5; Rom. 6:19, 22; 2 Cor. 3:16-18; Matt. 5:8; Psa. 51:10-12.

H. As our heart is being established blameless in holiness by the continual renewing of the sanctifying Spirit, we are becoming the New Jerusalem with the newness of the divine life, and we are becoming the holy city with the holiness of the divine nature—Rev. 21:2; 1 John 5:11-12; 2 Pet. 1:4.

VI. “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. Faithful is He who calls you, who also will do it”—1 Thes. 5:23-24:

A. The God of peace is the Sanctifier; His sanctification brings in peace; when we are wholly sanctified by Him from within, we have peace with Him and with man in every way—vv. 23, 13; 2 Thes. 3:16.

B. God desires to sanctify us, and He Himself will do it as long as we are willing to pursue Him as holiness and cooperate with Him; in this way we can be holy as He is holy (1 Pet. 1:15-16); without holiness we cannot see Him (Heb. 12:14).

C. By sanctifying us, God transforms us in the essence of our spirit, soul, and body, making us wholly like Him in nature; in this way He preserves our spirit, soul, and body wholly complete—1 Thes. 5:23:

1. Through the fall our body was ruined, our soul was contaminated, and our spirit was deadened; in God's full salvation our entire being is saved and made complete and perfect.

2. For this, God is preserving our spirit from any deadening element (Heb. 9:14), our soul from remaining natural and old (Matt. 16:24-26), and our body from the ruin of sin (1 Thes. 4:4; Rom. 6:6).

3. Such a preservation by God and His thorough sanctification sustain us to live a holy life unto maturity so that we may meet the Lord in His coming.
4. Quantitatively, God sanctifies us wholly; qualitatively, God preserves us complete—that is, He keeps our spirit, soul, and body perfect.
5. Although God preserves us, we need to take the responsibility, the initiative, to cooperate with His operation to be preserved by keeping our spirit, soul, and body in the saturating of the Holy Spirit—1 Thes. 5:12-24.

VII. In order to cooperate with God to preserve our spirit in sanctification, we must keep our spirit in a living condition by exercising our spirit—1 Tim. 4:6-7:

- A. In order to preserve our spirit, we must keep our spirit living by exercising it to have fellowship with God; if we fail to exercise our spirit in this way, we will leave it in a deadened situation—2 Tim. 1:6-7; cf. Jude 19:
 1. To rejoice, pray, and give thanks are to exercise our spirit; to preserve our spirit is first of all to exercise our spirit to keep our spirit living and to pull it out of death—1 Thes. 5:16-18.
 2. We need to cooperate with the sanctifying God to be separated from a spirit-deadening situation—cf. Num. 6:6-8; 2 Cor. 5:4.
 3. We must worship God, serve God, and fellowship with God in and with our spirit; whatever we are, whatever we have, and whatever we do toward God must be in our spirit—John 4:24; Rom. 1:9; Phil. 2:1.
- B. In order to preserve our spirit, we need to keep it from all defilement and contamination—2 Cor. 7:1.
- C. In order to preserve our spirit, we must exercise ourselves to have a conscience without offense toward God and men—Acts 24:16; Rom. 9:1; cf. 8:16.
- D. In order to preserve our spirit, we must take heed to our spirit, setting our mind on the spirit and caring for the rest in our spirit—Mal. 2:15-16; Rom. 8:6; 2 Cor. 2:13.

VIII. In order to cooperate with God to preserve our soul in sanctification, we must clear the three main “arteries” of our psychological heart, the parts of our soul—our mind, emotion, and will—cf. Psa. 43:4; Neh. 8:10; 1 John 1:4; Jer. 15:16:

- A. In order for our soul to be sanctified, our mind must be renewed to be the mind of Christ (Rom. 12:2), our emotion must be touched and saturated with the love of Christ (Eph. 3:17, 19), our will must be subdued by and infused with the resurrected Christ (Phil. 2:13), and we must love the Lord with our whole being (Mark 12:30).
- B. The way to unclog the three main arteries of our psychological heart is to make a thorough confession to the Lord; we need to stay with the Lord for a period of time, asking Him to bring us fully into the light, and in the light of what He exposes, we need to confess our defects, failures, defeats, mistakes, wrongdoings, and sins—1 John 1:5-9:
 1. In order to unclog the artery of our mind, we need to confess everything that is sinful in our thoughts and in our way of thinking.
 2. In order to unclog the artery of our will, we need to confess the germs of rebellion in our will.
 3. In order to unclog the artery of our emotion, we need to confess the natural and even fleshy way that we have expressed our joy and sorrow; also, in many cases we hate what we should love, and we love what we should hate—cf. Rev. 2:4, 6.
 4. If we take the time necessary to unclog the three main arteries of our psychological heart, we will have the sense that our entire being has become living and is in a very healthy condition.

IX. In order to cooperate with God to preserve our body in sanctification, we must present our body to Him so that we may live a holy life for the church life, practicing the Body life in order to carry out God's perfect will—Rom. 12:1-2; 1 Thes. 4:4; 5:18:

- A. Our fallen body, the flesh, is the “meeting hall” of Satan, sin, and death, but by Christ's redemption and in the regenerated spirit as the “meeting hall” of the Father, the Son, and the Spirit, our body is a member of Christ and the temple of the Holy Spirit—Rom. 6:6, 12, 14; 7:11, 17-25; 8:2-3; 1 Cor. 6:15, 19.
- B. To preserve our body is to glorify God in our body—v. 20.
- C. To preserve our body is to magnify Christ in our body—Phil. 1:20.
- D. To preserve our body, we must not live according to our soul, the old man; then the body of sin will lose its job and become unemployed—Rom. 6:6.
- E. To preserve our body, we must not present our body to anything that is sinful but instead present ourselves as slaves to righteousness and our members as weapons of righteousness—vv. 13, 18-19, 22; 1 Thes. 4:3-5.
- F. To preserve our body, we must buffet it and lead it as a slave to fulfill our holy purpose to become the holy city—1 Cor. 9:27; Rev. 21:2.

Message Three

Taking the Lord's Yoke (the Father's Will) upon Us and Learning from Him to Find Rest for Our Souls

Scripture Reading: Gen. 1:26, 31; 2:1-2; Matt. 11:28-30; Exo. 31:12-17; Isa. 1:1; 2:1; 13:1; 15:1

- I. “Come to Me all who toil and are burdened, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am meek and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For My yoke is easy and My burden is light”—Matt. 11:28-30:**
- A. To toil here refers not only to the toil of striving to keep the commandments of the law and religious regulations but also to the toil of struggling to be successful in any work; whoever toils thus is always heavily burdened.
 - B. After the Lord extolled the Father, acknowledging the Father's way and declaring the divine economy (vv. 25-27), He called this kind of people to come to Him for rest.
 - C. Rest refers not only to being set free from the toil and burden under the law or religion or under any work or responsibility, but also to perfect peace and full satisfaction.
 - D. To take the Lord's yoke is to take the will of the Father; it is not to be regulated or controlled by any obligation of the law or religion or to be enslaved by any work, but to be constrained by the will of the Father.
 - E. The Lord lived such a life, caring for nothing but the will of His Father (John 4:34; 5:30; 6:38); He submitted Himself fully to the Father's will (Matt. 26:39-46); hence, He asks us to learn from Him:
 - 1. The believers copy the Lord in their spirit by taking His yoke—God's will—and toiling for God's economy according to His model—11:29a; 1 Pet. 2:21.
 - 2. The Lord, who was submissive and obedient to the Father throughout His life, has given us His life of submission and obedience—Phil. 2:5-11; Heb. 5:7-9.
 - 3. Christ was the first God-man, and we are the many God-men; we have to learn of Him in His absolute submission to God and His uttermost satisfaction with God.
 - 4. God is doing in us that which is well pleasing in His sight through Jesus Christ that we may be able to do His will (13:20-21); God operates in us both the willing and the working for His good pleasure (Phil. 2:13).
 - F. To be meek, or gentle, means not to resist opposition, and to be lowly means not to have self-esteem; throughout all the opposition the Lord was meek, and throughout all the rejection He was lowly in heart.
 - G. He submitted Himself fully to the will of His Father, not wanting to do anything for Himself or expecting to gain something for Himself; hence, regardless of the situation He had rest in His heart; He was fully satisfied with the Father's will.
 - H. The rest that we find by taking the Lord's yoke and learning from Him is for our souls; it is an inward rest; it is not anything merely outward in nature.
 - I. We learn from the Lord according to His example, not by our natural life but by Him as our life in resurrection—Eph. 4:20-21; 1 Pet. 2:21.
 - J. The Lord's yoke is the Father's will, and His burden is the work of carrying out the Father's will; such a yoke is easy, not bitter, and such a burden is light, not heavy.
 - K. The Greek word for *easy* means “fit for use”; hence, good, kind, mild, gentle, easy, pleasant—in contrast to hard, harsh, sharp, bitter.

- L. If we take the Lord's yoke (the Father's will) upon us and learn from Him, we will find rest for our souls; the yoke of God's economy is like this; everything in God's economy is not a heavy burden but an enjoyment.

II. In Exodus 31:12-17, after a long record concerning the building up of God's dwelling place, there is a repetition of the commandment to keep the Sabbath; according to Colossians 2:16-17, Christ is the reality of the Sabbath rest; He is our completion, rest, quietness, and full satisfaction—Heb. 4:7-9; Isa. 30:15a:

- A. The fact that the insertion concerning the Sabbath follows the charge for the building work of the tabernacle indicates that the Lord was telling the builders, the workers, to learn how to rest with Him as they worked for Him.
- B. If we only know how to work for the Lord but do not know how to rest with Him, we are acting contrary to the divine principle:
 - 1. God rested on the seventh day because He had finished His work and was satisfied; God's glory was manifested because man had His image, and His authority was about to be exercised for the subduing of His enemy, Satan; as long as man expresses God and deals with God's enemy, God is satisfied and can rest—Gen. 1:26, 31; 2:1-2.
 - 2. Later, the seventh day was commemorated as the Sabbath (Exo. 20:8-11); God's seventh day was man's first day.
 - 3. God had prepared everything for man's enjoyment; after man was created, he did not join in God's work; he entered into God's rest.
 - 4. Man was created not to work first but to be satisfied with God and rest with God (cf. Matt. 11:28-30); the Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath (Mark 2:27).
- C. Exodus 31:17 says, "In six days Jehovah made heaven and earth, and on the seventh day He rested and was refreshed":
 - 1. The Sabbath was not only a rest to God but also a refreshment to Him.
 - 2. God rested after His work of creation was completed; He looked upon His handiwork, at the heavens, the earth, and all the living things, especially at man, and said, "Very good!" (Gen. 1:31).
 - 3. God was refreshed with man; God created man in His own image with a spirit so that man could have fellowship with Him; man, therefore, was God's refreshment—v. 26; 2:7; cf. John 4:31-34.
 - 4. God was a "bachelor" before He created mankind (cf. Gen. 2:18, 22); He wanted man to receive Him, love Him, be filled with Him, and express Him to become His wife (2 Cor. 11:2; Eph. 5:25); in eternity future God will have a wife, the New Jerusalem, which is called the Lamb's wife (Rev. 21:9-10).
 - 5. Man was like a refreshing drink to quench God's thirst and satisfy Him; when God ended His work and began to rest, He had man as His companion.
 - 6. To God, the seventh day was a day of rest and refreshment; however, to man, God's companion, the day of rest and refreshment was the first day; man's first day was a day of enjoyment.
- D. It is a divine principle that God does not ask us to work until we have had enjoyment; after a full enjoyment with Him and of Him, we may work together with Him:
 - 1. If we do not know how to have enjoyment with God, how to enjoy God Himself, and how to be filled with God, we will not know how to work with Him and be

one with Him in His divine work; man enjoys what God has accomplished in His work.

2. On the day of Pentecost the disciples were filled with the Spirit, which means that they were filled with the enjoyment of the Lord; because they were filled with the Spirit, others thought that they were drunk with wine—Acts 2:4a, 12-13.
 3. Actually, they were filled with the enjoyment of the heavenly wine; only after they were filled with this enjoyment did they begin to work with God in oneness with Him; Pentecost was the first day of the eighth week; therefore, concerning the day of Pentecost, we see the principle of the first day.
 4. With God it is a matter of working and resting; with man it is a matter of resting and working.
- E. In doing God's divine work to build the church, typified by the work to build the tabernacle, we must bear a sign to indicate that we are God's people and that we need Him; then we will be able to work not only for God but also with God by being one with God; He will be our strength to work and our energy to labor:
1. We are God's people, and we should bear a sign that we need Him to be our enjoyment, strength, energy, and everything so that we may be able to work for Him to honor and glorify Him.
 2. The Sabbath means that before we work for God, we need to enjoy God and be filled with Him; Peter preached the gospel by the infilling God, the infilling Spirit; therefore, Peter had a sign that he was God's co-worker, and his gospel preaching was an honor and glory to God—v. 14.
 3. As God's people, we must bear a sign that we rest with God, enjoy God, and are filled up with God first, and then we work with the very One who fills us; furthermore, we not only work with God but also work as those who are one with God.
 4. In our speaking to God's people, we must always seek to bear a sign that our Lord is our strength, our energy, and our everything for ministering the word—2 Cor. 13:3; Acts 6:4.
- F. Keeping the Sabbath is also an eternal agreement, or covenant, that assures God that we will be one with Him by first enjoying Him and being filled with Him and then by working for Him, with Him, and in oneness with Him—Exo. 31:16:
1. It is a serious matter to work for the Lord by ourselves without taking Him in and enjoying Him by drinking and eating Him—cf. 1 Cor. 12:13; John 6:57.
 2. As Peter was speaking on the day of Pentecost, he was inwardly partaking of Jesus, drinking and eating Him.
- G. The Sabbath is also a matter of sanctification (Exo. 31:13); when we enjoy the Lord and then work with Him, for Him, and by being one with Him, spontaneously we are sanctified, separated unto God from everything that is common and saturated with God to replace everything that is fleshly and natural.
- H. In the church life we may do many things without first enjoying the Lord and without serving the Lord by being one with the Lord; that kind of service results in spiritual death and the loss of the fellowship in the Body (vv. 14-15).
- I. Everything related to God's dwelling place leads us to one matter—to the Sabbath with its rest and refreshment of the Lord; in the church life we are in the tabernacle, and the tabernacle leads us to rest, to the enjoyment of God's purpose and of what He has done!

III. The Lord's yoke (the Father's will) is easy, and His burden (the work to carry out the Father's will) is light; we must always serve with a burden from the Lord:

- A. An open spirit to God is the condition for receiving burdens from God; we must learn to receive burdens and release burdens through prayer in our intimate fellowship with the Lord—Luke 1:53; Psa. 27:4; Isa. 59:16; Col. 4:2.
- B. The revelations that the prophets received were the burdens that they received; without burden, there is no ministry of the word, no prophesying, for the building up of the church—Isa. 1:1; 2:1; 13:1; 15:1; Zech. 12:1; Mal. 1:1; Acts 6:4; 1 Cor. 14:4b:
 - 1. Our burden is to release God's revelation to man, and God's revelation is released through the words of revelation that God gives to us—2:11-16.
 - 2. When we minister the word of God, our concern must be whether we have God's speaking, not the topic of our speaking; in order to have God's speaking, the one who ministers the word must have a burden—Mal. 2:7.
 - 3. Those who minister the word must bear people's condition before God, sense their condition, and know what God wants to speak—Exo. 28:29-30.
- C. The greatest problem in the administration of the church and in the ministry of the word is not having a burden from the Lord:
 - 1. Without a burden, all our activity will be dead and ineffective; with a burden, we will be living and flourishing.
 - 2. Having a burden deals with us the most; if there is a burden, the self decreases and is dealt with, because there are things that our burden will not allow us to do, and there are areas that will require our being dealt with before we can release our burden.
 - 3. If we serve according to obligation instead of serving with a burden, such service will cause us to lose the Lord's presence—cf. Deut. 4:25.
 - 4. Whenever our service becomes a matter of fulfilling an obligation, our service has already degraded—Mal. 3:14 and footnote 1.
 - 5. The building work of the tabernacle and all its furniture (typifying the work of the Lord to build up the church) should begin with the enjoyment of God and continue in intervals with the refreshment by enjoying God; this will indicate that we do not work for God by our own strength but by the enjoyment of Him and by being one with Him; this is to keep the principle of the Sabbath with Christ as the inner rest in our spirit.

Message Four

Meeting to Know and Do the Will of God

Scripture Reading: Matt. 7:21; 12:50; 18:20; Eph. 3:8; Col. 1:12; 1 Cor. 14:26; Heb. 10:25

- I. To meet is to know and do the will of God; our goal, our purpose, on earth is to do the will of the Father, and we do this by coming to the meetings of the church—Heb. 10:25.**
- II. We need to realize that besides our inner life with the Lord, nothing is as crucial, important, and profitable as the church meetings—1 Cor. 14:23-26:**
 - A. As indicated by the Greek word *ekklesia*, the church—the dwelling place of God—is a meeting or an assembly of the called-out ones—Matt. 18:17-20:
 1. The church is a gathering of the believers, a meeting of a collective people.
 2. When God’s called-out ones meet together, this is the church—Acts 2:42; 8:1.
 3. Our Father has predestinated us to meet together; coming to the meetings is God’s will—Eph. 1:5; Rom. 8:29; 1 Cor. 14:26.
 - B. The Christian life is a meeting life—Heb. 10:25; 1 Cor. 14:23-26:
 1. Much of the grace that we receive is in the meetings, and much of the work that the Lord does is also in the meetings—Acts 4:33; 13:1-2.
 2. Since the Christian life is a meeting life and much of the Lord’s work is carried out through the meetings, we should regard the meetings as being of great importance—Heb. 10:25.
- III. In the meetings God makes His will known to us—Psa. 73:16-17:**
 - A. Doing God’s will depends on knowing His will—John 7:17.
 - B. In our meetings there are many wonderful things underneath the surface, one of which is knowing God’s will.
 - C. When the psalmist went into the sanctuary of God, he was able to know God’s will—Psa. 73:16-17:
 1. God’s sanctuary, His habitation, is in our spirit and in the church—Eph. 2:22; 1 Tim. 3:15.
 2. In order to go into the sanctuary of God, we need to turn to our spirit and go to the meetings of the church.
 3. Once we are in the sanctuary—in the spirit and in the meetings of the church—we receive another view, a particular perception, of our situation—Psa. 73:16-20.
 4. God’s way is made known in the sanctuary of God—v. 17:
 - a. In our spirit and in the meetings we receive divine revelation—Rev. 1:10; Eph. 1:17-18.
 - b. When we exercise our spirit and attend the meetings of the church, God’s way becomes clear to us—Psa. 73:17.

IV. Since the will of God is in Christ, concentrated in Christ, and for Christ, and Christ is everything in the will of God, we do God's will through exhibiting Christ in the meetings—Col. 1:9, 15-18, 12; 3:4, 11; 1 Cor. 14:26:

- A. The will of God for us is that we would experience and enjoy the all-inclusive Christ and live Him as our life—Col. 1:9, 15-18; 3:4, 11.
- B. Our meetings are to exhibit Christ, so when we come to a meeting, we need to bring with us the Christ whom we have enjoyed—1 Cor. 14:26.
- C. The proper church life depends upon the church meetings where all the saints exhibit Christ with His unsearchable riches—Eph. 3:8.
- D. The goal of our meeting is to exhibit Christ, and the Christian meeting is an exhibition of our Christian daily life—1 Cor. 14:26; cf. Deut. 12:5-7, 13-14.
- E. We exhibit Christ in the meetings by offering to God Christ as the reality of the offerings, enjoying Christ together with God—Heb. 10:8-10, 25; 13:20-21.
- F. We need to function in the meetings to exhibit Christ—Col. 1:12; 1 Cor. 14:26:
 - 1. Due to the influence of Christianity, many believers do not bear responsibility in the meetings.
 - 2. The concept that we may attend a meeting but are not responsible for the meeting is a fundamental error; it is a ploy of Satan to render the members of the Body of Christ useless so that they do not function.
- G. As Christians, we are members of Christ, and our most important service is to meet—12:4-11, 14-27; Heb. 10:25:
 - 1. The church meetings are the best opportunity to exhibit Christ—Col. 3:11.
 - 2. As Christians, we are commissioned to exhibit Christ in the meetings and thus do the will of God—Matt. 7:21; 16:18; Eph. 3:8; Col. 1:12.
 - 3. “The Father we would glorify, / Exalting Christ the Son, thereby / The meeting's purpose satisfy / That we exhibit Christ” (*Hymns*, #864, stanza 8).

V. Since the Father's eternal will and the desire of His heart are to build up the church as the Body of Christ, we do His will by functioning in the meetings according to the scriptural way to meet for the building up of the Body—Matt. 7:21; 12:50; Eph. 4:16; 1 Cor. 14:26:

- A. The meetings of the believers should always be linked to God's New Testament economy; we should come to the meetings with a vision of the divine economy, and what we speak in the meetings should focus on the economy of God—1 Tim. 1:4; Eph. 3:9; 1 Cor. 14:26.
- B. The recovery according to the Lord's mind is to bring His believers out of the clergy-laity system and to replace this system with the scriptural way to meet and to serve for the building up of the Body of Christ—v. 26; Eph. 4:12, 16.
- C. The Lord desires to recover the church meetings in mutuality with all functioning for the building up of the Body of Christ—1 Cor. 14:4b, 24a, 26, 31:
 - 1. When we come to the church meetings, we should have something of the Lord to share with others—v. 26.
 - 2. Before coming to a meeting, we should prepare ourselves for the meeting with something from the Lord or of the Lord, either through our experience of Him or through our enjoyment of His word and fellowship with Him in prayer.

3. We must labor on Christ, our good land, so that we may reap some produce of His riches to bring to the church meeting and offer—Col. 1:12; Eph. 3:8.
 4. Thus, the meeting will be an exhibition of His riches and will be a mutual enjoyment of Christ shared with all the attendants before God and with God for the building up of the saints and the church—1 Cor. 14:26.
 5. Whatever we do in the church meeting must be for the building up of the saints and the church—vv. 3-5, 12.
- D. In the practice of the scriptural way to meet and to serve, we emphasize prophesying—the excelling gift for the building up of the church—vv. 1, 4b, 24-25, 31:
1. The significance of prophesying in 1 Corinthians 14 is to speak for the Lord, to speak forth the Lord, and even to speak the Lord, to minister, to dispense, the Lord, into others; in the sense of the divine dispensing, the entire Bible consummates in all prophesying—vv. 3, 24-25, 31.
 2. Prophesying, speaking for God and speaking forth God with God as the content, ministers God to the hearers and brings them to God—v. 25.
 3. God desires that each of the believers prophesy, that is, speak for Him and speak Him forth—vv. 1b, 31; cf. Num. 11:29.
 4. The characteristic of prophesying is to minister Christ for the organic building up of the church as the Body of Christ; prophesying is the particular gift for the building up of the church—1 Cor. 14:3-5, 12, 24, 26.