

EXPERIENCING, ENJOYING, AND EXPRESSING CHRIST (4)

KEY STATEMENTS

Christ as Jehovah and also as man is the King
who is supplying, caring for, and covering God's
people;

He is the King for ruling and a
man
who is like a refuge from the wind and a covering from the tempest,
like streams of water in a dry place,
and like the shadow of a massive rock in a wasted land.

In order for us to eat Christ as the tree of life,
we must give Him the first place in all
things,
which is to love Him with the first love, being constrained by His
love to regard and take Him as everything in our life.

They overcame the accuser
because of the blood of the Lamb
and because of the word of their testimony,
and they did not love their soul-life even unto death.

In the kingdom
the Lord will appear publicly to the people as the sun,
but before the great tribulation
He will appear privately to the overcomers
as the morning star to rapture them.

HWMR: EXPERIENCING, ENJOYING, AND EXPRESSING CHRIST (4) (Week 1)

The Faithful Witness of God for the Testimony of Jesus

Scripture Reading: *Rev. 1:1-2, 5, 9-12; 7:9-17; 19:10*

- Rev. 1:1 The revelation of Jesus Christ which God gave to Him to show to His slaves the things that must quickly take place; and He made it known by signs, sending it by His angel to His slave John,
- Rev. 1:2 Who testified the word of God and the testimony of Jesus Christ, even all that he saw.
- Rev. 1:5 And from Jesus Christ, the faithful Witness, the Firstborn of the dead, and the Ruler of the kings of the earth. To Him who loves us and has released us from our sins by His blood
- Rev. 1:9 I John, your brother and fellow partaker in the tribulation and kingdom and endurance in Jesus, was on the island called Patmos because of the word of God and the testimony of Jesus.
- Rev. 1:10 I was in spirit on the Lord's Day and heard behind me a loud voice like a trumpet,
- Rev. 1:11 Saying, What you see write in a scroll and send it to the seven churches: to Ephesus and to Smyrna and to Pergamos and to Thyatira and to Sardis and to Philadelphia and to Laodicea.
- Rev. 1:12 And I turned to see the voice that spoke with me; and when I turned, I saw seven golden lampstands,
- Rev. 7:9 After these things I saw, and behold, there was a great multitude which no one could number, out of every nation and all tribes and peoples and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed in white robes and palm branches in their hands.
- Rev. 7:10 And they cry with a loud voice, saying, Salvation to our God who sits upon the throne and to the Lamb.
- Rev. 7:11 And all the angels stood around the throne and the elders and the four living creatures; and they fell on their faces before the throne and worshipped God,
- Rev. 7:12 Saying, Amen. The blessing and the glory and the wisdom and the thanks and the honor and the power and the strength be to our God forever and ever. Amen.
- Rev. 7:13 And one of the elders answered, saying to me, These who are clothed in the white robes, who are they, and where did they come from?
- Rev. 7:14 And I said to him, My lord, you know. And he said to me, These are those who come out of the great tribulation, and they have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.
- Rev. 7:15 Because of this they are before the throne of God and serve Him day and night in His temple; and He who sits upon the throne will tabernacle over them.
- Rev. 7:16 They will not hunger anymore, neither will they thirst anymore, neither will the sun beat upon them, nor any heat;
- Rev. 7:17 For the Lamb who is in the midst of the throne will shepherd them and guide them to springs of waters of life; and God will wipe away every tear from their eyes.
- Rev. 19:10 And I fell before his feet to worship him. And he said to me, Do not do this. I am your fellow slave and a fellow slave of your brothers who have the testimony of Jesus. Worship God. For the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of the prophecy.

Day 1

- Rev. 1:5 - And from Jesus Christ, the faithful Witness, the Firstborn of the dead, and the Ruler of the kings of the earth. To Him who loves us and has released us from our sins by His blood.*
- Rev. 1:20 - The mystery of the seven stars...and the seven golden lampstands: The seven stars are the messengers of the seven churches, and the seven lampstands are the seven churches*

I. Christ is the **faithful Witness** of God, the **testimony** and **expression** of God; His expressing God is His **witnessing**—Rev. 1:5; 3:14:

- A. Christ is the Witness of God, the testimony and expression of God; the **church is the testimony and expression of Christ**; as such, the church is the reproduction of the testimony and expression of God in Christ—1:5.
- B. Revelation presents to us the **revealed Christ** and the **testifying church**, which is the testimony of Jesus; Christ is the testimony of God, and the church is the testimony of Jesus, the enlarged Christ as the corporate expression of the Triune God—John 1:18; 5:31-37; 8:14; Rev. 1:2, 5, 9; 19:10; cf. Gen. 1:26.

Christ is the faithful Witness of God, the testimony and expression of God; His expressing God is His witnessing. We should pay attention to every word in this outline. Christ is the faithful Witness of God. A **witness is one who has heard, seen, or experienced something and then testifies or declares what he has seen, heard, or experienced**. Christ is such a faithful Witness of God. As God incarnate on earth, Christ's one work was to be a Witness of God, to testify concerning God the Father. John 1:18 says, "*No one has ever seen God; the only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, He has declared Him.*" This was Christ's primary purpose in coming to the earth. Of course, He died on the cross to accomplish redemption, but **He came to be the faithful Witness of God**. Whatever He did and said testified God. As such, Christ is the testimony of God. In the Old Testament, the Testimony of God, which was the law of God, was not merely a collection of dos and don'ts; it was a **photograph of God, an expression of God**. When we look at the law, we see God; we see the characteristics, attributes, and virtues of God. The Old Testament Testimony of God is a type of Christ, who is the living law, the testimony or "photograph" of God. Christ is not merely a photograph but even a "movie" of God.

Another word for testimony is **expression**. Christ is God's expression, not because He spoke certain words and did a particular kind of work but because **He is the embodiment of God**. He is God in the form of a man, God made visible. He is the effulgence of God's glory to shine out, radiate, declare, and testify God among men. The Gospels show that everything this man did testified God.

His expressing God was His witnessing. His living out God—speaking the Father's word, doing the Father's will, seeking the Father's glory, and being one with the Father—was His declaring and witnessing God. Therefore, He could say, "He who has seen Me has seen the Father" (14:9). **If we see Jesus, we see the Father**. He is God's Witness. He testified of God in everything that He was and in everything that He did and spoke. He fully expressed God's heart, attributes, virtues, and all that God is. (The Ministry of the Word, vol. 30, No. 2, chapter 37)

II. The testimony of Jesus is the **seven golden lampstands—golden (divine) in nature, shining in darkness, and identical with one another—Rev. 1:1-2, 9-12:**

Day 2

Rev. 4:5 - ...There were seven lamps of fire burning before the throne, which are the seven Spirits of God.

Rev. 5:6 - And I saw in the midst of the throne and of the four living creatures and in the midst of the elders a Lamb standing as having just been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent forth into all the earth.

- A. The golden lampstand symbolizes the Triune God; the **Father** as the **substance** is embodied in the Son, the **Son** as the **embodiment** is expressed through the Spirit, the **Spirit** is **fully realized and expressed** as the churches, and the **churches** are the **testimony of Jesus**—Exo. 25:31-40; Zech. 4:2-10; Rev. 1:10-12.

Day 3

Exo. 25:31 - And you shall make a lampstand of pure gold. The lampstand with its base and its shaft shall be made of beaten work; its cups, its calyxes, and its blossom buds shall be of one piece with it. 36 Their calyxes and their branches shall be of one piece with it; all of it one beaten work of pure gold.

- B. To experience the golden lampstands as the testimony of Jesus, the corporate expression of Jesus (Acts 9:4-5; 1 Cor. 12:12), **we must be filled with the Spirit of Jesus** (Acts 16:7) by **calling** on the name of the Lord Jesus **continually** (1 Cor. 12:3, 13; Rom. 10:12-13; Lam. 3:55-56) to bear the brands of Jesus (Gal. 6:17) as brothers and fellow partakers in the tribulation, kingdom, and endurance in Jesus (Rev. 1:9-10).
- C. The **beating of the gold** to form a stand signifies the **believers' participation in Christ's sufferings**; everything that goes on in our environment is for the producing of the beaten lampstand—Exo. 25:31; Col. 1:24:
1. If we **set our mind on knowing God**—submitting to the inward working of the Spirit and to the outward environment—**every circumstance will become an opportunity** for us to know Him—Hosea 6:1-3; Phil. 3:10a; Eph. 6:20; cf. Gen. 41:42.
 2. If a man does not know God in his lifetime, he has wasted his whole life; may the Lord make us **willing to accept His dealings** in our circumstances so that we may know Him more—2 Cor. 4:16-18; 12:7-9; cf. Isa. 7:14-15; 2 Cor. 5:14-15.
 3. The crux of the matter is whether or not one encounters the Lord as the great light in the midst of difficulties and trials; **suffering can make us understand** what we otherwise could not understand—1:8-9; cf. Eph. 1:17; Luke 1:78-79.
- D. The **shining of the golden lampstands** is so that people may **see the vision** of the glorious Christ as the Son of Man walking in their midst; by knowing the Lord in the midst of the churches as the One who is living forever and ever, we can be **assured of His presence in our spirit all the time**; He lives always to intercede for us, He appears now before the face of God for us, and He will never fail us nor forsake us—Rev. 1:12-18; 2:1; 2 Tim. 4:22; Heb. 7:25; 9:24; Num. 6:22-27; Deut. 31:6.

- E. The shining of the seven lamps of the golden lampstands, the Lord Jesus walking in their midst with His seven eyes like a flame of fire, His feet like shining bronze, and the shining of His face as the sun indicate that we need **more and more of the Lord's shining** day by day in our daily life and church life for **more and more of His shepherding**—saving, restoring, reviving, and deifying—Rev. 1:14b-15a, 16b; 4:5; 5:6; Luke 1:78-79; 2 Cor. 4:6-7; Mal. 4:2; Prov. 4:18; Psa. 22, title; 80:1-3, 7, 15-19.

However, it is not adequate merely to have a large quantity of gold. We may have a thousand talents of gold and not yet have the lampstand, for we may just have the substance without the form. How can we have the form? All fundamental students of the Bible agree that the **lampstand was made by beating the gold**. One brother may have ten pounds of gold, another may have seven pounds, and still another may have five pounds. How can all this gold be formed into a stand? **Only by its being beaten together**. All the gold must be brought together **into one**. This refers to the **building**. Firstly, we need the **substance** and then we need the **building by beating**. It is a shame to the Lord if today He cannot see any building. Many people argue with us about the church, asking how we can say that we are the church and that they are not the church. But the question is: where is the building? You may even have a great deal of gold, but if you do not have the form, by the way of the building, you do not have the lampstand. This means that you may be rich in gold but poor in the lampstand—the building.

If you would have the stand, you must be **beaten together with others**. You need to lose your identification. Do not say, "This is my gold. I'm spiritual." For you to be spiritual as an end in itself is meaningless as far as the lampstand is concerned. Your experience and enjoyment of God must be beaten together with that of others. Our gold must be put together, beaten, and built up as one entity, as one unit. Then we not only have the gold, but are also built into a golden lampstand. This is the church.

If those in the church in Anaheim are merely several hundred individual units, we are finished. God does not desire hundreds of individual units of gold. **He wants all the gold put together and beaten to form the lampstand**. What a need there is for the building! If we have seen the building, we will never be individualistic. Rather, we would realize that whatever we gain or receive of the divine element is for the building of the lampstand. Because God's desire is for the building, we have given message after message saying that we need God in Christ as our very substance that we might be built together. It is good to have a large quantity of gold and thereby to be rich in God. But are you still individualistic, or are you part of a corporate entity? We need the building. (Life-Study of Revelation, chapter 31)

Day 4

2 Cor. 4:6 - *Because the God who said, Out of darkness light shall shine, is the One who shined in our hearts to illuminate the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ*

Eph. 5:14 - *Therefore He says, Awake, sleeper, and arise from the dead, and Christ will shine on you.*

- F. **Enlightening rests with the mercy of God**; whenever God comes and bestows His mercy, the light of His countenance is our light, His appearing is our vision, and His presence is our gain—Rom. 9:15; Acts 9:3-4; Isa. 50:10-11; Num. 6:25-26:

1. In order to be enlightened, **we must want and accept the Lord's shining**, setting our heart to be single in seeking the Lord alone with all our desire—Psa. 139:23-24; Phil. 2:12-16; 2 Chron. 12:14; 16:12; 34:1-3; Psa. 27:8; 73:25; Luke 11:33-36.

2. In order to be enlightened, **we must open ourselves to the Lord**, turn our heart to Him, and place ourselves before Him without any reservation or holding back; those who close themselves to the Lord are experts in judging and criticizing others—2 Cor. 3:16; Prov. 20:27; Matt. 7:1-5; Luke 6:36-37, 41-42.
3. In order to be enlightened, **we must put a stop to ourselves**; this means to put a stop to our views, our ways of looking at things, our feelings, our ideas, and our opinions; when a person who is completely stopped comes before the Lord, he can be exceedingly single and simple in receiving the word of the Lord—10:38-42; John 11:21-28; Isa. 40:31; Matt. 5:3; Luke 18:15-17; Isa. 66:1-2.
4. In order to be enlightened, **we must not dispute with the light of the Spirit who speaks within us**, and we should not dispute with the ministers of the Spirit who speak with-out—Acts 22:10; S. S. 5:4-6; 2 Cor. 10:3-5; 11:2-3; Num. 16:1-7, 31-39; 17:1-8; cf. Exo. 33:11-14.
5. In order to be enlightened, **we must continuously live in the light**—Isa. 2:5; 1 John 1:7; Heb. 9:14; 10:22; Matt. 5:3, 8, 14; Psa. 119:105; Rev. 1:20; Psa. 36:8-9.

The beating of the gold to form a stand signifies the believers' participation in Christ's sufferings; everything that goes on in our environment is for the producing of the beaten lampstand. In order to shape the gold into a lampstand, it must be beaten. This beating signifies our need to **participate in Christ's sufferings**.

The young people are wonderful and lovely; surely, they have gold. However, **their gold is not quite formed**. There is only one way for the gold that we possess to be formed, and that is through suffering. **We should not pray for suffering; however, suffering will come**. And when suffering comes to us, we should not be surprised or complain. Rather, we should say, "Lord, thank You for Your beating work so that I may be beaten together with others to become part of the lampstand."

To be beaten together implies **joining, blending, and building**. This is what we are experiencing today so that we may be formed as the lampstand.

Transformation requires God's work in the environment. Of course, transformation involves **God dispensing Himself into us, adding Himself as the substance and element to us**, so that we "might become partakers of the divine nature" (2 Pet. 1:4). Nevertheless, Peter's Epistles are mostly a strengthening to believers in suffering. First Peter 1:7 says, "So that the proving of your faith, much more precious than of gold which perishes though it is proved by fire, may be found unto praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ." The believers' suffering refines their gold (cf. Rev. 3:18), and Peter says that this refining, this proving, is more precious than gold. If the deposit of Christ in us is real, **that deposit must be tested**. Even our **faith needs to be tested**, and it is this testing—our environmental circumstances—that helps us to be approved, transformed, and conformed to Christ's image. These sufferings are akin to someone using a hammer to beat the gold into a lampstand. (The Ministry of the Word, vol. 30, No. 2, chapter 37)

Day 5

- Rev. 7:9** - *...I saw, and behold, there was a great multitude which no one could number, out of every nation and all tribes and peoples and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed in white robes and palm branches in their hands.*
- Rev. 7:15** - *Because of this they are before the throne of God and serve Him day and night in His temple; and He who sits upon the throne will tabernacle over them.*

III. The testimony of Jesus is the great multitude serving God in the temple, the whole Body of God's redeemed, who have been raptured to the heavens to enjoy God's care and the Lamb's shepherding with all the spiritual blessings in the heavenlies and in Christ that can be enjoyed today—Rev. 7:9-17; Eph. 1:3; Gal. 3:14; Gen. 12:2; cf. Rev. 21:3-4; 22:3-5; Isa. 49:10:

- A. The great multitude consists of **those who have been purchased with the blood of the Lamb** from every nation, tribe, people, and tongue to be the constituents of the church—Rev. 7:9a; 5:9; Rom. 11:25; Acts 15:14, 19; 1 Cor. 6:19-20.
- B. "These are **those who come out of the great tribulation**, and they have **washed their robes** and made them white in the **blood of the Lamb**"—Rev. 7:14:
 - 1. The great tribulation in verse 14 refers to the **tribulations, sufferings, persecutions, and afflictions** experienced by God's redeemed people throughout the ages—John 16:33.
 - 2. The **blood of the Lamb answers before God** all the accusations of the devil against us and gives us the victory over him (Rev. 12:11); because of the redeeming Christ as the opened fountain of blood for all our sin and impurity (Zech. 13:1; John 19:34), we can plunge beneath that blood, lose all our guilty stains (*Hymns*, #1006, stanza 1), and "rise to walk in God's own light / Above the world and sin, / With heart renewed and garments white / And Christ enthroned within" (*Hymns*, #1010, stanza 3).
 - 3. To wash our robes is to **keep our conduct clean** through the washing of the blood of the Lamb; this gives us the right to enjoy the tree of life and to enter into the city of life as the realm of God's eternal blessings—1 John 1:7; Rev. 22:14.
- C. Those of the great multitude are standing before the throne and before the Lamb with **palm branches in their hands**—7:9b:
 - 1. Palm branches signify **our victory over tribulation**, which we have undergone for the Lord's sake; palm trees are also a **sign of satisfaction gained through being watered**—v. 14; cf. John 12:13; Exo. 15:27.
 - 2. In the Triune God as the temple of God, we will serve Him day and night to enjoy Him as the eternal Feast of Tabernacles and to **flourish in life like the palm tree**—Rev. 7:15a; 3:12; Lev. 23:40; Neh. 8:15; Psa. 92:12-13; John 7:2, 37-39; Rom. 1:9; Col. 2:19.
 - 3. Our service in time today is a **preparation for our service in eternity**; God's only goal in time is to dispense Himself into us day by day; when God comes into us and comes out of us, that is service—Matt. 25:19-23; John 7:37-39.

Day 6

Rev. 7:16-17 - They will not hunger anymore, neither will they thirst anymore, neither will the sun beat upon them, nor any heat; for the Lamb who is in the midst of the throne will shepherd them and guide them to springs of waters of life; and God will wipe away every tear from their eyes.

- D. We will **not hunger or thirst anymore**—Rev. 7:16a:
 - 1. To **hunger** and **thirst** is to have a **hope that is not yet satisfied**; Christ promises that everyone who believes into Him will be satisfied and receive Him as their satisfying life—John 6:35.
 - 2. To contact God the Spirit in our spirit is to drink of the living water, and to drink of the living water is to **render real worship to God**—4:13-14, 23-24.

- E. The beating sun and the scorching heat **will not strike us**—Rev. 7:16b:
1. The Lamb-God sitting upon the throne will tabernacle over us, **overshadowing us with Himself**—v. 15b; 2 Cor. 12:9.
 2. There is one kind of life that is under God's overshadowing—it is a **life that is hidden in God**—Psa. 36:7-9; Eph. 6:17; Psa. 91:1; 17:8; 57:1; Ruth 2:12.
 3. Christ as Jehovah and also as man is the King who is supplying, caring for, and covering God's people; He is the King for ruling and a man who is like a refuge from the wind and a covering from the tempest, like streams of water in a dry place, and like the shadow of a massive rock in a wasted land—Isa. 32:1-2.
- F. The **Lamb** who is in the midst of the throne will **shepherd us and guide us** to springs of waters of life—Rev. 7:17a:
1. Shepherding includes **feeding**; under the shepherding of Christ, "I will lack nothing"—Psa. 23:1.
 2. We can never improve ourselves, and **we need a shepherd to feed us all the time**; He feeds the lambs with His experience as the Lamb of God, who is on the throne of God in and for the house of God—vv. 2-6; Rev. 22:1.
- G. He will **wipe away every tear** from our eyes—7:17b:
1. Tears are unavoidable in this age, but **our tears are put into God's bottle** and recorded in His book—Heb. 5:7; Acts 20:19, 31; Psa. 56:8; cf. Mal. 3:16.
 2. Because the Lamb **supplies us with waters of life** for our satisfaction, the water of tears is wiped away—Jer. 9:1; 2:13; cf. 15:16; Lam. 3:21-25, 55-56.
 3. Thank God that the days of sorrow and the things of sorrow **will not last**; the world is passing away, and we are blessed to drink of the flowing Triune God **until we become the totality of eternal life**, the New Jerusalem—John 4:14b.