

HWMR: EXPERIENCING, ENJOYING, AND EXPRESSING CHRIST (4) (Week 3)

Christ as the Son of Man Walking in the Midst of the Golden Lampstands

Scripture Reading: *Rev. 1:9—2:1*

- 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. 1:13 And in the midst of the lampstands One like the Son of Man, clothed with a garment reaching to the feet, and girded about at the breasts with a golden girdle.
- Rev. 1:14 And His head and hair were as white as white wool, as snow; and His eyes were like a flame of fire;
- Rev. 1:15 And His feet were like shining bronze, as having been fired in a furnace; and His voice was like the sound of many waters.
- Rev. 1:16 And He had in His right hand seven stars; and out of His mouth proceeded a sharp two-edged sword; and His face shone as the sun shines in its power.
- Rev. 1:17 And when I saw Him, I fell at His feet as dead; and He placed His right hand on me, saying, Do not fear; I am the First and the Last
- Rev. 1:18 And the living One; and I became dead, and behold, I am living forever and ever; and I have the keys of death and of Hades.
- Rev. 1:19 Write therefore the things which you have seen and the things which are and the things which are about to take place after these things.
- Rev. 1:20 The mystery of the seven stars which you saw upon My right hand and the seven golden lampstands: The seven stars are the messengers of the seven churches, and the seven lampstands are the seven churches.
- Rev. 2:1 To the messenger of the church in Ephesus write: These things says He who holds the seven stars in His right hand, He who walks in the midst of the seven golden lampstands:

Day 1

Eph. 4:3 - Being diligent to keep the oneness of the Spirit in the uniting bond of peace.

Matt. 18:20 - For where there are two or three gathered into My name, there am I in their midst.

I. In order to see the vision of Christ as the Son of Man walking in the midst of the golden lampstands, we must be the **Lord's overcoming messengers, those who are in our spirit on the ground of the church as fellow partakers in the tribulation, kingdom, and endurance in Jesus—Rev. 1:9-13, 20:**

A. The practice of the church life in the early days was the practice of having **one church for one city, one city with only one church**; in no city was there more than one church—Acts 8:1; 13:1; Rev. 1:11.

- B. There are **four characteristics** of our meeting on the genuine ground of oneness, the place God has chosen—cf. Deut. 12:5:
1. First, the **people of God should always be one**; there should be no divisions among them—Psa. 133; John 17:11, 21-23; 1 Cor. 1:10; Eph. 4:3.
 2. Second, the **unique name into which God's people should gather is the name of the Lord Jesus Christ**, the reality of which name is the Spirit; to be designated by any other name is to be denominated, divided; this is spiritual fornication—Matt. 18:20; 1 Cor. 1:12-13; 12:3b.
 3. Third, in the New Testament God's habitation, His dwelling place, is particularly located in our spirit, that is, in our mingled spirit, our human spirit regenerated and indwelt by the divine Spirit; in our meeting for the worship of God, **we must exercise our spirit and do everything in the spirit**—John 3:6b; Rom. 8:16; 2 Tim. 4:22; Eph. 2:22; John 4:24; Rev. 1:10; 1 Cor. 14:15.
 4. Fourth, in our worship of God we must have the **genuine application of the cross of Christ**, signified by the altar (Deut. 12:5-6, 27), by rejecting the flesh, the self, and the natural life and worshipping God with Christ and Christ alone (Matt. 16:24; Gal. 2:20).

We need to be messengers in order to see the vision of Christ as the Son of Man walking in the midst of the golden lampstands. We should pray, "Lord, make me a messenger." In Revelation 2 and 3 John was told to write "to the messenger" of each of the seven local churches, not to the local churches directly. This is significant. **Without a messenger the Lord cannot speak to the churches.** We need to pray, "Lord Jesus, by Your mercy, constitute me into a messenger through whom You can speak to the saints." We want the Lord **to speak through us.**

A messenger is **one who receives and dispenses Christ as the fresh message from God to His people.** As we are preparing for the prophesying meeting of the church, we should pray, "Lord, speak to me. Give me a fresh message so that I can receive You as a fresh message of God and dispense You to Your people." Our speaking as messengers will build up the church and prepare Christ's bride.

The footnote in Malachi 3:1 on the expression My messenger says, "In His first coming Christ came as a Messenger and even as the message sent by God. As the Messenger of God, Christ not only brings a word or a message from God to God's people; **He Himself is the living message.**" This is remarkable. We can pray, "Lord, I want to be one with You as the Messenger of God. I also want You to be my living message. Lord, thank You that I am in You and that You are in me as the Messenger of God. Constitute me into a messenger of God, and be my living, fresh message to dispense into Your people." We must be the messengers of God in order to see the vision of Christ as the Son of Man walking in the midst of the golden lampstands. (*The Ministry of the Word*, vol. 30, No. 2, chapter 39)

Day 2

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.*

Acts 14:22 - *...Through many tribulations we must enter into the kingdom of God.*

C. We are **fellow partakers** in the **tribulation in Jesus**:

1. *In Jesus* means that **we are suffering and being persecuted as we follow Jesus** the Nazarene by the indwelling Spirit of Jesus, the Spirit of a man with abundant strength for suffering—Acts 16:6-7.
2. As we are suffering today, the **Lord Jesus is suffering in us and with us**—9:4-5; Heb. 13:13.
3. We enter into the kingdom through **many tribulations**—Acts 14:22.
4. By the **power of His resurrection**, we are **enabled** to participate in His sufferings and to live a crucified life in conformity to His death—Phil. 3:10; Col. 1:24; S. S. 2:8-9, 14.
5. We **should not love our soul-life** even unto death and should lay down our lives on behalf of the brothers—Rev. 12:11; 1 John 3:16.

D. We are **fellow partakers** in the **kingdom in Jesus**:

1. The **kingdom is the church life**, in which the faithful believers live for their growth in life and transformation in life—Matt. 16:18-19; Rom. 14:17; 1 Cor. 3:7; 2 Cor. 3:18.
2. To practice the kingdom life, we need to **pursue righteousness, faith, love, and peace** with those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart—2 Tim. 2:22.
3. To practice the kingdom life, we need to **care** for the sinning brothers in order to recover them—Matt. 18:15-22; 1 John 5:16.

E. We are **fellow partakers** in the **endurance in Jesus**:

1. **We must resist** the wearing-out tactics of Satan—Dan. 7:25.
2. When we **abide in Christ**, we keep the word of His endurance and have the endurance to bear suffering and opposition—Rev. 3:10.
3. We can **endure with the endurance of Christ** that we have enjoyed and experienced—2 Thes. 3:5.

Satan always works to attack God's children. His attacks are not sudden; they often come gradually. According to Daniel 7:25, Satan will wear out the saints of the Most High. One of Satan's strategies against the saints of the Most High is to **wear them out**. We must remember that Satan's work among God's children is not apparent; he works by wearing them out. What does it mean to wear someone out? It means **to exhaust a person minute by minute, some today and some tomorrow**. The wearing out goes on invisibly, yet in a debilitating way; it goes on imperceptibly, yet the end is total depletion and waste. Satan works in God's children by the principle of wearing them out. He wears us out a little today and a little tomorrow. He causes us to suffer a little today and a little tomorrow. We may think that this is insignificant, yet the result of this wearing out by Satan is **total depletion**.

Satan is particularly good at **wearing out the physical bodies** of God's children.... Some Christians had healthy bodies before they were saved. After they are saved they become sick, and their health deteriorates. If God opens our eyes, we will see that Satan is **always plotting and planning to deal with God's children**. Many of God's servants experience the same thing when they set out to preach the gospel. Before they set out to work and preach the gospel, they have no problems with their health, but once they start to work and preach, their health breaks down within a period of three to five years. This is Satan's wearing out of the saints of the Most High. He depletes men of a little food today and a little sleep tomorrow. He makes them a little tired today and a little tired tomorrow. The cumulative effect of this tiredness eventually destroys their health completely. This is Satan's work.

Satan wears out not only man's body but also **man's heart**. When you first believed in the Lord, you may have been very happy, joyful, and peaceful. But if you are **not watchful and do not know the work** of Satan, you will suddenly become restless one day, unhappy another day, and depressed a third day. Little by little your peace will be lost, and your joy will be gone. You will become weary and discouraged. This is Satan's work in wearing you out.

Satan also tries to **wear out man's spirit**. He **takes away your prayer** little by little; he **takes away your trust** in God little by little. He causes you to trust in yourself more and more and believe that you are cleverer and cleverer. He causes you to trust in your gift and distracts your heart from the Lord little by little. If Satan struck God's children with a powerful blow all at once, they could withstand him because they would realize that it was the work of Satan. But his most evil work is not to strike just one blow but to wear you out over a long period of time. **He causes God's children to fall behind little by little and backslide little by little**. This is the way Satan wears out God's children.

Satan also **wears out man's time**. For example, Festus sent for Paul to converse with him frequently. A man as powerful and as gifted as Paul preached to Festus for two years, yet he was still not saved. This is Satan's wearing out of man. Festus would send for Paul, and there would be no result. The next day he would send for Paul again, and there would be no result. He continually sent for Paul, but there was no result. Satan engaged Paul in work with no result. At the end of two years, there was still no result. This is Satan's wearing out of man.

If God's children do not know Satan's strategy, they will be **deceived**. **We should redeem the time**, and each hour should be counted as an hour. We must stop Satan from wearing out our time and engaging us in fruitless work. (*General Messages (2)*, CWWN, vol. 38, chapter 52)

Day 3

Rev. 1:13 - And in the midst of the lampstands [I saw] One like the Son of Man, clothed with a garment reaching to the feet, and girded about at the breasts with a golden girdle.

Eph. 5:29 - For no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, even as Christ also the church

II. Christ as the Son of Man is the **High Priest**, “clothed with a garment reaching to the feet, and girded about at the breasts with a **golden girdle**” (Rev. 1:13), to **cherish** the churches in His humanity and **nourish** them in His divinity:

- A. The Son of Man is in His humanity, the **golden girdle** signifies His **divinity**, and **breasts** are a **sign of love**:
1. Christ was girded at the loins, **strengthened for the divine work** (Exo. 28:4; Dan. 10:5) to produce the churches, but now He is girded about at the breasts, **caring for the churches** that He has produced by His love.
 2. The golden girdle signifies Christ's divinity as His divine energy, and the breasts signify that this golden energy is exercised and motivated by and with His love to nourish the churches.

- B. Christ takes care of the churches in His humanity as the Son of Man to **cherish them**—Rev. 1:13a:
1. He **dresses the lamps** of the lampstands to make them proper, cherishing us so that we may be happy, pleasant, and comfortable—Exo. 30:7; cf. Psa. 42:5, 11:
 - a. The **Lord's presence** provides an atmosphere of tenderness and warmth to cherish our being, giving us rest, comfort, healing, cleansing, and encouragement.
 - b. We can enjoy the cherishing atmosphere of the Lord's presence **in the church** to receive the nourishing supply of life—Eph. 5:29; cf. 1 Tim. 4:6; Eph. 4:11.

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Psalm 42:5 refers to the salvation of God's countenance. When we turn our heart to the Lord, **His countenance becomes our salvation**. But Psalm 42:11 says that God is "the salvation of my countenance." Our countenance needs to be saved. When we contact people through door-knocking, **we should be happy. Our countenance should be beaming, not cheerless**. In The Vital Groups Brother Lee says, "We should not contact anyone with a cheerless countenance. We must give people the impression that we are genuinely happy and pleasant" (The Collected Works of Witness Lee, 1994–1997, vol. 5, p. 152).

In his speaking to people who minister the word, Charles Spurgeon said something to the effect that an individual who has no cheerfulness about him had better be an undertaker. In other words, we should not be those who minister the word in a cheerless way, like undertakers burying the dead. **We should have a cheerful countenance when we speak to others**. (*The Ministry of the Word*, vol. 30, No. 2, chapter 39)

2. He **trims the wicks of the lamps of the lampstand**, cutting off all the negative things that frustrate our shining—Exo. 25:38:
 - a. The **charred part of the wick, the snuff**, signifies **things that are not according to God's purpose and need to be cut off**, such as our flesh, our natural man, our self, and our old creation.
 - b. He **trims away all the differences** among the churches (the wrongdoings, shortages, failures, and defects) so that they may be the same in essence, appearance, and expression—cf. 1 Cor. 1:10; 2 Cor. 12:18; Phil. 2:2.

Day 4

Rev. 2:1 - ...These things says He who holds the seven stars in His right hand, He who walks in the midst of the seven golden lampstands.

Rev. 2:7 - He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes, to him I will give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the Paradise of God.

- C. **Christ takes care of the churches** in His divinity with **His divine love**, signified by the golden girdle on His breasts, to **nourish the churches**—Rev. 1:13b:
1. **He nourishes us with Himself** as the all-inclusive Christ in His full ministry of three stages so that we may grow and mature in the divine life to be His overcomers to accomplish His eternal economy.
 2. As the **walking Christ**, He gets to know the **condition of each church**, and as the **speaking Spirit**, He **trims and fills** the lampstands with fresh oil, the supply of the Spirit—2:1, 7.
 3. To participate in His move and enjoy His care, **we must be in the churches**.

Day 5

Rev. 1:14-15 - And His head and hair were as white as white wool, as snow; and His eyes were like a flame of fire; And His feet were like shining bronze, as having been fired in a furnace; and His voice was like the sound of many waters.

- III. The **heavenly ancientness of the Lord** is depicted by His **head and hair being as white as white wool, as snow**—1:14a; Dan. 7:9; Job 15:10; cf. S. S. 5:11.
- IV. The **Lord's seven eyes** are like a flame of fire for watching, observing, searching, judging by enlightening, and infusing—Rev. 1:14b; 5:6; Dan. 10:6:
- A. **Christ's eyes are for God's move and operation** on earth, since seven is the number for completion in God's move.
 - B. The Lord's eyes being like a flame of fire is **mainly for His judgment**—7:9-10; Rev. 2:18; 19:11-12.
- V. The **Lord's feet are like shining bronze**, as having been fired in a furnace, signifying that His perfect and bright walk **qualifies Him to exercise divine judgment**—1:15a; Ezek. 1:7; Dan. 10:6.
- VI. The **Lord's voice is like the sound of many waters** (Rev. 1:15b; cf. 14:2), which is a tumultuous sound, the sound of the voice of the almighty God (Ezek. 1:24; 43:2) in its seriousness and solemnity (cf. Rev. 10:3).

Day 6

Rev. 1:16 - And He had in His right hand seven stars; and out of His mouth proceeded a sharp two-edged sword; and His face shone as the sun shines in its power.

Heb. 4:12 - For the word of God is living and operative and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing even to the dividing of soul and spirit and of joints and marrow, and able to discern the thoughts and intentions of the heart.

VII. Christ is the **Holder of the bright messengers of the churches—1:16a, 20:**

- A. The **messengers are the spiritual ones** in the churches, the ones **who bear the responsibility** of the testimony of Jesus.
- B. The messengers, who are of the heavenly nature and in a heavenly position like stars, are **those who have a fresh message** from the Lord to His people—2:1a.
- C. Because the leading ones are in His right hand, there is no need for them to shrink back; Christ truly takes the responsibility for His testimony.

VIII. Out of Christ's mouth proceeds a **sharp two-edged sword, which is His **discerning, judging, and slaying word** for dealing with negative persons and things—1:16b; Heb. 4:12; Eph. 6:17.**

IX. Christ's face shines as the sun shines in its power (Dan. 10:6) for **judging enlightenment** to bring in the kingdom (Rev. 1:16c; 10:1; Matt. 17:2; cf. Mal. 4:2; Judg. 5:31; Matt. 13:43).

X. Christ is the First and the Last, assuring us that **He will never leave His work unfinished**, and the living One for the churches as the expression of His Body to be living, fresh, and strong—Rev. 1:17-18a.

XI. Christ has the keys of death and of Hades—v. 18b:

- A. Death is a collector, and Hades is a keeper, but **Christ nullified death on the cross and overcame Hades in His resurrection**—2 Tim. 1:10; Acts 2:24.
- B. As long as **we give the Lord the ground, the opportunity, and the way** to move and act among us by exercising to deny the self, take up the cross, and lose our soul-life, death and Hades will be under His control—Matt. 16:18, 21-26.