

WEEK 6 — OUTLINE

The Recovery of the Church

Scripture Reading: Matt. 16:18; 18:17; Eph. 1:22-23; 3:9-11; 4:16; Rom. 14:17

« DAY 1 »

I. When we speak of the recovery of the church, we mean that something was there originally, that it became lost, damaged, or misunderstood, and that now there is the need to bring that thing back to its original state (Matt. 16:18):

- A. Because the church has become degraded through the many centuries of its history, it needs to be recovered according to God's original intention (Eph. 1:4-5, 11, 22-23; 2:15; 3:9-11).
- B. Concerning the church, our vision should be governed not by the present situation nor by traditional practice but by God's original intention and standard as revealed in the Scriptures (v. 21; 5:23-27, 29, 32).
- C. The church is the heart's desire of God (3:9-11; 5:25):
 - 1. The church is the church of God, chosen and predestinated by God the Father, redeemed by God the Son, and sealed by God the Spirit (1 Cor. 10:32; Eph. 1:3-14).
 - 2. The church is the house of the living God, the pillar and base of the truth, for His manifestation in the flesh (1 Tim. 3:15-16).
 - 3. The church is the Body of Christ, the fullness of the One who fills all in all, for His expression (Eph. 1:22-23).
 - 4. The church is the wife of Christ, His counterpart (5:23-27).
 - 5. The church is the new man (2:15).
 - 6. The church exists universally as the unique universal church, but it is expressed locally as many local churches (1:22-23; Rev. 1:4a, 11).

« DAY 2 »

II. The recovery of the church is typified by the return of the children of Israel from their captivity (Ezra 1:3-11):

- A. As typified by the latter part of the history of the children of Israel, the recovery is from Babylon—the capturing and divisive ground; the recovery of the church involves a return from the capturing and divisive ground signified by Babylon (v. 11; Rev. 17:5).
- B. The recovery of the children of Israel was not only from Babylon but also back to Jerusalem, the God-ordained unique ground; Jerusalem was the

place the Lord had chosen (Deut. 12:5).

- C. Those who went back to Jerusalem from Babylon brought with them all the vessels of the temple of God, which had been captured to Babylon; these vessels, which were of silver and gold, signify the experiences of Christ and the riches of Christ (Ezra 1:5-11).
- D. The recovery of the church is typified also by the rebuilding of the temple of God, the house of God, in Jerusalem after the return of God's people from Babylon; thus, the recovery is a matter not only of going back to Jerusalem with the vessels of the temple of God but also of rebuilding the temple of God (v. 3).
- E. The recovery of the church is typified by the rebuilding of the city of Jerusalem (Neh. 2:11, 17).

« DAY 3 »

III. The recovery of the church is revealed in the New Testament even though the word recovery is not used:

- A. We need to be recovered from the factions—the sects and denominations (Titus 3:10).
- B. The recovery of the church requires that we cleanse ourselves from the vessels unto dishonor in the great house—the apostate Christendom (2 Tim. 2:20-21).
- C. We should not contact those who do not abide in the teaching of Christ—the teaching concerning Christ's deity and incarnation by divine conception (2 John 9-11).
- D. We need to obey the Lord's word to come out of religious Babylon the Great (Rev. 18:4).

« DAY 4 »

IV. We need to see what it means for the church to be recovered:

- A. For the recovery of the church, we need to be recovered from the divisive and apostate ground with its deviations from the truths concerning the person of the Triune God and the person and work of Christ:
 - 1. We must reject the heresies of modalism and tritheism and hold to the pure revelation of the Triune God according to the Word of God; the truth concerning the person of the Triune God is twofold—the aspect of the one and the aspect of the three—for the unique God is triune, three-one—the Father, the Son, and the Spirit (Matt. 28:19; 2 Cor. 13:14).

2. We need to be recovered from all heretical teachings regarding the person of Christ and confess that Jesus Christ, God manifested in the flesh, is the complete God, the perfect man, and, as the all-inclusive One, the reality of every positive thing (1 John 4:2-3, 14-15; Col. 1:15-19; 2:17).

« DAY 5 »

B. For the recovery of the church, we need to be brought back to the unique and pure ground of the oneness of the Body of Christ with its truths:

1. We need to be brought back to the truth concerning the New Testament faith and God's economy (Jude 3; 2 Pet. 1:1; 1 Tim. 1:3-4).
2. We need to be brought back to the truth concerning the person and work of Christ (John 1:1, 14, 18; 1 Tim. 3:15-16; 1:15; 1 Cor. 15:1-4).
3. The recovery of the church requires that we be recovered to the truth concerning the person and dispensing of the Triune God (Matt. 28:19; John 16:13-14; 2 Cor. 13:14).
4. The recovery of the church involves the recovery of the church as the Body of Christ, the corporate Christ:
 - a. The Body of Christ is an organism constituted of all the believers, who have been regenerated and have God's life, for the expression of the Head (Eph. 1:22-23).
 - b. The Body of Christ is actually the corporate Christ (1 Cor. 12:12).

« DAY 6 »

5. The truth concerning the universal and local aspects of the church also needs to be recovered:
 - a. In the universal aspect the church is uniquely one (Matt. 16:18).
 - b. In its local aspect the church is expressed in many localities as many local churches (18:17; 1 Cor. 1:2).
- C. In the recovery of the church, we are building up the Body of Christ, the temple of God, the house of God (Eph. 4:16):**
1. This was typified by the rebuilding of the temple under the leadership of Ezra.
 2. Today we are rebuilding the church as God's temple (2:21-22; 1 Cor. 3:9, 16-17).
 3. All the damage that the enemy does to the church gives the Lord the opportunity to enlarge His Body in resurrection (John 2:19-21).
- D. The recovery of the church involves the establishing of the kingdom life; the reality of the church life is the kingdom (Rom. 12:5; 14:17):**
1. Romans 14:17 reveals that the kingdom of God is the living of the church; the kingdom is today's church life.
 2. The kingdom of God as the living of the church is righteousness, peace, and joy

in the Holy Spirit (v. 17).

3. To have such a living is to establish the kingdom life as typified in the book of Nehemiah by the rebuilding of the city of Jerusalem.
4. In the recovery of the church, we are building up the church as God's house and God's city.

<< WEEK 6 — DAY 1 >>

Morning Nourishment

Matt. 16:18 And I also say to you that you are Peter, and upon this rock I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it.

Eph. 2:15 Abolishing in His flesh the law of the commandments in ordinances, that He might create the two in Himself into one new man, so making peace.

The word recover means to obtain again something that has been lost, or to return something to a normal condition. Recovery means the restoration or return to a normal condition after a damage or a loss has been incurred. When we speak of the recovery of the church, we mean that something was there originally, that it became lost or damaged, and that now there is the need to bring that thing back to its original state. Because the church has become degraded through the many centuries of its history, it needs to be restored according to God's original intention. Concerning the church, our vision should be governed not by the present situation nor by traditional practice but by God's original intention and standard as revealed in the Scriptures.

God is a God with an eternal purpose. He is a purposeful God, and once He has made up His mind to do something, nothing can change His mind or stop Him. (The Conclusion of the New Testament, pp. 2447-2448)

Today's Reading

The New Testament reveals that without the church Christ would be isolated and unable to do anything. The New Testament especially reveals that the church is the heart's desire of God. God's desire in this age is to have the church. (The Heavenly Vision, p. 17)

The church is the church of God (1 Cor. 10:32), chosen and predestinated by God the Father (Eph. 1:3-6), redeemed by God the Son (1:7-12), and sealed by God the Spirit (1:13-14). (A Brief Presentation of the Lord's Recovery, p. 25)

First Timothy 3:16 shows us that the church as God's house, the pillar and base of the truth, is God's manifestation in the flesh. God not only desires to make home in the church and have a resting place there, but He also wants to express Himself in the church. He wants to practice His New Testament economy, speak forth His desire, and manifest His glory in the church. All that He is, all that He is doing, and all that He wants to obtain are to be manifested in the church as His house.

The universal church is the Body of Christ...The Body of Christ is His fullness, that is, His full expression [Eph. 1:22-23]. The Body is the fullness of the Head, and the fullness is the expression of the Head. Christ, who is the infinite God without any limitation, is so great that He fills all things in all things. Such a great Christ needs the church to be His fullness for His complete expression.

The church is also the wife of Christ, His counterpart (Eph. 5:23-27). The church as the counterpart of Christ implies satisfaction and rest in love. Christ needs such a wife. To be the church is to render to Christ the adequate satisfaction and rest in love.

Finally, the universal church is the new man (Col. 3:10-11). In Ephesians 2:15 we see that Christ created the Jews and the Gentiles in Himself into one new man. This new man is corporate and universal. There are many believers, but there is only one new man. All the believers are components of this corporate and universal new man.

The emphasis on the church being the Body of Christ is on life, whereas the emphasis on the church being the universal new man is on Christ as our person. For the Body we need Christ to be our life, and for the new man we need Christ to be our person. (The Conclusion of the New Testament, pp. 2145, 2147)

The church exists universally as the unique universal church (Eph. 1:22-23), but it is expressed locally as many local churches (Rev. 1:4a, 11)...This is all according to the arrangement of God's eternal economy (Eph. 3:9-11; 1:9-11). (A Brief Presentation of the Lord's Recovery, p. 27)

Further Reading: Three Aspects of the Church, Book 2: The Course of the Church, chs. 4, 13-14

<< WEEK 6 — DAY 2 >>

Morning Nourishment

Ezra 1:3 Whoever there is among you of all His people, may his God be with him; and let him go up to Jerusalem,...and let him build the house of Jehovah the God of Israel—He is God—who is in Jerusalem.

11 There were five thousand four hundred vessels of gold and silver in all. Sheshbazzar brought up all of them with those of the captivity who were brought up from Babylon to Jerusalem.

The recovery of the church is typified by the return of the children of Israel from their captivity (Ezra 1:3-11)...The Old Testament is a book of types, and the greatest, all-inclusive type is the history of the people of Israel. Many Bible teachers apply the things which happened in the beginning of the history of the people of Israel to Christian experience today. For example, they apply the Passover to the experience of redemption and the crossing of the Red Sea to the experience of baptism....However, not many Christians know how to apply the last part of the history of the people of Israel—the captivity in Babylon and the return from captivity. As we shall see, the return of the children of Israel from their captivity typifies the recovery of the church. (The Conclusion of the New Testament, p. 2448)

Today's Reading

For the children of Israel to be recovered meant for them to be brought back to Jerusalem from Babylon. Negatively, to be recovered means to be brought out of Babylon; positively, it means to be brought up to Jerusalem.

The recovery of the children of Israel was not only from Babylon but back to Jerusalem, the God-ordained unique ground. Jerusalem was the place the Lord had chosen (Deut. 12:5). Jerusalem, therefore, was the center for God's people to worship Him, and this unique center preserved the unity of the people of God. Without such a center, after the children of Israel had entered the good land, they would have been divided.

Those who went back to Jerusalem from Babylon brought with them all the vessels of the temple of God which had been captured to Babylon (Ezra 1:5-11). These vessels, which were of silver and gold, signify the experiences of Christ and the riches of Christ....The people of God were scattered, and all the spiritual experiences were carried away. That was a shame to them and to God. Even today, some dear Christians have real experiences of Christ, but they are in Babylon. This means that they have the experiences of Christ in the place of captivity, and in the place of idols. The experiences are right, but the place is wrong, for the vessels are right, but they are the vessels of the temple of God in the temple of idols. Therefore, all the vessels of silver and gold must be brought back to Jerusalem.

The recovery of the church is also typified by the rebuilding of the temple of God, the house of God, in Jerusalem....Ezra 1:3 says, "Whoever there is among you of all his people, may his God be with him; and let him go up to Jerusalem, which is in Judah, and let him build the house of Jehovah the God of Israel—He is God—who is in Jerusalem." Verse 5 goes on to say, "Then the heads of the father's houses of Judah and Benjamin and the priests and the Levites rose up, even everyone whose spirit God had stirred up to go up to build the house of Jehovah, which is in Jerusalem." These verses indicate that the recovery is not only a matter of going back to Jerusalem with the vessels of the temple of God but also of rebuilding the temple of God, which had been destroyed.

Finally, the recovery of the church is typified in the Old Testament by the rebuilding of the city of Jerusalem (Neh. 2:11, 17). After the recovery of the building of the temple, there was still the need to build up the city. Without the city, there would have been no protection for the temple. The temple, the place of the Lord's presence, needed protection. The wall of the city was the defense to the temple. (The Conclusion of the New Testament, pp. 2450-2453)

Further Reading: The Conclusion of the New Testament, msg. 230; The Crucial Points of the Major Items of the Lord's Recovery Today, pp. 19-21

<< WEEK 6 — DAY 3 >>

Morning Nourishment

2 Tim. 2:20-21 But in a great house there are not only gold and silver vessels but also wooden and earthen; and some are unto honor, and some unto dishonor. If therefore anyone cleanses himself from these, he will be a vessel unto honor, sanctified, useful to the master, prepared unto every good work.

The recovery of the church is fully revealed in the New Testament even though the word recovery is not used...We do not find the recovery of the church in such Epistles as Romans or 1 Corinthians, but we do find it in Titus, 2 Timothy, 2 John, and Revelation. In these later writings of the New Testament the recovery is fully unveiled...For the recovery of the church, we need to be separated from the factious—the sects and denominations. This is indicated by Paul's word in Titus 3:10.

Like Ezra, Nehemiah, and other faithful ones in the Old Testament, we need to leave Babylon and come back to Jerusalem. (The Conclusion of the New Testament, pp. 2457-2458)

Today's Reading

The recovery of the church also requires that we cleanse ourselves from the vessels unto dishonor in the great house—the apostate Christendom [2 Tim. 2:20-21]...Here Paul uses the expression “a great house.” The house of God defined in 1 Timothy 3:15 and 16 is the genuine church in its divine nature and essential character as the foundation of the truth, whereas the great house here refers to the deteriorated church in its mixed character, as illustrated by the abnormally big tree in Matthew 13:31-32.

If we cleanse ourselves from negative things and negative persons, we shall be vessels unto honor, sanctified, useful to the master and prepared unto every good work.

“Everyone who goes beyond and does not abide in the teaching of Christ does not have God; he who abides in the teaching, he has both the Father and the Son. If anyone comes to you and does not bring this teaching, do not receive him into your house, and do not say to him, Rejoice! For he who says to him, Rejoice, shares in his evil works” (2 John 9-11). These verses reveal that we should not contact those who do not abide in the teaching of Christ—the teaching concerning Christ's deity and incarnation by divine conception. Literally, the Greek word translated “goes beyond” in verse 9 means “to lead forward” (in a negative sense), that is, to go further than what is right, to advance beyond the limit of orthodox teaching concerning Christ. Those who go beyond in this way go beyond the teaching of the divine conception of Christ and thus deny the deity of Christ. Consequently they do not have God in salvation and in life.

Revelation 17 presents a vision of Babylon the Great. According to verse 5, Babylon the Great is called “The Mother of the Harlots and the Abominations of the Earth.” Verse 4 exposes the fact that although this woman has a pleasant appearance, evil is concealed within her. “The woman was clothed in purple and scarlet, and gilded with gold and precious stone and pearls, having in her hand a golden cup full of abominations and the unclean things of her fornication.” Outwardly Babylon the Great is clothed in purple and scarlet and is gilded with gold, precious stone, and pearls. Furthermore, she has a golden cup in her hand. But this cup is full of abominations and unclean things of her fornication. This is a picture of Christendom today. Christendom may have the golden cup, but the contents of the cup are idolatry, fornication, and every kind of evil.

We surely cannot remain in Babylon the Great. Rather, we need to obey the Lord's word in Revelation 18:4. Here He tells us, “Come out of her, My people, that you do not participate in her sins and that you do not receive her plagues.”...We must leave the Babylonian system and come back to Jerusalem, that is, come back to the proper church life. This is the recovery of the church. (The Conclusion of the New Testament, pp. 2458-2460, 2462-2463)

Further Reading: The Conclusion of the New Testament, msg. 231; A Brief Presentation of the Lord's Recovery, pp. 7-33

<< WEEK 6 — DAY 4 >>

Morning Nourishment

Matt. 28:19 Go therefore and disciple all the nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

1 John 4:14-15 And we have beheld and testify that the Father has sent the Son as the Savior of the world. Whoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God, God abides in him and he in God.

We shall go on to see what it means for the church to be recovered...We shall consider the matter of being recovered from the divisive and apostate ground with its deviation from the truths concerning the person of the Triune God and the person and work of Christ. (The Conclusion of the New Testament, p. 2465)

Today's Reading

During the centuries, three main schools of teaching concerning the Trinity have emerged: modalism, tritheism, and the pure revelation according to the Bible. Modalism teaches that the Father, the Son, and the Spirit are not all eternal and do not all exist at the same time, but are merely three temporary manifestations of the one God. Tritheism teaches that the Father, the Son, and the Spirit are three Gods. We should have nothing to do with modalism, for that extreme view of the Trinity is a heresy. It is also a great heresy to teach that there are three Gods.

The pure revelation of the Triune God in the Bible occupies a central position between the extremes of modalism and tritheism. Because the truths in the Scriptures have two sides, there are two aspects to the Trinity: the aspect of the one-in-three and the aspect of the three-in-one. Modalism is an extreme on the side of the three-in-one. There is, of course, ground in the Scriptures for the side of the three-in-one, but modalism, going to an extreme, far beyond the confines of the Bible, neglects and even annuls the side of the one-in-three. Modalism has gone beyond the confines of the Scriptures concerning the aspect of the three. Hence, it is a heresy on the extreme of the one. Tritheism is the opposite extreme. Tritheism stresses the side of the three and neglects the side of the one. It also has scriptural ground because the Father, the Son, and the Spirit certainly are three. But tritheism, like modalism, also goes beyond the confines of the Bible and becomes a heresy. Therefore, both modalism and tritheism, being extremes, are heresies.

The twofoldness of the truth concerning the Trinity is embodied in the word triune....On the one hand, our God is uniquely one; on the other hand, He is three. In the aspect of God's being one, there is no separation between the Father, the Son, and the Spirit. However, in the aspect of God's being three, there is a distinction between the Father, the Son, and the Spirit.

We also need to be recovered from the divisive and apostate ground with its deviation from the truth concerning the person and work of Christ...In 1 John 2:22 we see that the principle of antichrist is to deny what Christ is. Jesus is the Christ, Christ is the Son of God, and the Son of God is the embodiment of the Father. To deny any aspect of this truth is to deny something of what Christ is and thereby to follow the principle of antichrist.

To deny that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is to deny His holy conception, His incarnation, His birth, His humanity, His human living, and also His redemption. The New Testament makes it emphatically clear that Christ's redemption was accomplished in His human body and by the shedding of His blood.

Anyone who rejects Christ's incarnation and thereby rejects His redemption also denies Christ's resurrection. If Christ had never passed through death, it would not have been possible for Him to enter into resurrection.

Denying that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is a great heresy. This heretical teaching makes it impossible to have the enjoyment of the Trinity. (The Conclusion of the New Testament, pp. 2465-2467, 2469, 2471)

Further Reading: The Conclusion of the New Testament, msg. 232; Three Aspects of the Church, Book 1: The Meaning of the Church, chs. 1-3

« WEEK 6 — DAY 5 »

Morning Nourishment

2 Cor. 13:14 The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

1 Cor. 12:12 For even as the body is one and has many members, yet all the members of the body, being many, are one body, so also is the Christ.

The next matter we shall see is that we need to be brought back to the unique and pure ground of the oneness of the Body of Christ with its truths concerning the New Testament faith and God's economy, the person and work of Christ, the person and the dispensing of the Triune God, the church, the Body of Christ, the corporate Christ, and the universal and local aspects of the church. (The Conclusion of the New Testament, p. 2477)

Today's Reading

[In 1 Timothy 1:4, "God's economy" is] God's household administration to dispense Himself in Christ into His chosen people, that He may have a house, a household, to express Himself, which household is the church, the Body of Christ (1 Tim. 3:15). The apostle's ministry was centered upon this economy of God (Col. 1:25; 1 Cor. 9:17), whereas the differing teachings of the dissenting ones were used by God's enemy to distract His people from this.

God's dispensation is His household economy. According to the Bible, God does not first want to have a kingdom. Rather, He first wants a house, a family. Once He has a family, His family will spontaneously become His kingdom. If He is not able to secure a family, a household, a house, He will not be able to have a kingdom. Thus, God's dispensation is first a matter of His household economy, or family economy.

Concerning the person and work of Christ, we must preach that Christ is God incarnated to be a God-man, that He is both divine and human. We must also preach His redemptive death. In His redemptive work He died on the cross for our sins and for us sinners. Then He was resurrected so that He could impart Himself into us as the divine life. Therefore, the gospel we preach is that Christ, the God-man, died for our sins and was resurrected.

The gospel of Christ not only has life; it also has the life power to subdue death, to conquer death, and to annul death. This life, the life that has subdued, conquered, and nullified death, is resurrection.

The recovery of the church also requires that we be recovered to the truth concerning the person and the dispensing of the Triune God. This matter of God's dispensing is something that is altogether missed by many Christians today. By the Lord's mercy we have been enlightened to see that in the New Testament economy of God there is the divine, triune Person for the dispensing of Himself into His chosen people to be their life, life supply, and everything. Because this has been neglected by many today, we need to be recovered to the proper understanding and apprehension of the divine dispensing of the riches of the processed Triune God into our being.

Ephesians 1:22-23 speaks of "the church, which is His Body, the fullness of the One who fills all in all." The Body of Christ is an organism constituted of all the believers, who have been regenerated and have God's life, for the expression of the Head. The Body is the fullness of the Head, and the fullness is the expression of the Head.

Because the church is the Body of Christ and Christ is the Head of the church (Col. 1:18), the church and Christ are one Body, the mysterious, universal great man, having the same life and nature and sharing the same position and authority. Just as Christ is far above all and sits in the heavenlies (Eph. 1:20-21), so also the church sits together with Him in the heavenlies (2:6). Just as Christ has received all authority in heaven and on earth (Matt. 28:18), so also the church participates in His authority (Luke 10:19). (The Conclusion of the New Testament, pp. 2477-2478, 2480, 2482-2483, 2487-2488)

Further Reading: The Conclusion of the New Testament, msg. 233; The Testimony and the Ground of the Church, sec. 1, chs. 1-2

<< WEEK 6 — DAY 6 >>

Morning Nourishment

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

Rom. 14:17 For the kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.

The Body of Christ is actually the corporate Christ...In 1 Corinthians 12:12, Christ is not the individual Christ but the corporate Christ, the Body-Christ. "The Christ" refers to the corporate Christ, composed of Christ Himself as the Head and the church as His Body with all the believers as its members. All the believers of Christ are organically united with Him and constituted of His life and element to be His Body, an organism, to express Him. Hence, He is not only the Head but also the Body. As our physical body has many members, yet is one, so is this Christ. (The Conclusion of the New Testament, pp. 2488-2489)

Today's Reading

The truth concerning the universal and local aspects of the church also needs to be recovered. In a very real sense, these matters have been lost, even annulled. Therefore, we need to be recovered to the truth concerning these two aspects of the church. In the universal aspect the church is uniquely one. This aspect of the church is revealed by the Lord Jesus in Matthew 16:18...What is revealed here is the universal church for the unique testimony of the Lord in the universe.

In 18:17 the Lord Jesus reveals the local church. The church mentioned in this verse must be a local church because it is a place where we can go. We cannot bring a problem to the universal church, only to the local church.

In the local aspect the church is expressed in many localities as many local churches. The one universal church expressed in many places on earth becomes the many local churches. The expression of the church in a locality is the local church in that particular locality. Without the local churches there would be no practicality and actuality of the universal church. The universal church is realized in the local churches.

In the recovery of the church, we are building the Body of Christ, the temple of God, the house of God. This was typified by the rebuilding of the temple under the leadership of Ezra in Old Testament times. Today we are rebuilding the church life as God's temple, the Body of Christ.

All the damage that the enemy does to the church simply gives the Lord the opportunity to enlarge His Body in resurrection. Satan can never defeat the Lord Jesus. The gates of Hades can never prevail against the builded church (Matt. 16:18). The church is still going on and is still growing. Although the enemy may try his best to tear it down, we shall see the victory. We shall see that not only the Lord Jesus Himself is prevailing but that the church, His Body, the temple, also is prevailing.

Finally, the recovery of the church involves the establishing of the kingdom life. This is indicated by Paul's word in Romans 14:17...This verse reveals that the kingdom of God is the living of the church. According to the context of Romans 14, the kingdom is today's church life. The reality of the church life is the kingdom. Romans 12 speaks of the Body life and Romans 14, of the kingdom life. This indicates that, according to Romans, the kingdom life is the reality of the Body life.

The kingdom of God as the living of the church is righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit. When the authority of God's kingdom operates in us, righteousness, peace, and joy will characterize our daily life. To have such a living is to establish the kingdom life as typified in the book of Nehemiah by the rebuilding of the city of Jerusalem. Therefore, in the recovery of the church, we are building up the church as God's house and city. (The Conclusion of the New Testament, pp. 2489-2490, 2494, 2496)

Further Reading: The Conclusion of the New Testament, msg. 234; The Testimony and the Ground of the Church, sec. 2, ch. 5; sec. 3, chs. 1-3

<< WEEK 6 — HYMN

Hymns, #1252

1

Down in Babylon, in captivity,
Oh, the Lord has stirred our spirit up!
Scattered everywhere, without unity,
Oh, the Lord has stirred our spirit up!
Stirred up! Stirred up!
Oh, the Lord has stirred our spirit up!

2

Up from Babylon, where the sects abound,
From division we must all rise up!
Brothers, Babylon's not the proper ground;
From division we must all rise up!
Rise up! Rise up!
From division we must all rise up!

3

To Jerusalem, from captivity,
God is with us, let us all go up!
To the one unique ground of unity,
God is with us, let us all go up!
Go up! Go up!
God is with us, let us all go up!

4

Platters full of Christ, bowls with Spirit filled—
All the vessels of the Lord bring up!
Bring them to the church as the Lord has willed—
All the vessels of the Lord bring up!
Bring up! Bring up!
All the vessels of the Lord bring up!

5

In Jerusalem, chosen of the Lord,
Now the temple of the Lord build up!
Serve with all the saints, share in one accord,
Now the temple of the Lord build up!
Build up! Build up!
Now the temple of the Lord build up!