

Message Nine

Enjoying Christ with God on the Ground of Oneness

MC Hymns: 864, 1339

Scripture Reading: Deut. 12:5, 8, 11, 13-14, 17-18, 21, 26-27;

Psa. 48:2, 11-12; 80:17-19

- Deut 12:5 But to the place which Jehovah your God will choose out of all your tribes to put His name, to His habitation, shall you seek, and there shall you go.
- Deut 12:8 You shall not do according to all that we do here today, each man doing all that is right in his own eyes;
- Deut 12:11 Then to the place where Jehovah your God will choose to cause His name to dwell, there you shall bring all that I am commanding you, your burnt offerings and your sacrifices, your tithes and the heave offering of your hand and all your choice vows which you vow to Jehovah.
- Deut 12:13 Be careful that you do not offer up your burnt offerings in every place that you see;
- Deut 12:14 But in the place which Jehovah will choose in one of your tribes, there you shall offer up your burnt offerings, and there you shall do all that I am commanding you.
- Deut 12:17 You may not eat within your gates the tithe of your grain or of your new wine or of your fresh oil, nor the firstborn of your herd or of your flock, or any of your vows which you vow or of your freewill offerings or of the heave offering of your hand;
- Deut 12:18 But you shall eat them before Jehovah your God in the place which Jehovah your God will choose, you and your son and daughter, and your male servant and female servant, and the Levite who is within your gates; and you shall rejoice before Jehovah your God in all your undertakings.
- Deut 12:21 If the place where Jehovah your God will choose to put His name is too far away from you, you may slaughter from your herd and from your flock, which Jehovah has given you, as I have commanded you; and you may eat within your gates according to all that your soul desires;
- Deut 12:26 But you shall take your holy things which you have and your vows, and go to the place which Jehovah will choose;
- Deut 12:27 And you shall offer your burnt offerings, the flesh and the blood, upon the altar of Jehovah your God; and the blood of your sacrifices shall be poured out upon the altar of Jehovah your God, and you shall eat the flesh.
- Psa 48:2 Beautiful in elevation, / The joy of the whole earth, / Is Mount Zion, the sides of the north, / The city of the great King.
- Psa 48:11 Let Mount Zion rejoice; / Let the daughters of Judah exult / Because of Your judgments.
- Psa 48:12 Walk about Zion, and go around her; / Count her towers.
- Psa 80:17 Let Your hand be upon the man of Your right hand, / Upon the son of man whom You have strengthened for Yourself;
- Psa 80:18 Then we will not turn back from You. / Revive us, and we will call upon Your name.
- Psa 80:19 O Jehovah God of hosts, restore us; / Cause Your face to shine, and we will be saved.

I. Deuteronomy 12 reveals the enjoyment of Christ with God at the unique place of God's choice for the keeping of the oneness of God's people—vv. 5-8, 11-14, 17-18, 21, 26-27; 14:22-23; 16:16; cf. 1 Cor. 10:6, 11; Rom. 15:4:

- Deut 12 be omitted.
- Deut 12:5 But to the place which Jehovah your God will choose out of all your tribes to put His name, to His habitation, shall you seek, and there shall you go.
- Deut 12:6 And there you shall bring your burnt offerings and your sacrifices and your tithes and the heave offering of your hand and your vows and your freewill offerings and the firstborn of your herd and of your flock;
- Deut 12:7 And there you shall eat before Jehovah your God, and you and your households shall rejoice in all your undertakings, in which Jehovah your God has blessed you.
- Deut 12:8 You shall not do according to all that we do here today, each man doing all that is right in his own eyes;
- Deut 12:11 Then to the place where Jehovah your God will choose to cause His name to dwell, there you shall bring all that I am commanding you, your burnt offerings and your sacrifices, your tithes and the heave offering of your hand and all your choice vows which you vow to Jehovah.
- Deut 12:12 And you shall rejoice before Jehovah your God, you and your sons and daughters, and your male servants and female servants, and the Levite who is within your gates, for he has no portion nor inheritance with you.

- Deut 12:13 Be careful that you do not offer up your burnt offerings in every place that you see;
- Deut 12:14 But in the place which Jehovah will choose in one of your tribes, there you shall offer up your burnt offerings, and there you shall do all that I am commanding you.
- Deut 12:17 You may not eat within your gates the tithe of your grain or of your new wine or of your fresh oil, nor the firstborn of your herd or of your flock, or any of your vows which you vow or of your freewill offerings or of the heave offering of your hand;
- Deut 12:18 But you shall eat them before Jehovah your God in the place which Jehovah your God will choose, you and your son and daughter, and your male servant and female servant, and the Levite who is within your gates; and you shall rejoice before Jehovah your God in all your undertakings.
- Deut 12:21 If the place where Jehovah your God will choose to put His name is too far away from you, you may slaughter from your herd and from your flock, which Jehovah has given you, as I have commanded you; and you may eat within your gates according to all that your soul desires;
- Deut 12:26 But you shall take your holy things which you have and your vows, and go to the place which Jehovah will choose;
- Deut 12:27 And you shall offer your burnt offerings, the flesh and the blood, upon the altar of Jehovah your God; and the blood of your sacrifices shall be poured out upon the altar of Jehovah your God, and you shall eat the flesh.
- Deut 14:22 You must give a tenth of all the produce of your seed, which the field brings forth, year by year.
- Deut 14:23 And you shall eat before Jehovah your God, in the place where He will choose to cause His name to dwell, the tithe of your grain, of your new wine, and of your fresh oil and the firstborn of your herd and flock, that you may learn to fear Jehovah your God always.
- Deut 16:16 Three times a year all your males shall appear before Jehovah your God in the place which He will choose: at the Feast of Unleavened Bread, at the Feast of Weeks, and at the Feast of Tabernacles. And they shall not appear before Jehovah empty-handed;
- 1 Cor 10:6 Now these things occurred as examples to us, that we should not be ones who lust after evil things, even as they also lusted.
- 1 Cor 10:11 Now these things happened to them as an example, and they were written for our admonition, unto whom the ends of the ages have come.
- Rom 15:4 For the things that were written previously were written for our instruction, in order that through endurance and through the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope.
- A. The children of Israel were not allowed to worship God and enjoy the offerings they presented to God in the place of their choice (Deut. 12:8, 13, 17); they were to worship God in the place of His choice, the place where His name, His habitation, and His altar were (vv. 5-6), by bringing their tithes, offerings, and sacrifices to Him there (vv. 5, 11, 14, 18, 21, 26-27; 14:22-23; 15:19-20; 16:16).
- Deut 12:8 You shall not do according to all that we do here today, each man doing all that is right in his own eyes;
- Deut 12:13 Be careful that you do not offer up your burnt offerings in every place that you see;
- Deut 12:17 You may not eat within your gates the tithe of your grain or of your new wine or of your fresh oil, nor the firstborn of your herd or of your flock, or any of your vows which you vow or of your freewill offerings or of the heave offering of your hand;
- Deut 12:5 But to the place which Jehovah your God will choose out of all your tribes to put His name, to His habitation, shall you seek, and there shall you go.
- Deut 12:6 And there you shall bring your burnt offerings and your sacrifices and your tithes and the heave offering of your hand and your vows and your freewill offerings and the firstborn of your herd and of your flock;
- Deut 12:11 Then to the place where Jehovah your God will choose to cause His name to dwell, there you shall bring all that I am commanding you, your burnt offerings and your sacrifices, your tithes and the heave offering of your hand and all your choice vows which you vow to Jehovah.
- Deut 12:14 But in the place which Jehovah will choose in one of your tribes, there you shall offer up your burnt offerings, and there you shall do all that I am commanding you.
- Deut 12:18 But you shall eat them before Jehovah your God in the place which Jehovah your God will choose, you and your son and daughter, and your male servant and female servant, and the Levite who is within your gates; and you shall rejoice before Jehovah

- your God in all your undertakings.
- Deut 12:21 If the place where Jehovah your God will choose to put His name is too far away from you, you may slaughter from your herd and from your flock, which Jehovah has given you, as I have commanded you; and you may eat within your gates according to all that your soul desires;
- Deut 12:26 But you shall take your holy things which you have and your vows, and go to the place which Jehovah will choose;
- Deut 12:27 And you shall offer your burnt offerings, the flesh and the blood, upon the altar of Jehovah your God; and the blood of your sacrifices shall be poured out upon the altar of Jehovah your God, and you shall eat the flesh.
- Deut 14:22 You must give a tenth of all the produce of your seed, which the field brings forth, year by year.
- Deut 14:23 And you shall eat before Jehovah your God, in the place where He will choose to cause His name to dwell, the tithe of your grain, of your new wine, and of your fresh oil and the firstborn of your herd and flock, that you may learn to fear Jehovah your God always.
- Deut 15:19 All firstborn males that are brought forth in your herd and in your flock you shall sanctify to Jehovah your God; you shall not do work with your firstborn ox, nor shall you shear your firstborn sheep.
- Deut 15:20 You and your household shall eat it before Jehovah your God year by year in the place which Jehovah will choose.
- Deut 16:16 Three times a year all your males shall appear before Jehovah your God in the place which He will choose: at the Feast of Unleavened Bread, at the Feast of Weeks, and at the Feast of Tabernacles. And they shall not appear before Jehovah empty-handed;
- B. The place of God's unique choice for His worship in Deuteronomy 12 signifies our meeting on the ground of locality for the expression of the one Body in practicality (signified by Jerusalem) and for the reality of the one Body in actuality (signified by Zion within Jerusalem)—Psa. 48:2; 50:2; Rev. 1:11; 2:7.
- Deut 12 be omitted.
- Psa 48:2 Beautiful in elevation, / The joy of the whole earth, / Is Mount Zion, the sides of the north, / The city of the great King.
- Psa 50:2 Out of Zion, the perfection of beauty, / God shines forth.
- 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 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. The revelation in the New Testament concerning the worship of God corresponds to the revelation in Deuteronomy 12 in the following ways:
- Deut 12 be omitted.
1. 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.
- Psa 133:1 Behold, how good and how pleasant it is / For brothers to dwell in unity!
- Psa 133:2 It is like the fine oil upon the head / That ran down upon the beard, / Upon Aaron's beard, / That ran down upon the hem of his garments;
- Psa 133:3 Like the dew of Hermon / That came down upon the mountains of Zion. / For there Jehovah commanded the blessing: / Life forever.
- John 17:11 And I am no longer in the world; yet they are in the world, and I am coming to You. Holy Father, keep them in Your name, which You have given to Me, that they may be one even as We are.
- John 17:21 That they all may be one; even as You, Father, are in Me and I in You, that they also may be in Us; that the world may believe that You have sent Me.
- John 17:22 And the glory which You have given Me I have given to them, that they may be one, even as We are one;
- John 17:23 I in them, and You in Me, that they may be perfected into one, that the world may know that You have sent Me and have loved them even as You have loved Me.

- 1 Cor 1:10 Now I beseech you, brothers, through the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you all speak the same thing and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be attuned in the same mind and in the same opinion.
- Eph 4:3 Being diligent to keep the oneness of the Spirit in the uniting bond of peace:
2. 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; 12:3; Rev. 3:8.
- Matt 18:20 For where there are two or three gathered into My name, there am I in their midst.
- 1 Cor 1:12 Now I mean this, that each of you says, I am of Paul, and I of Apollos, and I of Cephas, and I of Christ.
- 1 Cor 12:3 Therefore I make known to you that no one speaking in the Spirit of God says, Jesus is accursed; and no one can say, Jesus is Lord! except in the Holy Spirit.
- Rev 3:8 I know your works; behold, I have put before you an opened door which no one can shut, because you have a little power and have kept My word and have not denied My name.
3. In the New Testament God's habitation, His dwelling place, is particularly located 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 our spirit—Eph. 2:22; John 4:21-24; 1 Cor. 14:15.
- Eph 2:22 In whom you also are being built together into a dwelling place of God in spirit.
- John 4:21 Jesus said to her, Woman, believe Me, an hour is coming when neither in this mountain nor in Jerusalem will you worship the Father.
- John 4:22 You worship that which you do not know; we worship that which we know, for salvation is of the Jews.
- John 4:23 But an hour is coming, and it is now, when the true worshippers will worship the Father in spirit and truthfulness, for the Father also seeks such to worship Him.
- John 4:24 God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truthfulness.
- 1 Cor 14:15 What then? I will pray with the spirit, and I will pray also with the mind; I will sing with the spirit, and I will sing also with the mind.
4. In our worship of God we must have the genuine application of the cross of Christ, signified by the altar, by rejecting the flesh, the self, and the natural life and worshipping God with Christ and Christ alone—Psa. 43:4a; Matt. 16:24; Gal. 2:20.
- Psa 43:4a And I will go to the altar of God, / To God my exceeding joy; ...
- Matt 16:24 Then Jesus said to His disciples, If anyone wants to come after Me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow Me.
- Gal 2:20 I am crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but it is Christ who lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live in faith, the faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me.
5. The place that God has chosen for His worship is a place full of the enjoyment of the riches of Christ and a place full of rejoicing—Deut. 12:7, 12, 18; 14:23; Eph. 3:8; Phil. 4:4; 1 Cor. 14:3, 4b, 26, 31.
- Deut 12:7 And there you shall eat before Jehovah your God, and you and your households shall rejoice in all your undertakings, in which Jehovah your God has blessed you.
- Deut 12:12 And you shall rejoice before Jehovah your God, you and your sons and daughters, and your male servants and female servants, and the Levite who is within your gates, for he has no portion nor inheritance with you.
- Deut 12:18 But you shall eat them before Jehovah your God in the place which Jehovah your God will choose, you and your son and daughter, and your male servant and female servant, and the Levite who is within your gates; and you shall rejoice before Jehovah your God in all your undertakings.
- Deut 14:23 And you shall eat before Jehovah your God, in the place where He will choose to cause His name to dwell, the tithe of your grain, of your new wine, and of your fresh oil and the firstborn of your herd and flock, that you may learn to fear Jehovah your God always.

- Eph 3:8 To me, less than the least of all saints, was this grace given to announce to the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ as the gospel
- Phil 4:4 Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, rejoice.
- 1 Cor 14:3 But he who prophesies speaks building up and encouragement and consolation to men.
- 1 Cor 14:4b ...but he who prophesies builds up the church.
- 1 Cor 14:26 What then, brothers? Whenever you come together, each one has a psalm, has a teaching, has a revelation, has a tongue, has an interpretation. Let all things be done for building up.
- 1 Cor 14:31 For you can all prophesy one by one that all may learn and all may be encouraged.
- D. Wherever we may be, we should be gathered into the Lord's name, in our spirit, and with the cross; if we all do this, we all will meet in the same place, although we meet in different localities; this one place is the ground of the unique oneness—Deut. 12:5-6; Jer. 32:39:
- Deut 12:5 But to the place which Jehovah your God will choose out of all your tribes to put His name, to His habitation, shall you seek, and there shall you go.
- Deut 12:6 And there you shall bring your burnt offerings and your sacrifices and your tithes and the heave offering of your hand and your vows and your freewill offerings and the firstborn of your herd and of your flock;
- Jer 32:39 And I will give them one heart and one way, to fear Me all the days, for their own good and for the good of their children after them.
1. Apparently, we are divided by geography, for we meet in separate cities all over the world on the scriptural ground of locality—the practice of having one church for one city, one city with only one church—Acts 8:1; 13:1; Rev. 1:11.

Acts 8:1 And Saul approved of his killing. And there occurred in that day a great persecution against the church which was in Jerusalem; and all were scattered throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria, except the apostles.

Acts 13:1 Now there were in Antioch, in the local church, prophets and teachers: Barnabas and Simeon, who was called Niger, and Lucius the Cyrenian, and Manaen, the foster brother of Herod the tetrarch, and Saul.

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.
 2. Actually, in spite of geographical separation, we all meet in the same place—in the name of the Lord Jesus, in our mingled spirit, and with the cross; this is the oneness, and this is the ground for the proper worship of God:
 - a. Many Christians are divided by their preferences; in the Lord's recovery we must not be for our preference but for the Lord's presence as the Spirit of reality, the reality of His name—Matt. 18:20; 1 Cor. 1:10; Exo. 33:14.

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

1 Cor 1:10 Now I beseech you, brothers, through the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you all speak the same thing and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be attuned in the same mind and in the same opinion.

Exo 33:14 And He said, My presence shall go with you, and I will give you rest.
 - b. The fulfillment of the type in Deuteronomy 12 is not a matter of a geographical place but a matter of our spirit—John 4:21-24.

Deut 12 be omitted.

John 4:21 Jesus said to her, Woman, believe Me, an hour is coming when neither in this mountain nor in Jerusalem will you worship the Father.

John 4:22 You worship that which you do not know; we worship that which we know, for salvation is of the Jews.

John 4:23 But an hour is coming, and it is now, when the true worshippers will worship the Father in spirit and truthfulness, for the Father also seeks such to worship Him.

John 4:24 God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truthfulness.

- c. At the entrance of the church there is the cross, and in order to meet as the church, we must experience the cross for the crucifying of the self, for the overthrowing of “reasonings and every high thing rising up against the knowledge of God” (2 Cor. 10:5), and for the exalting of Christ alone so that He may be all and in all for God’s expression and the unique testimony of oneness—Matt. 16:24; 1 Cor. 2:2; 2 Cor. 10:3-5; Col. 1:10, 18b; 3:10-11.
- Matt 16:24 Then Jesus said to His disciples, If anyone wants to come after Me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow Me.
- 1 Cor 2:2 For I did not determine to know anything among you except Jesus Christ, and this One crucified.
- 2 Cor 10:3 For though we walk in flesh, we do not war according to flesh;
- 2 Cor 10:4 For the weapons of our warfare are not fleshly but powerful before God for the overthrowing of strongholds,
- 2 Cor 10:5 As we overthrow reasonings and every high thing rising up against the knowledge of God, and take captive every thought unto the obedience of Christ.
- Col 1:10 To walk worthily of the Lord to please Him in all things, bearing fruit in every good work and growing by the full knowledge of God,
- Col 1:18b ... He is the beginning, the Firstborn from the dead, that He Himself might have the first place in all things;
- Col 3:10 And have put on the new man, which is being renewed unto full knowledge according to the image of Him who created him,
- Col 3:11 Where there cannot be Greek and Jew, circumcision and uncircumcision, barbarian, Scythian, slave, free man, but Christ is all and in all.

II. The unique ground of Jerusalem, the place where the temple as God’s dwelling place was built on Mount Zion, typifies the unique ground of God’s choice, the ground of oneness—Deut. 12:5; 2 Chron. 6:5-6; Ezra 1:2-3:

- Deut 12:5 But to the place which Jehovah your God will choose out of all your tribes to put His name, to His habitation, shall you seek, and there shall you go.
- 2 Chron 6:5 Since the day when I brought My people out from the land of Egypt, I have not chosen a city out of all the tribes of Israel to build a house for My name that it might be there; nor did I choose a man to be a ruler over My people Israel;
- 2 Chron 6:6 But I have chosen Jerusalem that My name might be there, and I have chosen David to be over My people Israel.
- Ezra 1:2 Thus says Cyrus the king of Persia, All the kingdoms of the earth has Jehovah the God of heaven given to me; and He has charged me to build Him a house in Jerusalem, which is in Judah.
- 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, which is in Judah, and let him build the house of Jehovah the God of Israel—He is God—who is in Jerusalem.
- A. In the ancient time all the Israelites came together three times a year at Jerusalem; it was by this unique place of worship to God, Jerusalem, that the oneness of His people was kept for generations—Deut. 12:5; 16:16.
- Deut 12:5 But to the place which Jehovah your God will choose out of all your tribes to put His name, to His habitation, shall you seek, and there shall you go.
- Deut 16:16 Three times a year all your males shall appear before Jehovah your God in the place which He will choose: at the Feast of Unleavened Bread, at the Feast of Weeks, and at the Feast of Tabernacles. And they shall not appear before Jehovah empty-handed;
- B. In the New Testament the proper ground of oneness ordained by God is the unique ground of one church for one locality—Rev. 1:11:
- 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.
1. The church is constituted of the universal God, but it exists on earth in many

localities; in nature the church is universal in God, but in practice the church is local in a definite place, such as “the church of God which is in Corinth”—1 Cor. 1:2:

1 Cor 1:2 To the church of God which is in Corinth, to those who have been sanctified in Christ Jesus, the called saints, with all those who call upon the name of our Lord Jesus Christ in every place, who is theirs and ours:

- a. *The church of God* means that the church is not only possessed by God but has God as its nature and essence, which are divine, general, universal, and eternal—v. 2a.
- b. *The church...which is in Corinth* refers to a church in a city, remaining in a definite locality and taking it as its standing, ground, and jurisdiction for its administration in business affairs, which is physical, particular, local, and temporal in time—v. 2b.

2. Without the universal aspect, the church is void of content; without the local aspect, it is impossible for the church to have any expression and practice; the record concerning the establishment of the church in its locality is consistent throughout the New Testament—Acts 8:1; 13:1; 14:23; Rom. 16:1; 1 Cor. 1:2; 2 Cor. 8:1; Gal. 1:2; Rev. 1:4, 11.

Acts 8:1 And Saul approved of his killing. And there occurred in that day a great persecution against the church which was in Jerusalem; and all were scattered throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria, except the apostles.

Acts 13:1 Now there were in Antioch, in the local church, prophets and teachers: Barnabas and Simeon, who was called Niger, and Lucius the Cyrenian, and Manaen, the foster brother of Herod the tetrarch, and Saul.

Acts 14:23 And when they had appointed elders for them in every church and had prayed with fastings, they committed them to the Lord into whom they had believed.

Rom 16:1 I commend to you Phoebe our sister, who is a deaconess of the church which is in Cenchrea,

1 Cor 1:2 To the church of God which is in Corinth, to those who have been sanctified in Christ Jesus, the called saints, with all those who call upon the name of our Lord Jesus Christ in every place, who is theirs and ours:

2 Cor 8:1 Furthermore we make known to you, brothers, the grace of God which has been given in the churches of Macedonia,

Gal 1:2 And all the brothers who are with me, to the churches of Galatia:

Rev 1:4 John to the seven churches which are in Asia: Grace to you and peace from Him who is and who was and who is coming, and from the seven Spirits who are before His throne,

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.

III. The church life on the ground of oneness is today's Jerusalem; within the church life there must be a group of overcomers, and these overcomers are today's Zion—Psa. 48:2, 11-12:

Psa 48:2 Beautiful in elevation, / The joy of the whole earth, / Is Mount Zion, the sides of the north, / The city of the great King.

Psa 48:11 Let Mount Zion rejoice; / Let the daughters of Judah exult / Because of Your judgments.

Psa 48:12 Walk about Zion, and go around her; / Count her towers.

- A. As the highlight and beauty of the holy city Jerusalem, Zion typifies the overcomers as the high peak, the center, the uplifting, the strengthening, the enriching, the beauty, and the reality of the church—20:2; 53:6a; 87:2.

Psa 20:2 May He send you help from the sanctuary / And support you from Zion.

Psa 53:6a Oh that the salvation of Israel might come forth from Zion!

Psa 87:2 Jehovah loves the gates of Zion / More than all the dwellings of Jacob.

- B. The overcomers as Zion are the reality of the Body of Christ and consummate the building up of the Body in the local churches to bring in the consummated holy city, New Jerusalem, the Holy of Holies as God's dwelling place, in eternity—Rev. 21:1-3, 16, 22.
- Rev 21:1 And I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth passed away, and the sea is no more.
- Rev 21:2 And I saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.
- Rev 21:3 And I heard a loud voice out of the throne, saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will tabernacle with them, and they will be His peoples, and God Himself will be with them and be their God.
- Rev 21:16 And the city lies square, and its length is as great as the breadth. And he measured the city with the reed to a length of twelve thousand stadia; the length and the breadth and the height of it are equal.
- Rev 21:22 And I saw no temple in it, for the Lord God the Almighty and the Lamb are its temple.
- C. The church life is the right place for us to be an overcomer, but this does not mean that as long as we are in the church life, we are an overcomer; it is one thing to be in the church life, but it is another thing to be an overcomer—2:7, 11, 17, 26-28; 3:5, 12, 20-21.
- 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.
- Rev 2:11 He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. He who overcomes shall by no means be hurt of the second death.
- Rev 2:17 He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes, to him I will give of the hidden manna, and to him I will give a white stone, and upon the stone a new name written, which no one knows except he who receives it.
- Rev 2:26 And he who overcomes and he who keeps My works until the end, to him I will give authority over the nations;
- Rev 2:27 And he will shepherd them with an iron rod, as vessels of pottery are broken in pieces, as I also have received from My Father;
- Rev 2:28 And to him I will give the morning star.
- Rev 3:5 He who overcomes will be clothed thus, in white garments, and I shall by no means erase his name out of the book of life, and I will confess his name before My Father and before His angels.
- Rev 3:12 He who overcomes, him I will make a pillar in the temple of My God, and he shall by no means go out anymore, and I will write upon him the name of My God and the name of the city of My God, the New Jerusalem, which descends out of heaven from My God, and My new name.
- Rev 3:20 Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if anyone hears My voice and opens the door, then I will come in to him and dine with him and he with Me.
- Rev 3:21 He who overcomes, to him I will give to sit with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat with My Father on His throne.

IV. In order to be today's overcomers, we must enjoy Christ with God on the ground of oneness for the exhibition of Christ, the building of the church, and the preparation of Christ's bride—Matt. 16:18; Rev. 19:7:

- 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.
- Rev 19:7 Let us rejoice and exult, and let us give the glory to Him, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and His wife has made herself ready.
- A. The children of Israel could enjoy the rich produce of the good land in two ways:
1. The common, private way was to enjoy it as a common portion at any time, in any place, and with anyone—Deut. 12:15.
- Deut 12:15 Yet you may slaughter and eat meat within all your gates, in all that your soul desires, according to the blessing of Jehovah your God which He has given you; the unclean and the clean may eat it as the gazelle and the deer are eaten.

2. The special, corporate way was to enjoy the top portion, the firstfruits and the firstlings, with all the Israelites at the appointed feasts and in the unique place chosen by God—vv. 5, 8, 11, 13-14, 17-18, 21, 26-27; 14:22-23; 15:19-20; 16:16-17.

Deut 12:5 But to the place which Jehovah your God will choose out of all your tribes to put His name, to His habitation, shall you seek, and there shall you go.

Deut 12:8 You shall not do according to all that we do here today, each man doing all that is right in his own eyes;

Deut 12:11 Then to the place where Jehovah your God will choose to cause His name to dwell, there you shall bring all that I am commanding you, your burnt offerings and your sacrifices, your tithes and the heave offering of your hand and all your choice vows which you vow to Jehovah.

Deut 12:13 Be careful that you do not offer up your burnt offerings in every place that you see;

Deut 12:14 But in the place which Jehovah will choose in one of your tribes, there you shall offer up your burnt offerings, and there you shall do all that I am commanding you.

Deut 12:17 You may not eat within your gates the tithe of your grain or of your new wine or of your fresh oil, nor the firstborn of your herd or of your flock, or any of your vows which you vow or of your freewill offerings or of the heave offering of your hand;

Deut 12:18 But you shall eat them before Jehovah your God in the place which Jehovah your God will choose, you and your son and daughter, and your male servant and female servant, and the Levite who is within your gates; and you shall rejoice before Jehovah your God in all your undertakings.

Deut 12:21 If the place where Jehovah your God will choose to put His name is too far away from you, you may slaughter from your herd and from your flock, which Jehovah has given you, as I have commanded you; and you may eat within your gates according to all that your soul desires;

Deut 12:26 But you shall take your holy things which you have and your vows, and go to the place which Jehovah will choose;

Deut 12:27 And you shall offer your burnt offerings, the flesh and the blood, upon the altar of Jehovah your God; and the blood of your sacrifices shall be poured out upon the altar of Jehovah your God, and you shall eat the flesh.

Deut 14:22 You must give a tenth of all the produce of your seed, which the field brings forth, year by year.

Deut 14:23 And you shall eat before Jehovah your God, in the place where He will choose to cause His name to dwell, the tithe of your grain, of your new wine, and of your fresh oil and the firstborn of your herd and flock, that you may learn to fear Jehovah your God always.

Deut 15:19 All firstborn males that are brought forth in your herd and in your flock you shall sanctify to Jehovah your God; you shall not do work with your firstborn ox, nor shall you shear your firstborn sheep.

Deut 15:20 You and your household shall eat it before Jehovah your God year by year in the place which Jehovah will choose.

Deut 16:16 Three times a year all your males shall appear before Jehovah your God in the place which He will choose: at the Feast of Unleavened Bread, at the Feast of Weeks, and at the Feast of Tabernacles. And they shall not appear before Jehovah empty-handed;

Deut 16:17 Each man shall give as he is able to give, according to the blessing of Jehovah your God, which He has given you.

B. Likewise, the enjoyment of Christ by His believers is of two aspects:

1. The common, private aspect is to enjoy Christ as our God-allotted portion at every time and in every place—Col. 1:12; 1 Cor. 1:2, 9; Eph. 6:18; 1 Thes. 5:16-18; Rom. 10:12-13.

Col 1:12 Giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified you for a share of the allotted portion of the saints in the light;

1 Cor 1:2 To the church of God which is in Corinth, to those who have been sanctified in Christ Jesus, the called saints, with all those who call upon the name of our Lord Jesus Christ in every place, who is theirs and ours:

- 1 Cor 1:9 God is faithful, through whom you were called into the fellowship of His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.
- Eph 6:18 By means of all prayer and petition, praying at every time in spirit and watching unto this in all perseverance and petition concerning all the saints,
- 1 Thes 5:16 Always rejoice,
- 1 Thes 5:17 Unceasingly pray,
- 1 Thes 5:18 In everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.
- Rom 10:12 For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek, for the same Lord is Lord of all and rich to all who call upon Him;
- Rom 10:13 For "whoever calls upon the name of the Lord shall be saved."
2. The special, corporate aspect is to enjoy the top portion of Christ in the meetings of the proper church life on the unique ground of oneness, the place chosen by God—1 Cor. 14:3, 4b, 26, 31.
- 1 Cor 14:3 But he who prophesies speaks building up and encouragement and consolation to men.
- 1 Cor 14:4b ... but he who prophesies builds up the church.
- 1 Cor 14:26 What then, brothers? Whenever you come together, each one has a psalm, has a teaching, has a revelation, has a tongue, has an interpretation. Let all things be done for building up.
- 1 Cor 14:31 For you can all prophesy one by one that all may learn and all may be encouraged.
- C. We need to live a life of laboring upon Christ, a life of enjoying Christ personally so that we may enjoy Him together collectively for the building up of the Body of Christ as the house of God for God's expression and as the kingdom of God for God's dominion—3:16; 1 Tim. 3:15; Rom. 14:17-18:
- 1 Cor 3:16 Do you not know that you are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwells in you?
- 1 Tim 3:15 But if I delay, I write that you may know how one ought to conduct himself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and base of the truth.
- Rom 14:17 For the kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.
- Rom 14:18 For he who serves Christ in this is well pleasing to God and approved by men.
1. God's will is for us to enjoy Christ; we must seek to enjoy Christ and experience Him in every situation—Heb. 10:5-10; Phil. 3:7-14; 4:5-8.
- Heb 10:5 Therefore, coming into the world, He says, "Sacrifice and offering You did not desire, but a body You have prepared for Me.
- Heb 10:6 In burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin You did not delight.
- Heb 10:7 Then I said, Behold, I have come (in the roll of the book it is written concerning Me) to do Your will, O God."
- Heb 10:8 Saying above, "Sacrifices and offerings and burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin You did not desire nor delight in" (which are offered according to the law),
- Heb 10:9 He then has said, "Behold, I have come to do Your will." He takes away the first that He may establish the second,
- Heb 10:10 By which will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.
- Phil 3:7 But what things were gains to me, these I have counted as loss on account of Christ.
- Phil 3:8 But moreover I also count all things to be loss on account of the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, on account of whom I have suffered the loss of all things and count them as refuse that I may gain Christ
- Phil 3:9 And be found in Him, not having my own righteousness which is out of the law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which is out of God and based on faith,
- Phil 3:10 To know Him and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death,
- Phil 3:11 If perhaps I may attain to the out-resurrection from the dead.
- Phil 3:12 Not that I have already obtained or am already perfected, but I pursue, if even I may lay hold of that for which I also have been laid hold of by Christ Jesus.

- Phil 3:13 Brothers, I do not account of myself to have laid hold; but one thing I do: Forgetting the things which are behind and stretching forward to the things which are before,
- Phil 3:14 I pursue toward the goal for the prize to which God in Christ Jesus has called me upward.
- Phil 4:5 Let your forbearance be known to all men. The Lord is near.
- Phil 4:6 In nothing be anxious, but in everything, by prayer and petition with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God;
- Phil 4:7 And the peace of God, which surpasses every man's understanding, will guard your hearts and your thoughts in Christ Jesus.
- Phil 4:8 Finally, brothers, what things are true, what things are dignified, what things are righteous, what things are pure, what things are lovely, what things are well spoken of, if there is any virtue and if any praise, take account of these things.
2. Christ is rich beyond measure, but the church today is groveling in poverty because the Lord's children are indolent—Prov. 6:6-11; 24:30-34; 26:14; Matt. 25:26, 30; cf. 1 Cor. 15:58.
- Prov 6:6 Go to the ant, you sluggard; / Consider its ways, and be wise,
- Prov 6:7 Which, having no chief, / Officer, or ruler,
- Prov 6:8 Prepares its food in summer / And gathers its sustenance in the harvest.
- Prov 6:9 How long, sluggard, will you lie there? / When will you arise from your sleep?
- Prov 6:10 A little sleep, a little slumber, / A little folding of the hands to rest,
- Prov 6:11 And your poverty will come upon you like a robber, / And your want, like an armed man.
- Prov 24:30 I passed by the field of the sluggard, / And by the vineyard of the man lacking sense;
- Prov 24:31 And there it was, all overgrown with thorns; / Its surface was covered with nettles, / And its stone wall was broken down.
- Prov 24:32 When I looked, I considered it; / I saw it and received instruction:
- Prov 24:33 A little sleep, a little slumber, / A little folding of the hands to rest,
- Prov 24:34 And your poverty will come upon you like a robber, / And your want, like an armed man.
- Prov 26:14 As the door turns upon its hinges, / So does the sluggard upon his bed.
- Matt 25:26 And his master answered and said to him, Evil and slothful slave, you knew that I reap where I did not sow and gather where I did not winnow.
- Matt 25:30 And cast out the useless slave into the outer darkness. In that place there will be the weeping and the gnashing of teeth.
- 1 Cor 15:58 Therefore, my beloved brothers, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your labor is not in vain in the Lord.
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; thus, the meeting will be an exhibition of Christ in His riches and will be a mutual enjoyment of Christ shared by all the attendants before God and with God for the building up of the saints and the church—Col. 2:6-7; 1 Cor. 1:9; 14:3, 31.
- Col 2:6 As therefore you have received the Christ, Jesus the Lord, walk in Him,
- Col 2:7 Having been rooted and being built up in Him, and being established in the faith even as you were taught, abounding in thanksgiving.
- 1 Cor 1:9 God is faithful, through whom you were called into the fellowship of His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.
- 1 Cor 14:3 But he who prophesies speaks building up and encouragement and consolation to men.
- 1 Cor 14:31 For you can all prophesy one by one that all may learn and all may be encouraged.
4. Whenever we come to the meetings to worship the Lord, we should not come with our hands empty; we must come with our hands full of the produce of Christ—v. 26; Deut. 16:15-17.
- 1 Cor 14:26 What then, brothers? Whenever you come together, each one has a psalm, has a teaching, has a revelation, has a tongue, has an interpretation. Let all things be done for building up.

- Deut 16:15 You shall keep the feast to Jehovah your God for seven days in the place which Jehovah will choose, for Jehovah your God will bless you in all your produce and in all your undertakings; therefore you shall be nothing but joyful.
- Deut 16:16 Three times a year all your males shall appear before Jehovah your God in the place which He will choose: at the Feast of Unleavened Bread, at the Feast of Weeks, and at the Feast of Tabernacles. And they shall not appear before Jehovah empty-handed;
- Deut 16:17 Each man shall give as he is able to give, according to the blessing of Jehovah your God, which He has given you.
5. We meet together to have an exhibition of the Christ upon whom we have labored, the Christ whom we have experienced and enjoyed—14:22-23.
- Deut 14:22 You must give a tenth of all the produce of your seed, which the field brings forth, year by year.
- Deut 14:23 And you shall eat before Jehovah your God, in the place where He will choose to cause His name to dwell, the tithe of your grain, of your new wine, and of your fresh oil and the firstborn of your herd and flock, that you may learn to fear Jehovah your God always.

V. In order to be today's overcomers, we must maintain the ground of oneness, God's unique choice, without elevating anything other than Christ; in the Lord's recovery we elevate Christ and Christ alone—Col. 1:18b; Rev. 2:4; 2 Cor. 4:5; 10:5:

- Col 1:18b ... He is the beginning, the Firstborn from the dead, that He Himself might have the first place in all things;
- Rev 2:4 But I have one thing against you, that you have left your first love.
- 2 Cor 4:5 For we do not preach ourselves but Christ Jesus as Lord, and ourselves as your slaves for Jesus' sake.
- 2 Cor 10:5 As we overthrow reasonings and every high thing rising up against the knowledge of God, and take captive every thought unto the obedience of Christ.
- A. Before the children of Israel could have the full enjoyment of the riches of the good land, they had to utterly destroy the heathen places of worship, the idols, and the names of the idols "on the high mountains and on the hills and under every flourishing tree" (Deut. 12:2); the high mountains and hills signify the exaltation of something other than Christ, and the flourishing trees signify things that are beautiful and attractive—vv. 1-3, 5; 1 Kings 11:7-8; 12:26-31; Num. 33:52.
- Deut 12:1 These are the statutes and the ordinances that you shall be certain to do in the land which Jehovah, the God of your fathers, has given you to possess, all the days that you live on the earth.
- Deut 12:2 You shall completely destroy all the places where the nations whom you will dispossess have served their gods, on the high mountains and on the hills and under every flourishing tree.
- Deut 12:3 And you shall tear down their altars and crush their pillars; and their Asherahs you shall burn with fire, and the idols of their gods you shall cut down; and you shall destroy their name from that place.
- Deut 12:5 But to the place which Jehovah your God will choose out of all your tribes to put His name, to His habitation, shall you seek, and there shall you go.
- 1 Kings 11:7 Then Solomon built a high place to Chemosh the detestable thing of Moab in the mountain that is before Jerusalem and to Molech the detestable thing of the children of Ammon.
- 1 Kings 11:8 And so he did for all his foreign wives, who burned incense and offered sacrifices to their gods.
- 1 Kings 12:26 And Jeroboam said in his heart, Now the kingdom will return to the house of David.
- 1 Kings 12:27 If this people go up to make sacrifices in the house of Jehovah at Jerusalem, the heart of this people will return to their lord, to Rehoboam the king of Judah; and they will slay me and return to Rehoboam the king of Judah.
- 1 Kings 12:28 And the king took counsel and made two calves of gold. And he said to them, It is too

much for you to go up to Jerusalem. Behold your gods, O Israel, who brought you up out of the land of Egypt!

1 Kings 12:29 And he set one in Bethel, and he put the other one in Dan.

1 Kings 12:30 And this thing became a sin; and the people went to worship the one as far as Dan.

1 Kings 12:31 And he made a house of high places and appointed priests from among the people who were not from the sons of Levi.

Num 33:52 You shall drive out all the inhabitants of the land from before you, and you shall destroy all their figured stones and destroy all their molten images and demolish all their high places;

- B. The intrinsic reason for the desolation and degradation of God's people is that Christ is not exalted by them; they do not give Him the preeminence, the first place, in everything—Psa. 80:1, 3, 7, 15-19; 74:1.

Psa 80:1 O Shepherd of Israel, give ear, / You who lead Joseph like a flock; / You who are enthroned between the cherubim, shine forth.

Psa 80:3 O God, restore us; / And cause Your face to shine, and we will be saved.

Psa 80:7 O God of hosts, restore us; / And cause Your face to shine, and we will be saved.

Psa 80:15 Even the stock which Your right hand has planted / And the son whom You have strengthened for Yourself.

Psa 80:16 It is burned with fire; it is cut down; / They perish at the rebuke of Your countenance.

Psa 80:17 Let Your hand be upon the man of Your right hand, / Upon the son of man whom You have strengthened for Yourself;

Psa 80:18 Then we will not turn back from You. / Revive us, and we will call upon Your name.

Psa 80:19 O Jehovah God of hosts, restore us; / Cause Your face to shine, and we will be saved.

Psa 74:1 Why, O God, have You cast us off forever? / Why does Your anger smoke against the sheep of Your pasture?

- C. The way to be restored from desolation is to exalt Christ; the enjoyment of Christ with God on the ground of oneness can be maintained and preserved only when Christ is properly appreciated and exalted by God's people.

Study Questions

1. How do the four ways of worship revealed in the New Testament correspond with the revelation in Deuteronomy 12?
2. How does the unique ground of Jerusalem in the Old Testament typify the proper ground of oneness (the pattern and practice of one church for one city)?
3. What are the two aspects of the enjoyment of Christ as the believers' portion, and how are they typified by the two ways that the Israelites were commanded to enjoy the produce of the good land?
4. How does Deuteronomy 12 reveal our need to live a personal life of laboring upon Christ so that we can exhibit Him whom we have experienced?
5. Who are the overcomers in the church life, and how do they overcome the degradation of God's people today?