

# THE WILL OF GOD

(Friday—First Morning Session)

## Message One

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

RK *Hymns*: 981

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

- Eph 1:5 Predestinating us unto sonship through Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will,
- Eph 1:9 Making known to us the mystery of His will according to His good pleasure, which He purposed in Himself,
- Eph 1:10 Unto the economy of the fullness of the times, to head up all things in Christ, the things in the heavens and the things on the earth, in Him;
- Eph 1:11 In whom also we were designated as an inheritance, having been predestinated according to the purpose of the One who works all things according to the counsel of His will,
- Eph 3:11 According to the eternal purpose which He made in Christ Jesus our Lord,
- Eph 5:17 Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is.
- Col 1:9 Therefore we also, since the day we heard of it, do not cease praying and asking on your behalf that you may be filled with the full knowledge of His will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding,
- Rev 4:11 You are worthy, our Lord and God, to receive the glory and the honor and the power, for You have created all things, and because of Your will they were, and were created.
- 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 21:9 And one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls full of the seven last plagues came and spoke with me, saying, Come here; I will show you the bride, the wife of the Lamb.
- Rev 21:10 And he carried me away in spirit onto a great and high mountain and showed me the holy city, Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God,
- Rev 21:11 Having the glory of God. Her light was like a most precious stone, like a jasper stone, as clear as crystal.

#### **I. We need to understand what the will of the Lord is—Eph. 5:17; Col. 1:9.**

- Eph 5:17 Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is.
- Col 1:9 Therefore we also, since the day we heard of it, do not cease praying and asking on your behalf that you may be filled with the full knowledge of His will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding,

#### **II. God’s will is what He wants and what He intends to accomplish—Eph. 1:5, 9, 11:**

- Eph 1:5 Predestinating us unto sonship through Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will,
- Eph 1:9 Making known to us the mystery of His will according to His good pleasure, which He purposed in Himself,
- Eph 1:11 In whom also we were designated as an inheritance, having been predestinated according to the purpose of the One who works all things according to the counsel of His will,
- A. God has an eternal will, which is the source of His eternal purpose—v. 11; 3:11.
- Eph 1:11 In whom also we were designated as an inheritance, having been predestinated according to the purpose of the One who works all things according to the counsel of His will,
- Eph 3:11 According to the eternal purpose which He made in Christ Jesus our Lord,
- B. Since God is eternal, without beginning or ending, His will is also eternal; it lies at the heart of the origin of the universe—Rev. 4:11.
- Rev 4:11 You are worthy, our Lord and God, to receive the glory and the honor and the power,

for You have created all things, and because of Your will they were, and were created.

- C. God created all things for His will so that He might accomplish and fulfill His purpose—Eph. 3:11.  
Eph 3:11 According to the eternal purpose which He made in Christ Jesus our Lord,
- D. The will of God is concentrated in Christ and is for Christ to have the first place in all things; Christ is everything in God's eternal will—Col. 1:15-18; 3:4, 10-11.  
Col 1:15 Who is the image of the invisible God, the Firstborn of all creation,  
Col 1:16 Because in Him all things were created, in the heavens and on the earth, the visible and the invisible, whether thrones or lordships or rulers or authorities; all things have been created through Him and unto Him.  
Col 1:17 And He is before all things, and all things cohere in Him;  
Col 1:18 And He is the Head of the Body, the church; He is the beginning, the Firstborn from the dead, that He Himself might have the first place in all things;  
Col 3:4 When Christ our life is manifested, then you also will be manifested with Him in glory.  
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.
- E. God wants to have Christ with the church; the will of God is to obtain the church as the Body of Christ—Eph. 5:32; 1:9, 22-23; 2:21-22; 4:16.  
Eph 5:32 This mystery is great, but I speak with regard to Christ and the church.  
Eph 1:9 Making known to us the mystery of His will according to His good pleasure, which He purposed in Himself,  
Eph 1:22 And He subjected all things under His feet and gave Him to be Head over all things to the church,  
Eph 1:23 Which is His Body, the fullness of the One who fills all in all.  
Eph 2:21 In whom all the building, being fitted together, is growing into a holy temple in the Lord;  
Eph 2:22 In whom you also are being built together into a dwelling place of God in spirit.  
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.
- F. God in Christ as the Spirit is now working within us to accomplish His eternal will to have the New Jerusalem—the wife of the Lamb filled with the glory of God for His eternal expression in the new heaven and new earth—Phil. 2:13; Eph. 3:14-21; Rev. 21:1-2, 9-11.  
Phil 2:13 For it is God who operates in you both the willing and the working for His good pleasure.  
Eph 3:14 For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father,  
Eph 3:15 Of whom every family in the heavens and on earth is named,  
Eph 3:16 That He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with power through His Spirit into the inner man,  
Eph 3:17 That Christ may make His home in your hearts through faith, that you, being rooted and grounded in love,  
Eph 3:18 May be full of strength to apprehend with all the saints what the breadth and length and height and depth are  
Eph 3:19 And to know the knowledge-surpassing love of Christ, that you may be filled unto all the fullness of God.  
Eph 3:20 But to Him who is able to do superabundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power which operates in us,  
Eph 3:21 To Him be the glory in the church and in Christ Jesus unto all the generations forever and ever. Amen.  
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 21:9 And one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls full of the seven last plagues came and spoke with me, saying, Come here; I will show you the bride, the wife of the Lamb.

- Rev 21:10 And he carried me away in spirit onto a great and high mountain and showed me the holy city, Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God,  
 Rev 21:11 Having the glory of God. Her light was like a most precious stone, like a jasper stone, as clear as crystal.

### **III. According to the good pleasure of His will, God predestinated us unto sonship—Eph. 1:5:**

- Eph 1:5 Predestinating us unto sonship through Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will,
- A. God has a will, in which is His good pleasure; God’s good pleasure is of His will and is embodied in His will, so His will comes first—vv. 5, 9, 11.  
 Eph 1:5 Predestinating us unto sonship through Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will,  
 Eph 1:9 Making known to us the mystery of His will according to His good pleasure, which He purposed in Himself,  
 Eph 1:11 In whom also we were designated as an inheritance, having been predestinated according to the purpose of the One who works all things according to the counsel of His will,
- B. God’s good pleasure is what makes God happy—it is the desire of His heart; the living, loving, and purposeful God surely has a heart’s desire—v. 5.  
 Eph 1:5 Predestinating us unto sonship through Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will,
- C. God predestinated us to be His sons according to His pleasure, according to the desire of His heart—v. 5:  
 Eph 1:5 Predestinating us unto sonship through Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will,
1. Before the foundation of the world, God chose us to be holy; to be made holy—to be sanctified by God through His dispensing Himself into us and then mingling His nature with us—is the process, the procedure—v. 4.  
 Eph 1:4 Even as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world to be holy and without blemish before Him in love,
  2. To be sons of God is the aim, the goal, and is a matter of our being joined to the Son of God and conformed to the image of the firstborn Son of God so that our whole being may be “sonized” by God—v. 5; Rom. 8:29; Col. 1:15.  
 Eph 1:5 Predestinating us unto sonship through Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will,  
 Rom 8:29 Because those whom He foreknew, He also predestinated to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the Firstborn among many brothers;  
 Col 1:15 Who is the image of the invisible God, the Firstborn of all creation,

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

- A. God’s will is His intention, and God’s counsel is His consideration of the way to accomplish His will, His intention.
- B. According to His will, a council was held by the Trinity before the foundation of the world to make a counsel, a decision, which is His determined will—1 Pet. 1:20; Rev. 13:8; Eph. 1:11.  
 1 Pet 1:20 Who was foreknown before the foundation of the world but has been manifested in the last of times for your sake,  
 Rev 13:8 And all those dwelling on the earth will worship him, everyone whose name is not written in the book of life of the Lamb who was slain from the foundation of the world.  
 Eph 1:11 In whom also we were designated as an inheritance, having been predestinated according to the purpose of the One who works all things according to the counsel of His will,

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

- A. In eternity God had a will, but this will was hidden in Him; hence, it was a mystery—v. 9; 3:3-5, 9.
- Eph 1:9 Making known to us the mystery of His will according to His good pleasure, which He purposed in Himself,
- Eph 3:3 That by revelation the mystery was made known to me, as I have written previously in brief,
- Eph 3:4 By which, in reading it, you can perceive my understanding in the mystery of Christ,
- Eph 3:5 Which in other generations was not made known to the sons of men, as it has now been revealed to His holy apostles and prophets in spirit,
- Eph 3:9 And to enlighten all that they may see what the economy of the mystery is, which throughout the ages has been hidden in God, who created all things,
- B. In the pleasure of His heart and in His wisdom and prudence, God made this hidden mystery known to us through His revelation in Christ, that is, through Christ’s incarnation, crucifixion, resurrection, and ascension—1:9; John 1:14; Rom. 1:3-4; 4:25; 8:3, 34.
- Eph 1:9 Making known to us the mystery of His will according to His good pleasure, which He purposed in Himself,
- John 1:14 And the Word became flesh and tabernacled among us (and we beheld His glory, glory as of the only Begotten from the Father), full of grace and reality.
- Rom 1:3 Concerning His Son, who came out of the seed of David according to the flesh,
- Rom 1:4 Who was designated the Son of God in power according to the Spirit of holiness out of the resurrection of the dead, Jesus Christ our Lord;
- Rom 4:25 Who was delivered for our offenses and was raised for our justification.
- Rom 8:3 For that which the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God, sending His own Son in the likeness of the flesh of sin and concerning sin, condemned sin in the flesh,
- Rom 8:34 Who is he who condemns? It is Christ Jesus who died and, rather, who was raised, who is also at the right hand of God, who also intercedes for us.

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

- Eph 1:10 Unto the economy of the fullness of the times, to head up all things in Christ, the things in the heavens and the things on the earth, in Him;
- Eph 1:22 And He subjected all things under His feet and gave Him to be Head over all things to the church,
- Eph 1:23 Which is His Body, the fullness of the One who fills all in all.
- 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.
- A. God’s eternal intention is, in the economy of the fullness of the times, to head up all things in Christ, who has been appointed to be the universal Head—Eph. 1:10, 22.
- Eph 1:10 Unto the economy of the fullness of the times, to head up all things in Christ, the things in the heavens and the things on the earth, in Him;
- Eph 1:22 And He subjected all things under His feet and gave Him to be Head over all things to the church,
- B. Through the dispensations of God in all the ages, all things will be headed up in Christ in the new heaven and new earth; this will be God’s eternal administration and economy—Rev. 21:1-2.
- 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.
- C. Satan’s goal is to corrupt God’s creation and to cause confusion—Rom. 8:19-23:
- Rom 8:19 For the anxious watching of the creation eagerly awaits the revelation of the sons of God.

- Rom 8:20 For the creation was made subject to vanity, not of its own will, but because of Him who subjected it,
- Rom 8:21 In hope that the creation itself will also be freed from the slavery of corruption into the freedom of the glory of the children of God.
- Rom 8:22 For we know that the whole creation groans together and travails in pain together until now.
- Rom 8:23 And not only so, but we ourselves also, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan in ourselves, eagerly awaiting sonship, the redemption of our body.
1. The entire universe is a heap of collapse caused by Satan injecting himself as the factor of death into God's creation—Heb. 2:14; Rom. 8:20-21.
    - Heb 2:14 Since therefore the children have shared in blood and flesh, He also Himself in like manner partook of the same, that through death He might destroy him who has the might of death, that is, the devil,
    - Rom 8:20 For the creation was made subject to vanity, not of its own will, but because of Him who subjected it,
    - Rom 8:21 In hope that the creation itself will also be freed from the slavery of corruption into the freedom of the glory of the children of God.
  2. God is working to liberate His creation from bondage and to bring it into liberty by heading up all things in Christ—Eph. 1:22, 10.
    - Eph 1:22 And He subjected all things under His feet and gave Him to be Head over all things to the church,
    - Eph 1:10 Unto the economy of the fullness of the times, to head up all things in Christ, the things in the heavens and the things on the earth, in Him;
  3. We all need to be delivered from the heap of collapse and headed up in Christ—Col. 1:12-13.
    - 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;
    - Col 1:13 Who delivered us out of the authority of darkness and transferred us into the kingdom of the Son of His love,
  4. God's salvation is to save us not only from our fallen, sinful condition but also from the heap of collapse—vv. 12-13; Eph. 2:1-8, 21-22.
    - 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;
    - Col 1:13 Who delivered us out of the authority of darkness and transferred us into the kingdom of the Son of His love,
    - Eph 2:1 And you, though dead in your offenses and sins,
    - Eph 2:2 In which you once walked according to the age of this world, according to the ruler of the authority of the air, of the spirit which is now operating in the sons of disobedience;
    - Eph 2:3 Among whom we also all conducted ourselves once in the lusts of our flesh, doing the desires of the flesh and of the thoughts, and were by nature children of wrath, even as the rest;
    - Eph 2:4 But God, being rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us,
    - Eph 2:5 Even when we were dead in offenses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved)
    - Eph 2:6 And raised us up together with Him and seated us together with Him in the heavenlies in Christ Jesus,
    - Eph 2:7 That He might display in the ages to come the surpassing riches of His grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus.
    - Eph 2:8 For by grace you have been saved through faith, and this not of yourselves; it is the gift of God;
    - Eph 2:21 In whom all the building, being fitted together, is growing into a holy temple in the Lord;
    - Eph 2:22 In whom you also are being built together into a dwelling place of God in spirit.
- D. God will subject all things under Christ by heading up all things in Christ through the church as the Body of Christ—1 Cor. 15:20-28:
- 1 Cor 15:20 But now Christ has been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen

- asleep.
- 1 Cor 15:21 For since through man came death, through man also came the resurrection of the dead.
- 1 Cor 15:22 For just as in Adam all die, so also in Christ all will be made alive.
- 1 Cor 15:23 But each one in his own order: the firstfruits, Christ; then those who are Christ's at His coming;
- 1 Cor 15:24 Then the end, when He delivers up the kingdom to His God and Father, once He has abolished all rule and all authority and power.
- 1 Cor 15:25 For He must reign until God puts all His enemies under His feet.
- 1 Cor 15:26 Death, the last enemy, is being abolished.
- 1 Cor 15:27 For He has subjected all things under His feet. But when He says that all things are subjected, it is evident that all things are except Him who has subjected all things to Him.
- 1 Cor 15:28 And when all things have been subjected to Him, then the Son Himself also will be subjected to Him who has subjected all things to Him, that God may be all in all.
1. God is heading up His chosen ones to be the Body of Christ with Christ as the Head—  
Eph. 1:4, 22-23:
- Eph 1:4 Even as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world to be holy and without blemish before Him in love,
- Eph 1:22 And He subjected all things under His feet and gave Him to be Head over all things to the church,
- Eph 1:23 Which is His Body, the fullness of the One who fills all in all.
- a. Christ's headship is being transmitted to the church; this means that, in a sense, we can share the headship of Christ over all things.
  - b. The church is under nothing but Christ Himself; we are above everything else because we are the Body of the One who is over all things.
  - c. The first step in the heading up of all things in Christ is for God to bring His chosen ones, His sons, out of the universal collapse and to place them under the headship of Christ—v. 22; 4:15; 5:23; Col. 1:18; 2:10, 19.
- Eph 1:22 And He subjected all things under His feet and gave Him to be Head over all things to the church,
- Eph 4:15 But holding to truth in love, we may grow up into Him in all things, who is the Head, Christ,
- Eph 5:23 For a husband is head of the wife as also Christ is Head of the church, He Himself being the Savior of the Body.
- Col 1:18 And He is the Head of the Body, the church; He is the beginning, the Firstborn from the dead, that He Himself might have the first place in all things;
- Col 2:10 And you have been made full in Him, who is the Head of all rule and authority.
- Col 2:19 And not holding the Head, out from whom all the Body, being richly supplied and knit together by means of the joints and sinews, grows with the growth of God.
2. When the church takes the lead to be headed up in Christ, God has a way to head up all other things—Eph. 1:22-23, 10:
- Eph 1:22 And He subjected all things under His feet and gave Him to be Head over all things to the church,
- Eph 1:23 Which is His Body, the fullness of the One who fills all in all.
- Eph 1:10 Unto the economy of the fullness of the times, to head up all things in Christ, the things in the heavens and the things on the earth, in Him;
- a. The church is the vessel used by God to solve His problems and to fulfill His purpose, which is to manifest Himself through man by mingling Himself with man—3:9-11.
- Eph 3:9 And to enlighten all that they may see what the economy of the mystery is, which throughout the ages has been hidden in God, who created all things,

- Eph 3:10 In order that now to the rulers and the authorities in the heavenlies the multifarious wisdom of God might be made known through the church,
- Eph 3:11 According to the eternal purpose which He made in Christ Jesus our Lord,
- b. Eventually, the Body with Christ as the Head will be the universal Head over all things—1:22-23.
- Eph 1:22 And He subjected all things under His feet and gave Him to be Head over all things to the church,
- Eph 1:23 Which is His Body, the fullness of the One who fills all in all.
3. The church life is a life of being headed up—4:15; 1 Cor. 11:3:
- Eph 4:15 But holding to truth in love, we may grow up into Him in all things, who is the Head, Christ,
- 1 Cor 11:3 But I want you to know that Christ is the head of every man, and the man is the head of the woman, and God is the head of Christ.
- a. In the proper church life we are being headed up in Christ.
- b. If we do not know what it is to be headed up in Christ, we cannot know the church.
- c. In the church life we are taking the lead to be headed up in Christ; for this we need to grow in life—Eph. 4:15.
- Eph 4:15 But holding to truth in love, we may grow up into Him in all things, who is the Head, Christ,
- d. We are headed up through the divine dispensing—1 Tim. 1:4; 3:15; Eph. 1:1; 3:2, 9, 16-17.
- 1 Tim 1:4 Nor to give heed to myths and unending genealogies, which produce questionings rather than God's economy, which is in faith.
- 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.
- Eph 1:1 Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus through the will of God, to the saints who are in Ephesus and are faithful in Christ Jesus:
- Eph 3:2 If indeed you have heard of the stewardship of the grace of God which was given to me for you,
- Eph 3:9 And to enlighten all that they may see what the economy of the mystery is, which throughout the ages has been hidden in God, who created all things,
- Eph 3:16 That He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with power through His Spirit into the inner man,
- Eph 3:17 That Christ may make His home in your hearts through faith, that you, being rooted and grounded in love,
- e. God is working Himself into His chosen and redeemed ones through an administration that is a sweet dispensing, an intimate stewardship, a comfortable household arrangement—1:10; 3:2; 1 Tim. 1:4; 3:15.
- Eph 1:10 Unto the economy of the fullness of the times, to head up all things in Christ, the things in the heavens and the things on the earth, in Him;
- Eph 3:2 If indeed you have heard of the stewardship of the grace of God which was given to me for you,
- 1 Tim 1:4 Nor to give heed to myths and unending genealogies, which produce questionings rather than God's economy, which is in faith.
- 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.
- E. The heading up in the church life is by life and light— John 1:4; 8:12:
- John 1:4 In Him was life, and the life was the light of men.
- John 8:12 Again therefore Jesus spoke to them, saying, I am the light of the world; he who follows Me shall by no means walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.
1. God's way of recovery is Christ versus Satan, life versus death, light versus darkness, and order versus confusion.

2. The collapse comes from the factor of death; the heading up comes from the factor of life—Ezek. 37:4-10.
    - Ezek 37:4 Then He said to me, Prophecy over these bones, and say to them, O dry bones, hear the word of Jehovah.
    - Ezek 37:5 Thus says the Lord Jehovah to these bones: I will cause breath to enter into you, and you shall live.
    - Ezek 37:6 And I will put sinews on you and bring flesh back on you and cover you with skin and put breath in you, and you shall live; and you will know that I am Jehovah.
    - Ezek 37:7 So I prophesied as I was commanded. And as I prophesied, there was a noise, and suddenly, a rattling; and the bones came together, bone to its bone.
    - Ezek 37:8 And I looked, and there were sinews on them, and flesh came back, and skin covered them over; but there was no breath in them.
    - Ezek 37:9 Then He said to me, Prophecy to the wind; prophecy, son of man, and say to the wind, Thus says the Lord Jehovah, Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe on these slain, that they may live.
    - Ezek 37:10 So I prophesied as He commanded me, and the breath came into them; and they lived and stood up upon their feet, an exceedingly great army.
  3. God's way to recover the oneness among His creation is to impart Himself into us as life—Rom. 8:6, 10-11, 19-21.
    - Rom 8:6 For the mind set on the flesh is death, but the mind set on the spirit is life and peace.
    - Rom 8:10 But if Christ is in you, though the body is dead because of sin, the spirit is life because of righteousness.
    - Rom 8:11 And if the Spirit of the One who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who indwells you.
    - Rom 8:19 For the anxious watching of the creation eagerly awaits the revelation of the sons of God.
    - Rom 8:20 For the creation was made subject to vanity, not of its own will, but because of Him who subjected it,
    - Rom 8:21 In hope that the creation itself will also be freed from the slavery of corruption into the freedom of the glory of the children of God.
  4. In order to be delivered from the heap of collapse in a practical way, we need to grow in life; the more we grow in life, the more we will be headed up and the more we will be rescued from the universal collapse—Eph. 4:15; Col. 2:19.
    - Eph 4:15 But holding to truth in love, we may grow up into Him in all things, who is the Head, Christ,
    - Col 2:19 And not holding the Head, out from whom all the Body, being richly supplied and knit together by means of the joints and sinews, grows with the growth of God.
  5. When God comes into us as life, the light of life shines within us— John 1:4; Eph. 5:8-9:
    - John 1:4 In Him was life, and the life was the light of men.
    - Eph 5:8 For you were once darkness but are now light in the Lord; walk as children of light
    - Eph 5:9 (For the fruit of the light consists in all goodness and righteousness and truth),
      - a. This life swallows death, and this light dispels the darkness— John 8:12.
        - John 8:12 Again therefore Jesus spoke to them, saying, I am the light of the world; he who follows Me shall by no means walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.
      - b. If we are in the life and under the light, we will be delivered out of confusion and brought into order, harmony, and oneness.
- F. In the new heaven and new earth with the New Jerusalem as the center, all things will be headed up in Christ; this will be the complete fulfillment of Ephesians 1:10—Rev. 21:2-3, 23-25; 22:1-2a:
- Eph 1:10 Unto the economy of the fullness of the times, to head up all things in Christ, the things in the heavens and the things on the earth, in Him;

- 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 21:23 And the city has no need of the sun or of the moon that they should shine in it, for the glory of God illumined it, and its lamp is the Lamb.
- Rev 21:24 And the nations will walk by its light; and the kings of the earth bring their glory into it.
- Rev 21:25 And its gates shall by no means be shut by day, for there will be no night there.
- Rev 22:1 And he showed me a river of water of life, bright as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb in the middle of its street.
- Rev 22:2a And on this side and on that side of the river was the tree of life, producing twelve fruits, yielding its fruit each month; ...
1. In the New Jerusalem everything will be saturated with life and will be under light—v. 1; 21:23.
    - Rev 22:1 And he showed me a river of water of life, bright as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb in the middle of its street.
    - Rev 21:23 And the city has no need of the sun or of the moon that they should shine in it, for the glory of God illumined it, and its lamp is the Lamb.
  2. In Revelation 21 we see the Head, the Body surrounding the Head, and all the nations walking in the light of the city; the whole universe will be headed up in the light shown through the transparent city—v. 18.
    - Rev 21 be omitted.
    - Rev 21:18 And the building work of its wall was jasper; and the city was pure gold, like clear glass.

## **Excerpts from the Ministry:**

### **THE MYSTERY HAVING BEEN HIDDEN THROUGH THE AGES**

In this message we come to the mystery of God's will. God's will has a mystery, a mystery that has been hidden through the ages (Eph. 3:5; Col. 1:26). The universe is a mystery. Why is there a heaven, and why does the earth exist? Why are there so many millions of items in the universe? Why is man here on earth? All these questions are mysteries and have given rise to many different philosophies. The mystery, which is the will of God, has been made known to the church through the apostles. A will is an intention, and the will of God is God's intention. God's intention is intimately related to the desire of His heart. Thus, the mystery of the universe is a matter of God's will, which is related to the desire of God's heart. We need to know the mystery, the will of God, and the desire of God's heart.

Some may say that God's will and intention is to have the church and that the church is the desire of His heart. This is correct, but we need to ask what the church is. Many Christians, including Christian teachers, do not have a clear understanding concerning the church. The church is not simply a group of people. In ourselves we are not the church; we are pitiful sinners. The only way we can become the church is for God in His Son to work Himself into our being. Most Christians today do not see the crucial and vital matter that God in His Son is working Himself into His chosen and redeemed ones. They may know about God's selection and redemption, and they may realize that they are the chosen and redeemed ones. But they do not see that the very God who has chosen and redeemed them desires, in the person of the Son, to work Himself into them. Neither selection nor redemption is the goal. Both are steps toward the goal. God's goal is to work Himself into our being.

I realize that such a word may sound strange to many. For years I was in various branches of Christianity: fundamental Christianity, the Brethren assemblies, the inner-life practices, and the Pentecostal movement. But I was never told that in the person of the Son, God is working Himself into His redeemed ones. Nevertheless, this is the mystery of the universe.

The New Testament proves that God is working Himself into us. The Father, the Son, and the

Spirit are all in us (Eph. 4:6; 2 Cor. 13:5; John 14:17). According to 1 John, we are in God, and God is in us (4:15). Furthermore, we abide in Him, and He abides in us (John 15:4). In Philippians 1:21 the apostle Paul could even say, "To me, to live is Christ." In Galatians 2:20 he said that he lived no longer but that Christ lived in him. All these verses indicate that God in the Son is working Himself into us...

The mystery of the universe is the church, and the church is a group of people into whom God is working Himself. Eventually, the church will be fully saturated with God and will consummately become the holy city, the New Jerusalem. The church will not only be saturated with God but also mingled with Him. This does not mean, however, that we shall become the Godhead. No, this is neither what we say nor what we mean. Nevertheless, as those who are being saturated with God and mingled with Him, we shall become the very expression of God. The New Jerusalem will be the corporate expression of God. As we have pointed out a number of times, both God on the throne (Rev. 4:3) and the New Jerusalem (21:11) have the appearance of jasper. This means that the entire city has the appearance of God and is the expression of God. This is the mystery of the universe.

What a deliverance it would be for Christians if they could only see this! Many know only about being saved, being regenerated, becoming the children of God, and going to heaven some day. But the concept of being saved for the goal of going to heaven is much lower than the mystery of God's will. The mystery of God's will is to have a church constituted with those who have been saturated and mingled with God...

The mystery of the universe is that God is working Himself into us. Everything is working together for this purpose (Rom. 8:28). All things serve this goal. Everything is for God's working of Himself into our being. This is much different from merely having a happy life. You may be very happy today but not tomorrow. You may be happy in a meeting, but when you return home, your wife or husband may give you a difficult time. The mystery of God's will is not that we are becoming happy people. Today is not the time for us to be fully happy, because the time is not yet ripe. Because many do not have the adequate vision or revelation, they do not know what is actually taking place in the church life. They think that we are simply here to have a good time. But this is not the mystery of God's will. This mystery is that God is dispensing Himself into us to produce the church for Himself. This is a mystery hidden through the ages.

### **GOD'S WILL BEING GOD'S INTENTION TO ACCOMPLISH WHAT HE DESIRES FOR HIMSELF**

God's will is God's intention to accomplish what He has purposed in eternity past and what He desires for Himself for eternity future. He purposed and He desires to have the church. This is His will and intention.

### **THE MYSTERY OF GOD'S WILL HAVING BEEN MADE KNOWN TO US BY REVELATION**

Ephesians 1:9 says that God has made known to us the mystery of His will. To make known to us the mystery of His will is one item of God's wisdom and prudence. In eternity God planned a will. This will has been hidden in Him; hence, it was a mystery. In His wisdom and prudence He has made this hidden mystery known to us through His revelation in Christ, that is, through Christ's incarnation, crucifixion, resurrection, and ascension. It was the pleasure of God's heart to reveal to us the mystery of His will.

### **ACCORDING TO GOD'S GOOD PLEASURE**

God's good pleasure is the desire of His heart, that is, to have the church, and God's revelation of His hidden will is according to this desire of His heart. This is according to His good pleasure.

### **GOD'S GOOD PLEASURE HAVING BEEN PURPOSED BY GOD**

## **In Himself**

God's good pleasure has been purposed by God in Himself. This means that God Himself is the initiation, origination, and sphere of His eternal purpose. God has a plan, a desire, and according to His plan, He has a purpose. The existence of the universe is according to God's purpose. Heaven, earth, millions of items, and the human race are all according to God's purposed desire. Eventually, all these things will issue in God's desire. In the universe there is a desire, God's desire. Because this desire has been purposed by God, no one and nothing can overthrow it. Everything that takes place on earth is for this purpose. We, the sons of God, in whom God's grace abounds, are the focal point of His purpose, and everything is working for us. God has purposed this desire in Himself. He did not take counsel with anyone else regarding it.

God's good pleasure is what He has purposed in Himself for an administration (v. 10). The entire universe will eventually be under one administration. The Greek word rendered "administration" is *oikonomia*, from which we get the English word *economy*. God has purposed to have an economy. All the kingdoms in the universe—the angelic kingdom, the demonic kingdom, the human kingdom, the animal kingdom, and the plant kingdom—are for this economy, this administration, and are moving toward it. For example, today's world situation, the center of which is the Middle East, is according to the Bible. Since the reformation of the nation of Israel in 1948 and especially since the return of Jerusalem to Israel in 1967, the Middle East has become the center of international relations. This is altogether according to the Bible, and it is a sign that the universe is moving toward God's administration. Such an administration is what God has planned and purposed according to His desire. All the kingdoms will be under this unique administration, which is to head up all things in Christ. (*Life-study of Ephesians*, pp. 64-69)

## **THE HEADING UP OF ALL THINGS**

In Ephesians 1:10 Paul says, "Unto the economy of the fullness of the times, to head up all things in Christ, the things in the heavens and the things on the earth, in Him." We need to note that it is in Christ that God intends to head up all things. The word *Christ* here literally means "the Christ"; it refers to the One mentioned in verse 1 and verse 3, the One in whom are the spiritual blessings of God and in whom are the faithful saints, who participate in the blessings. He is a particular One; hence, He is called "the Christ."

The Greek word rendered "economy" in verse 10 is *oikonomia*, which means "house law, household management, or administration," and derivatively, "administrative dispensation, plan, or economy." The economy that God, according to His desire, planned and purposed in Himself is to head up all things in Christ at the fullness of the times. This is accomplished through the dispensing of the abundant life supply of the Triune God as the life factor into all the members of the church that they may rise up from the death situation and be attached to the Body.

The expression *the times* in verse 10 refers to the ages. The fullness of the times will be when the new heaven and new earth appear after all the dispensations of God in all the ages have been completed. Altogether there are four ages: the age of sin (Adam), the age of the law (Moses), the age of grace (Christ), and the age of the kingdom (the millennium).

God's eternal intention is to head up all things in Christ, who has been appointed to be the universal Head. Through all the dispensations of God in all the ages, all things will be headed up in Christ in the new heaven and new earth. That will be God's eternal administration and economy. Thus, the heading up of all things is the issue of all the items covered in verses 3 through 9. God chose us to be holy, predestinated us unto sonship, accomplished redemption for us through the blood of Christ, graced us in the Beloved, and caused grace to abound to us in all wisdom and prudence in order that He may head up all things in Christ.

Ephesians 1:22 says that God gave Christ to be Head over all things. This reveals that the

heading up of all things is to the church so that the Body of Christ may share in all that is of Christ as the Head, having been rescued from the heap of the universal collapse in death and darkness, which was caused by the rebellion of the angels and the rebellion of man. In Christ God is in the process of heading up all things in heaven and on earth. However, without the church as the Body to match Christ as the Head, it will not be possible for God to head up all things in Christ. The heading up of all things is accomplished by the Head, but it cannot be accomplished without a Body for the Head. Whether Christ can be the Head over all things, whether all things can be subjected to the authority of Christ, and whether all things can be headed up in Christ completely depend upon whether or not the church has been produced and has grown up (4:14-16; Col. 2:19). When the church is fully grown, God is able to subject all things to the authority of Christ. By means of the church, Christ is able to be the Head over all things. Eventually, the Body with Christ as the Head will be the universal Head over all things. When everything is headed up in Christ, there will be absolute peace and harmony (Isa. 2:4; 11:6; 55:12; Psa. 96:12-13), a full rescue out of the collapse. This will begin from the time of the restoration of all things (Acts 3:21).

When God created the universe, everything of the universe was in oneness; all things in it were in harmony, not in chaos. God and the universe were in harmony. This harmony is the great oneness of the universe. All things related to the universe depend on God, who is one, as the factor of their oneness. The center of the universe is God Himself; hence, the oneness of the universe is God Himself. There was oneness in the creation of the universe, and in this oneness there was no confusion. Yet because of Satan's rebellion, which was followed by man's fall, this original oneness in creation was ruined so that the entire universe was brought into confusion. Satan damaged the oneness of the universe in creation by introducing death into all creation, which death severed the Creator's relationship with creation. In other words, when Satan brought death into the universe, the universe was separated from God, and the oneness of the universe was lost. Thus, there is not the full harmony in the universe.

Yet God had an eternal plan to head up all things in Christ, that is, to make Christ the Head of all things and the Head above all things. God's way to recover the oneness among His creation is to impart Himself in Christ into us as life (Rom. 8:6, 10-11, 19-21). The Triune God as life brings in light, and light issues in harmony and brings all things into oneness. Hence, the believers participate in this heading up by growing in life, by being headed up in the proper church life, and by living under Christ's light (John 1:4; Rev. 21:23-25). The more we grow in life, the more we will be headed up and the more we will be rescued from the universal collapse (Eph. 4:15; Col. 2:19). This process of heading up all things in Christ is still continuing, and the heading up of all things will be fully accomplished and manifested when Christ finishes His work to bring forth the new creation out of the old creation through all the dispensations of God. It is through this new creation that Christ will head up all creation and bring it into the universal oneness; this will issue in the new heaven and the new earth. In the new heaven and new earth with the New Jerusalem as the center, all things will be headed up in Christ; this will be the complete fulfillment of the heading up of all things spoken of in Ephesians 1:10. In Revelation 21 we see the Head, the Body surrounding the Head, and all the nations walking in the light of the city. The whole universe will be headed up in the light shown through the transparent city (v. 18). (*The Conclusion of the New Testament*, pp. 3341-3344)