

## Message Nine

# The Full Ministry of Christ in Three Stages

EM Hymns: 894, 593

Scripture Reading: John 1:14; 1 Cor. 15:45b; Rev. 1:4; 3:1;  
4:5; 5:6; 2:4-5; 19:7-9; 21:2; 22:17a

- 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.
- 1 Cor 15:45b ... the last Adam became a life-giving Spirit.
- 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 3:1 And to the messenger of the church in Sardis write: These things says He who has the seven Spirits of God and the seven stars: I know your works, that you have a name that you are living, and yet you are dead.
- Rev 4:5 And out of the throne come forth lightnings and voices and thunders. And there were seven lamps of fire burning before the throne, which are the seven Spirits of God;
- Rev 5:6 And I saw in the midst of the throne and of the four living creatures and in the midst of the elders a Lamb standing as having just been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent forth into all the earth.
- Rev 2:4 But I have one thing against you, that you have left your first love.
- Rev 2:5 Remember therefore where you have fallen from and repent and do the first works; but if not, I am coming to you and will remove your lampstand out of its place, unless you repent.
- 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.
- Rev 19:8 And it was given to her that she should be clothed in fine linen, bright and clean; for the fine linen is the righteousnesses of the saints.
- Rev 19:9 And he said to me, Write, Blessed are they who are called to the marriage dinner of the Lamb. And he said to me, These are the true words of God.
- 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 22:17a And the Spirit and the bride say, Come! And let him who hears say, Come! ...

### I. The unique teaching of God's New Testament economy (1 Tim. 1:3-4) is the teaching concerning the full ministry of Christ in three stages—incarnation, inclusion, and intensification:

- 1 Tim 1:3 Even as I exhorted you, when I was going into Macedonia, to remain in Ephesus in order that you might charge certain ones not to teach different things
- 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.
- A. "What the Lord's recovery will be and how it will be depend upon how we handle this teaching" (Witness Lee); this teaching can be summarized in one simple sentence—"The Lord's recovery is God becoming the flesh, the flesh becoming the life-giving Spirit, and the life-giving Spirit becoming the sevenfold intensified Spirit to build up the church that becomes the Body of Christ and that consummates the New Jerusalem" (*The Divine and Mystical Realm*, pp. 17-18).
- B. In order to work together with God as His co-workers (2 Cor. 6:1; 1 Cor. 3:9), we need to know, experience, and enjoy Christ (to gain Christ—Phil. 3:8-14) in His full ministry in His three divine and mystical stages.
- 2 Cor 6:1 And working together with Him, we also entreat you not to receive the grace of God in vain;
- 1 Cor 3:9 For we are God's fellow workers; you are God's cultivated land, God's building.
- 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.

## II. In the first stage, the stage of His incarnation, from His human birth to His death, Christ accomplished the following main things:

- A. In the stage of His incarnation Christ brought the infinite God into the finite man; although Christ came forth from Bethlehem, His goings forth were from ancient times, from the days of eternity; this refers to Christ's eternal origin and indicates that the Triune God was preparing to come forth out of eternity into time, to come with His divinity into humanity by being born in Bethlehem as a man—Micah 5:2.
- Micah 5:2 (But you, O Bethlehem Ephrathah, / So little to be among the thousands of Judah, / From you there will come forth to Me / He who is to be Ruler in Israel; / And His goings forth are from ancient times, / From the days of eternity.)
- B. In the stage of His incarnation Christ united, mingled, and incorporated the Triune God with the tripartite man—Luke 1:35; 2:40, 52; John 14:10-11; 1:14.
- Luke 1:35 And the angel answered and said to her, The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore also the holy thing which is born will be called the Son of God.
- Luke 2:40 And the little child grew and became strong, being filled with wisdom, and the grace of God was upon Him.
- Luke 2:52 And Jesus advanced in wisdom and stature and in the grace manifested in Him before God and men.
- John 14:10 Do you not believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in Me? The words that I say to you I do not speak from Myself, but the Father who abides in Me does His works.
- John 14:11 Believe Me that I am in the Father and the Father is in Me; but if not, believe because of the works themselves.
- 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.
- C. In the stage of His incarnation Christ expressed in His humanity the bountiful God in His rich attributes through His aromatic virtues:
- The Man-Savior's human virtues of affection, kindness, patience, mercy, and understanding were displayed in His fellowship with a sinful woman; His divine attributes, especially the attributes of divine authority to forgive a person's sins and His giving of peace to the forgiven sinner, were also displayed—Luke 7:36-50.
- Luke 7:36 Now a certain one of the Pharisees asked Him to eat with him. And He entered into the Pharisee's house and reclined at table.
- Luke 7:37 And behold, there was a woman in the city who was a sinner, and when she learned that He was reclining at table in the Pharisee's house, she brought an alabaster flask of ointment.
- Luke 7:38 And she stood behind Him at His feet weeping and began to wet His feet with her tears and wiped them with the hair of her head, and she kissed His feet affectionately and anointed them with the ointment.
- Luke 7:39 But when the Pharisee who had invited Him saw this, he said within himself, This man, if He were a prophet, would know who and what sort of woman this is who is touching Him, because she is a sinner.
- Luke 7:40 And Jesus answered and said to him, Simon, I have something to say to you. And he said, Teacher, say it.
- Luke 7:41 A certain moneylender had two debtors: one owed five hundred denarii and the other fifty.

- Luke 7:42 But since they had nothing with which to repay, he graciously forgave them both. Which of them therefore will love him more?
- Luke 7:43 Simon answered and said, I suppose the one whom he graciously forgave the more. And He said to him, You have judged correctly.
- Luke 7:44 And turning to the woman, He said to Simon, Do you see this woman? I entered into your house; you did not give Me water for My feet, but she, with her tears, has wet My feet and with her hair has wiped them.
- Luke 7:45 You did not give Me a kiss, but she, from the time I entered, has not stopped kissing My feet affectionately.
- Luke 7:46 You did not anoint My head with oil, but she has anointed My feet with ointment.
- Luke 7:47 For this reason I say to you, Her sins which are many are forgiven, because she loved much; but to whom little is forgiven, he loves little.
- Luke 7:48 And He said to her, Your sins are forgiven.
- Luke 7:49 And those who were reclining at table with Him began to say within themselves, Who is this who even forgives sins?
- Luke 7:50 But He said to the woman, Your faith has saved you. Go in peace.
2. The Man-Savior, as the good Samaritan, came down to the place where the wounded victim of the Judaistic robbers lay in his miserable and dying condition; He was moved with compassion in His humanity with His divinity and rendered him tender healing and saving care, fully meeting his urgent need—10:25-37.
- Luke 10:25 And behold, a certain lawyer stood up and put Him to the test, saying, Teacher, what should I do to inherit eternal life?
- Luke 10:26 And He said to him, What is written in the law? How do you read it?
- Luke 10:27 And he answered and said, "You shall love the Lord your God from your whole heart and with your whole soul and with your whole strength and with your whole mind, and your neighbor as yourself."
- Luke 10:28 And He said to him, You have answered correctly; do this, and you shall have life.
- Luke 10:29 But he, wanting to justify himself, said to Jesus, And who is my neighbor?
- Luke 10:30 Jesus, taking up the question, said, A certain man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and he fell among robbers, who having both stripped him and beat him, went away, leaving him half dead.
- Luke 10:31 And by coincidence a certain priest was going down on that road; and when he saw him, he passed by on the opposite side.
- Luke 10:32 And likewise also a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the opposite side.
- Luke 10:33 But a certain Samaritan, who was journeying, came upon him; and when he saw him, he was moved with compassion;
- Luke 10:34 And he came to him and bound up his wounds and poured oil and wine on them. And placing him on his own beast, he brought him to an inn and took care of him.
- Luke 10:35 And on the next day he took out two denarii and gave them to the innkeeper and said, Take care of him; and whatever you spend in addition to this, when I return, I will repay you.
- Luke 10:36 Which of these three, does it seem to you, has become a neighbor to him who fell into the hands of the robbers?
- Luke 10:37 And he said, The one who showed mercy to him. And Jesus said to him, Go, and you do likewise.
3. When Christ was being crucified, one of the two criminals who were crucified with Him said, "Jesus, remember me when You come into Your kingdom"; Jesus said to him, "Truly I say to you, Today you shall be with Me in Paradise"; this shows the divine attribute of His eternal and indiscriminate love expressed through His cherishing human virtue—23:42-43.
- Luke 23:42 And he said, Jesus, remember me when You come into Your kingdom.
- Luke 23:43 And He said to him, Truly I say to you, Today you shall be with Me in Paradise.
- D. In the stage of His incarnation Christ accomplished His all- inclusive judicial redemption through His death on the cross:

1. His judicial redemption is according to the righteousness of God as the procedure of God's salvation to satisfy the requirements of God's righteous law on sinners—Rom. 1:17a; 3:21-26; 9:30-31.
  - Rom 1:17a For the righteousness of God is revealed in it out of faith to faith, ...
  - Rom 3:21 But now, apart from the law, the righteousness of God has been manifested, witness being borne to it by the Law and the Prophets;
  - Rom 3:22 Even the righteousness of God through the faith of Jesus Christ to all those who believe, for there is no distinction;
  - Rom 3:23 For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,
  - Rom 3:24 Being justified freely by His grace through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus;
  - Rom 3:25 Whom God set forth as a propitiation place through faith in His blood, for the demonstrating of His righteousness, in that in His forbearance God passed over the sins that had previously occurred,
  - Rom 3:26 With a view to the demonstrating of His righteousness in the present time, so that He might be righteous and the One who justifies him who is of the faith of Jesus.
  - Rom 9:30 What then shall we say? That the Gentiles who did not pursue righteousness have laid hold of righteousness, but a righteousness which is out of faith;
  - Rom 9:31 But Israel, pursuing a law of righteousness, did not attain to that law.
2. It is for sinners to be forgiven before God (Luke 24:47), washed (Heb. 1:3), justified (Rom. 3:24-25), reconciled to God (5:10a), and sanctified unto God positionally (1 Cor. 1:2; Heb. 13:12), thereby qualifying and positioning the believers to enjoy God's organic salvation and enter into God's higher grace for the accomplishment of God's eternal economy and the attainment of God's ultimate purpose (Rom. 5:10, 17, 21).
  - Luke 24:47 And that repentance for forgiveness of sins would be proclaimed in His name to all the nations, beginning from Jerusalem.
  - Heb 1:3 Who, being the effulgence of His glory and the impress of His substance and upholding and bearing all things by the word of His power, having made purification of sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high;
  - Rom 3:24 Being justified freely by His grace through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus;
  - Rom 3:25 Whom God set forth as a propitiation place through faith in His blood, for the demonstrating of His righteousness, in that in His forbearance God passed over the sins that had previously occurred,
  - 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:
  - Heb 13:12 Therefore also Jesus, that He might sanctify the people through His own blood, suffered outside the gate.
  - Rom 5:10 For if we, being enemies, were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more we will be saved in His life, having been reconciled,
  - Rom 5:17 For if, by the offense of the one, death reigned through the one, much more those who receive the abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness will reign in life through the One, Jesus Christ.
  - Rom 5:21 In order that just as sin reigned in death, so also grace might reign through righteousness unto eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

### **III. In the second stage, the stage of His inclusion, from His resurrection to the degradation of the church, Christ accomplished the following main things:**

- A. He was begotten in resurrection to be God's firstborn Son; "the seed of David" becoming "the Son of God" speaks of the process of Christ's being designated the firstborn Son of God by resurrection; this is the gospel of God, unto which Paul was separated—1:1-4:
  - Rom 1:1 Paul, a slave of Christ Jesus, a called apostle, separated unto the gospel of God,
  - Rom 1:2 Which He promised beforehand through His prophets in the holy Scriptures,
  - 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;
1. By incarnation Christ, the only begotten Son of God in His divinity (John 1:18), put on the flesh, the human nature, which had nothing to do with divinity; in His humanity He was not the Son of God.
 

John 1:18 No one has ever seen God; the only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, He has declared Him.
  2. By resurrection His human nature was sanctified, uplifted, and transformed; in resurrection His humanity was deified, “sonized,” meaning that He was designated the Son of God, becoming the firstborn Son of God with both divinity and humanity—Rom. 8:29; Acts 13:33.
 

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;

Acts 13:33 That God has fully fulfilled this promise to us their children in raising up Jesus, as it is also written in the second Psalm, "You are My Son; today I have begotten You."
  3. The divinity, the Spirit of holiness, in Christ became operative in His death, and in resurrection He “blossomed” to be the firstborn Son of God and the life-dispensing Spirit, imparting His divine life into us to make us His many brothers—Rom. 1:4; 8:29; 1 Cor. 15:45b.
 

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 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;

1 Cor 15:45b ... the last Adam became a life-giving Spirit.
  4. The prototype is the firstborn Son of God, and the reproduction is the many sons of God, the members of the prototype to be His Body, which consummates in the New Jerusalem—Col. 1:18; 1 Pet. 1:3.
 

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;

1 Pet 1:3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His great mercy has regenerated us unto a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,
  5. Christ has already been designated the Son of God, but we are still in the process of designation, the process of being “sonized,” deified—Rom. 8:28-29:
 

Rom 8:28 And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose.

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;

    - a. In resurrection Christ in His humanity was designated the Son of God, and by means of such a resurrection we also are in the process of being designated sons of God—v. 11.
 

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.
    - b. The key to the process of designation is resurrection, which is the indwelling Christ as the rising-up Spirit, the designating Spirit, the power of life in our spirit; we urgently need to learn how to walk according to the spirit, to enjoy and experience the designating Spirit—John 11:25; Rom. 8:10-11; Acts 2:24; 1 Cor. 15:26; 5:4; Rom. 8:4, 6, 14.
 

John 11:25 Jesus said to her, I am the resurrection and the life; he who believes into Me, even if he should die, shall live;

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.
- Acts 2:24 Whom God has raised up, having loosed the pangs of death, since it was not possible for Him to be held by it.
- 1 Cor 15:26 Death, the last enemy, is being abolished.
- 1 Cor 5:4 In the name of our Lord Jesus, when you and my spirit have been assembled, with the power of our Lord Jesus,
- Rom 8:4 That the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us, who do not walk according to the flesh but according to the spirit.
- Rom 8:6 For the mind set on the flesh is death, but the mind set on the spirit is life and peace.
- Rom 8:14 For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God.
- B. The incarnated Christ, the last Adam, became the life-giving Spirit—1 Cor. 15:45b; John 6:63; 2 Cor. 3:6:
- 1 Cor 15:45b ... the last Adam became a life-giving Spirit.
- John 6:63 It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh profits nothing; the words which I have spoken to you are spirit and are life.
- 2 Cor 3:6 Who has also made us sufficient as ministers of a new covenant, ministers not of the letter but of the Spirit; for the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life.
1. Our use of the word *inclusion* is based on our use of the word *inclusive*—for Christ, as the last Adam, to become the life-giving Spirit was for Him to become the all-inclusive Spirit— Phil. 1:19.
 

Phil 1:19 For I know that for me this will turn out to salvation through your petition and the bountiful supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ,
  2. The life-giving Spirit, who is the pneumatic Christ, is also called the Spirit of life (Rom. 8:2), the Spirit of Jesus (Acts 16:7), the Spirit of Jesus Christ (Phil. 1:19), and the Lord Spirit (2 Cor. 3:18).
 

Rom 8:2 For the law of the Spirit of life has freed me in Christ Jesus from the law of sin and of death.

Acts 16:7 And when they had come to Mysia, they tried to go into Bithynia, yet the Spirit of Jesus did not allow them.

Phil 1:19 For I know that for me this will turn out to salvation through your petition and the bountiful supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ,

2 Cor 3:18 But we all with unveiled face, beholding and reflecting like a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, even as from the Lord Spirit.
  3. The ministry of Christ in the stage of inclusion as the life-giving Spirit is revealed in Romans 8, which shows that the life of the Triune God, as the law of the Spirit of life dispensed into our tripartite being, makes us men of life to be God’s sons and the members of Christ to constitute the Body of Christ for His expression, thus fulfilling God’s original intention— Gen. 2:7, 9; Rom. 8:14; 12:5:
 

Rom 8 be omitted.

Gen 2:7 Jehovah God formed man from the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living soul.

Gen 2:9 And out of the ground Jehovah God caused to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for food, as well as the tree of life in the middle of the garden and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

Rom 8:14 For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God.

Rom 12:5 So we who are many are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another.

    - a. “The law of the Spirit of life [Gk. *zoe*] has freed me in Christ Jesus from the law of sin and of death”—8:2.
    - b. “If Christ is in you, though the body is dead because of sin, the spirit is life [Gk. *zoe*] because of righteousness”—v. 10.

- c. “The mind set on the spirit is life [Gk. *zoe*] and peace”—v. 6.
  - d. “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 [Gk. *zoe*] to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who indwells you”—v. 11.
- C. In His resurrection Christ regenerated the believers for His Body—1 Pet. 1:3:
- 1 Pet 1:3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His great mercy has regenerated us unto a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,
- 1. The pneumatic Christ became the firstborn Son of God and the life-giving Spirit for the regenerating of the believers, making them the many sons of God born of God with Him in one universally big delivery through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.
  - 2. All the believers of Christ have been baptized in one Spirit into the one Body of Christ and have been given to drink of this one Spirit for the constitution of the Body of Christ—1 Cor. 12:13.  
1 Cor 12:13 For also in one Spirit we were all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free, and were all given to drink one Spirit.
  - 3. In His resurrection Christ gave Himself as the all-inclusive life-giving Spirit without measure through His speaking of the words of God— John 3:34.  
John 3:34 For He whom God has sent speaks the words of God, for He gives the Spirit not by measure.

**IV. In the third stage, the stage of His intensification, from the degradation of the church to the consummation of the New Jerusalem, Christ intensifies His organic salvation, produces the overcomers, and consummates the New Jerusalem:**

- A. Because of the degradation of the church, Christ as the life-giving Spirit has been intensified sevenfold to become the seven Spirits— the sevenfold intensified life-giving Spirit—Rev. 1:4; 3:1; 4:5; 5:6.
- 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 3:1 And to the messenger of the church in Sardis write: These things says He who has the seven Spirits of God and the seven stars: I know your works, that you have a name that you are living, and yet you are dead.
- Rev 4:5 And out of the throne come forth lightnings and voices and thunders. And there were seven lamps of fire burning before the throne, which are the seven Spirits of God;
- Rev 5:6 And I saw in the midst of the throne and of the four living creatures and in the midst of the elders a Lamb standing as having just been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent forth into all the earth.
- B. Christ as the sevenfold intensified life-giving Spirit intensifies His organic salvation to save the believers from:
- 1. The formal church life and the loss of the first love to the Lord, the shining capacity of the lampstand, and the enjoyment of Christ as life in the church in Ephesus—2:1-7.  
Rev 2:1 To the messenger of the church in Ephesus write: These things says He who holds the seven stars in His right hand, He who walks in the midst of the seven golden lampstands:  
Rev 2:2 I know your works and your labor and your endurance and that you cannot bear evil men; and you have tried those who call themselves apostles and are not, and have found them to be false;  
Rev 2:3 And you have endurance and have borne all things because of My name and have not grown weary.  
Rev 2:4 But I have one thing against you, that you have left your first love.  
Rev 2:5 Remember therefore where you have fallen from and repent and do the first works; but if not, I am coming to you and will remove your lampstand out of its place, unless you repent.

- Rev 2:6 But this you have, that you hate the works of the Nicolaitans, which I also hate.  
 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.
2. The defeat that leads to the taste of the second death in the church in Smyrna—vv. 8-11.
- Rev 2:8 And to the messenger of the church in Smyrna write: These things says the First and the Last, who became dead and lived again:  
 Rev 2:9 I know your tribulation and poverty (but you are rich) and the slander from those who call themselves Jews and are not, but are a synagogue of Satan.  
 Rev 2:10 Do not fear the things that you are about to suffer. Behold, the devil is about to cast some of you into prison that you may be tried, and you will have tribulation for ten days. Be faithful unto death, and I will give you the crown of life.  
 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.
3. The worldliness in union with the world as a marriage and the teaching of Balaam and the Nicolaitans in the church in Pergamos—vv. 12-17.
- Rev 2:12 And to the messenger of the church in Pergamos write: These things says He who has the sharp two-edged sword:  
 Rev 2:13 I know where you dwell, where Satan's throne is; and you hold fast My name and have not denied My faith, even in the days of Antipas, My witness, My faithful one, who was killed among you, where Satan dwells.  
 Rev 2:14 But I have a few things against you, that you have some there who hold the teaching of Balaam, who taught Balak to put a stumbling block before the sons of Israel, to eat idol sacrifices and to commit fornication.  
 Rev 2:15 In the same way you also have some who hold in like manner the teaching of the Nicolaitans.  
 Rev 2:16 Repent therefore; but if not, I am coming to you quickly, and I will make war with them with the sword of My mouth.  
 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.
4. Fornication, idolatry, demonic teaching, and satanic depths in Catholicism, signified by the church in Thyatira—vv. 18-29.
- Rev 2:18 And to the messenger of the church in Thyatira write: These things says the Son of God, He who has eyes like a flame of fire, and His feet are like shining bronze:  
 Rev 2:19 I know your works and love and faith and service and your endurance and that your last works are more than the first.  
 Rev 2:20 But I have something against you, that you tolerate the woman Jezebel, she who calls herself a prophetess and teaches and leads My slaves astray to commit fornication and to eat idol sacrifices.  
 Rev 2:21 And I gave her time that she might repent, and she is not willing to repent of her fornication.  
 Rev 2:22 Behold, I cast her into a bed, and those who commit adultery with her, into great tribulation, unless they repent of her works;  
 Rev 2:23 And her children I will kill with death; and all the churches will know that I am He who searches the inward parts and the hearts; and I will give to each one of you according to your works.  
 Rev 2:24 But I say to you—the rest in Thyatira, as many as do not have this teaching, who have not known the deep things of Satan, as they Say—I put no other burden upon you;  
 Rev 2:25 Nevertheless what you have hold fast until I come.  
 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 2:29 He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.
5. The spiritual death—dead and dying—in Protestantism, signified by the church in Sardis—3:1-6.
- Rev 3:1 And to the messenger of the church in Sardis write: These things says He who has the seven Spirits of God and the seven stars: I know your works, that you have a name that you are living, and yet you are dead.
- Rev 3:2 Become watchful and establish the things which remain, which were about to die; for I have found none of your works completed before My God.
- Rev 3:3 Remember therefore how you have received and heard, and keep it and repent. If therefore you will not watch, I will come as a thief, and you shall by no means know at what hour I will come upon you.
- Rev 3:4 But you have a few names in Sardis who have not defiled their garments, and they will walk with Me in white because they are worthy.
- 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 3:6 He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.
6. The losing of the crown, which has been gained already in Brethrenism, signified by the church in Philadelphia—vv. 7-13.
- Rev 3:7 And to the messenger of the church in Philadelphia write: These things says the Holy One, the true One, the One who has the key of David, the One who opens and no one will shut, and shuts and no one opens:
- 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.
- Rev 3:9 Behold, I will make those of the synagogue of Satan, those who call themselves Jews and are not, but lie—behold, I will cause them to come and fall prostrate before your feet and to know that I have loved you.
- Rev 3:10 Because you have kept the word of My endurance, I also will keep you out of the hour of trial, which is about to come on the whole inhabited earth, to try them who dwell on the earth.
- Rev 3:11 I come quickly; hold fast what you have that no one take your crown.
- 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 3:13 He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.
7. The lukewarmness and Christlessness in degraded Brethrenism, signified by the church in Laodicea—vv. 14-22.
- Rev 3:14 And to the messenger of the church in Laodicea write: These things says the Amen, the faithful and true Witness, the beginning of the creation of God:
- Rev 3:15 I know your works, that you are neither cold nor hot; I wish that you were cold or hot.
- Rev 3:16 So, because you are lukewarm and neither hot nor cold, I am about to spew you out of My mouth.
- Rev 3:17 Because you say, I am wealthy and have become rich and have need of nothing, and do not know that you are wretched and miserable and poor and blind and naked,
- Rev 3:18 I counsel you to buy from Me gold refined by fire that you may be rich, and white garments that you may be clothed and that the shame of your nakedness may not be manifested, and eyesalve to anoint your eyes that you may see.
- Rev 3:19 As many as I love I rebuke and discipline; be zealous therefore and repent.
- 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.
- Rev 3:22 He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.

- C. If we would be overcomers, we must recover, maintain, and develop our first love toward the Lord:
1. The leaving of the first love is the source and the main reason for the failure of the church throughout the ages—2:4-5.  
 Rev 2:4 But I have one thing against you, that you have left your first love.  
 Rev 2:5 Remember therefore where you have fallen from and repent and do the first works; but if not, I am coming to you and will remove your lampstand out of its place, unless you repent.
  2. To love the Lord Jesus with the first love is to give Him the first place in all things; we need to give Christ the first place, the preeminence, in all things and in all matters, regarding Him as everything in our life—Col. 1:18b.  
 Col 1:18b ... He is the beginning, the Firstborn from the dead, that He Himself might have the first place in all things;
  3. We must not love anyone or anything above the Lord, including our soul-life—Matt. 10:37-39; Rev. 12:11.  
 Matt 10:37 He who loves father or mother above Me is not worthy of Me; and he who loves son or daughter above Me is not worthy of Me;  
 Matt 10:38 And he who does not take his cross and follow after Me is not worthy of Me.  
 Matt 10:39 He who finds his soul-life shall lose it, and he who loses his soul-life for My sake shall find it.  
 Rev 12:11 And they overcame him because of the blood of the Lamb and because of the word of their testimony, and they loved not their soul-life even unto death.
- D. We are saved from degradation by the speaking of the sevenfold intensified pneumatic Christ and by the overcoming saints living in their spirit—2:1, 7; 1:10; 4:2; 17:3; 21:10.  
 Rev 2:1 To the messenger of the church in Ephesus write: These things says He who holds the seven stars in His right hand, He who walks in the midst of the seven golden lampstands:  
 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 1:10 I was in spirit on the Lord's Day and heard behind me a loud voice like a trumpet,  
 Rev 4:2 Immediately I was in spirit; and behold, there was a throne set in heaven, and upon the throne there was One sitting;  
 Rev 17:3 And he carried me away in spirit into a wilderness; and I saw a woman sitting upon a scarlet beast, full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns.  
 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,
- E. Christ's sevenfold intensified heavenly ministry is for the complete preparation of the bride for Christ (19:7-9), the formation of the bridal army (vv. 11-21; 17:14), the binding of Satan (20:1-3), the bringing in of the kingdom of Christ and of God (vv. 4-6), and the consummation of the New Jerusalem (2:7; 21:2).  
 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.  
 Rev 19:8 And it was given to her that she should be clothed in fine linen, bright and clean; for the fine linen is the righteousneses of the saints.  
 Rev 19:9 And he said to me, Write, Blessed are they who are called to the marriage dinner of the Lamb. And he said to me, These are the true words of God.  
 Rev 19:11 And I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse, and He who sits on it called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He judges and makes war.  
 Rev 19:12 And His eyes are a flame of fire, and on His head are many diadems, and He has a name written which no one knows but Himself.  
 Rev 19:13 And He is clothed with a garment dipped in blood; and His name is called the Word of God.  
 Rev 19:14 And the armies which are in heaven followed Him on white horses, dressed in fine linen, white and clean.  
 Rev 19:15 And out of His mouth proceeds a sharp sword, that with it He might smite the nations; and He will shepherd them with an iron rod; and He treads the winepress of the fury of the wrath of God the Almighty.

Rev 19:16 And He has on His garment and on His thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS.

Rev 19:17 And I saw an angel standing in the sun, and he cried out with a loud voice, saying to all the birds that fly in mid-heaven, Come here; gather yourselves to the great dinner of God,

Rev 19:18 That you may eat the flesh of kings and the flesh of generals and the flesh of mighty men and the flesh of horses and of those who sit on them and the flesh of all men, both free and slave and small and great.

Rev 19:19 And I saw the beast and the kings of the earth and their armies gathered together to make war with Him who sits on the horse and with His army.

Rev 19:20 And the beast was seized, and with him the false prophet, who in his presence had done the signs by which he deceived those who received the mark of the beast and those who worshipped his image. These two were cast alive into the lake of fire, which burns with brimstone.

Rev 19:21 And the rest were killed with the sword which proceeds out of the mouth of Him who sits on the horse, and all the birds were filled with their flesh.

Rev 17:14 These will make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb will overcome them, for He is Lord of lords and King of kings; and they who are with Him, the called and chosen and faithful, will also overcome them.

Rev 20:1 And I saw an angel coming down out of heaven, having the key of the abyss and a great chain in his hand.

Rev 20:2 And he laid hold of the dragon, the ancient serpent, who is the Devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years

Rev 20:3 And cast him into the abyss and shut it and sealed it over him, that he might not deceive the nations any longer until the thousand years were completed; after these things he must be loosed for a little while.

Rev 20:4 And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given to them. And I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded because of the testimony of Jesus and because of the word of God, and of those who had not worshipped the beast nor his image, and had not received the mark on their forehead and on their hand; and they lived and reigned with Christ for a thousand years.

Rev 20:5 The rest of the dead did not live again until the thousand years were completed. This is the first resurrection.

Rev 20:6 Blessed and holy is he who has part in the first resurrection; over these the second death has no authority, but they will be priests of God and of Christ and will reign with Him for a thousand years.

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 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.

- F. The final outcome is that the ultimately consummated Spirit as the consummation of the processed Triune God becomes the Bridegroom, and the aggregate of the overcoming saints becomes the bride of the universal romance between the redeeming God and His redeemed man as the conclusion of the entire Scriptures— 22:17a.  
 Rev 22:17a And the Spirit and the bride say, Come! And let him who hears say, Come! ...
- G. We need to consider this matter of intensification and pray desperately to the Lord, saying, “I want to advance from inclusion to intensification. Lord, You have been intensified sevenfold, and I pray that I also will be intensified sevenfold to overcome the degradation of the church that the Body may be built up to consummate the New Jerusalem” (*Incarnation, Inclusion, and Intensification*, p. 22).