

**HWMR: AN OVERVIEW OF THE CENTRAL BURDEN AND PRESENT TRUTH OF THE LORD'S RECOVERY BEFORE HIS APPEARING, (Week 9)**

*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*

**The Full Ministry of Christ in Three Stages**

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 Corinthians 15:45	So also it is written, "The first man, Adam, became a living soul"; the last Adam became a life-giving Spirit.
Revelation 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,
Revelation 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.
Revelation 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;
Revelation 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.
Revelation 2:4	But I have one thing against you, that you have left your first love.
Revelation 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.
Revelation 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.
Revelation 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.
Revelation 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.
Revelation 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.
Revelation 22:17	And the Spirit and the bride say, Come! And let him who hears say, Come! And let him who is thirsty come; let him who wills take the water of life freely.

**Day 1**

<i>John 1:14</i>	<i>- 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.</i>
<i>Luke 1:35</i>	<i>- 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.</i>
<i>Luke 2:40</i>	<i>- And the little child grew and became strong, being filled with wisdom, and the grace of God was upon Him.</i>

**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**:**

- 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.

**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.
- 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.

**Day 2**

*Luke 7:47-48* - 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. And He said to her, Your sins are forgiven.

*Luke 7:50* - But He said to the woman, Your faith has saved you. Go in peace.

- C. In the stage of His incarnation **Christ expressed in His humanity the bountiful God** in His rich attributes through His aromatic virtues:
  - 1. 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.
  - 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.
  - 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.
- 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.

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).

#### The First Stage—Incarnation—the Stage of Christ in the Flesh

As the record of the four Gospels indicates, this stage lasted only thirty-three and a half years. This was the time in which the **Lord Jesus accomplished God's redemption judicially**. The four Gospels reveal Christ in the flesh as the One who lived a human life on earth and who was then crucified, dying for our sins in order to redeem us back to God. Strictly speaking, this is a matter not of salvation but of **judicial redemption**.

God's judicial redemption includes the **forgiveness of sins**, the **purification of sins**, **justification**, **reconciliation** to God, and **positional sanctification**. In a judicial sense, one who has been forgiven, washed, justified by God, reconciled to God, and sanctified unto God is a saved person.

This judicial redemption is not God's full salvation. Rather, judicial redemption is simply the **initial part**, the **foundational part**, of God's full salvation; it is the base upon which God's complete, organic salvation is built. (*Incarnation, Inclusion, and Intensification, chapter 2*)

#### Day 3

*Romans 1:3-4 - Concerning His Son, who came out of the seed of David according to the flesh, 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;*

### 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:
  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.
  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.
  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.
  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.
  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:
    - 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.
    - 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.

Christ's resurrection was also very complicated. His **resurrection** produced the **firstborn Son of God** by uplifting the humanity of Christ into His divinity and by having Christ born of God, that is, by designating the seed of David (Christ's human nature) by the Spirit of holiness (the divinity of Christ) in the power of resurrection to be the firstborn Son of God. In Christ's resurrection **all of God's chosen people** were regenerated to be the **many sons of God** and the **many brothers** of the firstborn Son of God. In Christ's resurrection the Spirit of God was consummated to be the life-giving Spirit: the Spirit of Christ—the pneumatic Christ, the pneumatized Christ; the ultimate consummation of the processed and consummated Triune God, who is embodied in the pneumatized Christ as the life-giving Spirit; and the reality of resurrection, which is Christ Himself and the processed and consummated Triune God. From this we can see that Christ's resurrection is full of complications.

Because so many complications are involved in Christ's second becoming, His becoming the all-inclusive life-giving Spirit in resurrection, we may use the word **inclusion** in speaking of this second stage of Christ. The issue of this becoming was not something simple but something compounded, that is, not just oil signifying the Spirit of God but the ointment signifying the life-giving Spirit, the Spirit who gives life. This Spirit is the pneumatic Christ, the Christ in the second stage—the stage of inclusion.

Whereas it is common for Christians to teach concerning incarnation, very few, if any, teach concerning inclusion. The **incarnation** issued in the **Christ who was in the flesh**, but the **inclusion** has issued in a **Christ who has become the compound, all-inclusive, life-giving Spirit**. We see this compound Spirit in the book of Acts and in the twenty-one Epistles from Romans to Jude.

#### Day 4

*1 Corinthians 15:45* - So also it is written, "The first man, Adam, became a living soul"; the last Adam became a life-giving Spirit.

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

*Romans 8:6* - For the mind set on the flesh is death, but the mind set on the spirit is life and peace.

- B. The incarnated Christ, the last Adam, became the **life-giving Spirit**—1 Cor. 15:45b; John 6:63; 2 Cor. 3:6:
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.
  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).
  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:
    - 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. 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.
  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.

### Day 5

*Revelation 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,

*Revelation 2:4-5* - But I have one thing against you, that you have left your first love. 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.

#### 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.
- 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.
  2. The **defeat** that leads to the **taste of the second death** in the church in Smyrna—vv. 8-11.
  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.
  4. **Fornication, idolatry, demonic teaching**, and **satanic depths in Catholicism**, signified by the church in Thyatira—vv. 18-29.
  5. The **spiritual death**—dead and dying—in Protestantism, signified by the church in Sardis—3:1-6.
  6. The **losing of the crown**, which has been gained already in Brethrenism, signified by the church in Philadelphia—vv. 7-13.
  7. The **lukewarmness and Christlessness** in degraded Brethrenism, signified by the church in Laodicea—vv. 14-22.
- 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.
  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.
  3. We must not love anyone or anything above the Lord, including our **soul-life**—Matt. 10:37-39; Rev. 12:11.

## Day 6

*Revelation 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.

*Revelation 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.

- 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.
- 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).
- 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.
- 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).

Shortly after the church was produced, it began to become **degraded**. This is clearly seen in Acts. In chapter 5 Ananias and Sapphira lied to the Holy Spirit; in chapter 6 there was a murmuring of the Hellenists against the Hebrews regarding the daily dispensing; and in chapter 15 there was trouble concerning circumcision. The separation of Barnabas from Paul should also be regarded as a part of the degradation. Eventually, the church degraded to such an extent that the Lord could no longer tolerate it, and He reacted by **intensifying Himself sevenfold** to become the sevenfold intensified Spirit. He became intensified sevenfold to deal with the degradation of the church.

We have pointed out that in His second stage, the stage of His being the compound, all-inclusive, life-giving Spirit, Christ has produced the churches, **but not much of the Body was produced and built up** in an actual and practical way. For this reason Christ has become the sevenfold intensified Spirit to overcome the degradation of the church that the overcomers may be produced to bring forth the Body.

The issue of Christ in the flesh was a **group of redeemed persons**, and the issue of Christ as the compound, all-inclusive, life-giving Spirit was the **churches**. For the **Body** to be produced, there is the need for the compound, all-inclusive, life-giving Spirit to be intensified sevenfold. This sevenfold intensification deals with the sevenfold situation of the seven churches in Revelation 2 and 3.

The Brethren and those who followed their teaching saw something concerning the prophetic significance of the seven churches in Revelation 2 and 3. From their study of these chapters, they discovered that the church is in seven conditions, in seven stages, and in seven periods of time. However, they did not see the matter of **overcoming**. Jessie Penn-Lewis saw this matter and published a paper called *The Overcomer*. Although Mrs. Penn-Lewis wrote something concerning the seven churches producing the overcomers, the light she received was not full, and thus she did not see that the overcomers are for the building up of the Body to consummate the New Jerusalem. The **stage of incarnation** produced a group of **redeemed people**, and the **stage of inclusion** produced the **church**. The **stage of intensification** will **build up the Body** to consummate the New Jerusalem. (*Incarnation, Inclusion, and Intensification*, chapter 2)