

Practicing the Church Life under the Ministry of Christ as the Minister of the True, the Heavenly, Tabernacle

The Hebrew believers in Jerusalem were suffering persecution; they were plundered of their goods, some were in prison, and they practiced the church life in an exceedingly difficult situation. As a result, a significant number of believers were forsaking the church life to return to Judaism; they were abandoning their assembly together, leaving grace for the law, leaving the new covenant for the old covenant, leaving the New Testament economy for the Old Testament, leaving the High Priest according to the order of Melchizedek for the earthly outward Aaronic priesthood, leaving the church life for the temple, leaving Christ as the reality of all the offerings who made redemption once for all, and returning to animal sacrifices, counting the blood of Jesus a common thing. Paul's practical intention in writing this epistle, which is filled with the word of righteousness and contains many somber words of warning together with an amazing unveiling of Christ in His heavenly ministry and a clear speaking concerning the coming kingdom, is that he wanted the believers would **remain faithful to the transfer that has taken place**, and they would go outside the camp of religion, bearing the reproach of the Lord Jesus, even as inwardly they had the blessing of going within the veil.

There is a practical, actual, and experiential **connection** between **the heavenly ministry of the ascended Christ** and **every aspect of the church life**. We need to see this **connection**. Christ is interceding for us in the heavenly Holy of Holies, bearing us before God, shepherding us, and He's the Pioneer and the Forerunner encouraging us, the Mediator of the new covenant and its Executor wanting to make real to us all the bequests of the new covenant. At the same time, Christ is a heavenly Minister, as a Priest, and His ministry is transmitted into us to supply us with whatever we need humanly, physically, and spiritually, and to sustain us with a particular supply that we may go on.

He wants us to be able to sense deep within our spirit a certain atmosphere and condition of life, so that in the midst of whatever is going on outwardly, physically, personally, and corporately, we would live within in another realm, the heavenly realm, by the divine and heavenly supply. We need to learn to **come to the Lord** and **let Him minister to us**. We need to recognize that we can't live without Him, we can't even be a human being without Him; eventually we all will be **simplified** and come to Him to say,

Lord, I don't know what I need, but You do; I will let You minister Yourself into me for the sake of the church. Lord, supply me for the sake of the church with whatever You think I need.

Today we as believers in Christ cannot live without the Lord; we need His supply, and our experience confirms what Paul already said, which is that His grace is all-sufficient to us. His grace is not just sufficient in general but sufficient for us, **in a personal way**.

Sometimes, as we enjoy the Lord and exercise our spirit to contact Him in a normal way in life and peace, there's **a bountiful supply**, an unexpected and undeserved influx of grace and life and power, that is beyond our exercise; we enjoy such a supply and are very nourished. And then, shortly thereafter, **something devastating** happens. **This is the Lord's care under His sovereignty**; He knows that a certain thing is about to take place, and it has passed through the throne under His sovereignty; He knows that it's hard to bear, and He knows we need a particular supply; He knows that, as this particular thing happens, we may lose our spiritual balance, so **He supplies us in advance** with whatever we need to pass through that situation. On the one hand He ministers Himself to us to meet all our needs, and on the other, He carries out God's economy; **He takes care of our need in relation to God's economy**. Whatever Christ carries out as the heavenly Minister, He applies to us as the Spirit.

What Christ is doing right now in the heavens is being transmitted into our spirit, and when we exercise our spirit and live in spirit, we cooperate with the heavenly ministry of the ascended Christ. Whenever we exercise our spirit and set our mind on the things above, we are connected to the heavens, and Christ as the Spirit transmits and dispenses all that He is and He's doing in the heavens into us. He has gone before us, He is now in the heavenly Holy of Holies, He is interceding for us, He's shepherding us, and He's the Pioneer and Forerunner encouraging us to go on with Him and cooperate with Him in His heavenly ministry. Christ is also the Mediator of the new covenant and its Executor; He makes real to us all the bequests of the new covenant to us. **Everything that He does is related to the church life and can be applied in our practical church life today.**

On the positive side, the Lord perfects us by working Himself into us so that we may have an uplifted humanity, a resurrected humanity, a humanity like that of Jesus. Our humanity is full of holes, lacks, shortcomings, and failures, but the humanity of Jesus is uplifted and resurrected. **On the negative side**, the Lord perfects us to be sons of God in reality by giving us the experiences we need that will apply the cross to our being; on the positive side, He saturates us and permeates us with Himself so that we may have an increase of the divine life in us. Christ is **the appointed Heir of God**, and we have been saved to be joint-heirs with Christ; we are partners in the heavenly corporation of "Christ and the church", and millions of angels are ministering to us. We inherit not only salvation but all things with Him. In the human realm, if you're a partner with a billionaire, you share in all his riches – whatever he has is yours; in the spiritual realm, we are not "hired" into the divine corporation but born as partners, and we share in all that Christ is and has. All believers in Christ work for the divine corporation called, "Christ and the church", and each believer is a partner in this corporation, a joint-heir with Christ.

In Hebrews 13:1-19 we see many virtues and experiences which we need not only for our personal Christian life but **for the practice of the church life**; such experiences include brotherly love, practicing hospitality, holding on to Christ, following Jesus outside the camp, and offering a sacrifice of praise to God through Christ. After unveiling such a high and lofty **vision of Christ in His heavenly ministry**, Paul in Hebrews 13 speaks of many practical things which we need to practice for the proper church life.

We need to let brotherly love continue, not forget hospitality, remember those in prison, and let marriage be held in honor. We need to pray for one another that the Lord would give us a divinely-human marriage life for the church life. We need to have a way of life that is without the love of money. There needs to be a thorough dealing with money and allow the Lord to touch in love the love of money. We need to be satisfied with the things which are at hand. We need to remember the ones leading us; in the church life, we don't have an organization, but there are some saints that are leading us, and we need to consider the issue of their manner of life.

We need to obey the leading ones and submit to them; there's an organic element, which we sense in our spirit, that causes us to realize who are the ones watching over our souls, who take the lead, and who care for our growth and maturity in life – we need to pray for such ones. All these practical aspects revealed in Heb. 13 are not only for our personal Christian life, so that we may have a walk that is pleasing to the Lord in all consideration, but it is for the church life.

Loving the brothers is for the church life; being hospitable is for the building up of the church; suffering with those who are persecuted is for the church life, and having a married life is in a divine and human way for the building up of the church. Our married life is part of the Body life; we should not be a certain kind of person in the meeting, and a different person at home. For **all these practical matters we need a divine transmission**; we need to remain under the divine dispensing so that we are one person with one living, one way of life, and one expression, whether we are at work or at home or in the church meetings. *(Excerpt from the Ministry of the Word)*