

**GENERAL SUBJECT:
THE NEW TESTAMENT MINISTRY AND THE CHRISTIAN LIFE**

Message One

**The New Testament Ministry—
the Ministry of the Spirit, the Ministry of Righteousness,
and the Ministry of Reconciliation to Bring Us into a New Revival**

Scripture Reading: 2 Cor. 3:6-9; 5:18-20

- I. The New Testament ministry is the ministry of the Spirit as the high peak of the divine revelation to bring us into a new revival—2 Cor. 3:6-8; Rev. 22:17a; Hab. 3:2:**
- A. The contents of God's economy involve both the Triune God being processed and consummated and His chosen and redeemed people being processed and consummated.
 - B. First, the Triune God was processed by becoming a man (John 1:14) to pass through human living, an all-inclusive death, and an all-surpassing resurrection to become the life-giving Spirit (1 Cor. 15:45b), the consummated Spirit.
 - C. Then when this wonderful consummated Spirit enters into God's chosen and redeemed people, they begin to pass through a wonderful process of becoming God in life and nature but not in the Godhead.
 - D. This process begins with regeneration and continues with sanctification, renewing, transformation, conformation, and glorification until they are consummated to be the bride of Christ.
 - E. Thus, at the end of the Bible there is a marvelous couple—the processed and consummated Triune God as “the Spirit” married to the processed and consummated tripartite church as “the bride”—Rev. 22:17a.
 - F. This is the ultimate consummation of God becoming a man that man might become God in life and nature but not in the Godhead so that God and man can be an eternal couple, a pair of lovers of the same kind, who are united, mingled, and incorporated together as one entity for eternity for the full expression of the Triune God in this universe.
 - G. The Spirit with our spirit is the secret of all the experiences of organic salvation, which is our deification and bride beautification—Eph. 5:25-27:
 - 1. The generating Spirit in our spirit, quickened by Christ, regenerates us, giving us authority to be the children of God, begotten of God—John 1:12-13; 3:6; Titus 3:5.
 - 2. The sanctifying Spirit from our spirit, captivated by Christ, sanctifies us with the nature of God, making us holy unto God—Rom. 6:19, 22; Eph. 5:26.
 - 3. The renewing Spirit in our spirit, indwelt by Christ, renews us that we may put on the new man through the breaking of the cross—Rom. 12:2; Eph. 4:23-24; 2 Cor. 4:16-18.
 - 4. The transforming Spirit in our spirit, filled by Christ, transforms us into the glorious image of Christ for His expression—3:15-18.
 - 5. The maturing Spirit in our spirit, enriched with Christ, conforms us to the image of Christ, the firstborn Son of God—the model of God's sons—Col. 1:28; Eph. 4:13; Rom. 8:28-29.
 - 6. The sealing Spirit in our spirit, exulting with Christ, saturates us with and brings us into the glory of God for our glorification—Eph. 4:30; Heb. 2:10; Phil. 3:20-21.
 - 7. In addition to this, we need to see and experience the secret of God's intensified salvation; the intensified Spirit in our spirit, drawn by the Lamb, motivates us to overcome the degradation of the church for the Body of Christ to consummate the New Jerusalem—Rev. 1:4; 3:1; 4:5; 5:6; 2:7; 1:10; 19:7-9; 21:2.

II. The ministry of the New Testament is the ministry of righteousness, which is the living out and genuine expression of Christ, the God-man living, to bring us into a new revival—2 Cor. 3:9; Rom. 5:18, 21:

- A. There are two aspects of Christ being righteousness to the believers:
 - 1. Christ is our objective righteousness for us to be justified before God at the time of our repenting unto God and believing into Christ—3:24-26; Acts 13:39; Gal. 3:24b, 27.
 - 2. Christ is also our subjective righteousness as the living out and genuine expression of Christ, which is the transcendent condition of expressing God by living Christ—Phil. 3:9; 1:21a.
- B. These two aspects of righteousness are typified by the two garments of the queen in Psalm 45:13-14:
 - 1. One garment corresponds to the objective righteousness, which is for our salvation—“her garment is a woven work inwrought with gold”—v. 13b:
 - a. This signifies that the Christ who has been dealt with through death and resurrection is the righteousness of the church to meet the righteous requirement of God for her to be justified by God—1 Cor. 1:30; Luke 15:22; Jer. 23:6.
 - b. Her being covered with gold signifies the church’s appearing in the divine nature—Psa. 45:9b; 2 Pet. 1:4.
 - 2. The other garment corresponds to the subjective righteousnesses, which are for our victory—“she will be led to the King in embroidered clothing”—Psa. 45:14a; cf. Rev. 19:8; Matt. 22:11-12:
 - a. The overcoming believers are Christ’s corporate queen, taking Christ as their royal abode for them to be found in Christ and for Him to become their subjective righteousness—Psa. 45:13a; John 15:4a.
 - b. This embroidered clothing, another garment, the second layer of her covering, signifies that the church will be led to Christ at their marriage, clothed with the righteousnesses of the saints to meet the requirement of Christ for her marriage—Rev. 19:8.
 - c. The raiment of embroidered work is the subjective Christ woven into our character, embroidered into our being, to be our lived-out righteousness.
 - d. This embroidery signifies the transforming work of the Holy Spirit, who is working day by day to embroider Christ into us stitch by stitch to be our wedding garment.
 - e. The degraded recovered church needs to pay the price to live Christ as her subjective righteousness so that she may be clothed with Christ as her God-approved conduct—3:18.
- C. In order to be awarded with Christ as our crown of righteousness in the next age, we must experience and enjoy Him as our subjective, lived-out righteousness in this age—Phil. 3:9.
- D. The ministry of righteousness culminates in the New Jerusalem as “the city of righteousness” (Isa. 1:26) dwelling in the “new heavens and a new earth” (2 Pet. 3:13).

III. The New Testament ministry is the ministry of reconciliation, the intrinsic significance of which is shepherding according to God, to bring us into a new revival—2 Cor. 5:18-20:

- A. The ministry of reconciliation brings us from the outer court into the Holy of Holies, to which Christ as the great Shepherd guides us on the paths of righteousness for His name’s sake so that we may dwell in the house of the Lord, the sanctuary of God (Christ, the church, our spirit, and the New Jerusalem), for the length of our days—Psa. 23:3, 6; 73:17; 77:13; John 1:14; 2:21; 1 Tim. 3:15-16; Eph. 2:22; Rev. 21:2-3, 22.
- B. Because the apostle Paul had been fully reconciled to God, he was qualified to be an ambassador of Christ, representing Christ to shepherd people into Christ; as an ambassador of Christ, Paul was “the acting God”—2 Cor. 5:18-20; 1:3-4, 12; 2:10; 11:2.
- C. First Peter 5:1-2 says that we need to shepherd people according to God; *according to God* means that we are one with God and become God in His four attributes of love, light, holiness, and

righteousness; we must shepherd the young ones, the weak ones, and the backsliding ones fully into God according to these four attributes.

- D. The ambassadors of Christ carry out the ministry of reconciliation; the ministry of reconciliation is not only to bring sinners back to God but also to bring the believers into God and to make them absolutely one with Him—2 Cor. 5:18-20.
- E. The extent to which we can bring others to God is always measured by where we are with respect to God; the more we are in Him, the more we can reconcile others into Him; Paul could charge the believers to “come forward” (not “go forward”) to the Holy of Holies because he was a person in the Holy of Holies—12:2a; 5:20; Heb. 10:22:
 - 1. If we have the ability to carry on a work but lack an intimate concern, our work will be fruitless; our not having the loving and forgiving heart of our Father God and the shepherding and seeking spirit of our Savior Christ is the reason for our barrenness—Luke 15; cf. 1 Cor. 12:31b; 2 Tim. 1:7; Philem. 9-12.
 - 2. How fruitful we are does not depend upon what we are able to do but on whether or not we have an intimate concern; a ministering life is a life that warms up others by cherishing them in the humanity of Jesus to nourish them in the divinity of Christ with the riches of Christ—2 Cor. 12:15; 1 Cor. 9:22; Matt. 9:12.
 - 3. Paul shepherded the saints as a nursing mother and an exhorting father; he came down to the weak ones’ level so that he could gain them—1 Thes. 2:7-8, 11-12; Acts 20:19-20, 27, 31; 2 Cor. 11:28-29; 1 Cor. 9:22; cf. Matt. 12:20.
- F. We need Christ’s shepherding to usher us into the Holy of Holies to live with God in our spirit so that we can shepherd others into the Holy of Holies to make them persons in the spirit—1 Cor. 2:15; 6:17:
 - 1. The reality of the Body of Christ is a living in the mingled spirit, which is the dwelling place of God, the house of God, today’s Bethel, the gate of heaven, and the Holy of Holies—Eph. 2:22; Gen. 28:12-17; John 1:51; Heb. 9:3-4; 10:19-22.
 - 2. The reality of the Body of Christ is the sum total of all the new persons within all of us (our inner man being our new person); we need to pray to be strengthened with power into the inner man for the reality of the Body of Christ as the inner experience of the indwelling Christ as life for God’s glory in the church—Eph. 3:16-21.
- G. In the New Jerusalem as the ultimate and eternal Holy of Holies (Rev. 21:16), “the Lamb who is in the midst of the throne will shepherd them and guide them to springs of waters of life” (7:17).