

Outline of the Messages for the Thanksgiving Conference

November 28—December 1, 2013

GENERAL SUBJECT: THE MENDING MINISTRY OF JOHN

Message Five

Christ's Heavenly Priesthood Ministered to the Churches for the Producing of the Overcomers

Scripture Reading: Rev. 2—3

- 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.
- 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.
- 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.
- 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.
 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.
 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.
 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.

I. Christ's heavenly priesthood is a speaking ministry:

- A. Christ speaks to God to intercede for us, and He speaks to us to minister the priestly service—Heb. 7:25; Rev. 1:16, 20; 2:1a, 7; cf. Mal. 3:1; Heb. 1:2:
 - Heb 7:25 Hence also He is able to save to the uttermost those who come forward to God through Him, since He lives always to intercede for them.
 - Rev 1:16 And He had in His right hand seven stars; and out of His mouth proceeded a sharp two-edged sword; and His face shone as the sun shines in its power.

- Rev 1:20 The mystery of the seven stars which you saw upon My right hand and the seven golden lampstands: The seven stars are the messengers of the seven churches, and the seven lampstands are the seven churches.
- Rev 2:1a To the messenger of the church in Ephesus write: ...
- 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.
- Mal 3:1 I am about to send My messenger, and he will clear the way before Me; and suddenly the Lord, whom you seek, will come to His temple. And the Angel of the covenant, whom you desire, He will come, says Jehovah of hosts.
- Heb 1:2 Has at the last of these days spoken to us in the Son, whom He appointed Heir of all things, through whom also He made the universe;
1. No one has ever seen God; the Son, as the Word of God (John 1:1, 14) and the speaking of God, has declared Him with a full expression, explanation, and definition of Him (v. 18).

John 1:1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

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.

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. The book of Revelation tells us that even in the warfare for the kingdom of God, Christ is the Word of God speaking for God's purpose—19:13.

Rev 19:13 And He is clothed with a garment dipped in blood; and His name is called the Word of God.
- B. By Christ's walking in the midst of the churches, He gets to know the condition of each church; such a tour of the churches makes Him thoroughly familiar with every situation; then according to what He sees, He speaks to us—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 2:7 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.
- C. In His walking He is Christ, and in His speaking He is the Spirit; at the beginning of each of the seven epistles it is the Lord who speaks (vv. 1, 8, 12, 18; 3:1, 7, 14), and at the end it is the Spirit speaking to the churches (2:7, 11, 17, 29; 3:6, 13, 22); the walking Christ becomes the speaking Spirit.
- 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 2:8 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 2:12 And to the messenger of the church in Pergamos write: These things says He who has the sharp two-edged sword:
- 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 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 3:7 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 3:14 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 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 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.

- 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.
- Rev 2:29 He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.
- Rev 3:6 He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.
- Rev 3:13 He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.
- Rev 3:22 He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.

D. The nature of the Lord's priestly speaking is to trim and fill the golden lampstands:

1. In the Old Testament there was the lampstand in the tabernacle; every morning the lamps were trimmed by having their charred wicks snuffed (Exo. 30:7); in addition, the lamps were supplied with oil (27:20).
Exo 30:7 And Aaron shall burn on it fragrant incense; every morning when he dresses the lamps he shall burn it.
Exo 27:20 And you shall command the children of Israel to bring to you pure oil of beaten olives for the light, to make the lamps burn continually.
2. To trim is to cut off the charred ends that can no longer burn brightly; to add oil is to supply the Spirit.
3. In Revelation 2 and 3 our High Priest is trimming the seven lampstands, cutting away those things that are not needed and that frustrate the shining; at the same time He is supplying the oil that is needed and that will make the lampstands burn brightly.
Rev 2, 3 (be omitted.)

II. The Lord's speaking trims away religion—2:9:

- 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.
- A. Today's Christianity has been Judaized; there are many essential differences between Judaism and the church in four major points—the temple, the law, the priests, and the worldly promises:
1. In Judaism there is a material temple, whereas the temple in the church is a spiritual temple; in Judaism the worshippers and the place of worship are two different things; there is no place of worship in the church, for the place of worship is the worshipper—Eph. 2:21-22; John 4:24; 1 Cor. 3:16; 6:19; 2 Cor. 6:16.
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.
John 4:24 God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truthfulness.
1 Cor 3:16 Do you not know that you are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwells in you?
1 Cor 6:19 Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own?
2 Cor 6:16 And what agreement does the temple of God have with idols? For we are the temple of the living God, even as God said, "I will dwell among them and walk among them; and I will be their God, and they will be My people."
 2. In Judaism there are the laws, a standard of principles for daily living, which are written on tablets of stone; in the church the Holy Spirit is our indwelling law of life inscribed on our hearts—Heb. 8:10.
Heb 8:10 For this is the covenant which I will covenant with the house of Israel after those days, says the Lord: I will impart My laws into their mind, and on their hearts I will inscribe them; and I will be God to them, and they will be a people to Me.
 3. In Judaism there is a mediatorial class of priests, but in the church all the believers are laboring priests of the gospel of God, a holy and royal priesthood—Rom. 15:16; Rev. 1:6; 1 Pet. 2:5, 9.
Rom 15:16 That I might be a minister of Christ Jesus to the Gentiles, a laboring priest of

- the gospel of God, in order that the offering of the Gentiles might be acceptable, having been sanctified in the Holy Spirit.
- Rev 1:6 And made us a kingdom, priests to His God and Father, to Him be the glory and the might forever and ever. Amen.
- 1 Pet 2:5 You yourselves also, as living stones, are being built up as a spiritual house into a holy priesthood to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.
- 1 Pet 2:9 But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people acquired for a possession, so that you may tell out the virtues of Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light;
4. In Judaism there are worldly promises and earthly blessings, but in the church there are heavenly promises and spiritual blessings—Eph. 1:3; Gal. 3:14; cf. Matt. 16:24.
- Eph 1:3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenlies in Christ,
- Gal 3:14 In order that the blessing of Abraham might come to the Gentiles in Christ Jesus, that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.
- Matt 16:24 Then Jesus said to His disciples, If anyone wants to come after Me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow Me.
- B. “He is a not Jew who is one outwardly; neither is circumcision that which is outward in the flesh. But he is a Jew who is one inwardly; and circumcision is of the heart, in spirit, not in letter, whose praise is not from men, but from God”—Rom. 2:28-29; cf. Phil. 3:3; Gal. 3:7, 14, 16, 29.
- Phil 3:3 For we are the circumcision, the ones who serve by the Spirit of God and boast in Christ Jesus and have no confidence in the flesh,
- Gal 3:7 Know then that they who are of faith, these are sons of Abraham.
- Gal 3:14 In order that the blessing of Abraham might come to the Gentiles in Christ Jesus, that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.
- Gal 3:16 But to Abraham were the promises spoken and to his seed. He does not say, And to the seeds, as concerning many, but as concerning one: "And to your seed," who is Christ.
- Gal 3:29 And if you are of Christ, then you are Abraham's seed, heirs according to promise.

III. The Lord's speaking trims away worldliness—Rev. 2:12-17:

- 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.
- A. Satan's throne is in the world, the place where he dwells and the sphere of his reign; since the worldly church entered into union with the world, she dwells where Satan's throne is—v. 13; cf. John 12:31-33; 14:30.
- 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.
- John 12:31 Now is the judgment of this world; now shall the ruler of this world be cast out.
- John 12:32 And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men to Myself.
- John 12:33 But He said this signifying by what kind of death He was about to die.

John 14:30 I will no longer speak much with you, for the ruler of the world is coming, and in Me he has nothing;

- B. The worldly and degraded church holds not only the teaching of Balaam but also the teaching of the Nicolaitans; the teaching of Balaam distracts people from the person of Christ to idolatry and from the enjoyment of Christ to spiritual fornication, whereas the teaching of the Nicolaitans destroys the function of the believers as members of the Body of Christ, thus annulling the Lord's Body as His expression; the former teaching disregards the Head, and the latter destroys the Body—Rev. 2:14-15.

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.

- C. While the church goes the way of the world, the overcomers come forward to abide in the presence of God in the Holy of Holies, where they enjoy the hidden Christ as a special portion for their daily supply; if we seek the Lord, overcome the degradation of the worldly church, and enjoy a special portion of the Lord today, He as the hidden manna will be a reward to us in the coming kingdom—vv. 16-17.

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.

IV. The Lord's speaking trims away the leaven of the evil in the apostate church—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.

- A. The woman Jezebel is the same as the one prophesied by the Lord in Matthew 13:33; there the woman added leaven (signifying evil, heretical, and pagan things) into the fine flour (signifying Christ as the meal offering for the satisfaction of God and man).

Matt 13:33 Another parable He spoke to them: The kingdom of the heavens is like leaven, which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal until the whole was leavened.

- B. This woman is the great harlot of Revelation 17, who mixes abominations with the divine

things; Jezebel, the pagan wife of Ahab, is a type of the apostate church—2:20; 1 Kings 16:31; 19:1-2; 21:23, 25-26; 2 Kings 9:7.

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.

1 Kings 16:31 And as if it were a light thing for him to walk in the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, he took as his wife Jezebel the daughter of Ethbaal the king of the Sidonians; and he went and served Baal and worshipped him.

1 Kings 19:1 And Ahab told Jezebel all that Elijah had done and all about how he had slain all the prophets with the sword.

1 Kings 19:2 And Jezebel sent a messenger to Elijah, saying, The gods do so to me and even more, if by this time tomorrow I do not make your life like the life of one of them!

1 Kings 21:23 And concerning Jezebel, Jehovah also spoke, saying, The dogs will eat Jezebel by the rampart of Jezreel.

1 Kings 21:25 (Indeed there was none like Ahab, who sold himself to do what was evil in the sight of Jehovah because Jezebel his wife urged him on.

1 Kings 21:26 And he acted very abominably in going after idols, according to all that the Amorites did, whom Jehovah had dispossessed before the children of Israel.)

2 Kings 9:7 And you shall strike the house of Ahab your master, and I will avenge the blood of My servants the prophets and the blood of all the servants of Jehovah at the hand of Jezebel.

- C. We need to beware of the principle of Babylon, the principle of the apostate church; anything that is halfway and not absolute is called Babylon; we need God to enlighten us so that in His light we may judge everything in us that is not absolute toward Him—Rev. 3:16-19; cf. Num. 6:1-9:

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.

Num 6:1 Then Jehovah spoke to Moses, saying,

Num 6:2 Speak to the children of Israel and say to them, When a man or a woman makes a special vow, the vow of a Nazarite, to separate himself to Jehovah,

Num 6:3 He shall separate himself from wine and strong drink; he shall drink no vinegar of wine or vinegar of strong drink, nor shall he drink any juice of grapes, nor eat fresh or dried grapes.

Num 6:4 All the days of his separation he shall eat nothing that is produced by the grape vine, from the seeds even to the skin.

Num 6:5 All the days of his vow of separation no razor shall pass over his head. He shall be holy until the days are fulfilled for which he separated himself to Jehovah; he shall let the locks of the hair of his head grow long.

Num 6:6 All the days that he separates himself to Jehovah he shall not come near a dead person.

Num 6:7 He shall not make himself unclean for his father or for his mother, for his brother or for his sister, when they die, because his separation to God is upon his head.

Num 6:8 All the days of his separation he is holy to Jehovah.

Num 6:9 And if anyone dies very suddenly beside him so that he defiles the head of his separation, then he shall shave his head on the day he becomes clean; on the seventh day shall he shave it.

1. The principle of Babylon (Heb. *Babel*) is man's endeavor to build up something from earth to heaven by human ability, signified by bricks—Gen. 11:1-9; 1 Cor. 3:12.

Gen 11:1 And the whole earth had one language and the same speech.

Gen 11:2 And as they journeyed east, they found a plain in the land of Shinar; and they dwelt there.

- Gen 11:3 And they said to one another, Come, let us make bricks and burn them thoroughly. And they had brick for stone, and they had tar for mortar.
- Gen 11:4 And they said, Come, let us build ourselves a city and a tower whose top is in the heavens; and let us make a name for ourselves, lest we be scattered over the surface of the whole earth.
- Gen 11:5 And Jehovah came down to see the city and the tower which the children of men had built.
- Gen 11:6 And Jehovah said, Behold, they are one people, and they all have one language; and this is only the beginning of what they will do; and now nothing which they purpose to do will be kept from them.
- Gen 11:7 Come, let Us go down and there confound their language, that they may not understand one another's speech.
- Gen 11:8 So Jehovah scattered them from there over the surface of all the earth, and they ceased building the city.
- Gen 11:9 Therefore its name was called Babel, because there Jehovah confounded the language of all the earth, and from there Jehovah scattered them over the surface of all the earth.
- 1 Cor 3:12 But if anyone builds upon the foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, grass, stubble,
2. The principle of Babylon is hypocrisy—Rev. 17:4, 6; Matt. 23:25-32; 6:1-6; 15:7-8; John 5:44; 12:42-43.
- Rev 17:4 And the woman was clothed in purple and scarlet, and gilded with gold and precious stone and pearls, having in her hand a golden cup full of abominations and the unclean things of her fornication.
- Rev 17:6 And I saw the woman drunk with the blood of the saints and with the blood of the witnesses of Jesus. And I marveled with great marvel when I saw her.
- Matt 23:25 Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you cleanse the outside of the cup and the dish, but inwardly they are full of extortion and self-indulgence.
- Matt 23:26 Blind Pharisee, cleanse first the inside of the cup and the dish so that their outside also may become clean.
- Matt 23:27 Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you resemble white-washed graves, which outwardly appear beautiful but inwardly are full of dead men's bones and all uncleanness.
- Matt 23:28 So you also outwardly appear righteous to men, but inwardly you are full of hypocrisy and lawlessness.
- Matt 23:29 Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you build up the graves of the prophets and adorn the tombs of the righteous,
- Matt 23:30 And say, If we had been there in the days of our fathers, we would not have been partakers with them in the blood of the prophets.
- Matt 23:31 So then you testify against yourselves that you are the sons of those who murdered the prophets.
- Matt 23:32 And you, fill up the measure of your fathers!
- Matt 6:1 But take care not to do your righteousness before men in order to be gazed at by them; otherwise, you have no reward with your Father who is in the heavens.
- Matt 6:2 Therefore when you give alms, do not sound a trumpet before you as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, so that they may be glorified by men. Truly I say to you, They have their reward in full.
- Matt 6:3 But you, when you give alms, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing,
- Matt 6:4 So that your alms may be in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will repay you.
- Matt 6:5 And when you pray, you shall not be like the hypocrites, because they love to pray standing in the synagogues and on the street corners, so that they may be seen by men. Truly I say to you, They have their reward in full.
- Matt 6:6 But you, when you pray, enter into your private room, and shut your door and pray to your Father who is in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will repay you.
- Matt 15:7 Hypocrites! Well has Isaiah prophesied concerning you, saying,

- Matt 15:8 "This people honors Me with their lips, but their heart stays far away from Me;
 John 5:44 How can you believe when you receive glory from one another and do not seek the glory that is from the only God?
 John 12:42 Nevertheless even many of the rulers believed into Him, but because of the Pharisees they did not confess Him, so that they would not be put out of the synagogue;
 John 12:43 For they loved the glory of men more than the glory of God.
3. The principle of Babylon is that of not considering herself a widow but of glorifying herself and living luxuriously; in a sense, the believers in Christ are a widow in the present age because their Husband, Christ, is absent from them; because our Beloved is not here in the world, our heart is not here—Rev. 18:7; cf. 1 Cor. 16:22; Rev. 22:20; Luke 12:34; 1 Tim. 6:6-10.
- Rev 18:7 As much as she has glorified herself and lived luxuriously, as much torment and sorrow give to her; for she says in her heart, I sit a queen, and I am not a widow, and I shall by no means see sorrow.
 1 Cor 16:22 If anyone does not love the Lord, let him be accursed! The Lord comes!
 Rev 22:20 He who testifies these things says, Yes, I come quickly. Amen. Come, Lord Jesus!
 Luke 12:34 For where your treasure is, there also your heart will be.
 1 Tim 6:6 But godliness with contentment is great gain;
 1 Tim 6:7 For we have brought nothing into the world, because neither can we carry anything out.
 1 Tim 6:8 But having food and covering, with these we will be content.
 1 Tim 6:9 But those who intend to be rich fall into temptation and a snare and many foolish and harmful desires, which plunge men into destruction and ruin.
 1 Tim 6:10 For the love of money is a root of all evils, because of which some, aspiring after money, have been led away from the faith and pierced themselves through with many pains.
4. The principle of Babylon is the principle of a harlot; Babylon's purpose is for man to make a name for himself and deny God's name; the church, as the pure virgin espoused to Christ, should have no name other than her Husband's—Gen. 11:4; Rev. 3:8; 2 Cor. 11:2; 1 Cor. 1:10.
- Gen 11:4 And they said, Come, let us build ourselves a city and a tower whose top is in the heavens; and let us make a name for ourselves, lest we be scattered over the surface of the whole earth.
 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.
 2 Cor 11:2 For I am jealous over you with a jealousy of God; for I betrothed you to one husband to present you as a pure virgin to Christ.
 1 Cor 1:10 Now I beseech you, brothers, through the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you all speak the same thing and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be attuned in the same mind and in the same opinion.

V. The Lord's speaking trims away lukewarmness—Rev. 3:14-22:

- 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.
- A. “I know your works, that you are neither cold nor hot; I wish that you were cold or hot. So, because you are lukewarm and neither hot nor cold, I am about to spew you out of My mouth”—vv. 15-16.
- B. Laodicea is a distorted Philadelphia—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.
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- 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.
1. When brotherly love is gone, Philadelphia immediately turns into “the opinion of the people” (the meaning of *Laodicea*).
 2. Laodicea is characterized by lukewarmness and spiritual pride; spiritual pride comes from history; some were once rich, and they think that they are still rich; the Lord was once merciful to them, and they remember their history, but now they have lost that reality.
 3. Laodicea means to know everything but in reality to be fervent about nothing; in name it has everything, but it cannot sacrifice its life for anything; it remembers its former glory but forgets its present condition before God.
 4. If we want to continue in the way of Philadelphia and be saved from the lukewarmness of Laodicea, we must remember to humble ourselves before God—Isa. 66:1-2; 57:15.
- Isa 66:1 Thus says Jehovah, / Heaven is My throne, / And the earth the footstool for My feet. / Where then is the house that you will build for Me, / And where is the place of My rest?
- Isa 66:2 For all these things My hand has made, / And so all these things have come into being, declares Jehovah. / But to this kind of man will I look, to him who is poor / And of a contrite spirit, and who trembles at My word.
- Isa 57:15 For thus says the high and exalted One, / Who inhabits eternity, whose name is Holy: / I will dwell in the high and holy place, / And with the contrite and lowly of spirit, / To revive the spirit of the lowly / And to revive the heart of the contrite.

VI. In addition to trimming the lampstand, the priest also filled the lamps with oil; to eat of the tree of life, to eat of the hidden manna, and to feast with the Lord are all the infilling of the Spirit—cf. Zech. 4:11-14:

- Zech 4:11 Then I answered and said to him, What are these two olive trees on the right of the lampstand and on its left?
- Zech 4:12 And I answered a second time and said to him, What are the two olive branches that are by the side of the two golden spouts, which empty the gold from themselves?
- Zech 4:13 And he spoke to me, saying, Do you not know what these are? And I said, No, sir.
- Zech 4:14 And he said, These are the two sons of oil, who stand by the Lord of the whole earth.
- A. The book of Revelation reveals the intensification of the Triune God (1:4; 3:1; 4:5; 5:6) to

bring the degraded church back to the enjoyment of Himself as the tree of life, the hidden manna, and the feast for the finalization of God's New Testament economy.

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. "To him who overcomes, to him I will give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the Paradise of God" (2:7); eating of the tree of life is the best infilling.

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.

- C. "To him who overcomes, to him I will give of the hidden manna" (v. 17); to eat of the hidden manna is to be filled and supplied.

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.

- D. "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" (3:20); by feasting with the Lord, the infilling takes place.

VII. By Christ's high priestly service all the dark things of religion, worldliness, evil, and lukewarmness are trimmed away; also by His heavenly priesthood the heavenly, divine element of the tree of life, the hidden manna, and the heavenly feast is ministered to us; the effect of this heavenly ministry is a metabolic transformation to make us precious stones for the building of God's dwelling place—Rom. 12:2; 2 Cor. 3:18:

Rom 12:2 And do not be fashioned according to this age, but be transformed by the renewing of the mind that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and well pleasing and perfect.

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.

- A. All the Lord's heavenly service and care have the aim of making us the overcomers—Rev. 2:7, 11, 17, 26-28; 3:5, 12, 20-21.

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 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.

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.

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 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 3:12 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 3:20 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.
- B. The nourishment of the tree of life, the hidden manna, and the heavenly feast becomes the divine element of which the lampstand is composed.
- C. Thus, every local church will be a lampstand, and in every local church there will be overcomers; these overcomers will make up the lampstand; a lampstand eventually is the overcomers in a local church.

VIII. While the Lord Jesus is arranging the world situation so that God's people may go on, He is also exercising His heavenly ministry to especially supply God's lovers and seekers with the heavenly riches, the divine element, so that they may be kept at an overcoming level; the sustaining of these God-lovers and Christ-seekers needs Christ's heavenly ministry—Acts 5:31; Heb. 7:25; 8:2.

- Acts 5:31 This One God has exalted to His right hand as Leader and Savior, to give repentance to Israel and forgiveness of sins.
- Heb 7:25 Hence also He is able to save to the uttermost those who come forward to God through Him, since He lives always to intercede for them.
- Heb 8:2 A Minister of the holy places, even of the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, not man.