

## ***Session 7 Divine Affirmation, Memorials, and Communion with God***

### **I. REVIEW**

- A. Eternal rewards are Jesus expressing how He feels about the way we loved Him in this age. Jesus' power and creativity are far greater than man's, so we can expect far greater glory and diversity.  
***<sup>9</sup>Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, nor have entered into the heart of man the things which God has prepared for those who love Him. (1 Cor. 2:9)***
- B. Believers will differ from one another in the measure of glory expressed in the rewards they receive.  
***<sup>41</sup>...for one star differs from another star in glory. <sup>42</sup>So also is the resurrection of the dead. (1 Cor. 15:41-42)***

### **II. DIVINE AFFIRMATION: RECEIVING PRAISE AND HONOR FROM GOD**

- A. The Lord delights to verbally affirm the love and godly choices of His people. After Jesus returns, He will reveal the godly counsels, or the deep thoughts, in the heart of each believer and then will openly affirm each person (1 Cor. 4:5; cf. Mt. 25:21; Jn. 12:26; Rom. 2:29; 1 Pet. 1:7; Rev. 3:5).  
***<sup>5</sup>The time...the Lord comes, who will both bring to light the hidden things of darkness and reveal the counsels of the hearts. Then each one's praise [affirmation] will come from God. (1 Cor. 4:5)***  
***<sup>29</sup>...he is a Jew who is one inwardly...whose praise is not from men but from God. (Rom. 2:29)***
- B. The genuineness of our faith, our response to God, will result in praise from or affirmation by God.  
***<sup>7</sup>...the genuineness of your faith [responsiveness to God], being much more precious than gold [money] that perishes...may be found to praise [affirmation], honor, and glory... (1 Pet. 1:7)***
- C. Jesus promised that the Father will honor anyone who serves Jesus (Jn. 12:26). Jesus spoke of affirmation or honor varying according to one's obedient response to His leadership with humility (Mt. 5:19; 18:4; 20:26-27; 23:11-12; Mk. 10:43-44; Lk. 9:48; 14:11; 18:14; 22:26; Jn. 12:26).  
***<sup>26</sup>...If anyone serves Me, him My Father will honor. (Jn. 12:26)***
- D. Jesus will say, "Well done," showing how He generously He evaluates the weak work that we did. Our life vision should include living in a way so as to hear Jesus say "Well done!" at the end of our life. We set our heart to walk in excellence in our relationship with God, refusing to settle for less.  
***<sup>21</sup>Well done, good and faithful servant; you were faithful over a few things... (Mt. 25:21)***
1. ***Good*** points to godly motivations with sincere intentions to do God's will.
  2. ***Faithful*** highlights diligence and follow-through of our intentions to do good in the face of pressure, obstacles, mundaneness, and temptation.
  3. ***Servant*** speaks being willing to sacrifice our comfort, honor, and personal agenda.

### III. GOD REMEMBERS: AN OVERVIEW OF MEMORIALS IN THE SCRIPTURE

- A. One of the great rewards of heaven is to receive a white stone with a new name on it (Rev. 2:17). I understand the white stone to be related to Jesus expressing His affirmation for His people.  
*<sup>17</sup>I will give him a white stone, and on the stone a new name written which no one knows except him who receives it. (Rev. 2:17)*
- B. A memorial is established to honor the memory of God's activity or someone's devotion to God. A *memorial is a monument, statue, holiday, or ritual which serves as a remembrance or reminder of a person or an event* (Nelson's Bible Dictionary). The Scripture mentions many memorials (Ex. 3:14-15; 12:10-14; 13:6-9; 17:14; 28:12, 29; 30:16; 39:6-7; Lev. 2:2, 9, 16; 5:12; 6:15; 23:24; 24:7; Num. 5:26; 10:10; 16:40; 31:54; Josh. 4:7-9; Neh. 2:20; Zech. 6:14; Mal. 3:16; Mt. 26:13; Mk. 14:9; Lk. 22:19; Acts 10:4; 1 Cor. 5:7; 11:25-26).
- C. The story of Mary anointing Jesus with the costly oil is spoken as a memorial to honor her devotion (Mt. 26:13; Mk. 14:9).  
*<sup>8</sup>...She has come...to anoint My body...<sup>9</sup>Wherever this gospel is preached in the whole world, what this woman has done will also be told as a memorial to her. (Mk. 14:8-9)*
- D. Cornelius' devotion to God in his prayers and alms was spoken of as a memorial (Acts 10:4).  
*<sup>4</sup>So he [an angel] said..., "Your prayers and your alms have come up for a memorial before God. (Acts 10:4)*
- E. As a memorial, the names of the sons of Israel were engraved on two stones which were placed on the shoulders of the high priest's ephod (Ex. 28:12; 39:6-7) and engraved on precious stones on his breastplate (Ex. 28:29). Does Jesus wear a heavenly ephod with stones with names on it?  
*<sup>12</sup>And you shall put the two stones on the shoulders of the ephod as memorial stones for the sons of Israel. So Aaron shall bear their names before the LORD on his two shoulders as a memorial ...<sup>29</sup>Aaron shall bear the names of the sons of Israel on the breastplate ...over his heart, when he goes into the holy place, as a memorial before the LORD continually. (Ex. 28:12, 29)*  
*<sup>6</sup>And they set onyx stones...they were engraved...with the names of the sons of Israel. <sup>7</sup>He put them on the shoulders of the ephod as memorial stones for the sons of Israel... (Ex. 39:6-7)*
- F. A memorial included godly words and deeds recorded in His books (Ex. 17:14; Mal. 3:16).  
*<sup>16</sup>Then those who feared the LORD spoke to one another, and the LORD listened and heard them; So a book of remembrance was written before Him for those who fear the LORD and who meditate on His name. (Mal. 3:16)*
- G. The Passover feast is a memorial to honor Israel's deliverance from bondage in Egypt (Ex. 12:14). The stones left in the Jordan River memorialized Israel entering the Promise Land (Josh. 4:7).
- H. Observing the Lord's Supper is a memorial to honor Jesus' death (Lk. 22:19; 1 Cor. 5:7; 11:25-26).

#### IV. JESUS CONFESSES THE NAME OF THE FAITHFUL BEFORE HIS FATHER

- A. Jesus will confess one's name before His Father and His angels (Rev. 3:5; cf. Mt. 10: 32; Lk. 12:8). Jesus linked someone's name with their reputation or story (3:1) with their deeds (3:2). Then He promised to confess the name of overcomers (3:5)—that is, to tell the story of their love for God.

*<sup>1</sup>...I know your works, that you have a name that you are alive, but you are dead...<sup>4</sup>You have a few names even in Sardis who have not defiled their garments...<sup>5</sup>He who overcomes shall be clothed in white garments...I will confess his name before My Father and before His angels. (Rev. 3:1-5)*

1. Jesus confessing your name includes more than His making a one-time declaration of your name so that you may be permitted to enter the New Jerusalem. This is more than a reference to being saved, but also to Jesus speaking about your love, deeds, and obedience to the Father.
  2. Jesus was not telling them how to be born again. He was not saying, "If you overcome the temptations related to defiling your garments, then you will be born again."
  3. Jesus may tell the story of one's love and dedication to God many times throughout eternity. The story of a devoted believer has many episodes. That story may then be shared by others similarly to how we enthusiastically tell the story of others after we read their biography.
  4. We enjoy retelling the stories about the heroic and virtuous deeds of people. After reading a good biography, we tell others about it. This dynamic will happen in the age to come. We love telling stories that highlight the virtue and nobility of our friends and family members.
  5. There are stories that I tell over and over throughout the years. Some stories are so moving that telling it only once is never enough. One reason Jesus will praise His people is because aspects of their life story move Him deeply. It is why you tell stories about the nobility of others. When we hear somebody's story that moves us, we want others to know it.
- B. Jesus wanted the story about Mary of Bethany to be told over and over—as a memorial to her (Mk. 14:3-9)
- <sup>9</sup>Wherever this gospel is preached...what [Mary]...has done will be told as a memorial to her. (Mk. 14:8-9)*
- C. One of most glorious things that can happen to anyone is Jesus declaring their name or story before God on the last day (Rev. 3:5), and the most terrible thing is if He denied them on that day.
- <sup>32</sup>Therefore whoever confesses Me before men, him I will also confess before My Father...  
<sup>33</sup>But whoever denies Me before men, him I will also deny before My Father... (Mt. 10:32-33)*
- D. A person's name written in God's books in heaven includes details of "their story" along with their many small deeds that expressed love for God (Heb. 6:10). God keeps detailed records in His books (Dan. 7:10; cf. Ex. 32:32-33; Ps. 69:28; 87:6; 139:16; 87:6; Isa. 4:3; Dan. 12:1; Mal. 3:16-17; Lk. 10:20; Phil. 4:3; Heb. 12:23; Rev. 3:5; 13:8 17:8; 20:12, 15; 21:27).

*<sup>20</sup>...but rather rejoice because your names are written in heaven. (Lk. 10:20)*

V. WHITE STONE WITH A NEW NAME (REV. 2:17)

- A. Jesus promised to give a white stone with a new name on it (Rev. 2:17). I understand the white stone to include Jesus expressing His affirmation of His people and more. Receiving a new name may indicate new capacities and privileges in our relationship with Jesus.

*<sup>14</sup>...those who hold the doctrine of Balaam, who...put a stumbling block before the children of Israel...to commit sexual immorality...<sup>17</sup>To him who overcomes...I will give him a white stone, and on the stone a new name written which no one knows except him who receives it. (Rev. 2:14-17)*

- B. A new name will be given to overcomers that will reflect new dimensions in their relationship with Jesus as well as indicating their faithfulness, character, and possibly their new role in the millennial kingdom (Isa. 62:2; 65:15). Names express one's character, status, and role. As parents give their child a name of endearment, so Jesus will give names that reveal how He feels toward each of us.

- C. Simon was renamed Peter to speak of his character and position of authority as "the rock." Abram's name was changed to Abraham indicating that he was the father of a multitude (Gen. 17:5-15). Jacob's name was changed to Israel to show that he was a prince with God (Gen. 32).

- D. The new name written on a stone may be comparable to having one's name engraved on an award such as a plaque or championship ring. The new name seems to indicate one's achievements and place in government as well as to describe their relationship with Jesus.

1. In the ancient world, stones were given as awards to honor those who offered valiant service to the community, or in battle, or for athletic accomplishments (receiving a gold medal).
2. Stones with one's name written on them gave the recipient privileges such as admission to special events, including the games and feasts hosted by leaders in the Roman Empire.
3. Receiving a white stone may be comparable to receiving an award for an accomplishment—like a Nobel Prize, MVP, an Emmy, Grammy, gold medal, or championship ring, etc.

- E. Eternal rewards are commensurate with the glory of the New Jerusalem; therefore, I assume that the "stone" referred to here is a precious stone like the gems in the New Jerusalem (Rev. 21:19-20). The word "white" (Gk. *leukos*) can refer to "shining or glistening" (Mt. 17:2; Rev. 3:4, 5; 19:14).

*<sup>19</sup>The foundations of the wall of the city were adorned with all kinds of precious stones: the first foundation was jasper, the second sapphire, the third chalcedony, the fourth emerald, <sup>20</sup>the fifth sardonyx, the sixth sardius....the eleventh jacinth, and the twelfth amethyst. (Rev. 21:19-21)*

*<sup>15</sup>You shall make the breastplate...<sup>17</sup>put settings of stones in it, four rows of stones: the first row shall be a sardius, a topaz, and an emerald...<sup>21</sup>The stones shall have the names of the sons of Israel...like the engravings of a signet, each one with its own name...<sup>29</sup>Aaron shall bear the names of the sons of Israel on the breastplate...over his heart, when he goes into the holy place, as a memorial before the LORD continually. (Ex. 28:15-29)*

**VI. COMMUNION WITH JESUS: GOD’S NAME WRITTEN ON HIS PEOPLE (REV. 3:12)**

- A. One amazing eternal reward is Jesus writing the Father’s name and His new name on the saints (Rev. 3:12).

*<sup>12</sup>He who overcomes...I will write on him the name of My God...and I will write on him My new name. (Rev. 3:12)*

1. This speaks of God declaring His ownership over His people and imparting the spirit of revelation that His people would understand His heart and ways in an increased measure.
2. The communion that each has with God will vary according to their spiritual capacity.

- B. Every believer has access to worship God because the gift of righteousness and of the Holy Spirit. Yet we all will have a varying capacity to understand and communicate with Him similar to believers in this age. Some are closer to Jesus than others, yet all believers possess the free gift of righteousness, though their capacity to interact with the Lord in a deep way is different for all.

- C. The Lord wrote the Ten Commandments by His finger on tablets of stone (Ex. 31:18).

*<sup>18</sup>...He gave Moses two tablets of the Testimony, tablets of stone, written with the finger of God. (Ex. 31:18)*

- D. The Spirit writes God’s Word on our heart and mind (2 Cor. 3:3). God writing His name on His people includes them being recipients of revelation of His heart, beauty, and partnership.

*<sup>16</sup>This is the covenant [promise] that I will make with them...I will put My laws [Word] into their hearts [emotions], and in their minds [understanding] I will write them... (Heb. 10:16)*

1. **Mind:** Releasing the spirit of revelation and living understanding of God to our mind
2. **Heart:** Empowering our emotions until we feel the power of His Word with holy desires

- E. Jesus will reveal His new name—thus His heart and beauty—to the faithful (Rev. 19:12).

*<sup>12</sup>He had a name written that no one knew except Himself. (Rev. 19:12)*

- F. God’s name shall be written on the foreheads of the saints (Rev. 22:4).

*<sup>4</sup>They shall see His face, and His name shall be on their foreheads. (Rev. 22:4)*

- G. Aaron, the high priest, wore on his forehead a plate with the engraving “Holiness to the Lord” (Ex. 28:36).

*<sup>36</sup>You shall also make a plate of pure gold and engrave on it, like the engraving of a signet: **HOLINESS TO THE LORD**. (Ex 28:36)*

## VII. COMMUNION WITH JESUS: THE MORNING STAR (REV 2:28)

- A. Jesus promised to give overcomers the morning star (Rev. 2:28). Jesus is the morning star (Rev. 22:16; cf. Num. 24:17-19). This reward includes receiving greater understanding and communion with Jesus, which speaks of a greater capacity to receive the light of the glory of who Jesus is.

*<sup>20</sup>...I have a few things against you, because you allow that woman Jezebel...to teach and seduce My servants to commit sexual immorality and eat things sacrificed to idols...*

*<sup>26</sup>He who overcomes...<sup>28</sup>I will give him the morning star. (Rev. 2:20-28)*

*<sup>16</sup>I, Jesus...am the Bright and Morning Star. (Rev 22:16)*

1. This reward is promised to those who overcome immorality and idolatry (Rev. 2:20).
  2. The morning star is the brightest star to the naked eye (the planet Venus). It is seen just before the dawning of a new day.
  3. Jesus' face shines like the sun (Rev. 1:16).
- B. Peter spoke of the "morning star rising" in our heart. Being strengthened by "grace like a morning star" includes the Holy Spirit giving more understanding of the prophetic Scriptures in this age.

*<sup>19</sup>We have the prophetic word confirmed, which you do well to heed as a light that shines in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts... (2 Pet. 1:19)*

## VIII. COMMUNION WITH JESUS: DINING WITH JESUS

- A. Dining with Jesus speaks of deep fellowship with Him. The saints will dine with Jesus, including at the marriage supper of the Lamb (Rev. 3:20; 19:9; cf. Lk. 22:16, 30; Mt. 26:29; Mk. 14:25).

*<sup>20</sup>...If anyone...hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and dine with him... (Rev. 3:20)*

*<sup>9</sup>... Blessed are those who are called to the marriage supper of the Lamb! (Rev. 19:9)*

- B. Jesus promised to dine with the apostles in the millennial kingdom (Lk. 22:29-30). He ate with them on various occasions during the 40 days after His resurrection (Lk. 24:41-43).

*<sup>16</sup>...I will no longer eat of it until it is fulfilled in the kingdom of God ...<sup>30</sup>... that you may eat and drink at My table in My kingdom, and sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel. (Lk. 22:16, 30)*

*<sup>41</sup>...He said to them, "Have you any food here?" <sup>42</sup>So they gave Him a piece of a broiled fish and some honeycomb. <sup>43</sup>And He took it and ate in their presence. (Lk. 24:41-43)*

- C. Moses and the elders of Israel ate a meal with the Lord on Mt. Sinai (Ex. 24:9-11).

*<sup>9</sup>Then Moses...and seventy of the elders<sup>10</sup>...saw the God of Israel...<sup>11</sup>But on the nobles of the children of Israel He did not lay His hand. So they saw God, and they ate and drank. (Ex. 24:9-11)*