

## Message Three

### The Living of the Jubilee

*Scripture Reading: Matt. 11:28-30; Phil. 4:4-7, 11-13; 1 Thes. 5:16-18*

- I. **The type of the children of Israel with the Passover, their journey in the wilderness, and their life in the good land shows us how to live the life of the jubilee—1 Cor. 10:1-4, 11; 2 Cor. 13:14:**
  - A. When the children of Israel were in bondage in Egypt, God saved His people by instituting the feast of the Passover so they could rest from their labor to enjoy God as their satisfaction—Exo. 12:14.
  - B. When the children of Israel were led into the wilderness for forty years, they did not labor to sow or reap but simply rested with God and enjoyed His gift of manna—Exo. 16:15-18.
  - C. When the children of Israel entered the good land, each family was allotted a portion of the land for them to live, rest, enjoy, and receive satisfaction—Josh. 1:3-6; 14:1-2; cf. Col. 1:12.
  - D. Because many of the children of Israel did not live on the land in the way of rest and enjoyment, it was necessary for God to establish the year of the jubilee to deliver the children of Israel from bondage into rest and enjoyment—Lev. 25:10; cf. 1 Cor. 10:6-11.
- II. **The living of our human life without the jubilee is a life of three labors—the labor to be a good person, the labor of anxiety, and the labor of suffering—cf. Matt. 11:28-30:**
  - A. The first labor in human life is our striving to be good persons with improved behavior, character, and conduct; these works cannot save us—Rom. 3:20; 7:15; Eph. 2:9.
  - B. The second labor in human life is to worry and be anxious about our life—Matt. 6:31:
    1. We are anxious because we are seeking many things other than God, so He does not have the full ground in us—Phil. 4:5-7; 1 Pet. 5:7.
    2. Anything that is good or bad, in the present or in the future, that is not God Himself is a source of anxiety and cannot be our enjoyment, satisfaction, and rest—Matt. 6:34.
  - C. The third kind of labor in human life is suffering—cf. Job 2:3, 13:
    1. We should not have the concept that because we are saved, love the Lord, and have given everything to Him that we will not suffer—Matt. 5:11; 2 Cor. 1:7; Phil. 1:29.
    2. If we feel that in a particular environment we are suffering, this indicates that we still love certain things other than God—Matt. 11:2-6; Phil. 1:20; cf. Acts 16:25.
- III. **The living of the jubilee is a life of liberty, freedom, and release, a life full of rest, satisfaction, and enjoyment—2 Cor. 3:17; Rom. 7:24-8:2; Phil. 4:4-7; 2 Cor. 12:9:**
  - A. In the jubilee all things are pleasant and satisfying to our heart, and we are free from anxiety, at ease, and exultant; hence, everything is to our satisfaction—Isa. 30:15a; 33:21-22; 61:1-2; 66:12; Psa. 46:4; John 4:10, 14.
  - B. The secret of a Christian's enjoyment of rest is his gaining Christ, the eternal God, as his enjoyment; if we have God, everything is to our satisfaction:
    1. The apostle Paul learned the secret of living in the jubilee, the secret of gaining Christ in any kind of environment—Phil. 4:4-7, 11-13.
    2. Everything can be satisfying to us only after we have gained the all-inclusive Christ as our enjoyment; it is not outward persons, matters, or things but Christ within us who enables us to be calm and free of worries as we face all kinds of situations—John 16:33.
    3. When we receive Christ as our Savior and life, He comes into us to be our jubilee, but unless we allow Him to live in us and unless we live by Him, we are not practically living in the jubilee—8:11-12.
    4. If our heart is set on any person, thing, or matter other than the Lord, this is idolatry, and the end is wretchedness—1 John 5:21; cf. Ezek. 14:3, 5; 6:9.
  - C. The living of the jubilee is a life in which we take God Himself, Christ Himself, in every situation; then He becomes the primary factor and center in us to lead us and overrule all the troubles of human life—John 6:16-21.

D. The Christian life should be a life full of enjoying the Lord, a life full of joy and praises; when we enjoy the Lord fully, He becomes our jubilee:

1. The tone of an overcoming living is the tone of rejoicing, thanking, and praising God continually—1 Thes. 5:16-18.
2. The overcoming life can survive only in an environment of thanksgiving and praise—v. 18; Col. 3:17; Psa. 106:12; 2 Chron. 20:20-22.

E. We can practically live in the jubilee by enjoying God as our life, Husband, food and drink, habitation, light of life, strength, rest, love, joy, comfort, healing, and guidance through:

1. Calling on the name of the Lord Jesus as the all-inclusive Spirit so He can render us His bountiful supply—Isa. 12:3-4; 1 Cor. 12:3, 13; Phil. 1:19.
2. Having set times of prayer to seek after God, behold the beauty of God, breathe in God, be silent before God, wait on God, and muse on God—Psa. 27:4; 46:10; 62:1; 104:34; Lam. 3:55-56; Isa. 40:31.
3. Practicing to pray at every time in spirit to touch God at all times by learning to set our mind on the spirit and calming our being to mingle with God in our spirit—Eph. 6:18; 1 Thes. 5:17.
4. Reading His Word with an attitude of eating, drinking, and receiving God by mingling our reading with prayer to digest, contact, and assimilate God Himself—John 6:63; 2 Tim. 3:16-17.

**IV. Our living and enjoyment of Christ as the jubilee of God's grace in this age will issue in the full enjoyment of Christ as the jubilee in the millennium and in the fullest enjoyment of Christ in the New Jerusalem in the new heaven and new earth—Psa. 36:8-9; Rom. 14:17; Rev. 22:1-5; cf. Lev. 25:23-30, 32-34.**

*Focus: The living of the jubilee is a living full of satisfaction, enjoyment, and rest from the three kinds of labor in human life; only when we are fully gaining Christ, wholly seeking God, and fully giving ourselves to His church will we be freed from all kinds of slavery to live the jubilee in this age so that we can enjoy it in the coming age.*

### Ministry Excerpts

#### THE THREE KINDS OF LABOR IN HUMAN LIFE

If we read the Bible carefully, we shall see that there are three kinds of labor in human life, not including working at a job to earn a living. The first kind of labor is the labor to be a good person, to have good behavior, and to improve one's character. In this labor people struggle to be humble, patient, and loving. In the Bible, especially in the New Testament, to work means to do such things. But no one can be saved by works (Eph. 2:8-9). This means that no one can be saved by the works of trying to improve one's behavior and character, to keep the law, and to be good, patient, kind, and honest. This kind of effort is a real labor, and in the New Testament this is called work.

According to the Bible, the second kind of labor is to worry, to be anxious. What a hard job it is to labor under anxiety! If you could do your job day by day without having any anxiety, you would be a healthy person. However, you may spend more hours each day worrying than you do working. Can you say that you have not had any anxiety, any worry, so far today? Day by day, everyone is anxious. You may be anxious about your health, your job, or a great many other things. I, of course, am not an exception. I have learned from experience that the only way to escape anxiety is to enjoy the Lord. Whenever I am not enjoying Christ, I have anxiety. Christ is versus anxiety. In the Life-study of Philippians we gave a number of messages entitled "A Life Full of Forbearance but without Anxiety."

The third kind of labor revealed in the Bible is suffering. Suffering is a very hard labor. When we enjoy God in the jubilee, there should not be any suffering. Paul, for example, suffered from a "thorn in the flesh" (2 Cor. 12:7). Concerning this thorn, he entreated the Lord three times that it might depart

from him (v. 8). However, instead of removing the thorn, the Lord said to him, “My grace is sufficient for you.” The Lord seemed to be telling Paul, “No, I shall not remove the thorn, for My grace is sufficient. If you enjoy Me, you will not have any suffering.”

To say that we shall not have suffering when we enjoy the Lord does not mean that our environment will improve. On the contrary, in many cases the environment changes for the worse. Consider the situation of Paul and Silas in Acts 16. Paul and Silas were cast into prison in Philippi. We would expect that this imprisonment would have been a great suffering for them. However, Paul and Silas were not suffering there in prison—they were enjoying the jubilee. They were singing and praising the Lord. Although they were in prison, they had enjoyment, satisfaction, and rest.

### **LOVING THINGS OTHER THAN GOD**

If we feel that in a particular environment we are suffering, this indicates that we still love certain things other than God. If we love God uniquely and wholly, we shall not be troubled by any kind of environment. This is the reason the Lord Jesus indicated that we must love Him more than we love our parents, brothers, sisters, wife or children (Matt. 10:37; Luke 14:26). If we feel that it would be a suffering to lose our parents, children, wife, or husband, this means that we do not love God solely. It means that we place our love on something or someone other than God. If we love God solely, giving our love entirely to Him, having nothing to divide our love, we shall not be bothered by whatever happens to us.

Suppose you lose your house. Would that be a suffering to you? Would you still be able to praise the Lord, praising Him even for the loss of your house? If losing your house is a suffering and if you would not praise the Lord for it, this indicates that you love your house as well as God, perhaps more than God. If you did not love your house, you would not suffer as a result of losing it. Rather, you would say, “Hallelujah! My house is gone, but my God is not gone. He is more to me now than before. When I had a good house, God was not so much to me. But now that I have lost my house, God has become much more to me.”

### **NO ANXIETY IN THE JUBILEE**

If we are living in the jubilee, we shall not have any anxiety. Concerning anxiety, the Lord Jesus says, “Do not be anxious about your life, what you should eat and what you should drink; nor for your body, what you should put on....Which of you by being anxious can add one cubit to his stature?... Therefore do not be anxious for tomorrow, for tomorrow will be anxious for itself. Sufficient for the day is its own evil” (Matt. 6:25, 27, 34). There is no need for us to borrow tomorrow’s anxiety and bear it today. Every day has its own evil. Nevertheless, some saints, young as well as old, borrow anxiety not only from tomorrow but from years to come. This means that some are anxious not only concerning tomorrow but concerning what will happen years from now. Some grandparents may even be anxious concerning their third generation. They actually borrow the anxiety of a future generation and labor under it today.

Do you know why we are anxious both about today and tomorrow? We are anxious because God does not have the full ground within us. We still give a “corner” of our being to other things, and that corner causes us trouble. However, if we give all the room in our heart to God, we shall not be anxious or troubled by whatever happens to us. If in our hearts there is no ground for anything or anyone other than God, He will always be our enjoyment, satisfaction, and rest. The environment may change, but He remains the same.

It is very difficult for us to give all the ground in our being to God because we are fallen and have a fallen nature. The very cells and fibers of our physical bodies and our entire soul, including our mind, will, and emotion, are fallen from God, from the enjoyment of God, and from rest in God. We have fallen into many things other than God. Anything, whether good or bad, that is not God Himself can be a source of anxiety. Only God is enjoyment; only God is satisfaction and rest. No matter how good something else may be, it cannot be our enjoyment, satisfaction, and rest.

### **A LIFE THAT LIVES GOD**

The life of jubilee, that is, the life that lives in the jubilee, is a life that lives God. When some hear this, they may say, "Isn't this the victorious life? Isn't this a holy life, a life of the Spirit?" Yes, the life of jubilee is a victorious and holy life, and it is a life of the Spirit. But although we have heard many messages on living in the Spirit, we still do not live very much in the jubilee. Instead, we have the labor of struggling to improve ourselves, the labor of anxiety, the labor of dreaming, and the labor of suffering. What a hard labor it is to struggle to be good! It is an even harder labor to worry, to have anxiety. It is also a labor to dream, to have expectations. Every kind of expectation is a dream. Finally, there is the labor of suffering. When we have suffering, we cannot have enjoyment, satisfaction, and rest.

How can we be released from all this labor? The only way to be released is to take the Triune God as our portion. If we call on the name of the Lord Jesus, the all-inclusive Spirit will render us His bountiful supply. Then we shall enjoy God in Christ as the good land flowing with milk and honey, and we shall have enjoyment, satisfaction, and rest. We all need this jubilee.

The Gospel of Luke leads us into the life of the jubilee. The Man-Savior saves us from bondage into the jubilee. He saves us into the liberty, enjoyment, satisfaction, and rest of God's jubilee. The entire New Testament teaching concerning the Christian life involves the jubilee. When the kingdom comes, we shall enjoy a greater jubilee than we enjoy today. Then in eternity, in the New Jerusalem with the new heaven and new earth, we shall have the greatest jubilee. We shall enjoy God in full as our satisfaction and rest. Today we have a foretaste of this jubilee.

All day long we should enjoy God as our enjoyment, satisfaction, and rest. We should not struggle, worry, dream, or suffer. Even in the most difficult situation we can still enjoy the Lord. If we give all the ground in us to God and enjoy Him, not even martyrdom will be a suffering to us. Instead of struggle, anxiety, dreams, and suffering, we shall have the all-inclusive processed Triune God as our enjoyment, satisfaction, and rest. The grace of Christ, the love of God, and the fellowship of the Spirit will be ours. This is the enjoyment of the jubilee. (*Life-study of Luke*, pp. 589-594)