

BEING A PROPER PERSON IN LIFE TO CARE FOR THE CHURCH IN GOD'S ADMINISTRATION

(Saturday—First Morning Session)

Message Seven

Knowing the Lord's Recovery in Life

Scripture Reading: John 1:4; 10:10; 11:25; 14:6; Rom. 8:2, 10-11

- John 1:4 In Him was life, and the life was the light of men.
John 10:10 The thief does not come except to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life and may have *it* abundantly.
John 11:25 Jesus said to her, I am the resurrection and the life; he who believes into Me, even if he should die, shall live;
John 14:6 Jesus said to him, I am the way and the reality and the life; no one comes to the Father except through Me.
Rom 8:2 For the law of the Spirit of life has freed me in Christ Jesus from the law of sin and of death.
Rom 8:10 But if Christ is in you, though the body is dead because of sin, the spirit is life because of righteousness.
Rom 8:11 And if the Spirit of the One who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who indwells you.

I. In order to see life and to know the Lord's recovery in life, we need to be unveiled—2 Cor. 3:14-17:

- 2 Cor 3:14 But their thoughts were hardened; for until the present day the same veil remains at the reading of the old covenant, it not being unveiled *to them* that *the veil* is being done away with in Christ.
2 Cor 3:15 Indeed unto this day, whenever Moses is read, a veil lies on their heart;
2 Cor 3:16 But whenever *their heart* turns to the Lord, the veil is taken away.
2 Cor 3:17 And the Lord is the Spirit; and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom.
- A. For centuries the human mind has been in captivity to religious and natural concepts; for this reason, we may read the Bible without seeing what it reveals—v. 15; John 5:39-40.
2 Cor 3:15 Indeed unto this day, whenever Moses is read, a veil lies on their heart;
John 5:39 You search the Scriptures, because you think that in them you have eternal life; and it is these that testify concerning Me.
John 5:40 Yet you are not willing to come to Me that you may have life.
- B. Many in the local churches are still natural in their understanding of spiritual things; they remain under the veil of natural concepts—2 Cor. 3:14.
2 Cor 3:14 But their thoughts were hardened; for until the present day the same veil remains at the reading of the old covenant, it not being unveiled *to them* that *the veil* is being done away with in Christ.
- C. From experience we know that there are different kinds of veils—v. 15:
2 Cor 3:15 Indeed unto this day, whenever Moses is read, a veil lies on their heart;
1. Believers are veiled by religious concepts, and everyone is veiled by certain natural concepts or ideas—Matt. 11:25.
Matt 11:25 At that time Jesus answered and said, I extol You, Father, Lord of heaven and of earth, because You have hidden these things from the wise and intelligent and have revealed them to infants.
 2. Veils are often related to the kind of people we are by our natural constitution—1 Cor. 2:14.
1 Cor 2:14 But a soulish man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him and he is not able to know *them* because they are discerned spiritually.
 3. We may be veiled by our racial and national character; the various national characters, dispositions, habits, and customs are veils that keep us from seeing the vision concerning life—Phil. 3:3-6.
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,

Phil 3:4 Though I myself have *something* to be confident of in the flesh as well. If any other man thinks that he has confidence in the flesh, I more:
 Phil 3:5 Circumcised the eighth day; of the race of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew *born* of Hebrews; as to the law, a Pharisee;
 Phil 3:6 As to zeal, persecuting the church; as to the righteousness which is in the law, become blameless.

4. Everyone has four layers of veils: the natural makeup with its ethical element, culture, religion, and the ethics acquired through teaching and training—Rom. 7:21-23; Phil. 3:3-6.

Rom 7:21 I find then the law with me who wills to do the good, that is, the evil is present with me.

Rom 7:22 For I delight in the law of God according to the inner man,

Rom 7:23 But I see a different law in my members, warring against the law of my mind and making me a captive to the law of sin which is in my members.

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,

Phil 3:4 Though I myself have *something* to be confident of in the flesh as well. If any other man thinks that he has confidence in the flesh, I more:

Phil 3:5 Circumcised the eighth day; of the race of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew *born* of Hebrews; as to the law, a Pharisee;

Phil 3:6 As to zeal, persecuting the church; as to the righteousness which is in the law, become blameless.

D. Instead of assuming that we do not have any veils, we need to look to the Lord and pray, “Lord, take away anything that is covering me. O Lord, remove my veils!”

II. Organized Christianity has deviated from the central line of life; the degradation in Christianity is a deviation from life—Eph. 4:18; Rev. 3:1.

Eph 4:18 Being darkened in their understanding, alienated from the life of God because of the ignorance which is in them, because of the hardness of their heart;

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.

III. We need to know the Lord’s recovery in life—John 1:4; 1 John 1:1-2:

John 1:4 In Him was life, and the life was the light of men.

1 John 1:1 That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we beheld and our hands handled, concerning the Word of life

1 John 1:2 (And the life was manifested, and we have seen and testify and report to you the eternal life, which was with the Father and was manifested to us);

A. Our eyes must be opened to see that the Lord’s recovery is a recovery back to life—John 1:1, 4; 14:6; 1 John 1:1-2.

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

John 1:4 In Him was life, and the life was the light of men.

John 14:6 Jesus said to him, I am the way and the reality and the life; no one comes to the Father except through Me.

1 John 1:1 That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we beheld and our hands handled, concerning the Word of life

1 John 1:2 (And the life was manifested, and we have seen and testify and report to you the eternal life, which was with the Father and was manifested to us);

B. The purpose of the Lord’s recovery is to bring us back to God Himself as our life—Eph. 4:18; Rom. 5:10; 8:2, 10-11.

Eph 4:18 Being darkened in their understanding, alienated from the life of God because of the ignorance which is in them, because of the hardness of their heart;

Rom 5:10 For if we, being enemies, were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more we will be saved in His life, having been reconciled,

Rom 8:2 For the law of the Spirit of life has freed me in Christ Jesus from the law of sin and of death.

Rom 8:10 But if Christ is in you, though the body is dead because of sin, the spirit is life because of righteousness.

Rom 8:11 And if the Spirit of the One who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who indwells you.

C. The Lord's recovery is absolutely a matter of life—a recovery to bring us back to the Triune God in order to possess, experience, and enjoy Him as life— 2 Cor. 13:14.

2 Cor 13:14 The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

D. In order to have an adequate vision of the Lord's recovery, we need to know the recovery in the Triune God—1 John 1:1-2; 2:25; 5:11-13.

1 John 1:1 That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we beheld and our hands handled, concerning the Word of life

1 John 1:2 (And the life was manifested, and we have seen and testify and report to you the eternal life, which was with the Father and was manifested to us);

1 John 2:25 And this is the promise which He Himself promised us, the eternal life.

1 John 5:11 And this is the testimony, that God gave to us eternal life and this life is in His Son.

1 John 5:12 He who has the Son has the life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have the life.

1 John 5:13 I have written these things to you that you may know that you have eternal life, to you who believe into the name of the Son of God.

IV. To know the Lord's recovery in life is to know the Triune God as life in our experience—John 1:4, 14, 16-17; 10:10; 11:25; 14:6:

John 1:4 In Him was life, and the life was the light of men.

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 1:16 For of His fullness we have all received, and grace upon grace.

John 1:17 For the law was given through Moses; grace and reality came through Jesus Christ.

John 10:10 The thief does not come except to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life and may have *it* abundantly.

John 11:25 Jesus said to her, I am the resurrection and the life; he who believes into Me, even if he should die, shall live;

John 14:6 Jesus said to him, I am the way and the reality and the life; no one comes to the Father except through Me.

A. Life is the Triune God, for the Father is in the Son, and the Son became the Spirit to be our life—1:14; 20:22; 1 Cor. 15:45b:

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 20:22 And when He had said this, He breathed into *them* and said to them, Receive the Holy Spirit.

1 Cor 15:45b ... the last Adam *became* a life-giving Spirit.

1. Life is the Triune God Himself coming into us so that we may experience Him, enjoy Him, be one with Him, and express Him—Rom. 8:2, 10-11.

Rom 8:2 For the law of the Spirit of life has freed me in Christ Jesus from the law of sin and of death.

Rom 8:10 But if Christ is in you, though the body is dead because of sin, the spirit is life because of righteousness.

Rom 8:11 And if the Spirit of the One who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who indwells you.

2. Life is a person—the Triune God, who in Christ has passed through incarnation, human living, crucifixion, resurrection, and ascension and has come into us as the life-giving Spirit to be our life and to mingle with us— 1 Cor. 15:3-4, 45b; 6:17.

1 Cor 15:3 For I delivered to you, first of all, that which also I received, that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures;

1 Cor 15:4 And that He was buried, and that He has been raised on the third day according to the Scriptures;

1 Cor **15:45b** ... the last Adam *became* a life-giving Spirit.

1 Cor **6:17** But he who is joined to the Lord is one spirit.

3. Life is the Triune God Himself—the God who created the universe, was incarnated, lived on the earth in humanity for thirty-three and a half years, died on the cross, passed through death and Hades, entered into resurrection, ascended to the heavens as a man, and became the life-giving Spirit to enter into us as our life—John 1:14, 29; 12:24; 14:9-10, 17-18, 20.

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 **1:29** The next day he saw Jesus coming to him and said, Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!

John **12:24** Truly, truly, I say to you, Unless the grain of wheat falls into the ground and dies, it abides alone; but if it dies, it bears much fruit.

John **14:9** Jesus said to him, Have I been so long a time with you, and you have not known Me, Philip? He who has seen Me has seen the Father; how *is it that* you say, Show us the Father?

John **14:10** Do you not believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in Me? The words that I say to you I do not speak from Myself, but the Father who abides in Me does His works.

John **14:17** *Even* the Spirit of reality, whom the world cannot receive, because it does not behold Him or know *Him*; *but* you know Him, because He abides with you and shall be in you.

John **14:18** I will not leave you *as* orphans; I am coming to you.

John **14:20** In that day you will know that I am in My Father, and you in Me, and I in you.

- B. Our standard must be God Himself, who is our life—1:1, 4; 11:25; 14:6:

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

John **1:4** In Him was life, and the life was the light of men.

John **11:25** Jesus said to her, I am the resurrection and the life; he who believes into Me, even if he should die, shall live;

John **14:6** Jesus said to him, I am the way and the reality and the life; no one comes to the Father except through Me.

1. If we know God in all the items from creation to our glorification, then we know what life is—1 John 1:1-2; 5:13.

1 John **1:1** That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we beheld and our hands handled, concerning the Word of life

1 John **1:2** (And the life was manifested, and we have seen and testify and report to you the eternal life, which was with the Father and was manifested to us);

1 John **5:13** I have written these things to you that you may know that you have eternal life, to you who believe into the name of the Son of God.

2. God ordained that His chosen, redeemed, and regenerated people should live this life—the processed God, who is real, practical, available, and even one with us—John 6:57; 7:37-39; Col. 3:4.

John **6:57** As the living Father has sent Me and I live because of the Father, so he who eats Me, he also shall live because of Me.

John **7:37** Now on the last day, the great *day* of the feast, Jesus stood and cried out, saying, If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink.

John **7:38** He who believes into Me, as the Scripture said, out of his innermost being shall flow rivers of living water.

John **7:39** But this He said concerning the Spirit, whom those who believed into Him were about to receive; for *the* Spirit was not yet, because Jesus had not yet been glorified.

Col **3:4** When Christ our life is manifested, then you also will be manifested with Him in glory.

- C. Regeneration, sanctification, renewing, transformation, conformation, and glorification are

the work of life within us, and this life is the processed Triune God, who became the life-giving Spirit to dwell in our spirit and to be one with us—Rom. 6:19; 8:16, 29-30; 12:2.

Rom 6:19 I speak in human *terms* because of the weakness of your flesh. For just as you presented your members as slaves to uncleanness and lawlessness unto lawlessness, so now present your members as slaves to righteousness unto sanctification.

Rom 8:16 The Spirit Himself witnesses with our spirit that we are children of God.

Rom 8:29 Because those whom He foreknew, He also predestinated *to be* conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the Firstborn among many brothers;

Rom 8:30 And those whom He predestinated, these He also called; and those whom He called, these He also justified; and those whom He justified, these He also glorified.

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.

D. Christ is the processed Triune God, who is dwelling within us as our life and mingling Himself with us to sanctify, renew, transform, conform, and eventually glorify us—John 1:1, 14; 14:9-10, 17-18; Col. 3:4.

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 14:9 Jesus said to him, Have I been so long a time with you, and you have not known Me, Philip? He who has seen Me has seen the Father; how *is it that* you say, Show us the Father?

John 14:10 Do you not believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in Me? The words that I say to you I do not speak from Myself, but the Father who abides in Me does His works.

John 14:17 *Even* the Spirit of reality, whom the world cannot receive, because it does not behold Him or know *Him*; *but* you know Him, because He abides with you and shall be in you.

John 14:18 I will not leave you *as* orphans; I am coming to you.

Col 3:4 When Christ our life is manifested, then you also will be manifested with Him in glory.

E. Life is a wonderful person who is both God and man, who passed through incarnation, human living, crucifixion, resurrection, and ascension, and who is now the indwelling Spirit; this is what we mean by life, and we need to see a vision of this profound reality—2:9; 3:4; 1:9.

Col 2:9 For in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily,

Col 3:4 When Christ our life is manifested, then you also will be manifested with Him in glory.

Col 1:9 Therefore we also, since the day we heard of *it*, do not cease praying and asking on your behalf that you may be filled with the full knowledge of His will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding,

V. **If we see the vision of the churches as the golden lampstands—the embodiment and expression of the Triune God—we will truly know what life is—Rev. 1:12, 20; 2:1:**

Rev 1:12 And I turned to see the voice that spoke with me; and when I turned, I saw seven golden lampstands,

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 2:1 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:

A. The churches can be golden, having God's nature, because His life is being worked into the believers through regeneration, sanctification, renewing, transformation, conformation, and glorification; apart from this process, there is no way for the church to be a golden lampstand—John 3:6; Rom. 8:11.

John 3:6 That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.

Rom 8:11 And if the Spirit of the One who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who indwells you.

B. The church is the Triune God's reproduction, not in the Godhead as a deity to be

worshipped but in life, nature, and expression—Eph. 4:4-6; Rev. 1:12, 20.

Eph 4:4 One Body and one Spirit, even as also you were called in one hope of your calling;

Eph 4:5 One Lord, one faith, one baptism;

Eph 4:6 One God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all.

Rev 1:12 And I turned to see the voice that spoke with me; and when I turned, I saw seven golden lampstands,

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.

- C. Life is not only something in our experiences, such as the law of life, the sense of life, and the fellowship of life, but primarily the Triune God dispensing Himself into us and making us one in Him to be the golden lampstands— 2 Cor. 13:14; Rev. 1:4-6, 12, 20.

2 Cor 13:14 The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

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 1:5 And from Jesus Christ, the faithful Witness, the Firstborn of the dead, and the Ruler of the kings of the earth. To Him who loves us and has released us from our sins by His blood

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.

Rev 1:12 And I turned to see the voice that spoke with me; and when I turned, I saw seven golden lampstands,

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.

VI. The Christian life has the individual aspect and the corporate aspect; the individual aspect is for the corporate aspect—John 3:3, 5-6; 17:22-23:

John 3:3 Jesus answered and said to him, Truly, truly, I say to you, Unless one is born anew, he cannot see the kingdom of God.

John 3:5 Jesus answered, Truly, truly, I say to you, Unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.

John 3:6 That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.

John 17:22 And the glory which You have given Me I have given to them, that they may be one, even as We are one;

John 17:23 I in them, and You in Me, that they may be perfected into one, that the world may know that You have sent Me and have loved them even as You have loved Me.

- A. Outside the church life, people can be regenerated to receive the divine life, but without the church life, they will not have the abundance of life—1:12-13; 3:3, 5-6, 15-16.

John 1:12 But as many as received Him, to them He gave the authority to become children of God, to those who believe into His name,

John 1:13 Who were begotten not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

John 3:3 Jesus answered and said to him, Truly, truly, I say to you, Unless one is born anew, he cannot see the kingdom of God.

John 3:5 Jesus answered, Truly, truly, I say to you, Unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.

John 3:6 That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.

John 3:15 That every one who believes into Him may have eternal life.

John 3:16 For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that every one who believes into Him would not perish, but would have eternal life.

- B. We experience life individually, but because our individual experience is for the corporate aspect, we must be in the practical church life in order to have the abundance of life—10:10.

John 10:10 The thief does not come except to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life and may have *it* abundantly.

VII. We need to pray that the Lord will show us a clear vision of life so that we may know the

Lord's recovery in life—Col. 1:9; Eph. 1:17:

Col 1:9 Therefore we also, since the day we heard of *it*, do not cease praying and asking on your behalf that you may be filled with the full knowledge of His will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding,

Eph 1:17 That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to you a spirit of wisdom and revelation in the full knowledge of Him,

A. If we see the revelation in the Bible concerning life, we will know what the Lord's recovery is; we will know that the recovery is not a matter of any kind of activity, movement, or practice, because these things are not the Triune God Himself as life—Rom. 8:2, 6, 10-11.

Rom 8:2 For the law of the Spirit of life has freed me in Christ Jesus from the law of sin and of death.

Rom 8:6 For the mind set on the flesh is death, but the mind set on the spirit is life and peace.

Rom 8:10 But if Christ is in you, though the body is dead because of sin, the spirit is life because of righteousness.

Rom 8:11 And if the Spirit of the One who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who indwells you.

B. If we see life in a practical way, we will be able to discern life and not be misled if some try to lead the church in a wrong direction—Col. 3:4.

Col 3:4 When Christ our life is manifested, then you also will be manifested with Him in glory.

C. If we have the vision of the Lord's recovery in life, no matter what happens, we will be kept in the recovery without any change, distraction, or deviation—Prov. 29:18a; Acts 26:19.

Prov 29:18a Where there is no vision, the people cast off restraint; ...

Acts 26:19 Therefore, King Agrippa, I was not disobedient to the heavenly vision,

Excerpts from the Ministry:

NEEDING TO KNOW THE LORD'S RECOVERY IN LIFE

Although in the local churches we have seen something concerning life, there have been periods in our history when we deviated from life. We forgot what we were doing for a time and missed the mark. Sometimes even the so-called release of the spirit has not been on the line of life—it was not the genuine release of the spirit.

Life is mysterious and difficult to define and share with others, but our eyes must be opened to see that the Lord's recovery is a recovery back to life. The degradation of Christianity is a deviation from life. Even a deviation to doctrines concerning life is still a deviation from life.

The Bible establishes the principle that the degradation of Christianity, which began from the last part of the first century, is a deviation from life. The last ministry in the Bible is John's mending ministry, which uniquely brings the believers back to life. Yet many who read the Gospel of John, the Epistles of John, and Revelation do not realize that the purpose of these writings is to bring us back to life. The deviation of Christianity from life has continued from the New Testament time down to the present.

We need to pray that the Lord would cause us to see life. Although we may have heard many messages concerning life, it is possible that we may have never seen life. As genuine believers, we have life, but if we have seen life in a practical way, we will be able to discern life and not be misled if some try to lead the church in a wrong direction. No man's speaking alone can give us a vision or cause us to see life. Our seeing of life depends entirely on the Lord, but we need to have a seeking heart. We must not be content with the situation in Christianity or with our own situation. Our standard must be God Himself, who is our life. If we know God in all the items from creation to our glorification, we know what life is.

The elders should not try to learn methods for establishing, organizing, and pasturing a local church. These kinds of subjects are taught in seminary courses. We do not need any such techniques. Instead, we need to see a vision concerning what life is. To know the Lord's recovery in life is to know

God as our life in experience. We should be able to tell others how we definitely experienced the Lord as our life.

Seeing such a vision concerning life will make us different. This is what we need. In past turmoils many saints in the local churches were deceived because their vision concerning life was inadequate. If a man does not know what real gold looks like, he can be cheated by someone selling a lesser substitute. If we have a proper and definite vision, a clear view, concerning life, no one will be able to deceive us. For this reason, we all need to pray definite prayers asking the Lord to show us a clear vision of life. Along with such prayer, we also need to study particular verses and books in the Bible. Reading certain ministry books concerning life can also help us. However, studying alone is not adequate to see life—we must have the prayer.

Many in the local churches are still quite natural in their concepts concerning the spiritual things and their understanding of the Bible. They remain under a thick veil of their natural concepts. Some are still distracted by miracles, thinking that miracles and divine healing are life. These things are not life, for their effects are temporary, but life is eternal.

We need to see that life is a person—the Triune God, who in Christ has passed through incarnation, human living, crucifixion, resurrection, and ascension and has come into us as the life-giving Spirit to be our life and to mingle with us. Because we have received Him, we have been regenerated, are being transformed, and will be conformed to His image and glorified. The Christian life is not an exchanged life but a grafted, mingled, regenerated, transformed, conformed, and glorified life. This is beyond our human thought.

We need to see that life is a wonderful person who is both God and man, who passed through incarnation, human living, crucifixion, resurrection, and ascension, and who is now the indwelling Spirit. John 7:39 says, “The Spirit was not yet, because Jesus had not yet been glorified.” At that time the Spirit was not yet. But since the Lord’s resurrection, the Spirit has been, and He is now within us and is everything to us. This is what we mean by life. We need a vision of this profound reality.

Revelation depicts the churches as golden lampstands (1:12, 20; 2:1). The church can be golden, having God’s nature, because His life is being worked into the believers through their regeneration, transformation, conformation, and glorification. Apart from this process, there is no way for the church to be a golden lampstand, a shining testimony of God’s nature. The churches are seen as golden lampstands in Revelation because in God’s eyes, in His eternal view, the church is altogether divine. The church is divine because Christ, the divine person, has been wrought into it. The lampstand was patterned to depict the Triune God (Exo. 25:31-40). The golden substance signifies God the Father in His divine nature, the form of the lampstand signifies God the Son as the embodiment and expression of the Father, and the seven lamps signify God the Spirit as the seven Spirits of God for His expression. This implies that the church is the Triune God’s reproduction not in the Godhead as a deity to be worshiped but in life, nature, and expression. Life is not only our experiences, such as the law of life, the sense of life, the fellowship of life, and the anointing, but primarily the Triune God dispensing Himself into us and making us one in Him to be the golden lampstands. We need to see a vision of the churches as the lampstands—the embodiment and expression of the Triune God. When we see this vision, we will know what life is.

The New Testament revelation concerning life is that the Triune God becomes one with His chosen and redeemed people and that they become His embodiment. This is what the Bible means by life. The Lord Himself told us that He is life (John 11:25; 14:6), and Paul in Colossians 3:4 says, “When Christ our life is manifested, then you also will be manifested with Him in glory.” Christ is our life, and glory is His expression. When we are manifested with Him in glory, we will be exactly the same as He is in life, nature, and expression.

If we see the revelation in the Bible concerning life, we will know what the Lord’s recovery is. It is not any kind of work, movement, activity, teaching, or practice but a living of the life that is the Triune God. Once we see this, nothing will distract us, because nothing else is as valuable, precious, or

high. The churches in the Lord's recovery are the lampstands in Revelation, which are the testimony of Jesus and the embodiment of the Triune God. We have to know the Lord's recovery in life. This vision will keep us; it has kept me. It was this vision that kept Brother Nee while he was imprisoned for twenty years. Perhaps no other Christian in history has been in prison for the Lord's sake for so long without changing his belief. I believe that what kept him without any change was this vision. I can testify concerning him because I was with him.

If we have the vision of the Lord's recovery in life, no matter what happens, we will be kept in the Lord's recovery without any change. No one will be able to persuade us to change, because we have the best. If a man possesses costly gold and realizes what he has, no one will be able to convince him to exchange it for something less valuable. Nothing is better or higher than what the Lord has revealed to us in His recovery. If we see this, we will never be convinced to change. I have seen the vision clearly for forty-five years, since 1933. In myself I am weak, but I cannot deny what I have seen. This is what burdens me to share with others. We need to see the Lord's recovery in life—the Triune God in Christ realized as the indwelling Spirit to be our life. (*Basic Principles concerning the Eldership*, pp. 86-90, 98-101)