

International Training for Elders and Responsible Ones

April 2025

GENERAL SUBJECT: ONE ACCORD AND CRUCIAL ASPECTS OF THE BOOK OF ACTS (Lord's Day—First Morning Session)

Message Seven

Continuing to Live in the Divine History within Human History in the Continuation of the Book of Acts for the Spreading and Building Up of the Church as the Corporate Manifestation of Christ

MC Hymns: 473

Scripture Reading: Acts 1:8, 13-14; 2:16-18, 21; 5:20, 41-42; 6:4;
13:32-34; 16:6-7; 17:16; 19:21; 28:31

- Acts 1:8 But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you, and you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria and unto the uttermost part of the earth.
- Acts 1:13 And when they entered, they went up to the upper room where they were residing, Peter and John and James and Andrew, Philip and Thomas, Bartholomew and Matthew, James the son of Alphaeus and Simon the Zealot and Judas the brother of James.
- Acts 1:14 These all continued steadfastly with one accord in prayer, together with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with His brothers.
- Acts 2:16 But this is what is spoken through the prophet Joel:
- Acts 2:17 "And it shall be in the last days, says God, that I will pour out of My Spirit upon all flesh, and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream things in dreams;
- Acts 2:18 And indeed upon My slaves, both men and women, I will pour out of My Spirit in those days, and they shall prophesy.
- Acts 2:21 And it shall be that everyone who calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved."
- Acts 5:20 Go and stand in the temple and speak to the people all the words of this life.
- Acts 5:41 So they went from the presence of the Sanhedrin, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to be dishonored on behalf of the Name.
- Acts 5:42 And every day, in the temple and from house to house, they did not cease teaching and announcing the gospel of Jesus as the Christ.
- Acts 6:4 But we will continue steadfastly in prayer and in the ministry of the word.
- Acts 13:32 And we announce to you the gospel of the promise made to the fathers,
- Acts 13:33 That God has fully fulfilled this promise to us their children in raising up Jesus, as it is also written in the second Psalm, "You are My Son; today I have begotten You."
- Acts 13:34 And as to His having raised Him up from the dead, no longer to return to corruption, He spoke in this way, "I will give you the holy things of David, the faithful things."
- Acts 16:6 And they passed through the region of Phrygia and Galatia, having been forbidden by the Holy Spirit to speak the word in Asia.
- Acts 16:7 And when they had come to Mysia, they tried to go into Bithynia, yet the Spirit of Jesus did not allow them.
- Acts 17:16 And while Paul was waiting for them in Athens, his spirit was provoked within him as he beheld

- that the city was full of idols.
- Acts 19:21 And when these things were fulfilled, Paul purposed in his spirit to pass through Macedonia and Achaia and go to Jerusalem, saying, After I have been there, I must also see Rome.
- Acts 28:31 Proclaiming the kingdom of God and teaching the things concerning the Lord Jesus Christ with all boldness, unhindered.

I. The book of Acts reveals a group of people who live in the divine history within human history as the acting God; they have become God in life, in nature, in expression, and in function (but not in the Godhead) for the spreading and building up of the church as the corporate manifestation of Christ—1:8, 14; 2:14a; 4:10-20, 31-32; 5:20, 38-39; 13:1-4; 26:16-19; 28:31:

- Acts 1:8 But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you, and you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria and unto the uttermost part of the earth.
- Acts 1:14 These all continued steadfastly with one accord in prayer, together with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with His brothers.
- Acts 2:14a But Peter, standing with the eleven, lifted up his voice and spoke forth to them: ...
- Acts 4:10 Let it be known to you all and to all the people of Israel that in the name of Jesus Christ the Nazarene, whom you crucified and whom God has raised from the dead, in this name this man stands before you in good health.
- Acts 4:11 This is the stone which was considered as nothing by you, the builders, which has become the head of the corner.
- Acts 4:12 And there is salvation in no other, for neither is there another name under heaven given among men in which we must be saved.
- Acts 4:13 And as they beheld the boldness of Peter and John and perceived that they were uneducated men and laymen, they marveled and they recognized them, that they had been with Jesus.
- Acts 4:14 And seeing the man who had been healed standing with them, they had nothing to say against it.
- Acts 4:15 But they ordered them to go away outside the Sanhedrin and conferred with one another,
- Acts 4:16 Saying, What shall we do to these men? For that indeed a notable sign has occurred through them is manifest to all who dwell in Jerusalem, and we cannot deny it.
- Acts 4:17 But in order that this would not be spread further among the people, let us threaten them that they no longer speak based upon this name to anyone.
- Acts 4:18 And when they called them, they charged them not to utter anything at all nor teach based upon the name of Jesus.
- Acts 4:19 But Peter and John answered and said to them, Whether it is right in the sight of God to listen to you rather than to God, you judge;
- Acts 4:20 For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard.
- Acts 4:31 And when they had so besought, the place in which they were gathered was shaken, and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak the word of God with boldness.
- Acts 4:32 And the heart and soul of the multitude of those who had believed was one; and not even one said that any of his possessions was his own, but all things were common to them.
- Acts 5:20 Go and stand in the temple and speak to the people all the words of this life.
- Acts 5:38 And now I say to you, withdraw from these men and leave them alone; for should this counsel or this work be of men, it will be overthrown;
- Acts 5:39 But if it is of God, you will not be able to overthrow them, lest you be found to be even fighters against God.
- Acts 13:1 Now there were in Antioch, in the local church, prophets and teachers: Barnabas and Simeon, who was called Niger, and Lucius the Cyrenian, and Manaen, the foster brother of Herod the tetrarch, and Saul.
- Acts 13:2 And as they were ministering to the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, Set apart for Me now Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them.
- Acts 13:3 Then, when they had fasted and prayed and laid their hands on them, they sent them away.
- Acts 13:4 They then, having been sent out by the Holy Spirit, went down to Seleucia; and from there

- they sailed away to Cyprus.
- Acts 26:16 But rise up and stand on your feet; for I have appeared to you for this purpose, to appoint you as a minister and a witness both of the things in which you have seen Me and of the things in which I will appear to you;
- Acts 26:17 Delivering you from the people and from the Gentiles, to whom I send you,
- Acts 26:18 To open their eyes, to turn them from darkness to light and from the authority of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and an inheritance among those who have been sanctified by faith in Me.
- Acts 26:19 Therefore, King Agrippa, I was not disobedient to the heavenly vision,
- Acts 28:31 Proclaiming the kingdom of God and teaching the things concerning the Lord Jesus Christ with all boldness, unhindered.

- A. In Peter's first proclamation of the gospel in the book of Acts, he quoted from the book of Joel, which reveals the intrinsic, divine history within the outward, human history—Acts 2:17-21; Joel 1:1-4; 2:28-32.

- Acts 2:17 "And it shall be in the last days, says God, that I will pour out of My Spirit upon all flesh, and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream things in dreams;
- Acts 2:18 And indeed upon My slaves, both men and women, I will pour out of My Spirit in those days, and they shall prophesy.
- Acts 2:19 And I will show wonders in heaven above and signs on the earth below, blood and fire and vapor of smoke.
- Acts 2:20 The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the great and notable day of the Lord comes.
- Acts 2:21 And it shall be that everyone who calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved."
- Joel 1:1 The word of Jehovah which came to Joel the son of Pethuel.
- Joel 1:2 Hear this, you elders, / And give heed, all you inhabitants of the land. / Has this ever happened in your days, / Or even in the days of your fathers?
- Joel 1:3 Tell your children about it, / And let your children tell their children, / And let their children tell the next generation.
- Joel 1:4 What the cutting locust has left, the swarming locust has eaten; / And what the swarming locust has left, the licking locust has eaten; / And what the licking locust has left, the consuming locust has eaten.
- Joel 2:28 And afterward I will pour out My Spirit upon all flesh, / And your sons and your daughters shall prophesy; / Your old men shall dream dreams; / Your young men shall see visions.
- Joel 2:29 Indeed even upon the male and female slaves / In those days I will pour out My Spirit.
- Joel 2:30 And I will show wonders in the heavens and on earth: / Blood and fire and pillars of smoke.
- Joel 2:31 The sun shall be turned into darkness, / And the moon into blood, / Before the great and terrible / Day of Jehovah comes.
- Joel 2:32 And everyone who calls on the name of Jehovah shall be saved; / For in Mount Zion and in Jerusalem will be an escape, / As Jehovah has said, / Even for the remnant / Whom Jehovah calls.

- B. The divine history within the human history is Christ's "goings forth...from the days of eternity" (Micah 5:2) across the bridge of time into eternity future (Psa. 90:2) so that He might be dispensed into His chosen ones as the Desire of all the nations (Hag. 2:7) for His corporate manifestation and His full glorification.

- Micah 5:2 (But you, O Bethlehem Ephrathah, / So little to be among the thousands of Judah, / From you there will come forth to Me / He who is to be Ruler in Israel; / And His goings forth are from ancient times, / From the days of eternity.)
- Psa 90:2 Before the mountains were brought forth, / And before You gave birth to the earth and the world, / Indeed from eternity to eternity, You are God.
- Hag 2:7 And I will shake all the nations, and the Desire of all the nations will come; and I will fill this house with glory, says Jehovah of hosts.

- C. Joel speaks concerning the outpouring of the processed, consummated, compound Spirit, who was poured out on the day of Pentecost; this Spirit is the consummated Triune God and the realization of Christ for the manifestation of Christ— Joel 2:28-29; Acts 2:1-4, 16-21; 1

Tim. 3:15-16.

Joel 2:28 And afterward I will pour out My Spirit upon all flesh, / And your sons and your daughters shall prophesy; / Your old men shall dream dreams; / Your young men shall see visions.

Joel 2:29 Indeed even upon the male and female slaves / In those days I will pour out My Spirit.

Acts 2:1 And as the day of Pentecost was being fulfilled, they were all together in the same place.

Acts 2:2 And suddenly there was a sound out of heaven, as of a rushing violent wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting.

Acts 2:3 And there appeared to them tongues as of fire, which were distributed; and it sat on each one of them;

Acts 2:4 And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in different tongues, even as the Spirit gave to them to speak forth.

Acts 2:16 But this is what is spoken through the prophet Joel:

Acts 2:17 "And it shall be in the last days, says God, that I will pour out of My Spirit upon all flesh, and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream things in dreams;

Acts 2:18 And indeed upon My slaves, both men and women, I will pour out of My Spirit in those days, and they shall prophesy.

Acts 2:19 And I will show wonders in heaven above and signs on the earth below, blood and fire and vapor of smoke.

Acts 2:20 The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the great and notable day of the Lord comes.

Acts 2:21 And it shall be that everyone who calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved."

1 Tim 3:15 But if I delay, I write that you may know how one ought to conduct himself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and base of the truth.

1 Tim 3:16 And confessedly, great is the mystery of godliness: He who was manifested in the flesh, / Justified in the Spirit, / Seen by angels, / Preached among the nations, / Believed on in the world, / Taken up in glory.

II. The book of Acts reveals a group of people who live in the divine history by calling on the name of the Lord, suffering on behalf of the name of the Lord, and speaking in the name of the Lord, the name of Jesus:

- A. Joel's prophecy and its fulfillment concerning God's New Testament jubilee have two aspects: on God's side, He poured out His Spirit in the ascension of the resurrected Christ; on our side, we call on the name of the ascended Lord, who has accomplished all, attained unto all, and obtained all—Acts 2:16-18, 21; Joel 2:28-29, 32a:

Acts 2:16 But this is what is spoken through the prophet Joel:

Acts 2:17 "And it shall be in the last days, says God, that I will pour out of My Spirit upon all flesh, and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream things in dreams;

Acts 2:18 And indeed upon My slaves, both men and women, I will pour out of My Spirit in those days, and they shall prophesy.

Acts 2:21 And it shall be that everyone who calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved."

Joel 2:28 And afterward I will pour out My Spirit upon all flesh, / And your sons and your daughters shall prophesy; / Your old men shall dream dreams; / Your young men shall see visions.

Joel 2:29 Indeed even upon the male and female slaves / In those days I will pour out My Spirit.

Joel 2:32a And everyone who calls on the name of Jehovah shall be saved; ...

1. Our divine history in the midst of human history is a history of calling on the name of the Lord to enjoy the riches of Christ for the building up of the Body of Christ as the fullness of Christ—Rom. 10:12-13; Eph. 3:8, 19; 1:22-23.

Rom 10:12 For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek, for the same Lord is Lord of all and rich to all who call upon Him;

Rom 10:13 For "whoever calls upon the name of the Lord shall be saved."

Eph 3:8 To me, less than the least of all saints, was this grace given to announce to the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ as the gospel

- Eph 3:19 And to know the knowledge-surpassing love of Christ, that you may be filled unto all the fullness of God.
- Eph 1:22 And He subjected all things under His feet and gave Him to be Head over all things to the church,
- Eph 1:23 Which is His Body, the fullness of the One who fills all in all.
2. By calling on the name of the Lord, we keep ourselves in God's golden, divine history—a history that begins with Enosh (Gen. 4:26), continues through the Old and New Testaments (Job 12:4; Gen. 12:8; 26:25; Deut. 4:7; Judg. 15:18; 1 Sam. 12:18; Psa. 116:4, 13, 17; 80:18; 88:9; 1 Kings 18:24; Isa. 12:4; Lam. 3:55, 57; Psa. 99:6; Isa. 55:6; Jonah 1:6; 2 Kings 5:11; Isa. 41:25; Acts 2:21; 7:59; 9:14, 21; 22:16; Rom. 10:12-13; 1 Cor. 1:2; 2 Tim. 2:22), and concludes with the last prayer in the Bible (Rev. 22:20).
- Gen 4:26 And to Seth also a son was born, and he called his name Enosh. At that time men began to call upon the name of Jehovah.
- Job 12:4 I have become a laughingstock to my friends, / I, who have called out to God and He answers me. / The righteous man, the perfect man, is a laughingstock.
- Gen 12:8 And he proceeded from there to the mountain on the east of Bethel and pitched his tent, with Bethel on the west and Ai on the east; and there he built an altar to Jehovah and called upon the name of Jehovah.
- Gen 26:25 And he built an altar there and called upon the name of Jehovah and pitched his tent there. And there Isaac's servants dug a well.
- Deut 4:7 For what great nation is there that has a god so near to it as Jehovah our God is whenever we call upon Him?
- Judg 15:18 And he was very thirsty, and he called on Jehovah, saying, You have granted this great victory by the hand of Your servant. And will I now die of thirst and fall into the hand of the uncircumcised?
- 1 Sam 12:18 And Samuel called to Jehovah, and Jehovah sent thunder and rain on that day. And all the people feared Jehovah and Samuel greatly.
- Psa 116:4 But I called upon the name of Jehovah. / O Jehovah, I pray, deliver my soul.
- Psa 116:13 I will take up the cup of salvation / And call upon the name of Jehovah.
- Psa 116:17 To You I will offer a sacrifice of thanksgiving, / And I will call upon the name of Jehovah.
- Psa 80:18 Then we will not turn back from You. / Revive us, and we will call upon Your name.
- Psa 88:9 My eye wastes away at the affliction; / I have called out to You, O Jehovah, every day; / I have spread out my hands to You.
- 1 Kings 18:24 Then call on the name of your god, and I will call on the name of Jehovah; and the God who answers by fire, He will be God. And all the people answered and said, The word seems good.
- Isa 12:4 And you will say in that day, / Give thanks to Jehovah; call upon His name! / Make His deeds known among the peoples; / Remind them that His name is exalted.
- Lam 3:55 I called upon Your name, O Jehovah, / From the lowest pit.
- Lam 3:57 You drew near in the day that I called upon You; / You said, Do not fear.
- Psa 99:6 Moses and Aaron among His priests, / And Samuel among those who called on His name
- Isa 55:6 Seek Jehovah while He may be found; / Call upon Him while He is near.
- Jonah 1:6 So the ship captain approached him and said to him, How can you be fast asleep? Arise, call on your God. Perhaps God will give thought to us, and we will not perish.
- 2 Kings 5:11 But Naaman became furious and went away and said, I thought, He will surely come out to me and stand and call on the name of Jehovah his God, and wave his hand over the place and cure the leper.
- Isa 41:25 I have raised up one from the north and he has come; / From the rising of the sun he will call upon My name. / He will come upon rulers as upon mortar, / As the potter treads the clay.
- Acts 2:21 And it shall be that everyone who calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved."

Acts 7:59 And they stoned Stephen as he called upon the Lord and said, Lord Jesus, receive my spirit!

Acts 9:14 And here he has authority from the chief priests to bind all who call upon Your name.

Acts 9:21 And all who heard him were amazed and said, Is this not the one who ravaged those who call upon this name in Jerusalem and came here for this, that he might bring them bound before the chief priests?

Acts 22:16 And now, why do you delay? Rise up and be baptized and wash away your sins, calling on His name.

Rom 10:12 For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek, for the same Lord is Lord of all and rich to all who call upon Him;

Rom 10:13 For "whoever calls upon the name of the Lord shall be saved."

1 Cor 1:2 To the church of God which is in Corinth, to those who have been sanctified in Christ Jesus, the called saints, with all those who call upon the name of our Lord Jesus Christ in every place, who is theirs and ours:

2 Tim 2:22 But flee youthful lusts, and pursue righteousness, faith, love, peace with those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart.

Rev 22:20 He who testifies these things says, Yes, I come quickly. Amen. Come, Lord Jesus!

- B. As we are living in the divine history, we suffer on behalf of the Lord's name within the human history; it is a real honor to be dishonored on behalf of the Name, the very name of the man-dishonored but God-honored Jesus—Acts 4:18-20, 29-31; 5:41-42; 9:13-16; 2 Cor. 6:4; 11:23; Col. 1:24-25.

Acts 4:18 And when they called them, they charged them not to utter anything at all nor teach based upon the name of Jesus.

Acts 4:19 But Peter and John answered and said to them, Whether it is right in the sight of God to listen to you rather than to God, you judge;

Acts 4:20 For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard.

Acts 4:29 And now, Lord, look upon their threatenings and grant Your slaves to speak Your word with all boldness,

Acts 4:30 While stretching out Your hand to heal, and that signs and wonders may take place through the name of Your holy Servant Jesus.

Acts 4:31 And when they had so besought, the place in which they were gathered was shaken, and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak the word of God with boldness.

Acts 5:41 So they went from the presence of the Sanhedrin, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to be dishonored on behalf of the Name.

Acts 5:42 And every day, in the temple and from house to house, they did not cease teaching and announcing the gospel of Jesus as the Christ.

Acts 9:13 But Ananias answered, Lord, I have heard from many concerning this man, how many evil things he has done to Your saints in Jerusalem;

Acts 9:14 And here he has authority from the chief priests to bind all who call upon Your name.

Acts 9:15 But the Lord said to him, Go, for this man is a chosen vessel to Me, to bear My name before both the Gentiles and kings and the sons of Israel;

Acts 9:16 For I will show him how many things he must suffer on behalf of My name.

2 Cor 6:4 But in everything we commend ourselves as ministers of God, in much endurance, in afflictions, in necessities, in distresses,

2 Cor 11:23 Ministers of Christ are they? I speak as being beside myself, I more so! In labors more abundantly, in imprisonments more abundantly, in stripes excessively, in deaths often.

Col 1:24 I now rejoice in my sufferings on your behalf and fill up on my part that which is lacking of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh for His Body, which is the church;

Col 1:25 Of which I became a minister according to the stewardship of God, which was given to me for you, to complete the word of God,

- C. We carry out the divine history within the human history by speaking "boldly in the name of Jesus"; this name is the expression of the sum total of what the Lord is in His person and work—Acts 9:27; Phil. 2:9-11; 1 Thes. 2:2; 2 Cor. 4:5.

Acts 9:27 But Barnabas took hold of him and led him to the apostles, and he related to them

- how Saul had seen the Lord on the road, and that He had spoken to him, and how in Damascus he had spoken boldly in the name of Jesus.
- Phil 2:9 Therefore also God highly exalted Him and bestowed on Him the name which is above every name,
- Phil 2:10 That in the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those who are in heaven and on earth and under the earth,
- Phil 2:11 And every tongue should openly confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father.
- 1 Thes 2:2 But having suffered previously and having been outrageously treated, even as you know, in Philippi, we were bold in our God to speak to you the gospel of God in much struggle.
- 2 Cor 4:5 For we do not preach ourselves but Christ Jesus as Lord, and ourselves as your slaves for Jesus' sake.

III. The book of Acts reveals a group of people who live in the divine history by living, moving, and acting as one Body; they do everything in the Body, through the Body, and for the Body:

- A. After the Lord Jesus died, resurrected, and ascended, He continued to live, act, walk, and work on earth in thousands of people because He imparted Himself into them through His death and resurrection—John 12:24.
- 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.
- B. The four Gospels give us a picture of the Head, and the book of Acts shows us the Body; the book of Acts is actually the acts of Christ by the Spirit in the church as His Body, His reproduction and duplication—1:14; 2:14a, 42; 9:4-5; 28:13-15.
- Acts 1:14 These all continued steadfastly with one accord in prayer, together with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with His brothers.
- Acts 2:14a But Peter, standing with the eleven, lifted up his voice and spoke forth to them: ...
- Acts 2:42 And they continued steadfastly in the teaching and the fellowship of the apostles, in the breaking of bread and the prayers.
- Acts 9:4 And he fell on the ground and heard a voice saying to him, Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me?
- Acts 9:5 And he said, Who are You, Lord? And He said, I am Jesus, whom you persecute.
- Acts 28:13 From there we sailed around and arrived at Rhegium. And after one day a south wind came on, and the second day we came to Puteoli,
- Acts 28:14 Where, having found brothers, we were urged to remain with them seven days. And thus we came to Rome.
- Acts 28:15 And from there the brothers, having heard about the things concerning us, came as far as the Market of Appius and Three Inns to meet us; and when Paul saw them, he thanked God and took courage.

IV. The book of Acts reveals a group of people who live in the divine history by rejecting themselves and living by another life—Christ as the divine life; this corporate living of Christ is the reality of the Body of Christ:

- A. The life that is indicated by “this life” in Acts 5:20 is the divine life preached, ministered, and lived by Peter that overcame the Jewish leaders’ persecution, threatening, and imprisonment; Peter’s life and work made the divine life so real and present in his situation that even the angel saw it and pointed it out.
- Acts 5:20 Go and stand in the temple and speak to the people all the words of this life.
- B. Paul lived Christ and served God by the all-inclusive Spirit of Jesus in his spirit (the divine Spirit mingled with his human spirit as one spirit); he lived within the veil (in his spirit as the practical Holy of Holies) and outside the camp (the human organization of religion)—16:6-7; 17:16; 19:21; Rom. 8:16; 2 Tim. 4:22; 1 Cor. 6:17; Rom. 1:9; Phil. 3:3; Heb. 6:19-20; 13:13.

Acts 16:6 And they passed through the region of Phrygia and Galatia, having been forbidden by the Holy Spirit to speak the word in Asia.

Acts 16:7 And when they had come to Mysia, they tried to go into Bithynia, yet the Spirit of Jesus did not allow them.

Acts 17:16 And while Paul was waiting for them in Athens, his spirit was provoked within him as he beheld that the city was full of idols.

Acts 19:21 And when these things were fulfilled, Paul purposed in his spirit to pass through Macedonia and Achaia and go to Jerusalem, saying, After I have been there, I must also see Rome.

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

2 Tim 4:22 The Lord be with your spirit. Grace be with you.

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

Rom 1:9 For God is my witness, whom I serve in my spirit in the gospel of His Son, how unceasingly I make mention of you always in my prayers,

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,

Heb 6:19 Which we have as an anchor of the soul, both secure and firm and which enters within the veil,

Heb 6:20 Where the Forerunner, Jesus, has entered for us, having become forever a High Priest according to the order of Melchizedec.

Heb 13:13 Let us therefore go forth unto Him outside the camp, bearing His reproach.

C. In order to live in the divine history within the human history and by the divine life in our human life, we need to be vessels open to the Lord, loving Him, receiving Him, being filled with Him, and letting Him be everything to us and do everything in us, through us, and for us—Acts 9:15; 2 Cor. 4:7; Rom. 9:21, 23; cf. 2 Kings 4:1-6.

Acts 9:15 But the Lord said to him, Go, for this man is a chosen vessel to Me, to bear My name before both the Gentiles and kings and the sons of Israel;

2 Cor 4:7 But we have this treasure in earthen vessels that the excellency of the power may be of God and not out of us.

Rom 9:21 Or does not the potter have authority over the clay to make out of the same lump one vessel unto honor and another unto dishonor?

Rom 9:23 In order that He might make known the riches of His glory upon vessels of mercy, which He had before prepared unto glory,

2 Kings 4:1 Now a certain woman from among the wives of the sons of the prophets cried out to Elisha, saying, Your servant my husband is dead, and you know that your servant feared Jehovah. And the creditor has come to take my two children to himself as servants.

2 Kings 4:2 And Elisha said to her, What shall I do for you? Tell me, what do you have in your house? And she said, Your servant has nothing at all in the house, except a jar of oil.

2 Kings 4:3 And he said, Go and borrow vessels outside, from all your neighbors, empty vessels, and not just a few.

2 Kings 4:4 Then go in and shut the door behind you and your sons, and pour out into all those vessels; and each one you fill set aside.

2 Kings 4:5 So she went away from him and shut the door behind herself and her sons; and they brought the vessels to her, and she poured out into them.

2 Kings 4:6 And when she had filled the vessels, she said to her son, Bring me another vessel. But he said to her, There is no other vessel. And the oil stopped.

V. The book of Acts reveals a group of people who live in the divine history by continuing steadfastly in prayer and in the ministry of the word; this is to live in the apostolic ministry in coordination with Christ as our great High Priest in His heavenly ministry—6:4; Heb. 7:25; 8:1-2:

Acts 6:4 But we will continue steadfastly in prayer and in the ministry of the word.

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 8:1 Now in the things which are being said the chief point is this: We have such a High Priest, who sat down on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens,

- Heb 8:2 A Minister of the holy places, even of the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, not man.
- A. By prayer we set our mind on the things above and become a reflection of Christ's ministry in the heavens; we depend on prayer to do what man cannot do, to understand what man cannot understand, and to speak what man cannot speak—Acts 9:11; 13:1-4; Col. 3:1-3; 4:2; Eph. 6:18; Dan. 6:10; 9:2-3; 1 Cor. 2:13; 2 Cor. 3:6.
- Acts 9:11 And the Lord said to him, Rise up and go to the lane called Straight, and seek in the house of Judas a man from Tarsus named Saul; for behold, he is praying;
- Acts 13:1 Now there were in Antioch, in the local church, prophets and teachers: Barnabas and Simeon, who was called Niger, and Lucius the Cyrenian, and Manaen, the foster brother of Herod the tetrarch, and Saul.
- Acts 13:2 And as they were ministering to the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, Set apart for Me now Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them.
- Acts 13:3 Then, when they had fasted and prayed and laid their hands on them, they sent them away.
- Acts 13:4 They then, having been sent out by the Holy Spirit, went down to Seleucia; and from there they sailed away to Cyprus.
- Col 3:1 If therefore you were raised together with Christ, seek the things which are above, where Christ is, sitting at the right hand of God.
- Col 3:2 Set your mind on the things which are above, not on the things which are on the earth.
- Col 3:3 For you died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God.
- Col 4:2 Persevere in prayer, watching in it with thanksgiving,
- Eph 6:18 By means of all prayer and petition, praying at every time in spirit and watching unto this in all perseverance and petition concerning all the saints,
- Dan 6:10 Now when Daniel came to know that the writing had been signed, he went to his house (in his upper room he had windows open toward Jerusalem) and three times daily he knelt on his knees and prayed and gave thanks before his God, because he had always done so previously.
- Dan 9:2 In the first year of his reign I, Daniel, understood by means of the Scriptures the number of the years, which came as the word of Jehovah to Jeremiah the prophet, for the completion of the desolations of Jerusalem, that is, seventy years.
- Dan 9:3 So I set my face toward the Lord God to seek Him in prayer and supplications with fasting and sackcloth and ashes.
- 1 Cor 2:13 Which things also we speak, not in words taught by human wisdom but in words taught by the Spirit, interpreting spiritual things with spiritual words.
- 2 Cor 3:6 Who has also made us sufficient as ministers of a new covenant, ministers not of the letter but of the Spirit; for the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life.
- B. By the ministry of the word, we impart Christ into others as the heavenly life and power so that they may be sustained with the riches of Christ to live Christ as their heavenly life on earth—Rom. 15:16; cf. Isa. 50:4-5.
- 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.
- Isa 50:4 The Lord Jehovah has given me / The tongue of the instructed, / That I should know how to sustain the weary with a word. / He awakens me morning by morning; / He awakens my ear / To hear as an instructed one.
- Isa 50:5 The Lord Jehovah has opened my ear; / And I was not rebellious, / Nor did I turn back.

VI. The book of Acts reveals a group of people who live in the divine history seen in Psalm 68, which shows that Christ is the center of God's move on the earth and the reality of God's activities through the church—vv. 1, 24:

- Psa. 68 be omitted.
- Psa 68:1 Let God arise; let His enemies be scattered; / And let those who hate Him flee before Him.
- Psa 68:24 They have seen Your goings, O God, / The goings of my God, my King, in the sanctuary:
- A. We need to enjoy the processed and consummated Triune God as the life-dispensing and outpoured Spirit day by day—vv. 11-13, 19; Acts 2:46-47; 5:42; 16:5; 20:31; 28:30-31.
- Psa 68:11 The Lord gives the command; / The women who bear the glad tidings are a great host.

- Psa 68:12 The kings of the armies flee. / They flee! / And she who abides at home / Divides the spoil.
- Psa 68:13 Though you lie among the sheepfolds, / There are dove wings covered with silver, / And its pinions, with greenish yellow gold.
- Psa 68:19 Blessed be the Lord, who day by day loads us with good; / God is our salvation. Selah.
- Acts 2:46 And day by day, continuing steadfastly with one accord in the temple and breaking bread from house to house, they partook of their food with exultation and simplicity of heart,
- Acts 2:47 Praising God and having grace with all the people. And the Lord added together day by day those who were being saved.
- Acts 5:42 And every day, in the temple and from house to house, they did not cease teaching and announcing the gospel of Jesus as the Christ.
- Acts 16:5 And so the churches were strengthened in the faith and increased in number daily.
- Acts 20:31 Therefore watch, remembering that for three years, night and day, I did not cease admonishing each one with tears.
- Acts 28:30 And he remained two whole years in his own rented dwelling and welcomed all those who came to him,
- Acts 28:31 Proclaiming the kingdom of God and teaching the things concerning the Lord Jesus Christ with all boldness, unhindered.
- B. We need to dwell in Christ as the “shore” of the evangelists for the transportation and spreading in the preaching of the gospel; on the day of Pentecost at least one hundred twenty gospel “ships,” all of whom were Galileans, set out from the “shore” to spread the gospel—Psa. 68:27; Gen. 49:13; Acts 2:7; 13:31.
- Psa 68:27 There are little Benjamin, who rules them, / And the princes of Judah in their company, / The princes of Zebulun, the princes of Naphtali.
- Gen 49:13 Zebulun will dwell at the shore of the sea, / And he will be a shore for ships, / And his flank will be toward Sidon.
- Acts 2:7 And they were amazed and marveled, saying, Behold, are not all these who are speaking Galileans?
- Acts 13:31 And for many days He appeared to those who had come up with Him from Galilee to Jerusalem, who are now His witnesses to the people.

VII. The book of Acts reveals a group of people who live in the divine history by continuing to enjoy, live, and proclaim the resurrected Christ as the firstborn Son of God and as the holy things of David, the faithful things, which are all the aspects of what Christ is as mercies to us—13:32-34:

- Acts 13:32 And we announce to you the gospel of the promise made to the fathers,
- Acts 13:33 That God has fully fulfilled this promise to us their children in raising up Jesus, as it is also written in the second Psalm, "You are My Son; today I have begotten You."
- Acts 13:34 And as to His having raised Him up from the dead, no longer to return to corruption, He spoke in this way, "I will give you the holy things of David, the faithful things."
- A. Christ as the seed of David was begotten through His resurrection to be the firstborn Son of God and the life-giving Spirit as God's sure mercies shown to David—vv. 33-35; Isa. 55:3-4.
- Acts 13:33 That God has fully fulfilled this promise to us their children in raising up Jesus, as it is also written in the second Psalm, "You are My Son; today I have begotten You."
- Acts 13:34 And as to His having raised Him up from the dead, no longer to return to corruption, He spoke in this way, "I will give you the holy things of David, the faithful things."
- Acts 13:35 Therefore He also says in another place, "You will not allow Your Holy One to see corruption."
- Isa 55:3 Incline your ear and come to Me; / Hear, so that your soul may live; / And I will make an eternal covenant with you, / Even the sure mercies shown to David.
- Isa 55:4 Indeed, I have given Him as a Witness to the peoples, / A Leader and a Commander to the peoples.
- B. In Acts 13:34 Paul interprets God's sure mercies in Isaiah 55:3 as “the holy things of David, the faithful things,” and in Acts 13:33 and 35 he indicates that these things are the resurrected Christ Himself as the firstborn Son of God and as the Holy One.
- Acts 13:34 And as to His having raised Him up from the dead, no longer to return to corruption,

- Isa 55:3 He spoke in this way, "I will give you the holy things of David, the faithful things."
 Incline your ear and come to Me; / Hear, so that your soul may live; / And I will make an eternal covenant with you, / Even the sure mercies shown to David.
- Acts 13:33 That God has fully fulfilled this promise to us their children in raising up Jesus, as it is also written in the second Psalm, "You are My Son; today I have begotten You."
- Acts 13:35 Therefore He also says in another place, "You will not allow Your Holy One to see corruption."
- C. This is also confirmed by Isaiah 55:4, which reveals that the sure mercies are Christ Himself as the Witness, Leader, and Commander to the peoples.
 Isa 55:4 Indeed, I have given Him as a Witness to the peoples, / A Leader and a Commander to the peoples.
- D. The resurrected Christ as the firstborn Son of God and the life-giving Spirit is a great gift given by God to His chosen people, and this gift is entitled "the holy things of David, the faithful things"—Acts 13:33-34.
 Acts 13:33 That God has fully fulfilled this promise to us their children in raising up Jesus, as it is also written in the second Psalm, "You are My Son; today I have begotten You."
 Acts 13:34 And as to His having raised Him up from the dead, no longer to return to corruption, He spoke in this way, "I will give you the holy things of David, the faithful things."
- E. The resurrected Christ is the mercies and blessings, the holy and faithful things, whom God gives to us as a great gift; this gift is the resurrected Christ Himself as the reality of the eternal covenant with all His unsearchable riches to be our all-inclusive grace—Isa. 42:6b; 55:3; 1 Cor. 1:9; Acts 13:43.
 Isa 42:6b ... I have held You by the hand; / I have kept You and I have given You / As a covenant for the people, as a light for the nations;
 Isa 55:3 Incline your ear and come to Me; / Hear, so that your soul may live; / And I will make an eternal covenant with you, / Even the sure mercies shown to David.
 1 Cor 1:9 God is faithful, through whom you were called into the fellowship of His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.
 Acts 13:43 And when the synagogue gathering had been dismissed, many of the Jews and the devout proselytes followed Paul and Barnabas, who spoke to them and urged them to continue in the grace of God.

VIII. If we would be in the continuation of the book of Acts, we need to continue to live in the divine history by having an upper-room consecration—1:13-14:

- Acts 1:13 And when they entered, they went up to the upper room where they were residing, Peter and John and James and Andrew, Philip and Thomas, Bartholomew and Matthew, James the son of Alphaeus and Simon the Zealot and Judas the brother of James.
- Acts 1:14 These all continued steadfastly with one accord in prayer, together with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with His brothers.
- A. At the seashore Peter gave up his job to follow the Lord Jesus, but in the upper room he gave up much more—Matt. 4:18-20; Acts 1:13-14:
 Matt 4:18 And while He was walking beside the Sea of Galilee, He saw two brothers, Simon, who is called Peter, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea, for they were fishermen.
 Matt 4:19 And He said to them, Come after Me, and I will make you fishers of men.
 Matt 4:20 And immediately leaving the nets, they followed Him.
 Acts 1:13 And when they entered, they went up to the upper room where they were residing, Peter and John and James and Andrew, Philip and Thomas, Bartholomew and Matthew, James the son of Alphaeus and Simon the Zealot and Judas the brother of James.
 Acts 1:14 These all continued steadfastly with one accord in prayer, together with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with His brothers.
1. He stood with the heavenly vision to give up the religion of his forefathers.
 2. He gave up his country, his relationship with his neighbors and friends, and his relatives, and he was willing to risk his life.
- B. The kind of consecration that we need today is an upper-room consecration, a consecration

in which we pay the price to have our whole being “married” to the heavenly vision—26:19; 1:8; 20:24.

Acts 26:19 Therefore, King Agrippa, I was not disobedient to the heavenly vision,
Acts 1:8 But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you, and you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria and unto the uttermost part of the earth.

Acts 20:24 But I consider my life of no account as if precious to myself, in order that I may finish my course and the ministry which I have received from the Lord Jesus to solemnly testify of the gospel of the grace of God.

C. If we pay the price for the heavenly vision, we will “burn the bridges” behind us and will have no way to go backward.

D. Whether we have seen the heavenly vision or not depends on whether we are willing to pay the price to buy the anointing Spirit as the eyesalve—Rev. 3:18.

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.

E. To take the way of the Lord’s recovery is not cheap; this way is expensive and requires a costly consecration.

F. We are not here for a movement but for the Lord’s recovery, and the recovery can be carried out only by the specific and extraordinary consecration in the upper room.

G. The one hundred twenty in the upper room all became a burnt offering; they were burning for the Lord in spirit, and they burned others with the divine fire of the divine life—Luke 12:49-50; Acts 2:3-4; Rom. 12:11.

Luke 12:49 I have come to cast fire on the earth, and how I wish that it were already kindled!

Luke 12:50 But I have a baptism to be baptized with, and how I am pressed until it is accomplished!

Acts 2:3 And there appeared to them tongues as of fire, which were distributed; and it sat on each one of them;

Acts 2:4 And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in different tongues, even as the Spirit gave to them to speak forth.

Rom 12:11 Do not be slothful in zeal, but be burning in spirit, serving the Lord.

H. When the Lord Jesus was on the earth, great crowds followed Him, but they did not afford Him anything for His move; His move was with those in the upper room, with those whose eyes had been opened and whose hearts had been touched—Acts 17:6b.

Acts 17:6b ... they dragged Jason and some brothers before the city officials, shouting, These men who have upset the world have come here also,

I. It is a small number who will turn the world upside down and change the age; if we would be in the upper room, we need to pray in a specific way and say, “Lord, I am willing to be in the upper room for the recovery of Your testimony.”

Excerpts from the Ministry:

THE VISION OF CONSECRATION

Scripture Reading: Acts 1:12-14; Rev. 3:18

In the foregoing chapters we have covered the vision of Christ, the vision of the church, the vision of the Body, the vision of the self, and the vision of the world. In this chapter we need to consider the vision of consecration. As we will see, this vision is of a particular kind of consecration.

BOUND BY THE FLESH, THE SELF, AND THE WORLD

We have pointed out that fallen people are bound by a cord composed of three strands: the flesh, the self, and the world. The flesh is the human body corrupted by the sinful nature of Satan. Sin is nothing less than the sinful nature of Satan injected into the human body, which had been created by

God for His purpose. In Romans 6 and 7 sin is personified and likened to a living person who dwells in us, works in us, and reigns in us. As we have the flesh in the body, so we have the self in the soul. The self is the soul plus the satanic mind, the satanic thought.

The human body has become the flesh, and the human soul has become the self, but what has happened to the human spirit? There seems to be nothing wrong with the human spirit, for, in contrast to the body and the soul, there is nothing evil or sinful in it. No, there is nothing sinful in the human spirit, but nevertheless the human spirit has been deadened. The spirit has been deadened by the sin in the body and by the self in the soul. The more sinful we are, the more our spirit is deadened. Likewise, the more self-seeking we are, the more our spirit is deadened.

Human beings are bound not only by the flesh and the self but also by the world. Satan has systematized all the things on earth which are necessary for human existence. These things include food, marriage, clothing, housing, and transportation. The Lord provides everything necessary for our existence so that we may live to fulfill His purpose. However, Satan has come in to systematize these things into a system which in the Greek New Testament is the word *kosmos* and in English is *world*. Originally, all these things were on earth for human existence, and there was nothing wrong with them, but Satan came in to change the earthly things into worldly things. Satan transmuted the human body into the flesh and changed the human soul into the self. In the same principle, Satan has changed the earthly things—the things that were originally on earth for man's existence—into worldly things. These things have become elements of Satan's system, the world, in which all people are imprisoned. Man has been systematized by Satan and has no freedom to fulfill God's purpose.

How evil and how subtle Satan is! Satan has corrupted the human body with sin, causing the body to become the flesh. Satan has polluted the human soul with the satanic mind, causing the soul to become the self. Satan has systematized all the earthly things that are necessary for human existence, organizing them into one system, the world.

THE UNIVERSITY OF THE WORLD

The world may be likened to a large university. A university is a system with many colleges, schools, and departments. In a university there may be a school of medicine, a school of law, a school of business, and a school of liberal arts. Such schools are the systematizing elements of the university. All the students in the university are systematized according to their major, and they study in one of the many schools.

The entire world today is a big “university”—the university of the world. In this university there are different “schools”: the school of food, the school of marriage, and the schools of clothing, housing, and transportation. Whereas most students in a university study in just one school, the worldly people, who have been systematized in the university of the world, may study in a number of different schools, taking many “units” at a time but never graduating. They are so busy and so occupied that they have no time for God. They will not say that they are too busy to eat, but they will tell you that they have no time to come to a meeting, to read the Bible, or to pray. They have time for anything in the university of the world, but they have no time for anything related to God.

In the great university of the world, there is also a school of religion. There are even a school of Christianity and a school of Judaism. When the Lord Jesus was on earth, the Jewish people were systematized by Satan in the school of Judaism.

TURNING FROM JUDAISM TO THE HEAVENLY VISION

The apostles and disciples in the early days were taught and trained by the Lord Jesus to realize something new, something absolutely different from Judaism. They came to know Christ, and they saw the vision of Christ. They knew that Christ had been crucified and resurrected, that He had ascended on high, that He had been enthroned and had been made the Lord and Christ, and that He would come back to the earth. They also had the vision of the church and realized that God would gather together His chosen ones and build them up as local churches. They had been in Judaism, but they were turned

from Judaism to the heavenly vision.

THE CONSECRATION IN THE UPPER ROOM

Acts 1 speaks of the upper room in Jerusalem. In this upper room a group of about a hundred and twenty prayed for ten days in one accord. They not only prayed, but they also consecrated themselves to the Lord, offering themselves to Him in a very real and practical way.

Three and a half years earlier, the Lord Jesus came to Peter by the seashore, and Peter offered himself to Him. Peter left his job and began to follow the Lord (Matt. 4:18-20). We may say that Peter consecrated himself to the Lord. However, Peter's experience in the upper room was something else. Here Peter had a new kind of consecration, not an ordinary consecration but something specific. At the seashore Peter gave up his job, indicated by his leaving his fishing nets, but in the upper room he gave up much more. We need to itemize the things Peter gave up in order to be in the upper room.

Standing with the Heavenly Vision to Give Up the Religion of His Forefathers

The first thing Peter gave up was Judaism. The heavenly vision was contradictory to the religion of his forefathers. Peter's attitude was not to stand with his forefathers' religion but to stand with the heavenly vision. In the first several chapters of Acts, we see that Peter and the other apostles were troubled and persecuted by Judaism, but they continued to take sides with the heavenly vision. The first item of their consecration in the upper room was to give up the traditional religion of their forefathers.

Giving Up His Country

In order to be in the upper room, Peter also gave up his country. Peter was from Galilee, but he left Galilee and came to the upper room in Jerusalem.

Giving Up His Relationships with His Neighbors and Friends

As a native of Galilee, Peter surely had relationships with his neighbors and friends in Galilee. For Peter to be in the upper room required that he give up these relationships. This is not an insignificant matter. Peter gave up these relationships at a real cost.

Giving Up His Relatives

Peter also gave up his relatives. I doubt whether Peter brought his parents with him into the upper room. There is no hint to this effect. Actually, Peter's parents might have remained in Judaism.

Risking His Life

Finally, Peter was in the upper room at the risk of his life. He was ready to give up his life. At that time Jerusalem was a threatening place to Peter and all the others in the upper room, yet they were willing to risk their lives to be there. In order to be in the upper room, they all gave up Judaism, their country, their neighbors and friends, and their relatives, and they were willing to risk their lives.

THE KIND OF CONSECRATION WE NEED TODAY

We need to see the vision of this upper-room consecration. You may talk much about consecration, but this may be a consecration at the seashore, not a consecration in the upper room. Yes, at the seashore you gave up something to follow the Lord Jesus, but you may not have yet come to the upper room. What kind of consecration do you have—a consecration at the seashore or a consecration in the upper room?

The time in the upper room in Acts 1 was a turning time. It was a time of the turning of an age, a time of the turning of a dispensation. The turn that took place at that time affected heaven and earth. Do you know what the issue of that consecration in the upper room was? That consecration issued in the church. The church came out of the consecration, the dedication, of the one hundred twenty in the upper room.

During those ten days in the upper room, everything was dedicated in a practical way and was dedicated at any cost—at the cost of their forefathers' religion, at the cost of their country, at the cost

of their relationships with neighbors and friends, at the cost of their relatives and families, and at the cost of their lives. The only thing they cared for was the heavenly vision. They were “drunken” with this heavenly vision. They were “married” to this heavenly vision; their whole being was held by this heavenly vision; and they were beside themselves with this heavenly vision. This is the kind of consecration we need today.

PAYING THE PRICE FOR THE HEAVENLY VISION

Have you seen the heavenly vision about which we have been speaking? Have you seen the visions of Christ, the church, the Body, the self, and the world? I believe that you have seen something. Will you be able to stand before the Lord at the judgment seat and tell Him that you have not seen any of these visions? Surely you have seen something concerning Christ, the church, the Body, the self, and the world, and thus you are without excuse in this matter.

Some claim that they have not seen the vision. They say this because they are not willing to be in the upper room. In other words, they are not willing to pay the price for the heavenly vision. They know that there is a cost to admitting that they have seen something. They realize that all these visions are costly, but they are not willing to pay the price.

Regarding this matter of cost, or price, let us read the word of the Lord Jesus in Revelation 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.” In this verse the Lord counsels us not to pray nor to ask nor to receive nor to take by faith; He counsels us to *buy*. Here we are concerned only with the third of the three things which the Lord counsels us to buy— eyesalve to anoint our eyes that we may see. Perhaps, in a sense, you have not seen the heavenly vision, but as soon as you are willing to pay the price, to buy the eyesalve, you will see. The crucial matter is the willingness to pay the price. Once you come into the upper room, everything is clear. But if you are not willing to come into the upper room, no matter how many messages you hear, you still will not be able to see.

You need to buy the eyesalve. Do not excuse yourself by saying that you have not seen the vision. Do not say that you are not clear. You may be clear, but you may not be willing to pay the price. If you are not willing to pay the price, you will not dare to say that you have seen the vision. Whether or not you have seen the vision depends on this one matter—whether you are willing to pay the price. Pay the price to buy the eyesalve, and you will see the vision.

I encourage you to pray, saying, “Lord Jesus, by Your mercy I will buy the eyesalve. By Your mercy I am willing to pay the price to be in the upper room.” If you say this to the Lord, the heavens will be opened, the scales will fall from your eyes, and you will see the heavenly vision.

BURNING THE BRIDGES BEHIND US

If you pay the price for the heavenly vision, you will “burn the bridges” behind you and will have no way to go backward. Christianity will be behind you, and you will have no way to return to it. Even if you wanted to go back, the people would not accept you.

However, suppose that one day an offer is presented to you, an opportunity to have a better position or a better future. The opportunity may be for you, or it may be for your wife or children. Would you consider this offer? For you to consider such an offer would mean that you have not burned all the bridges. It would mean that you have left yourself a way to go back. By the Lord’s mercy I can testify that I burned all my bridges more than thirty years ago. We should not be ashamed of burning our bridges—we should praise the Lord for it.

THE COST OF TAKING THE WAY OF THE LORD’S RECOVERY

To take the way of the Lord’s recovery is not cheap. This way is expensive; it requires a costly consecration. To take this way will be at the cost of the religion of your fathers and of your country, at the cost of your relationships with your neighbors and of your relatives, and at the cost of your own life. Are you ready for such a consecration? Are you ready to come into the upper room to be clear

concerning the heavenly vision?

We are here not for a movement but for the Lord's recovery. How can the recovery be realized? The recovery can be realized, carried out, only by the experience of the consecration in the upper room. This is not an ordinary consecration; it is a special consecration, a specific consecration, an extraordinary consecration. This consecration is a turning point.

What happened to those one hundred and twenty who were in the upper room in Acts 1? They all became a burnt offering. They were burning, and they burned others. We also need to be burned, and then we will burn others.

What are we expecting today? Do we expect a revival or a movement? Do we expect a new kind of Christian activity? What are we doing here? Have we come together to hear something that we cannot hear elsewhere? We may be here for this reason, but this is not enough. We must be here for the Lord's recovery, which is the issue of an upper-room consecration.

IN THE CROWD OR IN THE UPPER ROOM?

When the Lord Jesus was on earth, great crowds followed Him. Multitudes were saved and healed, and multitudes received the favor of God. Eventually, however, there were only about one hundred and twenty in the upper room. The crowds, the multitudes, did not afford the Lord Jesus anything for His move. The Lord's move was with those in the upper room, with those whose eyes had been opened and whose hearts had been touched. This small number came into the upper room to be burned, and then they turned the whole world upside down. The principle is the same today. It is a small number who will turn the world upside down and change the age.

Do you intend to be in the crowd or in the upper room? Will you remain one of the multitude, or by the Lord's mercy will you come into the upper room? I do not know who you are. Only the Lord knows who will be in the upper room.

I would urge you to pray to receive the Lord's mercy so that you might be in the upper room. If you are not willing to come here, then what you have read in these chapters will have nothing to do with you. Then you will be like those in the crowds, those the Lord did not count on. If you would be in the upper room, you need to pray in a specific way and say, "Lord, I am willing to be in the upper room for the recovery of Your testimony." (*The Collected Works of Witness Lee, 1965*, vol. 3, "The Heavenly Vision," pp. 207-214)

