

2017/7/24-30

Overview: In outline I indicates that The ascended Christ is a minister of the true tabernacle in the heaven. II refers that we need to have a revelation of various aspects of the Church to fulfill the church life under the heavenly Minister. III as for the virtues and the experiences that are needed practically for the practice of the church life. If we are not in under the Ministry of Christ in the heaven, we cannot have the revelations and the virtues so that we cannot have a proper church life.

I. The ascended Christ is a “Minister of the holy places, even of the true tabernacle”:

- A. Christ, as a Minister of the true (heavenly) tabernacle, ministers heaven (which is not only a place but also a condition of life) into us.
- B. The present Christ, who is now in the heavens as our Minister, is ministering to us the heavenly life, grace, authority, and power and sustaining us to live a heavenly life on earth as He did when He was here
- C. The heavenly Christ is ministering in the tabernacle “which the Lord pitched, not man”:
 1. This tabernacle, this sanctuary, is in the third heaven, in which is the heavenly Holy of Holies.
 2. The heavenly Holy of Holies, where Christ is ministering on our behalf, is connected to our spirit—
 3. Christ’s ministry in the heavens takes care of our needs:
 a) From the heavens Christ ministers Himself to us as food, as our life supply, in the way of dispensing. b) As our Minister takes care of our needs, He carries out God’s economy
- D. Whatever Christ carries out as the heavenly Minister, He applies to us as the Spirit:
 1. The supply we need comes from the Christ who is both the Lord in the heavens and the Spirit within us
 2. Now we may experience Him in all His functions as the ascended One
 3. As the heavenly Minister, He transmits what we need from God the Father, who is the source, into our spirit to supply and sustain us.
- E. In His heavenly ministry as the Minister of the true tabernacle, Christ is serving God’s people with the bequests, the blessings, of the new testament:
 2. Whatever is a fact in the new covenant is a bequest in the new testament; Christ, the heavenly Minister, is executing the bequests in the new testament

II. In the Epistle to the Hebrews, various aspects of the church are revealed:

- A. The church is a living composition of the many sons of God, who are the many brothers of Christ brought forth in His resurrection:
 1. God is our divine Father, and we are His divine sons born of His divine life with His divine nature
 2. As the many brothers of Christ, we are the same as the firstborn Son; He is divine and human, and we are human and divine
 3. The church is an organism with two lives and two natures combined and mingled together: a) The church is altogether a matter of life—the divine life and the uplifted, resurrected human life
- B. The church is a corporate partnership with Christ:
 1. The goal of God’s operation in the universe is to accomplish a glorious expression of Himself
 2. The firstborn Son is God’s appointed Heir, and we, the many sons, have been saved to be His joint heirs, inheriting not only salvation but also all things with Him
 3. Since Christ as the firstborn Son of God is God’s appointed Heir and we as the many sons of God are His joint heirs, we are Christ’s partners
 4. As Christ’s partners, we share in His anointing and cooperate with Him in His operation to reach the goal of God’s economy—the glorious expression of the Divine Being
- C. The church, the enlargement of Christ, is the Sabbath rest:
 1. The individual Christ is God’s Sabbath, and the church is the enlargement of Christ; therefore, the church is also God’s Sabbath rest.
 2. The church is God’s satisfaction and rest because in the church God has His habitation for His expression and representation
- D. To come to the church is to come to the new covenant and to the heavenly New Jerusalem:
 1. The new covenant, the heavenly Jerusalem, and the church are one.
 2. To receive the new covenant is to enter the New Jerusalem and come to the church: a) Hebrews 8 indicates that the old covenant of law has been replaced by the new covenant. b) Hebrews 12 says that we have come to Mount Zion, to the city of the living God, to the Mediator of a new covenant, and to the church
- E. The church is the unshakable kingdom of God:
 1. The unshakable kingdom that we are receiving is Christ with His enlargement: a) The kingdom is actually the Lord Himself as the kingdom within us b) Whereas the church is Christ’s increase in life, the kingdom is Christ’s increase in administration.
 2. In the church, we are living in the kingdom of God today

III. Hebrews 13:1–19 speaks of the virtues and the experiences needed for the practice of the church life:

- A. As indicated by its content, this chapter was written with a view to a proper church life; nearly everything mentioned here, such as brotherly love and hospitality, is for the church life, not only for the Christian life
- B. For a true and steadfast church life, we must hold on to the Christ who is the same yesterday and today, and even forever, and must not be carried away by various strange teachings
- C. The more we are in our spirit, enjoying the heavenly Christ, the more we will come outside the camp of religion, following the suffering Jesus
- D. Since in the church life we enjoy the unchanging Christ as grace and follow Him outside religion, we should offer through Him spiritual sacrifices of praise to God:
 1. In the church we should offer up through Christ a sacrifice of praise to God continually.
 2. In the church He sings in us hymns of praise unto God the Father, and in the church we too should praise God the Father through Him.
 3. Eventually, in the church He and we, we and He, praise the Father together in the mingled spirit:
 a) He, as the life-giving Spirit, praises the Father in our spirit, and we, by our spirit, praise the Father in His Spirit.
 b) This is the best and highest sacrifice that we can offer to God through Christ the Son.
 c) This is greatly needed in the church meetings.

Scriptures:

I . The ascended Christ is a “Minister of the holy places, even of the true tabernacle”:

Heb. 8:2 A Minister of the holy places, even of the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, not man.

Heb. 1:3 Who, being the effulgence of His glory and the impress of His substance and upholding and bearing all things by the word of His power, having made purification of sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high;

Heb. 4:12 For the word of God is living and operative and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing even to the dividing of soul and spirit and of joints and marrow, and able to discern the thoughts and intentions of the heart.

Heb. 4:14 Having therefore a great High Priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus, the Son of God, let us hold fast the confession. 15 For we do not have a High Priest who cannot be touched with the feeling of our weaknesses, but One who has been tempted in all respects like us, yet without sin.

Heb. 7:22 By so much Jesus has also become the surety of a better covenant.

Heb. 7:26 For such a High Priest was also fitting to us, holy, guileless, undefiled, separated from sinners and having become higher than the heavens,

Heb. 8:6 But now He has obtained a more excellent ministry inasmuch as He is also the Mediator of a better covenant, which has been enacted upon better promises.

Heb. 9:15 And because of this He is the Mediator of a new covenant, so that, death having taken place for redemption of the transgressions under the first covenant, those who have been called might receive the promise of the eternal inheritance. 16 For where there is a testament, the death of him who made the testament must of necessity be established. 17 For a testament is confirmed in the case of the dead, since it never has force when he who made the testament is living.

Heb. 9:24 For Christ did not enter into a holy place made by hands, a figure of the true, but into heaven itself, to appear now before the face of God for us;

Eph. 1:10 Unto the economy of the fullness of the times, to head up all things in Christ, the things in the heavens and the things on the earth, in Him;

1 Cor. 15:45 So also it is written, “The first man, Adam, became a living soul”; the last Adam became a life-giving Spirit.

2 Cor. 3:17 And the Lord is the Spirit; and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom.

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

II . In the Epistle to the Hebrews, various aspects of the church are revealed:

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;

Heb. 2:10 For it was fitting for Him, for whom are all things and through whom are all things, in

leading many sons into glory, to make the Author of their salvation perfect through sufferings.

11 For both He who sanctifies and those who are being sanctified are all of One, for which cause He is not ashamed to call them brothers,

12 Saying, “I will declare Your name to My brothers; in the midst of the church I will sing hymns of praise to You.”

Heb. 1:9 You have loved righteousness and hated lawlessness; therefore God, Your God, has anointed You with the oil of exultant joy above Your partners”;

Heb. 3:14 For we have become partners of Christ, if indeed we hold fast the beginning of the assurance firm to the end—

Heb. 4:9 So then there remains a Sabbath rest for the people of God.

Heb. 5:5 So also Christ did not glorify Himself in becoming a High Priest, but it was He who said to Him, “You are My Son; this day have I begotten You”;

Heb. 12:28 Therefore receiving an unshakable kingdom, let us have grace, through which we may serve God well-pleasingly with piety and fear;

1 Pet. 1:3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His great mercy has regenerated us unto a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,

John 20:17 Jesus said to her, Do not touch Me, for I have not yet ascended to the Father; but go to My brothers and say to them, I ascend to My Father and your Father, and My God and your God.

Eph. 1:5 Predestinating us unto sonship through Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will,

Gal. 3:26 For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus.

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

III . Hebrews 13:1–9 speaks of the virtues and the experiences needed for the practice of the church life:

Heb. 13:8 Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today, yes, even forever. 9 Do not be carried away by various strange teachings, for it is good for the heart to be confirmed by grace, not by the food of sacrifices, by which those who walk were not profited.

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

Heb. 13:15 Through Him then let us offer up sacrifice of praise continually to God, that is, the fruit of lips confessing His name. 16 But do not forget doing good and sharing with others, for with such sacrifices God is well pleased. 17 Obey the ones leading you and submit to them, for they watch over your souls as those who will render an account, that they may do this with joy and not groaning; for this would be unprofitable to you. 18 Pray for us, for we are persuaded that we have a good conscience, desiring in all things to conduct ourselves honorably.

Experience①: Being transformed to build up the church, the Body of Christ

God's eternal purpose is to have a group of sons as His corporate expression. First, His only begotten Son passed through the process and entered into glory, having been fully perfected to be the standard model, the firstborn Son of God, for God's expression. Since the time of Christ's ascension, God has been working to have a mass reproduction of that standard model, His firstborn Son. During the centuries, few Christians have seen this, and as a result, the Lord has been delayed....In His recovery, the Lord is reproducing the standard model, working desperately among us to make every one of us the same as the firstborn Son. This is what it means to be perfected.

For perfection, we need divinity, an uplifted, resurrected humanity, and the terminating crucifixion. Our perfection must include the terminating crucifixion of Christ, for His all-inclusive death puts all the negative things on the other side of the river as a history. We also need to have every inward part of our being permeated with all that He is. Even the smallest part of our being must be saturated with Him. ... This is glorification, perfection, and the reproduction, the reprint, of the model Son.

The church is a composition of the many sons of God. The church is a corporation of the many brothers of the firstborn Son of God. This is the church....More than forty years ago I saw that the church was a group of real believers in Christ meeting together. This definition of the church is not wrong. Approximately one hundred fifty years ago it was revealed to some of the brothers that the church is not a building of brick and stone. They declared strongly to all of Christendom that the church is not a physical building. It is not a cathedral, chapel, or sanctuary. They declared that the church is a gathering of God's called ones. When true believers in Christ come together, they are the church. We have received much help from this revelation and more than fifty years ago we also began to say that the church is a gathering of God's called saints. We were thankful for the help that we received from those brothers in the last century. Later on, we began to see that the church is not only a gathering of real believers; it is a body, the Body of Christ. If you gather many chairs together, the chairs cannot become a body. If you gather sheep together, they likewise cannot be a body. As everybody knows, a body is an organism with life. It has life tissues, life cells, life nature, life shape, life ability, and life function. The church is deeper, higher, and more profound than just a gathering.

For Middle and High School Students

Church is not a building like a chapel or meeting hall. Greek word, ekklesia, in the New Testament means the "called-out congregation". Therefore, the Chinese and Japanese Recovery version New Testament translate "eklesia" to "sho-kai" (church), instead of traditional translation, "kyo-kai".

The revelation of the New Testament concerning the church is going forward and it reveals the church is the "Body of Christ." In order to reach God's goal, realizing the church is the called-out congregation is not enough. God's goal is God's building, which is the building of the Body of Christ. You who have been saved are a part of the Body of Christ. Our body is composed of many parts and any of them are unnecessary. Every member is necessary for building up the body. In the same manner, in order to build up the Body of Christ to express Christ corporately, all brothers and sisters in the church should function properly. You should never think that "Because I am only a middle/high school student, I

The milestone of John 13: Life's Washing in Love to Maintain Fellowship

don't need to speak the word of God, sing a hymnal loud, or pray in the meeting." Actually, the more you function, the more you enjoy Christ and will be transformed. The more you are transformed, the more you become able to function for building. Amen!

Experience②: Being transformed by passing through sufferings to become a partner with Christ

God has a great operation in the universe. The goal of this operation is to accomplish a glorious expression. This glorious expression is the goal into which we all are going to enter. Our view must be broadened to see that God's operation in the whole universe is to accomplish a glorious expression of Himself. The Son of God was appointed to accomplish God's plan. He has been appointed to run this corporation. He was appointed to this office in eternity past.

Since Christ as the firstborn Son of God is God's appointed Heir and we as the many sons of God are His joint-heirs, we are His partners. He and we, we and He, are in one partnership sharing the same interests in the divine corporation....Hallelujah, we are His partners! Suppose you become the partner of a billionaire. You would certainly be assured of having great riches, for whatever the billionaire has is yours. You are one with him in a great corporation. God has the biggest corporation in the universe. The name of this corporation is "Christ and the Church." We are the partners in this corporation. We have not been hired by this corporation; we are the partners. In the entire universe God has only one corporation—"Christ and the Church"—and this corporation has millions of angels to be the serving ones. The Jews should no longer boast in the angels; the angels are our servants.

For Young Working Saints

Heb 3:14 For we have become partners of Christ, if indeed we hold fast the beginning of the assurance firm to the end--

Rom 8:17 And if children, heirs also; on the one hand, heirs of God; on the other, joint heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him that we may also be glorified with Him.

We are partners of CEO Christ in the largest company in the universe, called "Christ and the church." A partner in a company is not a manager or a director, but one who operate the company together. God's economy is to make you a partner of Christ. However, you do not become a partner immediately after you are saved. After saved, you can become a partner of Christ only after you are transformed and conformed.

In order to be transformed, you need to pass through suffering. Your boss, colleagues and people in your company are all arranged by God with His sovereignty so that you may experience Christ in your company and be transformed. Please experience Christ as wisdom and competency for executing your work in your company. And experience Christ as light, wisdom and insight to know how to behave in the complex human relationship. Moreover, in many cases Satan works behind the scene, so you also need to stand up and fight against Satan in the Body in your church life. In this way, you will gradually grow up to become a partner of Christ. Hallelujah!

Eph 6:10 Finally, be empowered in the Lord and in the might of His strength. 11 Put on the whole armor of God that you may be able to stand against the stratagems of the devil, 12 For our wrestling is not against the world-rulers of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenlies. 13 Therefore take up the whole armor of God that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having girded your loins with truth and having put on the breastplate of righteousness

1. Washing by the Lord Himself (verses 1-11)

1 Now before the Feast of the Passover, Jesus knowing that His hour had come for Him to depart out of this world unto the Father, having loved His own who were in the world, He loved them to the uttermost. 2 And while supper was taking place, the devil having already put into the heart of Judas Iscariot, the son of Simon, that he should betray Him, 3 Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all into His hands and that He had come forth from God and was going to God, 4 Rose from supper and laid aside His outer garments; and taking a towel, He girded Himself; 5 Then He poured water into the basin and began to wash the disciples' feet and to wipe them with the towel with which He was girded. 6 He came then to Simon Peter. Peter said to Him, Lord, do You wash my feet? 7 Jesus answered and said to him, What I am doing you do not know now, but you will know after these things. 8 Peter said to Him, You shall by no means wash my feet forever. Jesus answered him, Unless I wash you, you have no part with Me. 9 Simon Peter said to Him, Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands and my head. 10 Jesus said to him, He who is bathed has no need except to wash his feet, but is wholly clean; and you are clean, but not all of you. 11 For He knew the one betraying Him; for this reason He said, Not all of you are clean.

2. Washing by One Another among the Believers (verses 12-17)

12 Then when He had washed their feet and taken His outer garments and reclined at the table again, He said to them, Do you know what I have done to you? 13 You call Me the Teacher and the Lord, and you say rightly, for I am. 14 If I then, the Lord and the Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. 15 For I have given you an example so that you also may do even as I have done to you. 16 Truly, truly, I say to you, A slave is not greater than his master, nor one who is sent greater than the one who sends him. 17 If you know these things, blessed are you if you do them.

3. Love One Another (verses 34-35)

34 A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another, even as I have loved you, that you also love one another. 35 By this shall all men know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.

The outer garments of verse 4 signify the Lord's virtues and attributes in His expression. Hence, the laying aside of His outer garments signifies the putting off of what He is in His expression. To gird oneself signifies to be bound and restricted with humility.

The water of verse 5 signifies the Holy Spirit, the word, and life. In Chapters 1-12, life came and brought forth the church, composed of the regenerated ones. In their spirit the regenerated ones are in God and in the heavenlies, but in their body they are still living in the flesh and walking on the earth. Through their contact with earthly things they often become dirty. This frustrates their fellowship with the Lord and with one another. Hence, there is the need for the washing with the Holy Spirit, the word, and life. This is the washing away of their dirtiness that their fellowship with the Lord and with one another may be maintained; it is not the washing away of their sins by the blood. This is why, after Chapter 12, there is a need for such a sign in this chapter. Since this Gospel is a book of signs, what is recorded in this chapter should be considered a sign, having spiritual significance. Foot-washing should not be taken merely in a physical sense, but rather in a spiritual sense.

In ancient times the Jews wore sandals, and since their roads were dusty, their feet easily became dirty. If, when they came to a feast, they sat at the table and stretched out their feet, the dirt and the smell would certainly frustrate the fellowship. Hence, for the feast to be pleasant they needed foot-washing. The Lord washed His disciples' feet to show them that He loved them to

the uttermost (verse 1), and He charged them to do the same to one another in love (verses 14, 34). Today the world is dirty, and we, the saints, are easily contaminated. For us to maintain pleasant fellowship with the Lord and with one another, we need spiritual foot-washing – with the washing Holy Spirit, the washing word, and the washing life – carried out both by the Lord in His love and by one another in love.

We are easily dirtied by the traffic of the world because we are all living in it. For example, it is quite convenient to obtain needed information by searching the Internet. However, you can also find unhealthy links posted just beside the searched information. Advertisements in the train and large billboards in the station are also containing unhealthy and immoral things. In addition, there can be many drunkards around bars. Getting drunk can lower the control of you; in many cases drinking too much brings fornication. People of this world even without sin, they are easily get in contact with sinful things and be dirtied.

In addition, after getting employed, you will get involved with jealousy, anger, envy, and etc. because of the competition in the company and telling lies to protect your position. In other cases, you may go window shopping for the top fashion. These things may not necessarily be sinful, but stay in them will cloud up your heart and make you feel tired. These also show dirt from the traffic of the world.

Washing feet in John 13 cleanses the dirt caused by the traffic of the world and remove what interferes with each other's fellowship. Thanks be unto the Lord. The washing water here denotes the Holy Spirit, the word, and the life, you are to read the Bible, pray-read it, and pray. Just like taking a shower every day, you need to be washed by the Holy Spirit, the word, and the life every day.

If you sin, you should confess the sin and cleanse your dirty conscience by the blood of Jesus. But the washing of the life in John 13 is different from the washing by Jesus' blood. When you live in the traffic of the world for a day, even if you do not commit special crime, you get dirty and become smelly. This stench hinders the fellowship of life in the church life.

Carry out the following little by little, in a practical way.

1. Morning revival: use about 10 minutes every morning, to read, pray –read, and pray with the Lord's word.
2. Carry out the drip irrigation prayer daily. Participate in the prayer group by using LINE or etc., send a one-minute prayer and listen to the one-minute prayer by other members. This way, you wash each other's feet and love one another.
3. Participate in activities such as BSG every week; come out with your feeling and enjoyment.

Hymnal (#814)

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1. "Man shall not live by bread alone,
But by each word which doth proceed
From God's own mouth"; these we must eat
And let them be our life indeed. | 5. Thus, to receive Thy Word is not
To read it only with our eyes
And understand it in our mind,
But 'tis the spirit's exercise. |
| 6. Thy Word in spirit we must eat
And to our inmost part receive;
'Tis by our spirit's exercise
To pray with what our minds perceive. | 9. Lord, teach us how to exercise
Our spirit when Thy Word we read;
Then will our spirit nourished be
As thus upon Thyself we feed. |