

The Will of God #2: Knowing and Participating in God's Great and Lofty Will to Head Up All Things in Christ

For outline and the Word, please use "The Holy Word for Morning Revival" (2020/6/1-7)

Summary:

I. "Making known to us the mystery of His will according to His good pleasure, which He purposed in Himself, 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" (Eph. 1:9-10) :

A. The economy, or dispensation, that God, according to His desire, planned and purposed in Himself is to head up all things in Christ at the fullness of the times.

B. This is accomplished through the dispensing of the abundant life supply of the Triune God as the life factor into all the members of the church so that they may rise up from the death situation and be attached to the Body.

C. The times refers to the ages, and the fullness of the times will be when the new heaven and new earth appear after all the dispensations of God in all the ages have been completed. A dispensation is the act or instance of dispensing, and it refers to God's dispensing of Himself into His chosen people. Altogether there are four ages: the age of sin (Adam), the age of the law (Moses), the age of grace (Christ), and the age of the kingdom (the millennium). We enjoy a miniature of this consummate dispensation in the church life today; as we enjoy the Spirit as the living water and eat Christ as the tree of life in the church life, we await the consummate dispensation.

D. The heading up of all things in Ephesians 1:10 is the issue of all the things covered in verses 3 to 9—God has chosen us, predestinated us, redeemed us, forgiven us, and graced us for the purpose of heading up all things in Christ. **E.** Verses 22 and 23 reveal further that this heading up is "to the church" so that the Body of Christ may share in all that is of Christ as the Head, having been rescued from the heap of the universal collapse in death and darkness, which was caused by the rebellion of the angels and the rebellion of man; to be rescued from the collapse is to be headed up. **F.** When everything is headed up in Christ, there will be absolute peace and harmony, a full rescue out of the collapse; this will begin from the restoration of all things. **G.** The picture in Ezekiel 37 of the dead, dry, and scattered bones shows that the unique way to have the Body, the church, and the house of God in the genuine oneness is the way of life. When the breath entered into the dead ones, it became life to them, and they lived and stood up in oneness to become an exceedingly great army.

II. In order to be headed up in Christ, we need to grow up into Christ, the Head, in all things—in all things means in everything big or small in our daily life and in our work: **A.** The organic building up of the Body is the growth of the Body, which is the growth of God, the increase of God as life, in all the members. **B.** The growing members are the building members; to grow in life is to have more of God in us; our problem is that we are short of God. **C.** In order to grow up into the Head, we must hold to truth in the element and sphere of the divine love; truth in Ephesians 4:15 means things that are true. We need to hold to God's eternal economy,

the all-inclusive Christ, and the church as the Body of Christ. **D.** We grow up into the Head through acknowledging the authority of the headship of Christ. Christ is the Head of everyone, the church, and of all things. **E.** The believers participate in Christ's heading up by being willing to be headed up in the church life, that is, by growing in life and by living under Christ's light. **F.** We grow up into the Head by allowing Christ to increase and grow in all the inward parts of our being. In order to grow in life, we must pay attention to our spirit; we must know, we must use, and we must exercise our mingled spirit. Ephesians 1:17 shows that we need to pray for a spirit of wisdom and revelation to fully know Christ and God's economy. Ephesians 3:16 shows that we need to pray to be strengthened into the inner man. Ephesians 4:23 tells us to be renewed in the spirit of our mind. Ephesians 6:18 tells us to pray at every time in spirit. In order to grow in life, we must feed on the milk and food of the holy Word, as the embodiment of Christ, the living Word of God.

III. As we grow up into the Head in life, our function will come out from the Head for the building up of the Body:

A. When we allow Christ to be the Head in everything and when we grow up in Him in all things, we will be supplied with the riches of His life, receiving something from Him to transfuse into other members of the Body. WE must help the saints learn to enjoy the Lord and be nourished by the Lord so that they can grow. **B.** Under Christ's headship all the Body causes the growth of the Body of Christ. This growth is through every joint of the rich supply—all the particular gifts in the Body of Christ. This growth is through the operation in the measure of each one part—every member in the Body of Christ. **C.** The building up of the Body of Christ under His headship is in love and by love. Love is the most excellent way to be anything and to do anything for the building up of the Body of Christ; nothing but love can keep us in a proper relationship with the Lord. **D.** To grow in life is to grow up into the Head, Christ, but to operate in the Body of Christ is to operate out from Him; first, we grow into the Head, and then we have something that is out from the Head for the building up of the Body; this is to participate in God's great and lofty will to head up all things in Christ.

Crucial Point(1): The economy of the fullness of the times is to head up all things in Christ

Eph. 1:9-10 Making known to us the mystery of His will according to His good pleasure, which He purposed in Himself, 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.

Eze. 37:4-5 Prophecy over these bones, and say to them, O dry bones, hear the word of Jehovah....I will cause breath to enter into you, and you shall live.

7 ...As I prophesied, there was a noise,...a rattling; and the bones came together, bone to its bone.

10 ...And the breath came into them; and they lived and stood up upon their feet, an exceedingly great army.

OL1: A dispensation is the act or instance of dispensing, and it refers to God's dispensing of

Himself into His chosen people.

OL2: Altogether there are four ages: the age of sin (Adam), the age of the law (Moses), the age of grace (Christ), and the age of the kingdom (the millennium). The fullness of the times is the time when the New heaven and New earth will appear after completion of the dispensation of God in all ages.

OL3: Eph.1:22 and 23 reveal further that this heading up is "to the church" so that the Body of Christ may share in all that is of Christ as the Head, having been rescued from the heap of the universal collapse in death and darkness, which was caused by the rebellion of the angels and the rebellion of man; to be rescued from the collapse is to be headed up.

OL4: When the breath entered into the dead ones, it became life to them, and they lived and stood up in oneness to become an exceedingly great army.

Death brings in corruption, and darkness brings in confusion. Satan's goal is to corrupt God's creation and to cause confusion. But praise the Lord that where death abounds, life abounds all the more!... God came in to enliven, to impart life. Where there is life, there is light also. Death ruins, but life heals; darkness brings in confusion, but light brings in the proper order.

This dispensation began with Abel and has been increasing throughout the ages until it eventually will reach the dispensation of the fullness of times.

We are getting close to that dispensation. If we realize this, we shall be beside ourselves with joy. Not even the apostle Paul was as close to the ultimate dispensation as we are. Hallelujah, we all shall share in the consummate dispensation! In the Lord's recovery we have in the church life a miniature of that coming dispensation. How wonderful!

Many of us can testify that we used to be detached and in the heap caused by the universal collapse. But one day the factor of life came into us, and we rose up and became attached. After coming into the church life, we had the deep sense that we were more and more upright and that we were becoming more attached. This is the heading up in Christ. A number of times, however, the power of death has worked even in the church to inject the factor of death into the members of the church. When the factor of death gets into certain members, they are poisoned and spread the poison of death to others. Once again these dear ones collapse into a heap and are thus far removed from being headed up. But, praise the Lord, the factor of life eventually reaches them again!

Application to the young working saints and graduate students

There are many degraded matters such as power harassment, sexual harassment and moral harassment in the companies and laboratories of

graduate schools. This shows that the world is the heap of collapse. Because of the indwelling sin, people are committing various unrighteous and dishonored things In the eyes of God, this is not only man committing the sins, but man being the heap of collapse. Man is not only dead due to the sin, but they are dry and scattered bones.

For example, your boss may have inclination to follow the precedent. He may freeze and has no idea when put under the unprecedented situation like declaration of emergency state and the situation gets worse and worse. In such a chaotic situation, you should not criticize your boss in the same way the other employees do. Col. 3:22 **Slaves, obey in all things those who are your masters according to the flesh, not with eye-service as men-pleasers, but in singleness of heart fearing the Lord. 23 Whatever you do, work from the soul as to the Lord and not to men,**

First, trust the Lord and pray to the Lord. And experience Christ as wisdom and advise your boss to help him. Without the agreement of your boss, you should not do anything. You need to come to the Lord first and pray and be headed up. And then advise your boss to head up the situation, take action under the agreement of your boss.

Also, concerning the actions of Abe administration against the coronavirus situation and other cases, there are a lot of criticism flying. People get emotional and criticize Abe administration. In such time, you as a believer, should pray for Abe administration. It is not your job to look for the mistakes in the Abe administration. We trust God and hope that the darkness would be exposed, but where the administration is, you should pray for them and support them. This is to support this administration to take a proper leadership in this critically important situation and suppress coronavirus and bring quick economic recovery. You can pray for the administration, for the wisdom to be given and pray that they would be headed up through you indirectly. Do not be a heap of collapse in the same way that the worldly people criticize.

Prayer: 「Oh, Lord Jesus, the world is the heap of collapse. As a believer, I should not go back to this heap of collapse. I pray for my boss by being headed up to You as Head. I pray for Abe administration and do not criticize them. May they be given wisdom to suppress coronavirus and bring the quick economic recovery.」

Crucial Point(2):Holding to truth, acknowledging the headship of Christ, and growing up into the Head, Christ, in all things to be headed up

Eph. 4:15 But holding to truth in love, we may grow up into Him in all things, who is the Head, Christ.

Col. 2:19 ...Holding the Head, out from whom all the Body,

being richly supplied and knit together by means of the joints and sinews, grows with the growth of God.

Eph. 5:23 For a husband is head of the wife as also Christ is Head of the church, He Himself being the Savior of the Body.

OL1: In order to be headed up in Christ, we need to grow up into Christ, the Head, in all things—in all things means in everything big or small in our daily life and in our work.

OL2: The growing members are the building members; to grow in life is to have more of God in us; our problem is that we are short of God.

OL3: We grow up into the Head through acknowledging the authority of the headship of Christ.

OL4: The believers participate in Christ's heading up by being willing to be headed up in the church life, that is, by growing in life and by living under Christ's light.

To hold to truth (God's economy, all-inclusive Christ and the Body of Christ) is for the purpose of growing into the Head, Christ. According to our experience, the growth here is not our growth, but it is the growth of Christ within us. This is like the words of John the Baptist: "He must increase, but I must decrease" (John 3:30). Before we believed in Jesus, it was we who were growing. After we believed in the Lord and began to love Him, we began to decrease, and Christ began to increase within us. In the end we will be like Paul who said that "it is no longer I who live, but it is Christ who lives in me" (Gal. 2:20).

The meaning of growing into the Head, Christ, is acknowledging the authority of the headship of Christ. We have to acknowledge Him as Lord and Head. He has the authority over us. In all things big or small we have to allow Him to be the Lord. This lesson is not easy. In our eating out in restaurants and in our shopping, seldom do we allow Him to be the Lord. Since we lack the practice in our daily life, it is not a surprise that when we come to the meeting, we find it difficult to prophesy for the Lord. The key to prophesying is to allow Jesus to be the Lord. In your daily life you have to allow Jesus to be your Lord. Only then will you have the experience, and only then will you have something to say in the meetings. Christ is not only the Head of us individually; He is also the Head of the church and the Head of all things. We should acknowledge the authority of His headship in our Christian life, in the church life, and in everything. By this we will grow into Him.

Application to the new ones, young people and college students

Young students and new believers, in order to be headed up, please practice three things below.

(1) **Holding to truth in love:** Truth here is something not false. Something not false but real in this universe are God's economy, all-inclusive Christ, and the church as the Body of Christ.

(2) **Acknowledging the authority of the headship of Christ and being submissive to it:**

Please train yourself in your youth to acknowledge the authority of the headship of Christ and to be submissive to it. Train yourself to accept the God's arrangement of your environment, and to be thankful to the Lord and to praise the Lord about it. As an example, when you moved up to the next grade, you hoped your classmates or your teacher who didn't like you would go to another class, but they came to your class and the teacher became your new teacher. In such situation, you acknowledge the headship of Christ and pray, "Lord, I become submissive to you. I learn to be humble so that I can do well with them." When you get yourself humble and pray this way, you may be painful but you also experience a sweet peace. Then if you seek with the Lord to doing well with them in faith, the Lord surely will open the way for you. Especially, because your teacher is a deputy authority to you, you should learn willingly to obey him and to be subject to him. Then your teacher will notice a change in you.

(3) **Growing up into the Head in everything big or small:**

Things small are such as that your mother asks you to buy something for her or that you are to clean your room. While you do those things, please grow yourself into Christ the Head. When you deal with those small things, call upon the Lord's name and do them with spirit of joy and thanksgiving. You should never say in your heart, "I don't need to exercise my spirit for such a small thing." The Lord is asking you to grow up into the Head even in a small matter.

Studying which is your duty in school, and honoring your parents (including your spiritual parents), are considered as **the things big**. As a student, you are serving the Lord by studying diligently in the Lord, with the Lord, and for the Lord's testimony. **Rom. 12:11** Do not be slothful in zeal, but be burning in spirit, serving the Lord. Honoring your own parents is also the things big and so become a benefit to you. **Eph. 6:2** "Honor your father and mother," which is the first commandment with a promise, **3** "That it may be well with you and that you may live long on the earth."

Prayer: "Oh, Lord Jesus, help me to be thankful to you and to grow up into Christ the Head in everything big or small. Even when doing small things, such as going shopping for mother's help or cleaning my room, I do them calling on the Lord's name and exercising spirit. And studying, which is my duty, and honoring my parents are big things for me. Help me to grow up into Christ the Head in such the things big, so that I can be headed up. Amen!"

Crucial Point(3): We were not given a spirit of cowardice, but of power. Actively exercising the spirit, praying in the spirit, growing into the head in life, taking things from the head and functioning for the building up.

1 Tim. 4:8 For bodily exercise is profitable for a little, but godliness is profitable for all things, having promise of the present life and of that which is to come.

Eph. 4:16 Out from whom all the Body, being joined together and being knit together through every joint of the rich supply and through the operation in the measure of each one part, causes the growth of the Body unto the building up of itself in love.

1 Cor. 8:1 Knowledge puffs up, but love builds up.

OL1: In order to grow in life, we must pay attention to our spirit; we must know, we must use, and we must exercise our mingled spirit.

OL2: Ephesians 6:18 tells us to pray at every time in spirit.

OL3: To grow in life is to grow up into the Head, Christ, but to operate in the Body of Christ is to operate out from Him; this is to participate in God's great and lofty will to head up all things in Christ.

In each of the six chapters of Ephesians, the human spirit is mentioned. Our human spirit has been regenerated and indwelt by the compound, all-inclusive, consummated Spirit to make this spirit a mingled spirit.

In 1:17 the apostle Paul prayed that the Father would give us such a mingled spirit of wisdom to understand and of revelation to see. We need the revelation and the enlightenment to see the mystery of God's economy. We also need to understand, to apprehend, what we see by the divine wisdom. The economy of God is a real mystery, yet it has been revealed to us.

Ephesians 6 tells us something further. On the one hand, the church life is a praising life and a submitting life; at the same time, it is also a fighting life. While we are praising and submitting to one another, the enemy is here fighting, so we have to fight against him by prayer. Verse 18 says that whenever we pray, we should pray in our spirit, not in our mind. If we are going to walk, we need to use our feet. No one can walk by his nose. Even for someone to walk on his hands is awkward. To walk by our feet is the right way. ...We must pray by our spirit and in our spirit.

To be joined, fitted, together is like the joining together of the frames and beams of a house. Hence, to be joined together is for all the parts of the frames to be joined as one structure. To be knit together is like the filling up of the holes in between the frames by the rocks and the bricks, which are stacked up on top of one another and interwoven together. Hence, to be knit together is for all the other parts to be joined to the frames and to be knit together with one another to form one Body.

2 Tim. 1:6 For which cause I remind you to fan into flame

the gift of God, which is in you through the laying on of my hands.

7. For God has not given us a spirit of cowardice, but of power and of love and of sobermindedness.

As a New Testament servant, you need to exercise and burn your regenerated spirit. In order to burn the charcoal, at first it is necessary to compulsorily supply oxygen with a fan to make the charcoal burn. Similarly, you should exercise your spirit to force spiritual oxygen into the spirit so that they can burn up.

In all the chapters of the book of Ephesians, the human spirit is mentioned. The spirit of wisdom and revelation is given in the spirit of man (chapter 1), and believers are built together in the spirit (chapter 2), the regenerated spirit, strengthened into the inner man (chapter 3), renewed in the spirit of mind (Chapter 4), filled in the spirit (Chapter 5), and pray in the spirit (Chapter 6). Learn to know, use, and exercise your mingled spirit. The economy at the end of the Age of God is to head up all thing up in Christ. For this reason, the church should take the lead in heading up. The secret for the church to take the lead in heading up is to exercise your spirit.

You will never be able to "grow in life and be headed up" in God's economy without exercising and burning the strong spirit that have been given to you. The first important thing for a minister is to exercise the spirit to supply Christ for the enjoyment of human. And we should help the saints to open to the divine dispensation, to enjoy the Triune God, to grow in life, and to be headed up. In your morning revival with new ones, family meetings, small group meetings, prayer meetings, the Lord's Day meetings, services such as the gospel and nourishment through the internet or visit, you need to exercise the spirit, pray, speak the word of God and exercise the spirit to understand the situation. For example, the more you hear about coronavirus news, the more anxious, weakened, and unbelief. Such a state is a state of listening to news using only minds without using regenerated spirit. However, while listening to the news, please use the spirit to pray as follows: "Oh Lord Jesus, the pale white horse of the coronavirus is for the white horse of the Gospel to run even faster. The coronavirus is the supporting role, and the gospel of the church is the leading role. When listening to the news of coronaviruses, actively exercise the spirit and burn it. Then the more I hear the news, the stronger my spirit will be. It is by my mingled Spirit that I overcome the fall tendency, and it is by my prayer of fighting in my spirit that I can fight against Satan and stand firm until the end. For I am not given a spirit of cowardice, but of power and of love and of sobermindedness. Hallelujah! I exercise the spirit, grow in life, and function with one talent to build up the body. Being joined together and being knit together with brothers and sisters, causes the growth of the Body unto the building up of itself in love. Amen!"