

THE FOUR GREAT PILLARS IN THE LORD'S RECOVERY

(Saturday—Second Morning Session)

Message Eight

The Fourth Great Pillar—the Gospel

(1)

Blood and Water

Scripture Reading: John 19:34, 36; Gen. 2:21-24

- I. Our hymns are full of precious truths that enable us to preach the high gospel to people; for example, the first stanza of *Hymns*, #1058 says, “Rock of Ages, cleft for me, / Let me hide myself in Thee; / Let the water and the blood, / From Thy riven side which flowed, / Be of sin the double cure, / Save me from its guilt and power”:**
- A. We need to take note of *the water and the blood, the double cure, and guilt and power*.
 - B. The *double cure* refers to the cure of our outward sinful acts by the Lord's precious blood to save us from the guilt of sin, and it refers to the cure of our inward sinful nature by the Lord's flowing life to save us from the power of sin.
 - C. The blood refers to the precious blood shed by the Lord to deal with our outward sinful acts (John 1:29; Heb. 9:22), and the water refers to the life imparted by the Lord to deal with our inward sinful nature (John 19:34).
 - D. The precious blood of the Lord redeems us from the eternal punishment that we deserve due to our sinful acts, and His life saves us from the power of our sinful nature.
 - E. If we have a thorough understanding of the stanza of this hymn, we will be able to preach the high gospel to people, because this “double cure” of blood and water fulfills God's original intention with man.
- II. Two substances came out of the Lord's pierced side: blood and water—v. 34:**
- A. We sinners became fallen and were then against God's righteousness and estranged from God's life—Gen. 3:24; Eph. 4:18.
 - B. As sinners, we need to be redeemed judicially from God's condemnation according to the righteous requirement of His law (Gal. 3:13), and we need to be saved organically by His life from the death brought in by sin (2 Tim. 1:10; Rom. 5:10, 12, 17, 21).
 - C. God's full salvation for us is judicial according to His righteousness and organic according to His life.
 - D. Christ, as the Redeemer and Savior of fallen man, redeems us and saves us through His death and resurrection.
 - E. In His crucifixion, after He was pierced by a soldier, blood and water, two elements which are critical to human life, came out of Him—John 19:34:
 - 1. Blood is for God's judicial redemption to deal with sins (1:29; Heb. 9:22) for the purchasing of the church (Acts 20:28):
 - a. Redeeming the believers—Eph. 1:7; 1 Pet. 1:18-19; Gal. 3:13; 4:5.

- b. Forgiving the believers' sins—Heb. 9:22.
 - c. Washing away the believers' sins—1:3.
 - d. For God to justify the believers—Rom. 3:24; 5:9.
 - e. Sanctifying the believers positionally—Heb. 13:12; 10:29.
 - f. Speaking something better for the New Testament believers before God—12:24.
 - g. Overcoming Satan, the accuser of the believers—Rev. 12:11.
 - h. Thus, it is the precious blood of Christ—1 Pet. 1:19.
 - i. It is also considered God's own blood, which is very dear to God and with which God has purchased and obtained the church as His flock—Acts 20:28.
2. Water, signifying the divine life, is for God's organic salvation—for imparting life (John 12:24; 3:14-15) for the producing and building up of the church (Eph. 5:29-30):
- a. The Lord promises to give the sinners the water of life—John 4:10, 14; Rev. 21:6.
 - b. The Lord calls the sinners to come and drink His water of life—22:17; John 7:37-38:
 - (1) The believers are regenerated by God with His divine life—1 Pet. 1:3.
 - (2) The divine life saves the believers—Rom. 5:10b.
 - (3) The divine life dispositionally sanctifies (6:19, 22), renews (12:2b; Titus 3:5), transforms (Rom. 12:2a; 2 Cor. 3:18), conforms (Rom. 8:29), and glorifies (v. 30) the believers.
 - (4) The believers reign in life—5:17.
 - (5) The believers grow in life for the building up of the Body of Christ—Eph. 4:15-16.
 - (6) The divine life consummates the New Jerusalem, which is wholly supplied with the river of water of life and with the tree of life—Rev. 21:2; 22:1-2.

III. The flowing water and the unbroken bone mentioned by John in 19:34 and 36 are signs that relate to the life-releasing aspect of His death and the life-imparting aspect of His resurrection for the producing of His bride, His counterpart—Gen. 2:21-24:

- A. In order to produce a complement for Himself, God first became a man (John 1:14), as typified by God's creation of Adam (Rom. 5:14).
- B. Adam's deep sleep for the producing of Eve as his wife typifies Christ's death on the cross (1 Cor. 15:18; 1 Thes. 4:13-16; John 11:11-14) for the producing of the church as His complement (Gen. 2:21; Eph. 5:25-27).
- C. Through Christ's death, the divine life within Him was released, and through His resurrection, His released divine life was imparted into His believers for the constituting of the church.
- D. Through such a process, God in Christ has been wrought into man with His life and nature so that man can be the same as God in life and nature in order to match Him as His counterpart.
- E. The rib taken from Adam's opened side (Gen. 2:21) typifies the unbreakable,

indestructible eternal life of Christ (Heb. 7:16; John 19:36), which flowed out of His pierced side (v. 34) to impart life to His believers for the producing and building up of the church as His complement:

1. When Adam was created, there was no sin, so there was no need of redemption; it was not until Genesis 3 that sin came in.
2. Thus, all that came out of Adam's side was the rib, without the blood.
3. However, by the time that Christ was sleeping on the cross, there was the problem of sin; thus, His death had to deal with the sin problem.
4. The blood came out of Christ's side for judicial redemption; following the blood, the water came out, which is the flowing life to produce and build up the church.
5. This divine, flowing, uncreated life is typified by the rib taken out of Adam's side.
6. "These things happened that the Scripture might be fulfilled: 'No bone of His shall be broken'"—John 19:36:
 - a. In the Scriptures the first mention of a bone is in Genesis 2:21-23; there it was a rib taken out of Adam for the producing and building of Eve as a match for Adam.
 - b. Eve is a type of the church, which is produced and built with the Lord's resurrection life released out of Him.
 - c. Hence, the bone is a symbol, a figure, of the Lord's resurrection life, which nothing can break.
 - d. The Lord's side was pierced, but not one of His bones was broken; this signifies that although the Lord's physical life was terminated, His resurrection life, the very divine life, could not be hurt or damaged by anything.
 - e. This is the life with which the church is produced and built; it is also the eternal life, which we have obtained by believing into Him (John 3:36).
7. The building of Eve with the rib taken from Adam's side typifies the building of the church with the resurrection life released from Christ through His death on the cross and imparted into His believers in His resurrection—Gen. 2:22-24; John 12:24; 1 Pet. 1:3.
8. The church as the real Eve is the totality of Christ in all His believers; only that which comes out of Christ, having His resurrection life, can be His complement and counterpart, the Body of Christ—1 Cor. 12:12; Eph. 5:28-30.
9. Day by day as we enjoy this flowing, divine, uncreated, unbreakable, resurrection life, we are being transformed, and as we are being transformed, we are also being built into the church to be the bride to match Christ as His counterpart—Matt. 16:18.
10. At the end of Genesis 2 there is Eve, and at the end of the entire Bible there is the New Jerusalem, which is the ultimate Eve, the ultimate consummation of the eternal bride built up with precious materials produced by the flowing, resurrection life of Christ.
11. May we all be brought into the enjoyment and experience of this flowing, transforming, and building life to be prepared as the bride of Christ that will bring Christ back.

Excerpts from the Ministry:

THE TRUTH BEING THE URGENT NEED TODAY

Today the truth is needed everywhere. Not only the non-Christians do not know the truth; even many Christians do not know the truth. However, the Lord has given us many rich truths. Even our gospel hymns are full of precious truths. For example, the first stanza of *Hymns*, #1058 says, “Rock of Ages, cleft for me, / Let me hide myself in Thee; / Let the water and the blood, / From Thy riven side which flowed, / Be of sin the double cure, / Save me from its guilt and power.” Here it mentions *the water and the blood, the double cure, and guilt and power*. Even many saints among us may not know the meanings of these phrases. Here the double cure refers to the cure of our outward sinful acts and our inward sinful nature. The blood refers to the precious blood shed by the Lord to deal with our outward sinful acts (John 1:29; Heb. 9:22), and the water refers to the life imparted by the Lord to deal with our inward sinful nature (John 19:34). The precious blood of the Lord redeems us from the eternal punishment we deserve due to our sinful acts, and His life saves us from the power of our sinful nature.

If we have a thorough understanding of this hymn, we will be able to preach the high gospel to people. We may invite someone to sing this hymn with us and then explain it to him. This would be a very good gospel message. After hearing this, he will be surprised and will respect the excellence and mysteriousness of the content of the gospel. When we speak to him, the Holy Spirit will work in him. Then we could sing this hymn with him again. In this way, he would probably be saved in less than half an hour. We should not say anything about perdition and “heaven” or even prosperity and peace. Instead, we should speak only about Christ Jesus, the Rock of Ages, who was crucified for us, and out from whose riven side came blood for redeeming us from the eternal punishment that we deserved due to our sins, and water for saving us out of the power of sin. This kind of simple but excellent singing and speaking, matched by the working of the Holy Spirit, will lead people to salvation. This is the proper way to preach the gospel today.

First Timothy 3:15b says, “The church...the pillar and base of the truth.” This indicates that without the truth, there would be no church. The truth brings in life, and once we have life, we become the church. In addition, the unique commission of the church today is to preach the gospel, the content of which is the truth. The truth tells us one central point: the Triune God—the Father, the Son, and the Spirit—is dispensing Himself into us—sinful, tripartite men—that our sins may be forgiven and that we may receive God’s life and have God Himself in us for our transformation into the sons of God. This is the truth and the gospel. We must learn the truth. (*Truth, Life, the Church, and the Gospel—the Four Great Pillars in the Lord’s Recovery*, pp. 126-127)

THE BLOOD AND WATER

In His crucifixion, after He was pierced by a soldier, blood and water, two elements which are critical to human life, came out of Him (John 19:34).

Blood Being for God’s Judicial Redemption

The blood of Christ is for God’s judicial redemption in His redeeming the believers (Eph. 1:7; 1 Pet. 1:18-19), forgiving the believers’ sins (Heb. 9:22), and washing away the believers’ sins (Heb. 1:3). The blood of Christ is also for God to justify the believers (Rom. 3:24; 5:9) and sanctify the believers positionally (Heb. 13:12; 10:29). This blood speaks something better for the New Testament believers before God (Heb. 12:24). By the blood of Christ, the Lamb, we

can overcome Satan, the accuser of the believers (Rev. 12:11). Thus, it is the precious blood of Christ (1 Pet. 1:19).

It is also considered God's own blood, which is very dear to God and with which God has purchased and obtained the church as His flock. Acts 20:28 says that God secured, purchased, redeemed, the church with His own blood. If He were merely God, He could not have blood. God's own blood is the blood of the man Jesus Christ, who is the very God. God's purchasing the church with His own blood indicates the preciousness, the exceeding worth, of the church in the eyes of God. The church is dear to God, so we have to regard and respect the church.

Water Signifying the Divine Life for God's Organic Salvation

Water, signifying the divine life (see Message Three), is for God's organic salvation. The Lord promises to give the sinners the water of life (John 4:10, 14; Rev. 21:6).

Also, the Lord calls the sinners to come and drink His water of life (Rev. 22:17; John 7:37-38). The believers were regenerated by God with His divine life (1 Pet. 1:3). This divine life saves the believers (Rom. 5:10b). It dispositionally sanctifies (Rom. 6:19, 22), renews (Rom. 12:2b; Titus 3:5), transforms (Rom. 12:2; 2 Cor. 3:18), conforms (Rom. 8:29), and glorifies (Rom. 8:30) the believers. The believers reign in it (Rom. 5:17). We can be kings by this divine life. The believers also grow with it for the building up of the Body of Christ (Eph. 4:15-16). We all have to grow into the Head, Christ. Then out from Him we have something of the divine life to minister to the Body for its building up. This consummates the New Jerusalem, which is wholly supplied with the river of water of life and with the tree of life (Rev. 21:2; 22:1-2). The river of water of life signifies the Spirit of life, and the tree of life signifies Christ as the embodiment of the divine life. Both are for the supply of the New Jerusalem. (*Crystallization-study of the Gospel of John*, pp. 125-126)

HOW THE BRIDE OF CHRIST COMES INTO BEING

In Genesis 2 there is the picture of how the bride of Christ comes into being. Before God prepared a bride for Adam, He brought all the animals to Adam, and Adam named each one. But none of these created things matched Adam, and they could not be his counterpart (vv. 19-20). Then God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam (v. 21). Adam is a type of Christ (Rom. 5:14), and his sleep is a type of Christ's death. In the Bible sleep means death (1 Cor. 15:18; 1 Thes. 4:13-16; John 11:11-14).

During Adam's sleep, God took one of his ribs from his side. Likewise, when Christ was sleeping on the cross, something came out of His side. John 19:34 tells us that when the soldier pierced His side, out came blood and water. At Adam's time there was no sin, so there was no need of redemption. It was not until Genesis 3 that sin came in. Thus, all that came out of Adam's side was the rib without the blood. However, by the time that Christ was sleeping on the cross, there was the problem of sin. Thus, His death must deal with this sin problem. The blood came out of Christ's side for redemption. Following the blood, the water came out, which is the flowing life to produce the church. This divine, flowing, uncreated life is typified by the rib taken out of Adam's side.

When the Lord Jesus was dying on the cross, two others were dying with Him. Their legs were broken, but when the soldiers came to the Lord Jesus, He was already dead, and there was no need to break His bones. This fulfilled the prophecy that not one of His bones would be broken (John 19:31-33). Thus, the bone taken out of Adam's side signifies the Lord's unbroken, unbreakable, resurrection life. His resurrection life is unbreakable. The rib taken out of Adam signifies the resurrection life, and God built a woman with the rib of Adam. Now God

builds up the church with the resurrection life of Christ. Just as Eve was a part of Adam, so the church is a part of Christ. Eve was bone of Adam's bones and flesh of Adam's flesh. Today we as the church are a part of Christ (Eph. 5:30-32). This marvelous revelation can be seen by comparing Genesis 2, John 19, and Ephesians 5.

When we received the Lord Jesus, He came into us as the resurrection life, the unbreakable life. It is this life that transforms us. This life is the tree of life, the river of life, the very life that supplies us and that flows within us to transform us. Day by day as we enjoy this flowing, divine, uncreated, unbreakable life, we are being transformed. This transformation is mentioned and revealed in Romans 12:2 and 2 Corinthians 3:18. As we are being transformed, we are also being built into the church to be the bride to satisfy Christ as His counterpart. At the end of Genesis 2 is Eve, and at the end of the entire Bible is the New Jerusalem, which is the ultimate Eve, the ultimate consummation of the universal bride built up with precious materials produced by the resurrection life of Christ.

The life seen in Genesis 2 is the flowing life, the transforming life, and the building life. This life flows within us, transforms us, and eventually builds us up as the bride of Christ. This bride, the New Jerusalem, will fulfill the two aspects of the purpose of God. First, the New Jerusalem will be the full expression of God in God's full image (Rev. 21:11; cf. 4:3). Second, this New Jerusalem will subdue the enemy, conquer the earth, and exercise God's authority over the entire universe, especially over the creeping things (22:5; 21:15; cf. v. 8; 20:10, 14-15). God's dominion will be realized on the whole earth through the New Jerusalem. Thus, God's purpose is fully fulfilled by the New Jerusalem, which is the result, the issue, the ultimate consummation of life. What we believers need is life, and this life is nothing less than the Triune God Himself, the Father in the Son and the Son as the Spirit. May we all be brought into the enjoyment and experience of this flowing, transforming, and building life to be prepared as the bride that will bring Christ back. (*The Crucial Revelation of Life in the Scriptures*, pp. 20-21)