

The Crystallization

Producing Overcomers to Fulfill God's Will

The mystery of God's will, which was hidden in God's heart in the Old Testament, has been revealed in the New Testament time. As believers in Christ, we need to know that the will of God, the eternal purpose of God, and the economy of God are all focused on Christ with the church. Only the overcomers in the recovered church can accomplish God's will, fulfill God's purpose, and consummate God's economy. For the producing of the overcomers in the churches, we need to allow the sevenfold intensified Spirit, as revealed in Revelation, to reproduce Himself in us as those who receive mercy and grace from the eternal God, who love the Lord, and who willingly offer ourselves as a living sacrifice to the Lord.

The will of God is intrinsically related to Christ; apart from Christ we cannot know and carry out the will of God. The revelation of the will of God concerning Christ is matched by the revelation of His will regarding the church. The will of God is to produce and build up the Body of Christ as a corporate expression of Christ, an organism through which He can move to fulfill the desire of His heart. The Body of Christ is not an organization or a society; it is an organism produced by the union, the oneness, in life that we have in Christ.

God's eternal purpose can be fulfilled in time only through the recovered church as the reality of the expression of the Body of Christ, which is the issue of the economy of God. The economy of God is His detailed administrative arrangement to produce the church by dispensing Himself in Christ as the Spirit into His chosen, redeemed, and regenerated people, in whom He lives. The church produced through Christ's administrative outworking of the economy of God, as seen throughout the book of Revelation, is both universal and local. In its universal aspect, the Lord spoke of it as "My church" in Matthew 16:18, and in its local aspect, the Lord spoke of it as "the church" in Matthew 18:17.

The goal of God's eternal purpose for Christ to build "My church" is unchanging, and the God-ordained and God-established means to build up the universal church

is the building up of "the church" as the one expression of the Body of Christ in respective localities, as indicated by the Lord's association of the names of seven localities in Asia with the names of seven churches in Revelation 1:11. Sadly, even tragically, however, God's thought regarding "My church" has been misunderstood, and God's way regarding "the church" has been abandoned. God needs and requires a recovery of the vision of "My church" and the practice of "the church." God's requirements for the recovery of the genuine church include a recovery of the unique oneness of the Body of Christ, a recovery of the headship and preeminence of Christ, a recovery of the truth, a recovery of the tree of life, a recovery of the universal fellowship of the Body of Christ, and a recovery of the organic function of all the members of the Body of Christ.

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The church in Philadelphia prophetically depicts the proper church life that organically manifests the characteristics that are essential to the recovery of the church as ordained by the Triune God according to His will. Philadelphia expresses oneness through love, it upholds the headship of Christ by not denying the Lord's name by using other denominating designations, it treasures and keeps the truth in the Lord's word, it displays the sustaining power that is supplied by Christ as the source of life, it pursues the fellowship of the Body with an open door, and it promotes the function of all the members of the Body in their status as simply brothers. In the recovered church, the church in Philadelphia, the overcomers fulfill God's will by building up the universal church as the Body of Christ through local expressions of the Body.

These overcomers are produced by the overcoming Christ through the operation of the seven Spirits of God, the sevenfold intensified Spirit. *The seven Spirits of God* is a specific term used only in Revelation, but the implications of this unique title are profound because this designation points to the judging, enlightening, redeeming, life-dispensing, building, administrating, and reigning operation of the Divine Trinity in His economy. The phrase

seven Spirits does not denote seven different Spirits but one sevenfold intensified Spirit. In contrast to the number twelve, which indicates completion in God's eternal administration, the number seven refers to completion in God's dispensational operation and move on the earth. In order for the Body of Christ to be produced and built up to consummate God's eternal purpose, Christ, as the life-giving Spirit, needs to be intensified sevenfold in God's economical move in order to overcome the degradation of the church. As the seven Spirits, the Spirit is the seven lamps that function to enlighten the churches and to burn away the many degrading things that are exposed in the churches in Revelation 2 and 3. This degradation includes the formality of the church life in Ephesus; the possibility of defeat in Smyrna; union with the world in Pergamos; fornication, idolatry, and demonic teaching in Thyatira; spiritual death in Sardis; the possibility of losing the crown in Philadelphia; and lukewarmness and Christlessness in Laodicea. In response to these conditions, the seven Spirits function intensely to carry out the administration of God's economy by judging, enlightening, redeeming, life dispensing, building, administrating, and reigning. All these functions are fulfilled in believers who partake of Christ as the source of the divine life, the hidden manna.

In the epistles to the seven churches in Revelation 2 and 3, one of the first indications of degradation is spoken to the church in Pergamos related to its union with the world, its involvement with spiritual idolatry and fornication in the principle of the teaching of Balaam, and its acceptance of the Nicolaitans, who promote a teaching concerning clerical hierarchy. In spite of these tendencies toward degradation, the Lord as the Spirit is determined to carry out God's New Testament economy to its ultimate conclusion. He is sounding forth a call for believers to overcome the degradation of the church that is married to the world, promising to give them Himself as the hidden manna and to constitute them as living stones for His building. The Lord promises to nourish the overcomers with Himself as the hidden manna in order to transform them into white stones for God's building. This promise is fulfilled in the present age as a special portion to the overcomers and in the coming millennium when it will become their glorious prize in full. By eating Christ as the hidden manna, we will not only rise above the pitfalls of the worldly church but also fulfill God's intention to build up the church as His dwelling place in spirit. By partaking of Christ as the hidden manna and thereby being constituted with the One who overcame the world and judged its ruler, we too can reign in life over Satan and the world. By enjoying Christ as the hidden manna in a deeply personal and affectionate communion, we will willingly forsake the idols in our heart and love Him as our unique Husband with simplicity and purity as His chaste and spotless bride. By feeding on

Christ as the hidden manna, we will be supplied with the riches of the divine life so that we can worship God and minister the riches of Christ to others without a mediatorial class, thereby tearing down the clergy-laity system and building up the organic Body of Christ. And by feasting on Christ as the hidden manna, we will be transformed from worthless clay into precious stones to be built up as God's spiritual house, and we will be mingled and incorporated with the Triune God in Christ to become part of the New Jerusalem, a universal incorporation of God in man and man in God.

The believers who eat of the hidden manna and who are constituted as overcomers in this age will be organically rewarded in the coming millennial kingdom. These overcomers will be produced by the impartation and experience of the divine life of the living One, and the manifestation of this divine life will be evidenced by the organic rewards that the Lord gives to the overcomers in the coming millennial kingdom. All these rewards, despite the tendency to interpret them as material rewards, are organic in nature because the source of the reward, the organic life of the Triune God, will determine the content and expression of the rewards. The rewards in the millennial kingdom are related to the overflow of the organic grace and reality of Christ that the believers experience in the present age.

All the rewards promised to the overcomers are based on the believers' experience of God's organic salvation. Our objective reconciliation and justification through faith in Christ qualify us to receive the divine life, and they are the necessary initiation of a process of growing in the divine life unto maturity, which maturity is measured not by ethical perfection but by the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ that we personally experience and manifest in our practical daily living. Without this growth we will leave our first love, be defeated in trials and suffering, hold to defiling practices and human hierarchies, be unrepentant, be spiritually dead, be lax in holding to the things that we have received, and be spiritually proud and lukewarm. In such a condition there will be no organic over-coming and no organic rewards. In each situation involving degradation, however, we can pursue the growth in the divine life so that the organic resurrection life of God, the life of the living One and the life that is in the living One, will prevail in us to overcome and bring us into the organic rewards promised to the overcomers in the millennial kingdom. These rewards issue from partaking of Christ as the hidden manna according to the operation of the seven Spirits, the sevenfold intensified Spirit, who is intensely focused on the accomplishment of God's will, the fulfillment of God's purpose, and the consummation of God's economy. **AFC**

by the Editors