

Special Weekend Conference
May 1-3, 2015
Milwaukee, Wisconsin

Message One
The Need for Renewal

Scripture Reading: 2 Cor. 4:16, 10-11; Titus 3:5b; Eph. 4:23; 5:26; Rev. 21:2

I. According to the entire Bible, God uses four dispensations in His old creation to work out something new, to produce the new creation:

- A. The first dispensation is the dispensation before law, or the dispensation of the fathers from Adam to Moses' giving of the law.
- B. The second dispensation is the dispensation of law from Moses' giving of the law to the first coming of the Lord Jesus.
- C. The third dispensation is the dispensation of grace from the first coming of the Lord Jesus to His second coming.
- D. The fourth dispensation is the dispensation of the kingdom; after the Lord's second coming, He will set up God's government on this earth to practice God's kingdom in its manifestation for one thousand years.
- E. After the fourth dispensation, the new heaven and the new earth are brought in with the New Jerusalem as the center.
 1. The New Jerusalem is the composition of all God's redeemed, regenerated, transformed, and glorified people.
 2. The New Jerusalem composed of God's living, glorified people is absolutely new; nothing old will be there.

II. God has the best provisions to help us to receive the renewing; we are renewed by the cross, the Holy Spirit, our mingled spirit, and the Holy Word:

- A. The first provision is the cross, the putting to death of Jesus; the cross is the greatest help to accomplish the renewing for us—4:10-11.
- B. The second provision is the Holy Spirit who within us; His main work is first to regenerate us and then to renew us every day; we are receiving the new supply of the Spirit daily to renew us metabolically—Tit. 3:5.
- C. The third provision God gave us is our mingled spirit, our human spirit mingled with the divine Spirit:
 1. In our human spirit, the Holy Spirit dwells, works, and renews us.
 2. Ephesians 4:23 says that we need to be renewed in the spirit of our mind; our spirit is the place where we receive the renewing.
 3. Our mingled spirit spreads into our mind, thus becoming the spirit of our mind; it is in such a spirit that we are renewed for our transformation.
 4. We have to learn how to turn to our spirit; that is our refuge, our hiding place, to receive the renewing.
- D. In addition to the cross, the Holy Spirit, and our spirit, we have the holy Word; the Head of the Body cleanses the church, His Body, by the washing of the water in the word—Eph. 5:26:
 1. We may not even be able to take the situation we are in, but when we come to the Word, regardless of what chapter or verse, the word will wash us.
 2. There is water in the word to wash us; washing is a synonym of renewing.

III. We are being renewed through sufferings to be a new creation—2 Cor. 4:16, 10-11:

- A. In God's design all of us who are His chosen people have to go through sufferings; there is no exception to this because He wants us to be a new creation.
- B. He wants us to be transferred from the realm of the old creation into the realm of the new creation; this transfer is a process of suffering.

- C. The context of 2 Corinthians 4:16, which says that our inward man is being renewed day by day, shows us that this renewing takes place through sufferings; Paul called the sufferings that he passed through “the putting to death of Jesus”—4:10-11.
- D. “The putting to death” is “the killing;” the killing of Jesus means that Jesus kills us, puts us to death, all the time; the putting to death of Jesus is the working of death, the working of the cross.
- E. Paul told us in 2 Corinthians 4:11 that he was always being delivered unto death; he was under the killing of the cross every day; he was dying every day so that he could be renewed every day.
- F. The Christian life is a life of being renewed day by day; this renewing is by suffering; God does not like to see His children suffering, but we have to go through the process of suffering.

IV. We need to learn to cooperate with God by allowing Him to renew us day by day with the divine element:

- A. We may be good saints in the church who have been kept and preserved by the Lord, but have we been renewed with the divine element?
- B. If we know the Bible in its principle, we can see that God desires to renew us; God cares for whether we are still in the old creation or whether we are being renewed.
- C. We are renewed by the addition of God into our being, by having more of the divine element added into our being; the real Christian life is to have God added into us morning and evening and day by day.
- D. What God cares for is that His chosen ones would learn to cooperate with Him by allowing Him to be added into them day by day.
- E. Our God is daily waiting for a chance to add Himself into all of us; if we would give Him the opportunity and the opening, He will add Himself into our being as the new element, not merely to correct us but to replace us, to renew us.

V. We need to enjoy the renewing capacity of the divine life in resurrection day by day:

- A. Within the divine life that we are enjoying today, there is a renewing capacity.
 - 1. Capacity refers to the ability of the divine life in its nature; in God’s divine nature, there is the ability which is energizing all day.
 - 2. Once the divine life with the divine nature gets into us, it energizes within us; we all have the divine element energizing in us, and in this divine element there is the renewing capacity.
- B. God’s intention is altogether to make us new; it takes a long time in our life and it requires us to contact God, to receive God, and to get God added into us all the day:
 - 1. It requires us to pray, confessing our sins and rejecting ourselves to take the cross of Christ; to take the cross of Christ is a killing, and this killing is death.
 - 2. This death brings in resurrection, and in this resurrection, the divine life in us will carry out its renewing capacity.
 - 3. Moment by moment we have to receive God so that He can be added into us, and we have to reject ourselves to receive the death of Christ so that we can cooperate with the Lord within us.
- C. Then we will enjoy not only the renewing capacity but also the renewing result, which is a metabolic change in our behavior, in our character, in our disposition, and even in our habit.

VI. When all of the Lord’s children pass through the process of renewing to become the New Jerusalem, they will be in a state of being fully renewed; the holy city is called the New Jerusalem because it has no old element of God’s old creation; as we pass through afflictions, there needs to be a continual renewing taking place in us day by day so that God can accomplish His heart’s desire—Rev. 21:2.