

CALLING ON THE NAME OF THE LORD

Message Three

Calling On the Name of the Lord to Participate in the New Testament Jubilee

Scripture Reading: Leviticus 25:8-17; Isaiah 61:1-3; Luke 4:16-22; Joel 2:28-29, 32a; Acts 2:16-18, 21

- I. **The jubilant practice of calling on the name of the Lord was prophesied by Joel concerning the New Testament jubilee—Joel 2:32.**
- II. **The year of jubilee in Leviticus 25:8-17 is recorded as a prophecy in Isaiah 61:1-3 and is fulfilled in reality in Luke 4:16-22:**
 - A. In the year of jubilee there were two main blessings: the returning of every man to his lost possession and the liberation from slavery—Lev. 25:8-17:
 1. In the year of jubilee everyone who had sold his possession, his allotted portion of the good land, was returned to it without paying anything to redeem it (vv. 10, 13, 28), and everyone who had sold himself into slavery regained his freedom and returned to his family (vv. 39-41).
 2. Returning to one's possession and being freed and returning to one's family signify that in the New Testament jubilee the believers have returned to God as their lost divine possession, have been released from all bondage, and have returned to the church as their divine family—Eph. 1:13-14; John 8:32, 26; cf. Psalms 68:5-6.
 - B. In the Old Testament type the jubilee lasted for one year, but in the fulfillment it refers to the entire New Testament age, the age of grace, as the time when God accepts the returned captives of sin (Isa. 49:8; Luke 15:17-24; 2 Cor. 6:2) and when those oppressed under the bondage of sin enjoy the release of God's salvation (Rom. 7:14-8:2):
 1. The New Testament jubilee is an age of ecstasy for our salvation:
 - a. The New Testament age is an age of ecstasy, and a Christian is a person in ecstasy; if we have never been in ecstasy before God, this shows that we do not have a sufficient enjoyment of God—5:13; Acts 11:5; 22:17; Psalms 43:4a; 51:12; 1 Peter 1:8; Isaiah 12:3-6.
 - b. *Jubilee* means having no worry or anxiety, no concern or care, no lack or shortage, no sickness or calamity, and no problems whatsoever, but rather having all benefits; hence, all things are pleasant and satisfying to our heart, and we are free from anxiety, at ease, excited, and exultant.
 2. We must receive the Lord Jesus as the real jubilee in us; if we have Him, we have God as our possession and can be delivered from the bondage of sin and Satan to have real freedom and rest—Acts 26:18; Eph. 1:13-14; Col. 1:12; Matt. 11:28; John 8:32, 36.
 3. Everything can be satisfying to us only after we have gained the all-inclusive Christ as our enjoyment; it is not outward persons, matters, or things but Christ within us who enables us to be calm and free of worries as we face all kinds of situations—Phil. 3:8-9; 4:5-8, 11-13.
 - C. The living of the jubilee is a living in the enjoyment of Christ, a living of enjoying God as our inheritance and real freedom—Acts 26:18; John 8:36:

1. To be in the jubilee is to eat the Lord Jesus as the real produce of the good land, to take Him as our dwelling place for our rest, and be freed from the slavery of sin and from the bondage of law and religion—6:57; Deut. 8:7-10; Col. 1:12; John 15:5; Psa. 16:5; 90:1; Rom. 6:6-7; Gal. 5:1.
2. The only way to be released from the three kinds of labor in human life—the labor to be a good person, the labor of anxiety, and the labor of suffering—is to take Christ as our enjoyment, satisfaction, and rest—Rom. 7:24-8:2; Phil. 4:5-7; 2 Cor. 12:9.
3. The Christian life should be a life full of enjoying the Lord, a life full of joy and praises; when we enjoy the Lord fully, He becomes our jubilee:
 - a. The tone of an overcoming living is the tone of rejoicing, thanking, and praising God continually—1 Thes. 5:16-18.
 - b. The overcoming life can survive only in an environment of thanksgiving and praise—v. 18; Col. 3:17; Psa. 106:12; 2 Chron. 20:20-22.
4. The living of the jubilee is a life in which we take God Himself, Christ Himself, in every situation; then He becomes the primary factor and center in us to lead us and overrule all the troubles of human life—John 6:16-21; Col. 1:17b, 18b.

III. In Peter's first proclamation of the gospel, he quoted from the prophet Joel and declared that we can enjoy Christ as the jubilee by the jubilant practice of calling on the name of the Lord—Acts 2:16-18, 21; Joel 2:28-29, 32a:

- A. The book of Joel reveals the intrinsic divine history within the outward human history; our divine history in the midst of human history is a calling on the name of the Lord to enjoy the riches of Christ for the building up of the Body of Christ as the fullness of Christ—1:1-4; Rom. 10:12-13; Eph. 3:8, 19; 1:22-23.
- B. In the New Testament, calling on the name of the Lord was first mentioned by Peter on the day of Pentecost, as the fulfillment of Joel's prophecy; this fulfillment is related to God's outpouring of the all-inclusive Spirit economically upon His chosen people that they may participate in His New Testament jubilee—Acts 2:16-18, 21:
- C. Joel's prophecy and its fulfillment concerning God's New Testament jubilee have two aspects: on God's side, He poured out His Spirit in the ascension of the resurrected Christ; on our side, we call on the name of the ascended Lord, who has accomplished all, attained unto all, and obtained all:
 1. Calling on the name of the Lord is vitally necessary in order for us to participate in and enjoy the all-inclusive Christ with all that He has accomplished, attained, and obtained for our full salvation—1 Cor. 1:2; Rom. 10:12-13; 5:10.
 2. We can enjoy seasons of refreshing (cooling, reviving, and relieving) from the presence of the Lord by calling on the name of the Lord—Acts 3:20; 2:21.
 3. By practicing to call on the name of the Lord, we can continually receive the riches of the Spirit, and God fulfills His promise to restore to us "the years that the...locust has eaten"—Joel 2:25; Gal. 3:2, 5, 14.

Excerpts from the Ministry:

FALLEN MAN'S NEED OF THE JUBILEE

...When man was created, he received a possession. Man's possession by creation was actually God Himself. God created man to be His vessel for His expression. Thus, God intended to give Himself to man as his possession. But man became fallen, and in the fall man lost God as his possession.

Through the fall man also sold himself. In Romans 7:14 Paul says, "I am fleshly, sold under sin." To be sold in this way is to be held in slavery. Anyone who sells himself to be a slave enters into a condition of slavery. Today all of mankind is in slavery, mainly the slavery of sin. Man has sold himself into the slavery of sin, Satan, and the world. Therefore, fallen man has lost both God and himself.

Before we were saved, we were those who had lost God as our possession and who had also lost ourselves. Ephesians 2:12 indicates that fallen man is without God. Instead of God as his possession, man has sin and has sold himself into the slavery of sin.

Apart from God's preserving grace, even Christians may lose God as their possession in a practical way and may also sell themselves into the slavery of sin. In their daily living some Christians have sin instead of God. Like unbelievers, they have lost God as their possession, and they have sold themselves to sin, pleasures, and worldly amusements. All such believers, as well as all unbelievers, need a jubilee....

A WONDERFUL RELEASE

In Luke 4 the Lord Jesus read a portion from Isaiah that was a prophecy not of the jubilee in type, but of the actual jubilee: "The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, because He has anointed Me to bring good news to the poor. He has sent Me to proclaim release to the captives, and recovery of sight to the blind, to send away in release those who are oppressed, to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord" (vv. 18-19). Then He declared, "Today this Scripture has been fulfilled in your ears" (v. 21). By reading that portion of the Scripture the Lord sounded the trumpet; He proclaimed the jubilee.

Do you know what the preaching of the gospel is? The preaching of the gospel is the sounding of the jubilee, the trumpeting of the jubilee. The preaching of the gospel is the proclamation of our release. Actually, this release is not the release of our possession to us; it is the release of us to our possession and to our family. Once we were in the wrong family, the family of slavery. The sounding of the jubilee tells us to return to our own family, to the family of God.

Now we can understand what the jubilee is. The jubilee is the proclaiming of a wonderful release—a release of our possession to us and the release of ourselves so that we may return to God, to our family, and to our possession. (*Life-study of Luke*, ch. 64, pp. 550-552)

A LIFE OF ENJOYMENT

Luke 15:23 indicates that the Christian life should be a life of enjoyment: "And bring the fattened calf; slaughter it, and let us eat and be merry." The result of the prodigal son's coming back to his father's house was that he and all those in the house could eat, drink, and be merry. This indicates that we should eat Christ as the fattened calf, drink the life-giving Spirit, and be merry in the enjoyment of the Triune God and in the riches of the Father's house.

As we go on to 1 Corinthians 5:8 we see that the Christian life is a feast: "Let us therefore keep the feast, not with old leaven, nor with leaven of malice and evil, but with unleavened bread of sincerity and truth." The feast here refers to the feast of unleavened bread as the continuation of the Passover (Exo. 12:15-20). This feast lasted for seven days, the period of a complete course, signifying the entire period of our Christian life, from the day of our conversion to the day of rapture. This is a long feast which we should keep with unleavened bread, which is Christ as our nourishment and enjoyment. Only He is the life supply of sincerity and truth, absolutely pure, without mixture, and full of reality. Such a feast is a time for enjoyment. The entire Christian life should be a feast and an enjoyment of Christ as the rich supply of life. Therefore, in 1 Corinthians 5:8 Paul charges us to keep the feast with Christ as unleavened bread.

A feast is not a time for working; rather, it is a time for eating, enjoyment, satisfaction, and rest. In the Christian life Christ should be our food, enjoyment, satisfaction, and rest.

In Ephesians 3:8 Paul says, "To me, less than the least of all saints, was this grace given, to preach to the nations the unsearchable riches of Christ as the gospel." Paul preached not the doctrines but the riches of Christ. The riches of Christ are what He is to us, such as light, life, righteousness, and holiness, for our experience and enjoyment. These riches are unsearchable and untraceable. The Christian life is a life of enjoying the unsearchable riches of Christ.

In Philippians 1:19 Paul speaks of the bountiful supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ. The Christian life is a life of enjoying this bountiful supply.

In 2 Corinthians 12:9 we see that Paul experienced and enjoyed the grace of Christ: "And He has said to me, My grace is sufficient for you, for My power is perfected in weakness." Then in 2 Corinthians 13:14 Paul goes on to say, "The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all." To be sure, the grace of Christ, the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit are for our enjoyment. The grace of the Lord is the Lord Himself as life to us for our enjoyment, the love of God is God Himself as the source of the grace of the Lord, and the fellowship of the Spirit is the Spirit Himself as the transmission of the grace of the Lord with the love of God for our participation. The result of the enjoyment of the grace of the Lord, the love of God, and the fellowship of the Spirit is satisfaction, and the issue of this enjoyment and satisfaction is rest. All Christians should have this enjoyment, satisfaction, and rest.

However, only a small minority of Christians daily are enjoying the grace of Christ, the love of God, and the fellowship of the Spirit. Where are we with respect to this enjoyment? Many of us are laboring and are full of anxiety and worry. Furthermore, we have many expectations or dreams. Eventually, because these dreams are not fulfilled, we are disappointed and have suffering. Many among us daily are laboring, worrying, dreaming, and suffering. Someone may dream of becoming rich, but this dream leads to disappointment and suffering. Human life is a life of laboring, worrying, dreaming, and suffering.

Some believers who are still laboring, worrying, dreaming, and suffering may say, "I thought that life would be better after I became a Christian, but it's about the same. What, then, is the purpose of being a Christian?" Because of questions such as this, a number of Christians have been attracted to the teaching concerning prosperity, the teaching which claims that Christians can become rich and successful. Nevertheless, it is a fact that most Christians are laboring, worrying, dreaming, and suffering. Furthermore, most, whether they are a success or a failure, are going in a downward direction.

THE THREE KINDS OF LABOR IN HUMAN LIFE

If we read the Bible carefully, we shall see that there are three kinds of labor in human life, not including working at a job to earn a living. The first kind of labor is the labor to be a good person, to have good behavior, and to improve one's character. In this labor people struggle to be humble, patient, and loving. In the Bible, especially in the New Testament, to work means to do such things. But no one can be saved by works (Eph. 2:8-9). This means that no one can be saved by the works of trying to improve one's behavior and character, to keep the law, and to be good, patient, kind, and honest. This kind of effort is a real labor, and in the New Testament this is called work.

According to the Bible, the second kind of labor is to worry, to be anxious. What a hard job it is to labor under anxiety! If you could do your job day by day without having any anxiety, you would be a healthy person. However, you may spend more hours each day worrying than you do working. Can you say that you have not had any anxiety, any worry, so far today? Day by day, everyone is anxious. You may be anxious about your health, your job, or a great many other things. I, of course, am not an exception. I have learned from experience that the only way to escape anxiety is to enjoy the Lord. Whenever I am not enjoying Christ, I have anxiety. Christ is versus anxiety. In the Life-study of Philippians we gave a number of messages entitled "A Life Full of Forbearance but without Anxiety."

The third kind of labor revealed in the Bible is suffering. Suffering is a very hard labor. When we enjoy God in the jubilee, there should not be any suffering. Paul, for example, suffered from a “thorn in the flesh” (2 Cor. 12:7). Concerning this thorn, he entreated the Lord three times that it might depart from him (v. 8). However, instead of removing the thorn, the Lord said to him, “My grace is sufficient for you.” The Lord seemed to be telling Paul, “No, I shall not remove the thorn, for My grace is sufficient. If you enjoy Me, you will not have any suffering.”

To say that we shall not have suffering when we enjoy the Lord does not mean that our environment will improve. On the contrary, in many cases the environment changes for the worse. Consider the situation of Paul and Silas in Acts 16. Paul and Silas were cast into prison in Philippi. We would expect that this imprisonment would have been a great suffering for them. However, Paul and Silas were not suffering there in prison—they were enjoying the jubilee. They were singing and praising the Lord. Although they were in prison, they had enjoyment, satisfaction, and rest.

NO ANXIETY IN THE JUBILEE

If we are living in the jubilee, we shall not have any anxiety. Concerning anxiety, the Lord Jesus says, “Do not be anxious about your life, what you should eat and what you should drink; nor for your body, what you should put on....Which of you by being anxious can add one cubit to his stature?...Therefore do not be anxious for tomorrow, for tomorrow will be anxious for itself. Sufficient for the day is its own evil” (Matt. 6:25, 27, 34). There is no need for us to borrow tomorrow’s anxiety and bear it today. Every day has its own evil. Nevertheless, some saints, young as well as old, borrow anxiety not only from tomorrow but from years to come. This means that some are anxious not only concerning tomorrow but concerning what will happen years from now. Some grandparents may even be anxious concerning their third generation. They actually borrow the anxiety of a future generation and labor under it today.

Do you know why we are anxious both about today and tomorrow? We are anxious because God does not have the full ground within us. We still give a “corner” of our being to other things, and that corner causes us trouble. However, if we give all the room in our heart to God, we shall not be anxious or troubled by whatever happens to us. If in our hearts there is no ground for anything or anyone other than God, He will always be our enjoyment, satisfaction, and rest. The environment may change, but He remains the same.

It is very difficult for us to give all the ground in our being to God because we are fallen and have a fallen nature. The very cells and fibers of our physical bodies and our entire soul, including our mind, will, and emotion, are fallen from God, from the enjoyment of God, and from rest in God. We have fallen into many things other than God. Anything, whether good or bad, that is not God Himself can be a source of anxiety. Only God is enjoyment; only God is satisfaction and rest. No matter how good something else may be, it cannot be our enjoyment, satisfaction, and rest.

A LIFE THAT LIVES GOD

The life of jubilee, that is, the life that lives in the jubilee, is a life that lives God. When some hear this, they may say, “Isn’t this the victorious life? Isn’t this a holy life, a life of the Spirit?” Yes, the life of jubilee is a victorious and holy life, and it is a life of the Spirit. But although we have heard many messages on living in the Spirit, we still do not live very much in the jubilee. Instead, we have the labor of struggling to improve ourselves, the labor of anxiety, the labor of dreaming, and the labor of suffering. What a hard labor it is to struggle to be good! It is an even harder labor to worry, to have anxiety. It is also a labor to dream, to have expectations. Every kind of expectation is a dream. Finally, there is the labor of suffering. When we have suffering, we cannot have enjoyment, satisfaction, and rest.

How can we be released from all this labor? The only way to be released is to take the Triune God as our portion. If we call on the name of the Lord Jesus, the all-inclusive Spirit will

render us His bountiful supply. Then we shall enjoy God in Christ as the good land flowing with milk and honey, and we shall have enjoyment, satisfaction, and rest. We all need this jubilee.

The Gospel of Luke leads us into the life of the jubilee. The Man-Savior saves us from bondage into the jubilee. He saves us into the liberty, enjoyment, satisfaction, and rest of God's jubilee.

The entire New Testament teaching concerning the Christian life involves the jubilee. When the kingdom comes, we shall enjoy a greater jubilee than we enjoy today. Then in eternity, in the New Jerusalem with the new heaven and new earth, we shall have the greatest jubilee. We shall enjoy God in full as our satisfaction and rest. Today we have a foretaste of this jubilee.

All day long we should enjoy God as our enjoyment, satisfaction, and rest. We should not struggle, worry, dream, or suffer. Even in the most difficult situation we can still enjoy the Lord. If we give all the ground in us to God and enjoy Him, not even martyrdom will be a suffering to us. Instead of struggle, anxiety, dreams, and suffering, we shall have the all-inclusive processed Triune God as our enjoyment, satisfaction, and rest. The grace of Christ, the love of God, and the fellowship of the Spirit will be ours. This is the enjoyment of the jubilee. (*Life-study of Luke*, ch. 69, pp. 587-590, 592-594)

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[Calling on the name of the Lord] is such a jubilant practice that Joel prophesied (Joel 2:32) for the New Testament jubilee.

In the New Testament calling on the name of the Lord is mentioned first by Peter, in Acts 2:21, on the day of Pentecost as the fulfillment of Joel's prophecy. This fulfillment is related to God's outpouring of the all-inclusive Spirit economically upon His chosen people so that they may participate in His New Testament jubilee. Joel's prophecy and its fulfillment for God's New Testament jubilee have two aspects: on God's side, He poured out His Spirit in the ascension of the resurrected Christ; on our side, we call on the name of the ascended Lord who has accomplished all, attained unto all, and obtained all. It is vitally necessary for us, the believers in Christ, to participate in and enjoy the all-inclusive Christ with all He has accomplished, attained, and obtained (1 Cor. 1:2). It is a major practice in God's New Testament economy that we may enjoy the processed Triune God for our full salvation (Rom. 10:10-13).

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According to the context, 2:21 is the conclusion of the quotation of Joel's prophecy, which began in verse 17. The fact that verse 21 is the conclusion of the quotation indicates that the issue of God's pouring out of His Spirit upon all flesh is their salvation through calling on the name of the Lord. God's outpouring of His Spirit is the application of the Lord's salvation unto His chosen people. To be saved is to receive this Spirit, which is the blessing of the gospel in God's New Testament economy (Gal. 3:2, 5, 14). This Spirit is the Lord Himself as the breath (John 20:22) and the living water (John 4:10, 14) to us. To breathe Him in as our breath and drink Him as our living water, we need to call upon Him. Lamentations 3:55-56 indicates that calling upon the Lord is breathing, and Isaiah 12:3 and 4 indicate that calling upon the Lord is drinking. After we believe in the Lord, we need to call upon Him so that we may not only be saved but also enjoy His riches (Rom. 10:12-13). His riches are enjoyed through our calling upon Him by exercising our spirit. This is the real worship of God (John 4:24). (*Life-study of Acts*, msg. 9, pp. 70-72)

References and Further Reading:

1. *Holy Bible Recovery Version*, Acts 2:21, footnotes 1 and 3
2. *The Ministry Magazine*, Volume 12, No. 7, "Crystallization-study of Luke," Chapters 7-8
3. *The Ministry of the Word*, Volume 13, No. 1, "Crystallization-study of Acts," Chapter 8