

The Sovereign Hand That Brings Recovery

The Book of Immanuel and Zion

[The beginning of the word ministry was not recorded. The following text is from handwritten notes]

I remember one time I went out to India. One of the places they took me to was outside Chennai. I went out on a beach. It must have been over one hundred degrees. You are speaking. I am thinking, "Lord, help me not to faint." There were 3,000 people there on the beach. I was under some kind of shelter; they were not. Just about the time I thought I was going to faint, the wind started blowing from the sea. The Lord does some little mercy like that. You can appreciate it when it is going to be one hundred degrees, and these air conditioners are built for the mild climate of New York.

It is wonderful to be together. I do think after the time of Jubilee. There was a conference some time ago; the burden was passing the torch of the testimony. I feel, as I was praying about what to share, that we are truly in a time of transition when the Lord is passing a torch to a generation. My burden is aimed towards them, although it is for all of us. I hope we are refreshed by the truth of the word.

I would like to look at the passage in Isaiah 11:10-12.

Lord, we want to possess our possessions, but first You must possess Your possessions. Here I am, Lord, send me. Here I am, Lord, correct me. Here I am, Lord, recover me. Lord, it is the heart of all that gathers in these days. We pray in Your precious name, Amen.

The passage in Isaiah 11 opens the whole horizon of the recovery of Zion, where God's children have fully possessed their possession. Isaiah 7-12 is called the book of Emmanuel. What begins is revelation. That is my burden for tonight.

In Isaiah 6, Isaiah saw the Man in glory. He saw Jehovah of hosts. He saw a human being on the throne. That revelation in Isaiah 6 opened the book of Emmanuel that came to Isaiah after seeing the vision of the glorious Lord. Then he saw a child would be born of the virgin, and His name would be Emmanuel. In chapter 8, the prophecy of Zion, he prophesied that Zion, that Jerusalem, would be flooded with the Euphrates River and would be gobbled by Assyria, but they would be thwarted because of Emmanuel. Some 25 years later, that happened; all but took Zion.

[Transcribed from the audio recording]

... Hezekiah and Isaiah threw the scrolls on the ground and prayed, and 750,000 soldiers were wiped out by the Lord's host. So, anyway. And so that was chapter eight.

Then chapter nine. Suddenly, out of the darkness, there in the Gentiles, in the Galilee, a great light was seen. What was that light? Unto us a child is born. Unto us a son is given. The government shall be upon His shoulder. His name will be Wonderful

Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. That comes out of this Immanuel revelation that he saw back there in Isaiah 6. Then we come down to our section here in Isaiah 11, where a shoot from the stem of Jesse—it's the same revelation now, but he's seeing more parts to it—full of the Holy Spirit arises to restore Zion a second final time as the city of His rule in that day. Then finally, the portion of Immanuel, the book of Immanuel, ends with chapter 12.

So I just want to read a few verses there. "Then you will say on that day,"—there's a day coming, brothers and sisters—"I will give thanks to You, O LORD; For although You were angry with me, Your anger is turned away, And You comfort me. "Behold, God is my salvation, I will trust and not be afraid; For the LORD GOD is my strength and song, And He has become my salvation." And the chapter ends with: "Cry aloud and shout for joy, O inhabitant of Zion, For great in your midst is the Holy One of Israel." And so the Book of Emmanuel ends with this note for us.

The recovery is complete when we see Zion with Christ dwelling in the midst of her. Now we are just going to take a shortcut and talk about Zion being the Church. So here we are. The millennium comes when Christ possesses His possessions and Christ's people possess their possessions of Him. And the rest comes, and those are gathered in as it is spoken about there on the mount. And Zion is glorious.

The Two Hands of God in Recovery

The Sovereign Hand That Brings Recovery

So I wanted to begin tonight by talking about the importance of seeing the hand, the sovereign hand that brings recovery. If you will notice there, when we read Isaiah chapter 11 and verse 11, it says, "Then it will happen on that day that the Lord Will again recover the second time with His hand." With His hand. And I know I am being simple tonight, but I want us to start there. The Lord's hand recovers a second time. It tells us that recovery has been coming in stages. Right? Of course, you realize that the first recovery was when these exiles in Babylon came back to Jerusalem and built the house of God. It was not yet glorious because He was not in the midst, neither was the Ark of the Covenant at that time. But nevertheless, a recovery had begun. And in stages, you see, recovery takes place. And we need to see the hand of God recovering until that day when He finishes what He has begun.

The Lord's hand was in that. But later, of course, you know, the Romans came, destroyed Jerusalem, destroyed the temple. The Jews were scattered all over the earth. You see their name, their different destinations mentioned here and throughout the world, the Gentiles come and are saved out of the nations, throughout the world. The Jews come back to Zion and are gathered back into this glorious resting place. And it will be glorious, it says this full recovery at the end of the age will be accomplished by what is said to be the hand of God, the sovereign hand of God.

The Two Hands of God in Recovery

Now it is interesting, Bible teachers and scholars, when they talk about this hand of God, say it is actually the two hands of God. And of course they are talking about the one hand of the one triune God, which is the hand of the Father, which is the hand of the Son, which is the hand of the Holy Spirit. So we look at the two hands of God, we see the right hand of God sovereignly bringing recovery. How did He do that? Well, of course we know the gospel story. This is the right hand of the Messiah. And all authority in heaven and earth was given to Him when He was exalted at the Father's right hand to become the Father's right hand. All authority given to Him. He is head of the church now. And in His fullness, He intercedes now. He is recovering right now. He builds His church right now. He is washing the church with His precious word. He is gathering up by resurrection power these ones and that ones who come to see Him as the Messiah. The right hand of God is the Messiah.

But here is where there needs to be some growing up. And my prayer is for younger ones, those who are newer in the Lord, to begin to ascend Zion by seeing a revelation of Jesus Christ, namely in His left hand. Now scholars call the left hand of God the Holy Spirit. I do not know if you know that there is a right hand and a left hand. They are both involved in this recovery work. The right hand seen and known, the left hand more secretive. The left hand is that work of the Spirit of God here on earth. But is the power of the unseen left hand accomplishing all that is desired of the right hand?

So, His unseen presence, do you see His left hand? The unseen presence empowers the saints to preach the gospel, powers us to walk in the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus. But it also does that hidden work of engineering so essential to His recovery. What do I mean by that? He uses His tools. The all-wise Holy Spirit uses His tools of providence, of circumstances, of difficulties, of sufferings, to work all things together for good as we are conformed into the image of His beloved Son. This is God's left hand, which often is not seen by people. The right hand is seen, but the left hand is involved even in the Church. The left hand is that agent that recovers holiness to the Church that has lost its holiness. It returns that corporate unity in Zion. How? Through discipline, through conviction of the Spirit, through revelation, through judgments, through comforts, and through that word used throughout the New Testament, *thlipsis*, which in the Greek is translated as pressure.

The Hand of God in Salvation, Discipline, and Recovery

Now, why do I say all this? Because obviously we know, all of us know, that these two hands, we know the Lord, the Messiah, the authoritative one. We know the Holy Spirit and His hand at work. Well, it is important that we start out by saying God's hand has recovered us and is recovering us, even right now as we speak tonight. Just some verses. Just listen to them. You all know these verses. We know that God's hand is involved in our salvation. And so, John 10:27 says, "My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me; and I give eternal life to them, and they will never perish; and

no one will snatch them out of My hand.” Now there, there is a promise that His hand will keep us in our salvation.

There is the hand that we see when, in spreading the gospel, you and I go out with some tracts, or we go out to speak to people out on the streets, or we have some kind of gathering or assembly. Is it not wonderful? It says in Acts 11:21, “And the hand of the Lord was with them, and a large number who believed turned to the Lord.” Wonderful. When we are preaching the Gospel, because without that secret left hand of God, our preaching is in vain. Right?

How about this? God keeps and recovers Zion, even though Zion does not realize it. You see, this is now where I am wanting us to see that God is doing things that we cannot see. Listen to Isaiah 49, verses 14 and 15. Here is what Zion said in a difficult time. “But Zion said, “The LORD has forsaken me, And the Lord has forgotten me.”” Here is what the Lord says: ““Can a woman forget her nursing child And have no compassion on the son of her womb? Even these may forget, but I will not forget you. “Behold, I have inscribed you on the palms of My hands; Your walls are continually before Me.” Zion, you see, how many times do you know Christians, when they start getting in trouble and thinking things get really tough, they wonder if God loves them, has God deserted them? Where is God? This is Zion's complaint. And He says, “I have engraved you on My hand.”

Listen, God may severely discipline us to recover us. We will get to that, Lord willing. But never forget that His hand is for recovery. Right? Or how about this? The necessity of a hand to humble us in I Peter 5: “Humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God.”

Brothers and sisters, if we are going to talk about recovery this weekend, we have to start with a reality: we have lost something. There is a judgment on that even as He recovers. And so, it is important to understand that when we start, we start from a position of, “Lord, what do You want to say to me?” So I want us to see this vision of the hand of God in this great, great recovery work.

Ascending Mount Zion: Revelation and Perspective

Climbing Mount Zion and Spiritual Ascension

And in order to do that, brothers and sisters, we have to climb Mount Zion. There is a spiritual ascension necessary now. We can gain a lot of biblical knowledge and everything from the moment we are saved by studying the Word of God. But revelation comes to those who are climbing. A revelation is like a picture taken and you are like the camera; the lens opens. But if you do not have your film in there, if you are not ready, if your heart is not prepared to receive that light, there is no registration. What other people see as a revelation, you might say, it thundered. I heard the noise. What was the noise? Meanwhile, Paul is hearing words and revelations. You see, there needs to be a capacity in, brothers and sisters, some capacity of Christ that is growing in there in order to receive revelation. That is why it is so important. Mount Zion. We have to be stepping up into a heavenly life if we would see what God is doing today.

Many, many saints running around trial and error, doing good things, good intentions, some things working, some things not. Tough times have no idea what is going on because they cannot see the hand of God. And you cannot see the hand of God just by saying what is going on. No, there has got to be some searching for the hand of God to be revealed. So here is, in the Old Testament God uses Zion as this picture, picture of a mount of discovery, of a mount of disclosure, of a mount of God's presence. And so, it says in Isaiah 40:9, "Get yourself up on a high mountain, O Zion, bearer of good news, Lift up your voice mightily, O Jerusalem, bearer of good news; Lift it up, do not fear. Say to the cities of Judah, "Here is your God!"

And one of the great moments of recovery in the life of the church and the life among us is when we can get up and stand up, up in the ascended life and say to the nations around us, this is your God and the testimony of Jesus be real in our lives.

Zion in Hebrews and the Shaking

So this is what the Old Testament is talking about, Zion. But as you know, of course, in the New Testament, the writer of Hebrews uses this same spiritual terminology of a Zion, not as the physical place in Jerusalem, but as a spiritual place that we have come to. The writer brings Zion's vantage point before us in Hebrews chapter 12, verses 22-24. You see it clearly there. Listen to this. He says, "But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to myriads of angels, to the general assembly and church of the firstborn who are enrolled in heaven, and to God, the Judge of all, and to the spirits of the righteous made perfect, and to Jesus, the mediator of a new covenant, and to the sprinkled blood, which speaks better than the blood of Abel."

Now, what is he trying to get at? Well, the Book of Hebrews is written, first of all, to these Hebrew Christians who were in the midst of a great shaking, and they did not know what was going on. And the writer says there is a great shaking that is going to shake everything that is shakable. It is about to come upon us. But these Jewish Christians did not understand the shaking, what was going on. And so the writer, in the context, you know the story. But in Hebrews 12, here is what the writer says: Stop standing at the foot of Mount Sinai. You are trembling in fear at the foot of Mount Sinai. You no longer belong over there. You are in Mount Zion, the city of God, where Jesus, His blood, and the mediation of His new covenant—that is your life, and you need to ascend into it.

And so it is interesting, we could spend a long time going over these different things, but there is a certain, a certain kind of an ascending order as he describes. As we go up this mountain, up this mountain, we see God and we see Christ. We see the saints and we see the angels. It goes up, up. It ends up with Jesus at the top. Are you ascending that mountain? At some point in our Christian life, this desire to know Jesus Christ, the center of Zion, needs to lay hold of our Christian lives. Otherwise, we run through life not understanding so much of what is going on. So ascending into this reality comes to

us through progressive revelations of Christ as a King. As we see the King, we begin to understand what the King is doing.

Revelation, Recovery, and the Present Crisis

So what am I saying? Let me stop just to clear the track here. In order to see God's hand in recovery, it takes more than just teaching. It is more than just scriptures and doctrines on the subject. Our heart needs to come to the place of consecration and obedience where the Holy Spirit can reveal more. That left hand wants to reveal all things regarding Christ to us, but you cannot take them now. The Lord says, I have many more things to say to you. You cannot take them right now. Now the Holy Spirit is going to come, and He is going to reveal things to you. In these increments of recovery, as you take ground, you are going to receive more. As you take higher ground, you are going to receive more.

So, brothers and sisters and young ones in the Lord, we come to a time where we move from just studying the Scriptures to seeing more of Christ in those Scriptures. And when that revelation begins to happen, like what happened in Isaiah when he saw the Lord high and lifted up, he began to understand what was going on around him. Throughout God's people's history, God's people, many times, they started out into a vision, they lost it along the way, and then they did not know what was going on as God started to shake them.

In the present crisis, brothers and sisters, I am not going to be a prophet of doom because I think we are already in a time of shaking. But the question is, do you understand what is going on? Or is it all a great disappointment and a puzzlement? And does it bring doubt into your mind, all that kind of stuff? We know the right hand of God's grace through Jesus Christ, the blessing of knowing the Lord Jesus, the blessing of His love. But do you know the left hand is sanctifying us, but we need to see it? The fact is that God is recovering by His hand. The question is not will you see it, but do you see it now? Do you see the Lord's hand? What a precious thing. If you, through the trials and tribulations, can see what the Lord is after, it changes the whole equation of life.

It is like as the Lord said in Isaiah 43:19, “Behold, I will do something new, Now it will spring forth; Will you not be aware of it? I will even make a roadway in the wilderness, Rivers in the desert.” So here are the children of Israel in the desert and then the wilderness. He says, “Do not you see what I am doing? I am making a way for you in the wilderness. There is going to be a goal on the other end of it. I am returning you to Zion, you see?”

So I want us to climb up, climb up a mountain and see something of the revelation of the Lord tonight. Because it is through a revelation of the Lord that you begin to see what is going on around you. Okay, so to do that, we are going to go to the mountain. Jesus climbed the Mount of Transfiguration in Luke chapter nine. If you would, if you will turn to Luke chapter nine, beginning in verse 27, we will see Jesus climbing up the Mount of Transfiguration with his three disciples, Peter, James, and John. It starts in

verse 27 when He says, “But I say to you truthfully, there are some of those standing here who will not taste death until they see the kingdom of God.” Now, of course, that has an apocalyptic meaning about when the coming of the Lord is complete in the millennium. But it also has an application for Peter, James, and John, who are about to see the Kingdom of God.

The Mount of Transfiguration: Seeing the King in His Glory

The Mount of Transfiguration and the Capacity for Revelation

So, verse 28, “Some eight days after these sayings, He took along Peter and John and James and went up on the mountain to pray.” Now, all the 12 apostles had confessed Jesus on the foothills. The Mount of Transfiguration is probably thought to be much higher. And the ancestry of Philippi, where Peter made the confession of Christ, was in the foothills of that mountain. So all the disciples were saved. All of them knew that Jesus was the Christ, the Son of the living God. But Peter, James, and John had more capacity. They were ready to see something more. And so Jesus took them up with Him on the mountain to pray, right?

And then it says in verse 29, “And while He was praying, the appearance of His face became different, and His clothing became white and gleaming.” Now, we do not know what Jesus was seeing up on the mountain, but I imagine He was seeing the glory of His Father. And I imagine up on that mountain there, He was seeing the glory of the things that He once had before He came to earth, the glory which He shared with the Father before the foundation of the world. And seeing that glory, what did it do? It lit Him up like a candle. When someone sees glory, there is the shining on Moses’ face. When somebody sees glory, there is something that happens because this shining from Jesus came from the inside. It was not like glory came down on Jesus. Jesus is beholding the face of His Father. And suddenly the light unfolds with this glory, something springs out of Him which the disciples see. It is an amazing thing. The disciples see this thing for the joy set before Him. He is seeing things up there just before He goes down to Jerusalem, dies on Calvary for our sins.

So, and then it says in verses 30-31 here, “And behold, two men were talking with Him; and they were Moses and Elijah, who, appearing in glory, were speaking of His departure which He was about to accomplish at Jerusalem.” So Jesus, of course, not only saw the glory, but He also saw the cross. He saw the exodus that was before Him. And that is part of growing up also in our Christian life, not just to see the glory, but to see the cross that was necessary for His life. So Moses and Elijah spoke to Him about these things. But Jesus saw that glimpse of glory. And the Lord gave that to Him to encourage Him as He was about to set His face for Jerusalem.

The Disciples’ Response and the Voice from Heaven

“Now Peter and his companions had been overcome with sleep; but when they were fully awake, they saw His glory and the two men standing with Him. And as these were leaving Him, Peter said to Jesus, “Master, it is good for us to be here; let us make

three tabernacles: one for You, and one for Moses, and one for Elijah"—not realizing what he was saying." Well, there you go. They saw His glory. They did not know what to do about it. They saw something; they did not know how to translate it. The roll of film was not in their camera. They saw the glory. What do we do about it? When we see revelation, it takes a little while for that revelation to develop into something that makes sense. We see, and we actually know something, because the Lord has developed something within us to actually receive a revelation. So we know something, having seen revelation, even though we cannot explain it at the moment.

But of course, impetuous Peter could not wait for those moments. He immediately said, "Hey, I know just what to do. We are going to build. We are going to build these places, these statues, whatever these things are. We are going to make a monument to this glorious moment."

Well, of course, it says right here, he did not realize what he was saying. I guess, I suppose sometimes when we see a revelation of the Lord Jesus, we do not know what we are saying. We say all kinds of stuff we do not know. I am sure I have on some messages myself.

"While he was saying this, a cloud formed and began to overshadow them." This is Shekinah glory. "And they were afraid as they entered the cloud." And Mark and Matthew tell us they fell on their faces to the ground. They were terrified of this glory. "Then a voice came out of the cloud, saying, 'This is My Son, My Chosen One; listen to Him!' And when the voice had spoken, Jesus was found alone. And they kept silent," including Peter for the first time, and reported to no one in those days any of the things which they had seen."

The overwhelming Shekinah cloud terrified these men. But in that final moment, they heard something that transformed and changed their lives. As Peter later recounts in his Second Epistle, what did they do? They heard the Father speak about His Son. So we see that the revelation that we are looking for is to understand who the Son is. And the Father says, this is My Son. I guarantee you, Peter, James, and John had never heard a voice from heaven before. And as a matter of fact, Peter later on says in his Second Epistle, this is a life-changing moment in my life. When I witnessed the majestic glory of my Lord, I knew He was Messiah. I confess Him as the Son of God, but when I saw Him there, something happened, something changed.

Vision, Shrines, and the Need for a Prophetic Assembly

And you see, the point of this is this: if we can see the Lord in His glory, see the Lord in Revelation, He becomes the lens of our eyes to understand what is going on. It is not like some people think the Book of Revelation is a revelation of the woes and the revelation of the trumpets and a revelation. No, no, no. It is eight revelations of Jesus Christ in the Book of Revelation. And all that other stuff is just gathered around it to be a backdrop. It is when you see those eight revelations of Jesus described in the Book of

Revelation that you make sense of those things that are going on around. And this is the basis of Revelation.

Without a vision, as soon as trouble comes, we begin to grumble under the weight of recovery, under the weight of discipline, under the weight of being shaken. Many who, in previous history in the church, came into some recovery and into some vision eventually lost it. And what did they do when they lost the vision? They made a shrine, like Peter suggested. And so we got shrines all over the place. And what they are really is the testament to the time where, back a hundred years ago or two hundred years ago, we really saw the Lord and everything made sense through Him. But now we do not see the Lord anymore. And so let us build a shrine. This is our shrine of 1627. This is our shrine of 1727, or whatever the date may be, where something used to happen.

Now, is that where we are at? We got... Are we building a shrine to something we have seen years ago? It is possible to come into that kind of place, but that is not what the Lord wants, because the Lord is sovereignly moving with His hand right now. He wants us to see and understand. So much talk, a lot of talk in charismatic circles about prophecy. And in the last number of years, prophecy has become so, well, may I say, abused, that the church hardly wants to talk about it anymore. But, in these last days, one of the most important things we need is a prophetic church that understands what is going on, that hears what the Spirit is saying to the churches.

But all of these prophecies, prophesying about politics or prophesying about some Dumas, this or that, or some kind of moral issue. The prophecies in the Bible were prophecies written for the children of God to understand what was going on. It was not politics and things like that. Things have been taken way out. But the Lord wants to recover a prophetic assembly. Would it not be wonderful if we could come before the Lord on a prayer meeting night? We said, we got some problems here. And we said, now, Lord, we come to You. What is Your perspective on these things rather than just kind of coming up with Band-Aids or requests that we make just out of the goodness of our heart? A prophetic assembly would be a powerful prayer meeting. We would actually be required asking the Lord, and the Lord would be speaking to us because we would see this.

Epignosis: Knowing Beyond Knowledge

So again, let me take it back another step. We come to that wonderful prayer of Paul in Ephesians chapter one, which is repeated, I think, even tonight. Kenny mentioned it once again. Paul's prayer for the Ephesians, who—how much did they see of the Lord? An awful lot. But what did Paul pray? “I pray that you might receive a spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him. I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened.” And that word he says, I pray that you might receive spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him. This is a special word. Now to you older folks, you all know about this. For younger people I say the Greek word there is epignosko. Gnosko means know. Epi means upon. And so what he is saying is, I pray that you might receive a spirit of wisdom and revelation with a knowledge surpassing knowledge, a knowledge

upon knowledge, a knowledge that exceeds knowledge, not only to know the Lord, but to know the Lord.

Now, this comes by experience of the Lord, but through a revelation, it opens the door to experiencing this epignosis, this wonderful recovery of this knowledge upon knowledge, where we begin to see more of what is going on with the Lord. Now, knowing beyond knowledge. How about that as a translation?

Again, my burden is, if we leave Mount Randolph Macon with a notebook full of teaching on recovery and the Lord has not opened our eyes to how He is recovering us, then we may have missed why we should be here. Now, let me clarify once again what I am talking about, this whole matter of Jesus, Jesus being the lens of our revelation. We all know that wonderful section in Hebrews, chapter 12, where we are told to run the race looking unto Jesus, right? Everybody knows that one. We lay aside our weights, put aside the sin that so easily besets us, and run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith. Anybody who sets aside those weights and sets aside those sins and starts pursuing, looking to Jesus, is going to be blessed in his running, is not he?

Seeing With the Eyes of Jesus

But that is not really what the writer of Hebrews is saying. You have got to read the whole sentence in the Greek. And it is this: looking unto Jesus, the author and the finisher of our faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has now sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. Now, that is the whole sentence. So what is he saying? Our goal is not to look unto Jesus, full stop. It is to look unto Jesus until He gives us the eyesight to see His eyesight that kept Him going for the joy that was before Him. And as He endured the cross and the problems that were laying ahead, He was doing that to recover us. But He could see that thing before Him. And so the writer is saying, look unto Jesus until you see with His eyes what is going on in your life, and for the joy that is on the other end of what He is after, you can run faithfully just like Him.

So you see what I am saying? You have got to look at the Lord. But then through the Lord say, "Ah, I see the goal there, I see the joy there, I see the end there." It helps you as you run the race.

The Lord's Recovering Hand

So when we look at these kinds of things, I suppose the first thing we have to come to when we read the scriptures about these things, about recovering, is this: We first need to see that the Lord's hand must recover us. As a matter of fact, because of His sovereignty, the Lord's hand is recovering us. That left hand that you often do not understand, that left hand that is squeezing you in situations, that left hand that is working out all things together for good, that left hand is at work recovering you and I.

When you look at that left hand, let me put it two ways. Number one, when you look at His hand, you see that the left hand of God, the Holy Spirit, is wearing a glove. And what does it say? It says, "Recovery R Us." You and I are what He is recovering. So this is not about how we are going to go out there and recover everybody else. It first starts with us being recovered, right? And so the Holy Spirit, He has got to be tough, but He is like the repo man. Do you know what a repo man is? Some guy gets a fancy car, this happens a lot in New York City. They have got full-time repo men. They are going around with wrecking trucks all the time because guys buy Mercedes Benz and it only costs \$985 a month, the lease. So they lease it for three months and stop making payments. So the repo man comes about midnight and, hikes the guy's Mercedes and takes it off. That is the repo man. He repossesses, right?

Well, unfortunately, we are like that too. And so the Holy Spirit, the left hand of God, is our repo man, who repossesses our possessions until Christ becomes our possession. What a trade. But there is stuff He has got to repossess before we can possess Christ. And so there is some recovery work that needs to be done.

What a mighty hand is recovering us. How big do you think the boundaries of His recovery work are? Let us see, how about this one? I am the Alpha and the Omega. Well now, that takes care of just about everything, does it not? He is recovering everything.

How about this? How about seeing that vision that John saw? John was a human being like the rest of us, being on the Isle of Patmos. He was going through it. He did not know why, but he was in the Spirit on the Lord's day; he was a prepared film. "Okay, Lord, open the lens. Let me see."

And of course, the center of all of those eight revelations was the Lamb of God taking the scroll of the history and destiny of the universe, and He is pulling it open toward the end. Now what have we got to worry about? If the Lord Jesus has got the destiny of the world in His hands and He is unraveling, and so, He unravels this thing and all of these problems happen where these are, fire comes down and all of this, oh, it is terrible.

Then you look up to heaven. Oh, that is wonderful. There is a goal in all of those tribulations and things in the book of Revelation, because it is the Lamb who has been given the authority to open the scroll of man's history and bring it to its proper end in God's eternal purpose. This is an amazing revelation to see when you see it, and that kind of thing.

We look again in Colossians 1, where we see that the scope of Christ's recovery work is to reconcile and make peace with all things under His preeminence. Listen to these words in Colossians 1:19–20. "For it was the Father's good pleasure for all the fullness to dwell in Him, and through Him to reconcile all things to Himself, having made peace through the blood of His cross; through Him, I say, whether things on earth or things in heaven." How big is the recovery of and reconciliation of all things—things in heaven, things on earth, all being gathered together under His preeminence. He has

done that by His precious blood. He has done that because He has been given that position above all things. He is gathering right now all things, things in heaven, things on earth, all being gathered together by His great work.

New Creation and a Recovered Point of View

So, just looking at that scope of what He is doing now, He is working recovery in our life. When we read the Scriptures and we have a vision of Christ with our ears open, our eyes open, everything begins to speak of recovery. Let me give you another verse. You can see the principle behind the Lord's recovery work by listening to II Corinthians, chapter five, those familiar verses in verses 16 through 18. Let me read those. I know you know them already. Listen to what has happened to Paul. "Therefore from now on we recognize no one according to the flesh; even though we have known Christ according to the flesh, yet now we know Him in this way no longer." So what is Paul saying? Immediately, he says, now I want to talk to you about the body of Christ. I do not regard anybody according to the flesh anymore. Why? Because I looked at Christ, and He does not regard anybody according to the flesh. And He gave me a new perspective on this new creation.

The New Creation and Our Perspective

He goes on to say, "Therefore if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creature; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come. Now all these things are from God." We have different translations. I remember when I was a brand-new Christian, I only had a King James Version, and I believed it was the only Bible that was right. And it says, "You are a new creature in Christ."

So here I was, born again now as a new creature in Christ. Well, it is good to know that, or even to think I am a new creation in Christ. But it is not talking about us running around as individual new creatures. No. He says, if anyone is in Christ, I want you to see something. There is the new creation: this brother, that brother in Christ. If anyone, this brother, that brother.

It is no longer me just running around like a new creature. I am part of something, something bigger, a new creation. And its name is "In Christ." I am in Christ. You are in Christ. So here we are. And therefore, he says, that is why I am saying, be reconciled to this. Stop fighting with one another. Do not you see? You are looking at one another according to the flesh. No, no, no, no, no.

You are in Christ as a new creation. I see you after the Spirit and not the flesh. What a change of perspective that is for us.

How do we view one another? This is a greater challenge for us, I am sure. So what He is doing is He has got us together in this new creation called Christ. And as He has got us together, He is recovering our point of view. Like Paul not seeing people after the flesh anymore. He is recovering our minds with the mind of Christ. So now we gather in prayer meetings and, "Lord, what is Your mind on this matter? What do we think we

should do? Well, no, no. What is Your mind, Lord?" That new creation can find the mind of Christ, then that new creation is reconciling all things among us in this new creation. There is a lot of work that has got to go on there.

Everywhere in Scripture when you look at it, you see God's great recovery work. That is a couple of more things, and then we will end. I know you are all tired tonight. Old guys like me, we do not stay up much past nine o'clock, which is just when the young people get started, by the way. So Julie and I found we have a Bible study, or had one, in our home for a few months here this spring. And, I tried to end by quarter to nine, and then the people decide to start going around 9:30, quarter to 10. Young people like to hang out.

The Gospels and God's Recovery Work

Well, anyway, just a couple of more things. When you look at the Gospels, of course they are written to show Jesus Christ is the Son of God, so that we might be saved. But now, to the new creation: what do the Gospels speak to us? Think of this recovery work, the Gospel of Matthew. Matthew is speaking about the restoration of the kingdom of heaven to earth. Now that is a recovery. Earth and heaven used to be united. God spoke. Adam, Eve, they spoke in the garden. Sin separated heaven and earth. The kingdom of the heaven is Jesus came to connect heaven and earth once again. Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven. What a recovery work. Just think about, grasp the greatness of that, and you can understand the work that He must do in our midst.

Or you take the Gospel of Mark. What is that? How about this one simple thing? The center of the Gospel of Mark is when Jesus said, "I have not come to be served, but to serve, and to give My life as a ransom for many." And the Lord has given us the most amazing Gospel of Jesus, the immediate servant of God, so that He could raise up some people who do not want to be served but want to serve for the sake of their Lord that they serve. There are so many servants of God who are that in name only, who want to be served. But no, the Lord is raising up a generation of those who truly would serve.

How about the Gospel of Luke? Is that not a cry, a present cry for the Gospel to be recovered in such a way that we could seek and save that which was lost by the power of the Holy Spirit? The preaching of the Gospel and the power of the Holy Spirit is needed for the recovery and the gathering in. Because God's heart is bigger than just a few people. He loves everybody He has created and does not want anyone to perish, but come to the saving knowledge of Jesus Christ. Now there is a recovery work for us, brothers and sisters.

Or fourth, the Gospel of John, the present cry for recovery of the essential union between Christ the I Am and those born of God, but who are trying to live the Christian life by external things. Everywhere you look in the Gospel of John, it is talking about, we are not talking about this mountain, that mountain. We are talking about worshiping in spirit. We are talking about a spiritual union with Jesus and us where life comes out of

us. That is why He is the light and He is the bread and He is the life. We need to touch Him.

We are not recovered as long as we are doing a bunch of stuff. John was written at the end of the first century and the church was already going into shrines, already going into deeds, already going into "I got to do this to be a good Christian." And they lost the I Am. Can you believe Christians could lose the I Am? He is our I Am, the all-sufficient I Am. How could we lose that? How could we lose that? No wonder the things we do are so weak. No wonder our attempts at trying to do things fail. It is all part of God's recovery hand. He says, "No, no, no, My cross is not going to let you do things by your own flesh until you do them by the I Am. It is not going to work out." What tremendous recovery work!

Conclusion

Well, what a recovery the Lord is doing. I want you, those of you who are serious about the Lord and progress in it, to begin to ask the Lord to reveal Himself to you. Because I want young people not to be confused by the things going on around them today. Man, it is chaos what they are going through at this present time. But recovery would enable them to understand that the Lord is doing all of this to gather people for Himself. This Zion is His goal.

So, we know one thing sure about recovery, which we will take up at some later point, and that is this: judgment begins in the house of God. What is judgment? We look at judgment. That is the negative word. We like happy words. Judgment is actually a neutral word. Judgment can mean reward, or judgment can mean discipline. So judgment must come. When you read the Scriptures, when it talks about the coming of the millennium and the coming of the Lord, there is always judgment coming the day before in the day of the Lord, is not there? And it cleans house, and it prepares the way of the Lord, and then the Lord comes in all of His glory.

So, brothers and sisters, I say this to the most precious saints that I know, you guys: there is some judgment that He wants us to humble ourselves about, acknowledge that we may know a lot about the doctrines of recovery. But is the Lord recovering us? I am getting to be kind of an old guy; can the Lord still recover me? Is there still more that I can learn by looking at the Lord and seeing His perspective on things around? Can you be a counselor to those ones around you who are so insecure and so neurotic and fearful and discouraged, and can you give them perspective out of a knowledge of the Lord and His ways? The Lord is looking to pass on the torch to a younger generation that understands the left hand of God as well as the right hand of God and can understand that He is bringing us in, gathering us according to a great purpose in that day when the root of Jesse gathers together all of these Gentiles and all of these Jews together to Mount Zion, and it will be glorious.

May the Lord have His way. Let us pray. *Lord, we come and there is so much we could say, so many doctrines we could speak about. But Lord, what I am asking is that*

You would reveal Yourself to us by Your left hand as well as the right. How we love Your grace and mercy. How we fear Your left hand. But Lord, every time You deal with us, You bring us to higher ground. We take another step and progress up Mount Zion. We see more clearly the things that You have chosen and purposed for us in our lives. And we are set free from some of the weights of this world as we are joined more closely to You.

Lord, do let us see You and Your glory. Do let us see, even though Peter, James, and John had no idea what to do about it. Lord, show us Your glory on the mount that we might see and hear the voice from heaven that recovers. Lord, we thank You so much for Your mercy upon us through these years. We pray that as our dear brothers open the Word to us; we will continue to see how we might possess our possessions but always remembering that first You are going to repossess our possessions in the process. Thank You, Lord, for Your kindness to us. O Lord, in Thy wrath remember mercy. We pray in Jesus' precious name.

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