

## REVIVAL NEWS

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# FILLING THE ALL IN ALL

*“His mighty power which He worked in Christ when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenlies, far above all principality [rule] and power [authority] and might [power] and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age but also in that which is to come. And He put all things under His feet, and gave Him to be head over all things to the church, which is His body the fullness of Him who fills the all in all” Ephesians 1:19b-23.*

How can the church fill the ‘all in all’ as the body of Christ and how is this related to the description that Paul gives us, stating that Christ is seated ‘far above’ all the demonic rulers and powers? To help us understand the spiritual warfare that we are confronted with, we need to understand that there are three heavens referred to in the Scriptures.

1. **The first heavens:** the sun, moon and stars created by God, (**Genesis 1:14-16**). This is where we live in the natural realm and this is where the church [people of God] is, on the earth.

➤ **The light in the first heavens** is the natural light of the sun, moon and stars.

2. **The second heavens:** is the invisible heavens that are inhabited by *“thrones or dominions or principalities or powers”* (**Col.1:16**). This is where the wrestling referred to in **Ephesians 6:12** takes place. The demonic powers seek to destroy the church and diminish the influence of the Gospel among men on the earth. It is the church, the body of Messiah, that is to be used by God to make known the manifold wisdom of God *“to the principalities and powers in the heavenlies”* (**Eph.3:10**). It is in this realm of the heavens that Satan operates. He is referred to as *“the prince of the power of the air, the spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience”* (**Eph.2:2**).

It is from the second heavens, the demonic realm of rulers and authorities, that all false religions are spread in the earth, deceiving great multitudes of people in the earth. These religions that have names that they call upon all operate out of demonic power and specifically from the false prophet himself (**Rev.16:13**).

➤ **The light in the second heavens** is meant to be the church pushing back the darkness of these evil powers.

3. **The third heavens:** refers to the uncreated realm where God’s eternal throne is. Paul speaks of this saying, *“Such a one was caught up to the third heavens ... into Paradise”* (**2Cor.12:2&4**). This is the realm of the uncreated tabernacle referred to in **Hebrews 9:11**, *“But Christ came as High Priest of the good things to come, with the*

*greater and more perfect tabernacle not made with hands, that is, not of this creation.”* The writer explains this further in **Hebrews 9:24**, *“For Christ has not entered the holy places made with hands, which are copies of the true, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us.”*

Jesus is seated on the Father’s throne according to **Revelation 3:21**, and Jesus promises the overcomers: *“I will grant to sit with Me on My throne”*. This is the reward for those who overcome, to sit on the throne with Jesus; to rule and reign with Jesus, now.

- **The light in the third heavens** is the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb (**Rev.21:22-23**).

### **The position of the Church**

The church we know is in the earth, but that same church has been raised up with Christ *“and made to sit in the heavenly places in Christ”* (**Eph.2:6**). Where is Christ? He has been raised up, and *“seated at His right hand”* (**Eph.1:20**); He has been raised up and seated *“far above all principality and power ...”* (**Eph.1:21**). From this we see that the church is on earth and in heaven – in the third heavens, seated with Christ. **This is the position of the church!**

As we come to understand the position of the church in reality, our perspective on spiritual warfare changes radically. It is not for the church to go out waging war against the demonic powers. This has been the practice of some, but it is not the practice of Jesus and the apostles in the New Testament. It is not an issue of spiritual mapping! It is not a plan to hold prayer meetings in strategic places. The commission is to preach Christ and the kingdom of God: this is the way of warfare! As the church comes to realise that we are positioned with Christ ‘far above’ the principalities and powers, our perspective on spiritual warfare changes to one of enforcing the victory already won.

### **The name of Jesus is above all**

As Paul declares in **Philippians 2**, in explaining the mystery of godliness [God was manifest in the flesh, **1Tim.3:16**], God has *“highly exalted Him [Jesus] and given Him the name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on the earth, and of those under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus the Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father”* (**Phil.2:5-11**)

### **The church in maturity**

It is as the church grows to maturity according to the Scriptural pattern that the church will be able to manifest and make known *“the manifold wisdom of God ... to the principalities and powers in the heavenlies”* (**Eph.3:10**). This is how the church will *“fill the all in all”* (**Eph.1:23**). This is how the demonic powers in the heavenlies will be overcome and brought into submission to the eternal purpose of God. It is through the preaching and teaching of Jesus the Christ! (**Acts 5:42**). It is through preaching Christ! (**Acts 8:5**). It is through *“the foolishness of the message preached”* (**1 Cor.1:21**) that God’s eternal purpose in providing salvation for human kind is revealed.

### **WHAT DOES THIS CHURCH LOOK LIKE?**

## **The only foundation is Jesus Christ**

It is built on the only foundation, Jesus Christ. *“For no other foundation can anyone lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ”* **1Cor.3:11**. The revelation of Jesus the Messiah, the Son of God is the foundation of the church (**Matt.16:18**). This is the *“Rock”* on which the church is built *“and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it”* (**v.18**).

## **Apostles and prophets make known the mystery of Christ**

Then the Scripture says that the church, the household of God has been built on the foundation of apostles and prophets (**Eph.2:20**). **Ephesians 3:5** says that the knowledge of the mystery of Christ *“which in other ages was not made known to the sons of men, as it has now been revealed by the Spirit to His holy apostles and prophets”*. The apostles and prophets are to make known the revelation of the mystery to the church (**Eph.3:3-4, 8-9**)

It is time to check the foundations of the church. Is the church built on the revelation of Jesus the Messiah? Has the church received the ministries of apostles and prophets to properly found the church in the knowledge of the mysteries of Christ? Unless the foundation is properly laid the church will not be able to withstand the attacks of the evil one (**Eph.6:11-13**).

## **The Cornerstone**

Jesus Christ is the foundation of the house of God, but He is also the **chief cornerstone**. *“Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone, in whom the whole body being fitted together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord”* **Eph.2:20b-21**. The cornerstone in a building is that which holds the building together, tying it into the foundation, and from which the whole building takes its shape and is *“being fitted together”*. This issue of Jesus being the cornerstone [this word is literally ‘corner’ as found in the KJV] is very important. The references to the cornerstone from the Old Testament are quoted in the New, very powerfully: [**Isaiah 28:16; Psalm 118:22; Isaiah 8:14; 1Peter 2:4-8**].

**1 Peter 2:4-5** shows a picture of the church being built. Jesus is the Living Stone and the people of God are living stones *“being built up a spiritual house”*. We are built into Christ Jesus, the Cornerstone; we are built upon the foundation rock of Christ Jesus, and we are being built up into the head who is Christ Jesus (**Col.1:18; Eph.4:15**).

## **The ministry of the evangelist**

Once the apostles and prophets have laid the foundation, making known the mystery of Jesus the Christ, then the ministry of the evangelist can properly function, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God and seeing people born again because they have heard the preaching of who Christ is. The evangelist goes out into the world to preach the gospel (**Mark 16:15**). Those who believe and are baptised (**Mk.16:16**) become members of the body of Christ (**1Cor.12:13 & 18**).

## **The ministry of the pastor**

The evangelist brings the new believers to the pastor who looks after them, feeding the milk of the word of God to them so that they can grow (**1Pet.2:2**). The pastor is to ground the new believers in the word of God and especially teaching the foundational principles of Christ mentioned in **Hebrews 6:1-2**. If the new believers have not been baptised, then the pastor will attend to this. Also, the pastor will make sure that the Holy Spirit has been imparted to the new

believers [see the example of Paul in **Acts 19:1-6**, and the record in **Acts 8:5-17**]. The ‘living stones’ are now being built into the Cornerstone.

### **The ministry of the teacher**

The teacher has a special role in teaching the word of God, making disciples of all the new believers (**Matt.28:19-20**). The pastor should have begun this work, but it is the primary responsibility of the teachers to make disciples. The teacher, the pastor and the evangelist all need to be trained by apostles and be fully conversant in the apostles’ doctrine.

Paul was exercising the ministry of the teacher in the church at Antioch (**Acts 11:25-26**) before he was called and sent out by the Holy Spirit as an apostle (**Acts 13:1-4**).

### **The ministry of apostles and prophets**

We have already noted the essential role of apostles and prophets in founding the church on the revelation of Jesus Christ. Once the church has been properly founded and begins to do the work of discipleship in every local assembly, then the apostles and prophets need to be actively involved in bringing apostolic and prophetic revelation and teaching so that the whole church can grow to maturity. This is the purpose of Jesus giving us the five ministries mentioned in **Ephesians 4:11**.

The function of all the ministries is to do the work of the particular ministry, equipping [perfecting] setting the church in order to function, and building up [growing] the church until *“we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ”* (**Eph.4:12-13**). The church is to *“grow up in all things into Him who is the head – Christ”* (**Eph.4:15b**). This can never happen without apostles and prophets doing the work of their particular ministry.

## **HOW DOES THIS CHURCH FILL THE ALL IN ALL?**

### **The kingdom of God is to come on the earth**

The teaching of the New Testament is clear: the kingdom of God is to come on the earth [see the Lord’s Prayer **Matt.6:10**]; Jesus is the Messiah, the Anointed King. He has come and He has received the nations as His inheritance (**Ps.2:7-8**). Out of His authority, which is complete in heaven and on earth (**Matt.28:18**), Jesus authorizes His church to *“Go and make disciples of all nations”* (**Matt.28:19**). If we obey Jesus’ command to make disciples, *“teaching them to observe all things”* that Jesus commanded, then every believer becomes a disciple and is well taught in the word, well able to *“teach others”* (**2Tim.2:2**).

The problem is that when ministers and believers are not disciplined in the word, they come up with novel ways of doing Spiritual warfare, not appreciating that the victory has already been won, and that the preaching of the gospel of Jesus the anointed King [Christ/Messiah] and the kingdom of God, is the God-given means of seeing the kingdom of God established and functioning in the earth.

### **God has a plan**

How do the principalities and powers who inhabit the second heavens come into submission to this glorious gospel? How are principalities and powers overcome? Paul declares in **Ephesians 3:10** that it is through the church that the *“manifold wisdom of God is made*

*known to the principalities and powers in the heavenlies*". This is *"according to the eternal purpose which He [God] accomplished in Christ Jesus our Lord"* (v.11).

God has a plan and His plan has already been put in place in Christ Jesus. His plan is His eternal purpose: why did God create? Why was it necessary for Jesus the Son of God to come on the earth? How will the victory of the Anointed King [Christ] be manifest in the earth? The Scripture makes it clear: God is raising up His church to be the vehicle through which His kingdom is preached and in whom the victory is manifest. It is through a mature church! It is the church that we have described briefly in this teaching.

### **It is through the church**

It is the maturing church:

- the five ministries are fully functioning
- the whole church is growing up into maturity in Christ,
- which is built upon the foundation of Christ,
- being fitted together into the Cornerstone, which is Christ,
- and growing up in all things into the Head, who is Christ,

**This is the church that will fill the all in all!**

### **The powers in the heavens cannot withstand such a church**

As the church grows to maturity, because the work of the ministry is being done, those entities which are in the second heavens [that which is between the church on earth and Jesus on the throne of God in heaven], will come to know *"the manifold wisdom of God through the church"* (Eph.3:10) and the principalities and rulers will be brought into submission to the word of God. The light of the gospel penetrates the darkness of that realm, and as a result cities, regions and nations are released to receive the word of the gospel.

### **There is a wrestling**

There is a wrestling when this is happening (Eph.6:12), but the principalities and powers cannot withstand the church that is heralding the gospel and manifesting the behaviour of sons of the kingdom. The authority of Jesus Christ will be made known through the church. This is a picture of how the church which is the body of Messiah, *"fills all in all"* (Eph.1:23).

### **Conclusion**

The simple answer to what is a very complex and deep issue – the issue of spiritual warfare – is to know and understand that it is God's will for His church to be raised up in the earth to fill the demonic heavens that surround the earth with the knowledge of His manifold wisdom.

Up until this time, much of the spiritual warfare practiced by the church has been based upon man's ideas [even visions and dreams] and it has been operating out of a straw house. It is time for all of us to return to the Word and to see that God's pattern for the building of the church, the house of God (1Tim.3:15), is clearly portrayed in the Scripture.

**God's purpose will surely come to pass!**

by Paul Galligan

