

# 2024 Fall South Central Chinese-speaking Conference

September 13<sup>th</sup>-15<sup>th</sup>, Plano

## **GENERAL SUBJECT: The Secret of How to Conduct Myself, Serve the Lord, and Work for the Lord**

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## GENERAL SUBJECT:

### The Secret of How to Conduct Myself, Serve the Lord, and Work for the Lord

#### Message One

### Always Praying and Repenting to God, Thoroughly Confessing Our Sins, Continually Surrendering to the Lord, and Completely Consecrating Ourselves

Scripture Reading: 1 Thes. 5:17; Eph. 6:18; 1 John 1:7, 9; Num. 28:4

- I. **If we want to be proper persons who serve the Lord and do His work, the first secret is to be right toward God.**
- II. **First, in order to be right toward God, we must constantly pray, repent, and thoroughly confess our sins to Him:**
  - A. We need to constantly pray—1 Thes. 5:17:
    1. First, prayer is to absorb God; it causes man to obtain God; God is reality; hence, He is contactable and obtainable.
    2. Thus, the importance of prayer does not depend on how much we say to God or on how much we cry out to Him but on how much we contact Him; the more we contact God, the more we will absorb Him, and the more we absorb Him, the more we will enjoy God and salvation.
    3. God is Spirit (John 4:24); hence, our contacting and absorbing Him do not depend on our words; we may not say anything when we come to God, but our whole being, including our heart, should face God.
    4. While we look to God, we may sigh and confess that we are incompetent, weak, unable to rise, unpresentable, and thirsty and that we lack words for the gospel and are not inclined to fellowship with the saints.
    5. We should lay our inner condition before God and even tell Him that we are short in every matter; no matter what our inner condition is, we should bring it to God.
    6. There is a hymn that says, “Just as I am” (*Hymns*, #1048); this means that we should come to God just as we are without trying to improve or change our condition; our attitude when we come to God should be to come just as we are.
  - B. Daily we need to repent and confess our sins thoroughly—Psa. 51; Matt. 3:2; 1 John 1:9:
    1. We should know that we are sinful, often committing sins; even if we do not commit sins, we still make mistakes and offend others; we either offend our wife, our husband, our children, our parents, or other people; we are indebted to people in many ways.
    2. We need to repent and confess our sins to allow Christ to dispense Himself into us.
    3. In order to allow Christ to enter into every part of our soul, we need to exercise our conscience by repenting and confessing our sins.
    4. On the other hand, when we make mistakes, we should immediately confess them to the Lord and receive the cleansing of His blood so that we may keep our conscience void of offense—1 John 1:9, 7; Acts 24:16.
    5. Our confession follows our repentance; we should first repent of our sins, failures, mistakes, shortcomings, trespasses, and transgressions and then confess them to the

- Lord so that His blood will be applied to us to purify our conscience—Heb. 9:14.
6. We need to build up a habit of going to the Lord, spending much time in His presence, and making a thorough confession of our sins so that His blood will purify our conscience.
  7. The primary goal of our going to the Lord is not to confess our sins but to contact Him:
    - a. As we remain in contact with the Lord, we will spontaneously be under His shining; then we should follow His shining to confess our sins one by one.
    - b. Confessing our sins to the Lord should be the issue not of our introspection but of His enlightening; as we contact the Lord, we should confess to Him any sin, offense, or transgression that we sense in our conscience—1 John 1:7, 9.
  8. The purpose of our time with the Lord is to contact Him in order to enjoy the flow of His life:
    - a. If we sense in our fellowship with the Lord that we are wrong in a certain matter, we should repent, confess, and ask Him to forgive us and cleanse us with His precious blood.
    - b. However, if we do not sense anything negative in our conscience under the shining of the divine light, we do not need to try to find something to confess.
    - c. The goal of our time with the Lord is not merely to make a thorough confession of our sins but to eliminate the barriers between the Lord and us so that we may contact Him and enjoy the dispensing of Himself into us in an unhindered way.

### **III. Second, we need to continually surrender and submit to the Lord, and we need to completely consecrate ourselves and everything to Him, committing all into His hand:**

- A. We need to continually surrender and submit to the Lord—*Hymns*, #441, #442:
  1. The Lord desires to gain us so that He can dwell in us and become one with us; however, we constantly turn away from Him and act independently, thereby committing sins and making mistakes.
  2. Even though our mind often understands the intention in our spirit and we know the will of God, we are unwilling to submit and obey.
  3. We may understand, know, apprehend, and deeply sense that the Lord wants us to do a certain thing, but our will refuses to submit and surrender; our will is stubborn and hard, and we refuse to be softened, to let God break us, and to submit to Him.
  4. A will that has been dealt with is both strong and pliable; being pliable means that one is not insistent or stubborn; however, when a need arises, one can be strong and bold.
  5. Such a one is not afraid to give up his own life; only a person with such a will can carry out the Lord's command and act according to the Lord's leading.
  6. We need to learn to surrender our will to the Lord so that our will would be pliable.
  7. Then when we need to be strong, we will be able to stand up for the Lord; thus, our will can be both strong and pliable, and we will be able to cooperate with the Lord.
- B. We need to completely consecrate ourselves and everything to Him, committing all into His hand:
  1. We need to consecrate ourselves once and for all; we need to have a thorough prayer in which we confess our sins and hand ourselves over to God; all that we are, all that we have, and our everything then need to be handed over to God, item by item.
  2. Then we need to constantly renew our consecration; Numbers 28 and 29, shows a type of consecration; there God charged the Israelites to offer the burnt offering daily, in the morning and in the evening—28:4.

3. Offering the burnt offering typifies our need to consecrate ourselves on every occasion, for everything, at all times, and in every place.
4. We should consecrate ourselves to the Lord daily; each morning the first thing we should do as soon as we rise up is to tell the Lord, “O Lord, thank You for giving me a new day. I consecrate this day to You.”
5. Every day we should have a fresh consecration, telling the Lord that we do not want to be a barren branch; for fruit-bearing we need to consecrate daily.
6. “I hope that all the saints will make a vow before the Lord, saying, ‘Lord, I know that what You love the most is Your church and that You desire that we gain people and bring them into the church. Hence, I consecrate myself to You; I make a Nazarite vow and consecrate myself completely to live for You’”—*The Collected Works of Witness Lee, 1989, vol. 1, pp. 152-153.*

## **Excerpts from the Ministry:**

### **BEING RIGHT TOWARD GOD**

#### **Always Praying and Repenting to God, Thoroughly Confessing Our Sins**

If we want to be proper persons who serve the Lord and do His work, the first secret is to be right toward God; there should not be any problems between God and us. In order to be right toward God, we must constantly pray, repent, and thoroughly confess our sins to Him. We should know that we are sinful, often committing sins. Even if we do not commit sins, we still make mistakes and offend others. We either offend our wife, our husband, our children, our parents, or other people. We are indebted to people in many ways; therefore, daily we need to repent and confess our sins thoroughly. This is very crucial and cannot be neglected.

#### **Continually Surrendering to the Lord, Completely Consecrating Ourselves and Everything to Him, and Committing All into His Hand**

Second, we need to continually surrender and submit to the Lord, and we need to completely consecrate ourselves and everything to Him, committing all into His hand. The Lord desires to gain us so that He can dwell in us and become one with us. However, we constantly turn away from Him and act independently, thereby committing sins and making mistakes. Therefore, we need to continually surrender and submit to the Lord and completely consecrate ourselves and everything to Him, committing all into His hand. In this way we will be able to live in fellowship with the Lord all the time. (*CWWL, 1994-1997, vol. 4, “My Autobiography—an Oral Presentation to My Children,” ch. 5, pp. 540-541*)

### **THE MEANING OF PRAYER**

...I have a heavy burden to speak to the saints concerning the meaning of prayer.

#### **To Absorb God**

First, prayer is to absorb God; prayer causes man to obtain God. God is reality; hence, He is contactable and obtainable. The God whom we worship is not doctrine, theory, philosophy, or ideology, nor is He an empty character or a vain idol. The God whom we worship is Spirit; He is a real spiritual entity. He is as real as air, water, and sound. Just as air, water, and sound are in the universe, so also God, who is Spirit, is in the universe. We can worship Him, and we can also contact, absorb, and obtain Him.

We can obtain God through prayer. In order to obtain water, we must drink; in order to obtain air, we must breathe; and in order to obtain sound, we must listen. If we want to obtain God, we must pray. Hence, the first meaning of prayer is to obtain God. Regrettably, many believers pray often and for

long periods of time, but they do not seem to obtain much of the element of God, because they do not understand the meaning of prayer. They have not seen that prayer is to contact God and obtain Him.

Ironing is an example. Clothes that are placed under an electric iron absorb heat from the iron and, as a result, get hot. A sister in Taipei was ironing her clothes one night and forgot to unplug the iron when she finished. As a result, the ironing board absorbed heat from the iron and caught on fire. This illustration of absorbing heat through contact with an electric iron explains the meaning of prayer. To pray is to contact God and to absorb Him in that contact. Thus, the importance of prayer does not depend on how much we say to God or on how much we cry out to Him but on how much we contact Him. The more we contact God, the more we will absorb Him, and the more we absorb Him, the more we will enjoy God and salvation...

God is Spirit; hence, our contacting and absorbing Him do not depend on our words. Some people utter many words when they pray, but their words are like sounding brass or clanging cymbals; they do not have much value before God. We may not say anything when we come to God, but our whole being, including our heart, should face God. While we look to God, we may sigh and confess that we are incompetent, weak, unable to rise, unpresentable, and thirsty and that we lack words for the gospel and are not inclined to fellowship with the saints. We should lay our inner condition before God and even tell Him that we are short in every matter. No matter what our inner condition is, we should bring it to God. There is a hymn that says, "Just as I am" (Hymns, #1048). This means that we should come to God just as we are without trying to improve or change our condition. Our attitude when we come to God should be to come just as we are.

Many believers have the natural concept that before they can pray and draw near to God, they must wait until their condition improves or until their inner feeling is strong. This concept is not according to the meaning of prayer. To pray is to come to God just as we are. The closer we are to our true condition, the better. We do not need to wait for anything, change anything, or prepare anything. Even if we are weak, confused, sad, and speechless, we can still come to God. (*CWWL*, 1956, vol. 3, "The Meaning and Purpose of Prayer," ch. 1, pp. 222-223, 225)

### **MAKING A THOROUGH CONFESSION**

Our confession follows our repentance. We should first repent of our sins, failures, mistakes, shortcomings, trespasses, and transgressions and then confess them to the Lord so that His blood will be applied to us to purify our conscience (Heb. 9:14).

We need to build up a habit of going to the Lord, spending much time in His presence, and making a thorough confession of our sins so that His blood will purify our conscience. If our conscience is offended yet we desire to have fellowship with the Lord in order to gain Him, He may indicate to us that we need to confess our sins. The more we confess our sins, the more we may need to confess. Before cleaning a room, we may not realize how dirty it is, but the more thoroughly we clean, the more dirt we may find. Similarly, if we do not confess our sins thoroughly, we may think that we do not have many problems, but if we begin to confess thoroughly, we may realize that we have many failures and shortcomings. Once we become aware of our offenses, it may take hours to make a thorough confession.

### **CONFESSING OUR SINS BEING THE ISSUE OF CONTACTING THE LORD AND COMING UNDER HIS ENLIGHTENING**

The primary goal of our going to the Lord is not to confess our sins but to contact Him. If we contact the Lord and come under the shining of the divine light, our sins, trespasses, and failures will be exposed. Then we will sense in our enlightened conscience the need to confess our sins, trespasses, and failures and be cleansed by the Lord's blood. Occasionally, we may be led by the Lord to come to Him in order to make a thorough confession of our sins. However, day after day we should go to the Lord mainly with the intention of contacting Him. As we remain in contact with the Lord, we will spontaneously be under His shining. Then we should follow His shining to confess our sins one by

one.

Confessing our sins to the Lord should be the issue not of our introspection but of His enlightening. As we contact the Lord, we should confess to Him any sin, offense, or transgression that we sense in our conscience. First John 1:9 says, "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness." If we do not sense anything negative in our conscience, we should not be bothered, trusting that the Lord will show us the negative things that we should confess...

The goal of our time with the Lord is not merely to make a thorough confession of our sins but to eliminate the barriers between the Lord and us so that we may contact Him and enjoy the dispensing of Himself into us in an unhindered way...

### **CONFESSING OUR SINS TO ENJOY THE FLOW OF LIFE FOR THE LIVING, GROWING, AND PRODUCING OF CHRIST**

Since many Christians have a conscience that is dull or numb, they often disobey the Lord (1 Tim. 4:2). These Christians do not have much enjoyment of Christ and cannot live, grow, or produce Him. In order to help the saints to live, grow, and produce Christ, we need to shepherd them to contact Him, come under His shining, repent, and confess their sins until their conscience is properly dealt with and becomes an open gateway through which the Lord may dispense Himself into them.

Just as we spend time each morning to bathe ourselves and we wash our hands multiple times a day, so also, no matter how thorough our repentance and confession were in the past, we need to repent and confess our sins every morning as well as multiple times during the day. Each time we sense in our conscience that we are wrong in any matter, we should confess this matter to the Lord and ask for His forgiveness. If we practice keeping our conscience void of offense, the Lord will freely dispense Himself into us through our good conscience.

If we confess our sins to the Lord and are cleansed by His blood, our conscience will become an open gateway through which He can transmit Himself into us. Consequently, we will be able to live, grow, and produce Christ. Many believers do not live, grow, or produce Christ because their conscience has many offenses. These believers need to make a thorough confession of their sins so that the Triune God may spontaneously flow into them as the living water, thereby enabling them to live, grow, and produce Christ (John 4:14-18; 7:37-39).

If we offend the Lord, we must deal with that offense by confessing it to Him and asking Him to forgive us. However, if we sin against man, we should deal with that sin not only before God but also before the offended person. Suppose we criticize a brother inwardly. We should not confess that sin to the brother, because such a confession may create more problems. Instead, we should confess the sin to the Lord and ask for forgiveness. However, suppose we audibly criticize a brother, and he finds out about it. Then we need to not only confess the sin to the Lord but also seek the brother's forgiveness. Since our word of criticism has created a problem between us and him, our confession to him is needed to resolve the problem. Moreover, if we criticize a brother before other saints, we should repent and confess before those saints and ask them for forgiveness for creating a negative impression of that brother. We should exercise ourselves to have a conscience without offense toward God and men.

On the one hand, we should see the vision of living, growing, and producing Christ. On the other hand, we should build up a practice of going to the Lord privately, spending much time in His presence, and confessing our sins. During this time with the Lord, we should not bring anyone with us. The more we confess our sins according to the Lord's enlightening, the more He will flow into us so that we may be infused with Him. By confessing our sins to the Lord according to His leading, we will enjoy the rich flow of His life within us in order to live, grow, and produce Christ. (*CWWL*, 1978, vol. 2, "Living, Growing, and Producing Christ as Branches in the Vine," pp. 531-536)

### **THE PROBLEM OF OUR WILL**

There is also the problem of our will. Even though our mind often understands the intention in our

spirit and we know the will of God, we are unwilling to submit and obey. For example, consider the brother who decides to preach the gospel according to the concept in his mind. When he prays and the Lord gives him a feeling in his spirit to apologize to his wife, his mind has no difficulty in understanding this feeling, but his will is stubborn and unwilling to submit. This shows the problem of the will. Such a brother is not able to submit even to the Lord, much less to his wife. Thus, our will is another great obstacle. We may understand, know, apprehend, and deeply sense that the Lord wants us to do a certain thing, but our will refuses to submit and surrender. Our will is stubborn and hard, and we refuse to be softened, to let God break us, and to submit to Him. Although this brother clearly knows that the Holy Spirit wants him to apologize to his wife, his will is too strong, and he refuses to obey. Thus, God's Spirit and life encounter an enemy and an obstacle...

A will that has been dealt with is both strong and pliable. Being pliable is not the same as being soft. Being pliable means that one is not insistent or stubborn. However, when a need arises, one can be strong and bold; such a one is not afraid to give up his own life. Only a person with such a will can carry out the Lord's command and act according to the Lord's leading. A person with this kind of will allows the Lord's Spirit to come out of him as life. Having a will that can cooperate with God is a great matter. (*CWWL, 1953, vol. 1, "Knowing Life and the Church, ch. 4, pp. 147-148*)

### **CONSECRATING OURSELVES ONCE AND FOR ALL**

Consecration is a gate, and we must be determined to enter through this gate. Consecration is entering through a gate. We cannot regard this as a doctrine. A person who has not consecrated himself is outside of the gate. Only a person who has consecrated himself is inside of the gate. Therefore, we need to enter through this gate with determination.

We need to have thorough prayer in which we confess our sins and hand ourselves over to God. The sins, mistakes, contamination, and corruption that we sense before God need to be confessed one by one. All that we are, all that we have, and our everything then need to be handed over to God. We cannot casually and generally say, "God, I consecrate everything to You." This is insufficient. We need to thoroughly hand everything over, item by item. We need to hand ourselves over to the Lord. We need to hand over our wife, husband, and children to the Lord. We also need to hand over our education, career, future, and everything to the Lord. This is similar to a merchant selling his business. He hands over everything of his business, including furniture and stock, to the buyer. We should have this type of prayer alone before God. For some Christians, consecration is like a second salvation. Therefore, the more thorough it is, the better.

### **CONSTANTLY RENEWING OUR CONSECRATION**

Consecration is not only a gate but also a path. In all spiritual matters we must first step inside the gate and then walk on the path. The principle in the Bible is not to walk on the path and then enter through the gate. The biblical principle is that we first enter through the gate and then walk on the path (Matt. 7:13-14). This is the God-ordained order. Therefore, after we enter through the gate of consecration, we must continue to walk on the path of consecration. Although entering through the gate is once and for all, walking on the path requires a continual renewing, a daily consecration. Numbers 28 and 29 show a type of consecration. God charged the Israelites to offer the burnt offering daily. They had to daily offer the burnt offering in the morning and in the evening. They could not say that they had offered a sacrifice yesterday and therefore did not need to offer one today. Consecration, like eating, is a daily matter. Furthermore, the Israelites had to present burnt offerings on every Sabbath, at the beginning of every month, and during every feast. They also had to present an offering at other important times. This shows that after we have entered through the gate of consecration, we need to consecrate ourselves before God every morning. The first thing we should say after we get up every morning is, "Lord, I place myself in Your hands again this morning." At night when the day is over, we should go before Him again and say, "I give myself to You again." When we need to do specific things, we need to say, "Lord, I present myself to You once again." Whether we are going to

study, teach, take up a post in the government, give a message, or visit the brothers, we should first present a burnt offering, consecrating ourselves to God. Even if we want to see a movie, we should first kneel down before the Lord and say, “Lord, I am a consecrated person. I want to see a movie, but I acknowledge my consecration to You!” Once we acknowledge our consecration in this way, we will be clear whether we should go to see the movie or not. When we are about to quarrel with our spouse, we should acknowledge our consecration first. Once we do this, we will know whether we should quarrel or not. Therefore, we need to live a life of consecration practically. Consecration is not only a gate but also a path. After entering through the gate, we need to walk on the path. (*CWWL*, 1959, vol. 3, “Lessons for New Believers,” ln. 4, pp. 62-64)

### VOWING AND CONSECRATING TO GOD

I hope that all the saints will make a vow before the Lord, saying, “Lord, I know that what You love the most is Your church and that You desire that we gain people and bring them into the church. Hence, I consecrate myself to You; I make a Nazarite vow and consecrate myself completely to live for You.” After the saints make such a vow in the presence of the Lord, they need to have fellowship with their spouse and make a list of all their household matters and worldly commitments. Then they should schedule three hours twice a week, apart from the church meetings, for visiting people in order to gain them for the Lord.

We must realize that we are all weak and that if we do not make a schedule to budget our time, our time will easily slip away. In order to take the way of visiting people for the gospel, we must do two things—make a vow before the Lord and make a schedule in order to know how to use our time. To make a vow is to have a goal. In order to accomplish what we need to do, we need an explicit regulation of our time.

I encourage all the saints to make a special vow with regard to preaching the gospel; practically, we should consecrate ourselves to the Lord daily. Each morning the first thing we should do as soon as we rise up is to tell the Lord, “O Lord, thank You for giving me a new day. I consecrate this day to You.” Every day we should have a fresh consecration, telling the Lord that we do not want to be a barren branch. For fruit-bearing we need to consecrate daily. (*CWWL*, 1989, vol. 1, “The Organic Building Up of the Body of Christ,” pp. 152-153)

**References and Further Reading:** *The Collected Works of Witness Lee, 1994-1997*, vol. 4, “My Autobiography—an Oral Presentation to My Children,” ch. 5; *The Collected Works of Witness Lee, 1956*, vol. 3, “The Meaning and Purpose of Prayer,” ch. 1; *The Collected Works of Witness Lee, 1978*, vol. 2, “Living, Growing, and Producing Christ as Branches in the Vine”; *The Collected Works of Witness Lee, 1953*, vol. 1, “Knowing Life and the Church,” ch. 4; *The Collected Works of Witness Lee, 1959*, vol. 3, “Lessons for New Believers,” ln. 4; *The Collected Works of Witness Lee, 1989*, vol. 1, “The Organic Building Up of the Body of Christ,” ch. 3.



## GENERAL SUBJECT:

### The Secret of How to Conduct Myself, Serve the Lord, and Work for the Lord

#### Message Two

### Exercising the Spirit to Fellowship with the Lord, Living and Walking by Following His Leading in the Spirit, and Being United and Mingled with the Lord as One to Live the God-man Life and Be His Overcomers

Scripture Reading: 1 Tim. 4:7; Eph. 6:18; 1 John 1:7; Rom. 8:4, 14; Psa. 27:4; 119:147; Gal. 2:20

- I. We need to exercise the spirit unceasingly to fellowship with the Lord, and we need to live and walk by following His leading in the spirit in order to please Him:**
- A. We need to exercise the spirit unceasingly to fellowship with the Lord—*Hymns*, #784, #781:
1. “Exercise yourself unto godliness”—1 Tim. 4:7:
    - a. Godliness is Christ lived out of us to be the manifestation of God—1 Tim. 3:16.
    - b. Today this very Christ is the Spirit dwelling in our spirit—2 Cor. 3:17; 2 Tim. 4:22.
    - c. Hence, to exercise ourselves unto godliness is to exercise our spirit to live Christ in our daily life.
  2. To exercise our spirit is to have fellowship with the Lord and also with the saints in the presence of the Lord.
  3. If we do not use our spirit to fellowship with the Lord, we cannot have genuine worship, enjoyment, or knowledge of Him—John 4:24.
  4. For the exercise of our spirit we need the cleansing of the blood of Christ—1 John 1:7.
  5. For the sake of the exercise of our spirit, we need to learn the lesson of rejecting our natural mind and caring for the anointing—1 John 2:20, 27.
  6. The exercise of our spirit depends on prayer, just as the exercise of our feet requires us to jump and run; we need to pray in order for our spirit to be strong and uplifted—Eph. 6:18; *Hymns*, #780.
  7. To have a released, strong, and uplifted spirit that can be mingled and built together with God, we need to exercise our spirit through prayer and learn the basic lesson of dealing with the spirit.
- B. We need to live and walk by following the Lord’s leading in the spirit in order to please Him—Rom. 8:4, 14; *Hymns*, #390:
1. To live in the spirit is to walk according to and by the spirit; this means that our actions and behavior in our daily life must be in the spirit, by the spirit, and according to the spirit; this includes daily habits such as eating, getting dressed, resting, and fellowshiping with others—8:4.
  2. Only by living in the spirit can we be spiritual; those who live in the spirit and follow the sense of the spirit are built up to become a spiritual house (1 Pet. 2:5); we need to bring these matters into our daily life to practice them in a solid way.
  3. Whether we are in a meeting, reading the Bible in private, working, studying, grocery shopping, riding in the car, or having a conversation, we must exercise to live in the spirit to be persons in the spirit.
  4. We need to live in the spirit constantly, have intimate fellowship with the Lord,

inquire of the Lord's will, and touch the sense of the spirit—cf. Psa. 27:4.

## **II. We need to live and walk with the Lord and be united and mingled with Him as one to live the God-man life and be the Lord's overcomers:**

### **A. We need to live with the Lord:**

1. We need to practice living with the Lord in our daily living; our living must be His living, our speaking must be His speaking, and our moving must be His moving.
2. In order to live by and with the Lord and to abide together with Him we need to do only two things—Psa. 119:147:
  - a. First, we must always be open to the Lord; the easiest way to open to the Lord is to learn to open up our whole being—our spirit, our heart, and even our mouth and call on the name of the Lord, calling, “O Lord Jesus! O Lord Jesus!”—Rom. 10:12.
  - b. The second thing that we need to do in order to live with the Lord is to contact the Lord's word in a proper way; the way to do this is to genuinely pray-read and eat His word; to eat the Lord's word is to eat the Lord Himself—Jer. 15:16; Eph. 6:17-18; John 6:57, 63.

### **B. We need to walk with the Lord:**

1. We should not only call upon the name of the Lord, but should also walk with God; the calling must be followed by the walking—Gen. 4:26; 5:22, 24.
2. To walk with God is not to override God, not to be presumptuous, not to do things according to our own concept and desire, nor to do anything without God.
3. To walk with God is to take Him as our center and everything, to do things according to His revelation and leading, and to do everything with Him; it is not only to live for God and to do things for God, but to live and to do things according to God and with God—cf. 1 Pet. 5:2.
4. This implies the denying of our self and everything that is of our self (Matt. 16:24-25) that we may be one with Him.

### **C. We need to be united and mingled with Him as one to live the God-man life and be the Lord's overcomers:**

1. The Lord Jesus lived a genuine human life, yet in His life we see the divine element and also certain divine factors; this life did not express man; it expressed God; this is the God-man's life and living.
2. This living constituted a prototype to His believers; this prototype is for the “mass production,” the reproduction, of the God-man in the believers.
3. We are being perfected by the Lord to be God-men, living the divine life by denying our natural life according to the model of Christ as the first God-man—Matt. 11:29a; 17:5b; 1 Pet. 2:21:
  - a. In His life on earth He set up a pattern, as revealed in the four Gospels; then He was crucified and resurrected to become the life-giving Spirit so that He might enter into us to be our life; we learn from Him according to His example, not by our natural life but by Him as our life in resurrection—1 Cor. 15:45b; Col. 3:4.
  - b. Our Christian life is a life in Christ and also a life of Christ in us; we are in Christ as the mold, and He is in us as our life; in this way we learn Christ as the reality is in Jesus; this reality is the reality of the Body of Christ—1 Cor. 1:30; 2 Cor. 5:17; 12:2a; Col. 1:27; Gal. 2:20; Rom. 8:10.
4. As we love the Lord, contact Him, and pray to Him, we automatically live Him according to the mold, the form, the pattern, described in the Gospels; in this way we are shaped, conformed, to the image of this mold—this is what it means to learn

Christ—Matt. 11:29; Rom. 8:29.

5. The overcomers consummate God's economy and eventually bring in God's kingdom; as overcomers, we do not live ourselves; we are living God; while we are living God, we are conquering all kinds of circumstances.

## **Excerpts from the Ministry:**

### **THE EXERCISE OF THE SPIRIT**

In our past fellowship with the elders, we spoke about the importance of the mingling of the two spirits. There was a good response concerning this matter, and we all felt blessed by the Lord; each locality also received a confirmation of these words from the Lord. Today we must ask how to lead the brothers and sisters practically into the mingling of the two spirits and into the exercise of the spirit.

Ephesians 6:18 says, "Praying at every time in spirit," and Jude 20 says, "Praying in the Holy Spirit." The exercise of our spirit depends on prayer, just as the exercise of our feet requires us to jump and run. This is the same with other organs in the body. To have good vision, our eyes need to be exercised. In the same way, we need to pray in order for our spirit to be strong and uplifted.

To have a released, strong, and uplifted spirit that can be mingled and built together with God, we need to exercise our spirit through prayer and learn the basic lesson of dealing with the spirit. The exercise of the spirit depends on prayer. When we pray, our spirit must be open with an unveiled face (2 Cor. 3:18); it must be open to God and to man and must have boldness, being released from every oppression and bondage. In addition, we must completely hand ourselves over to God and to the saints. In this way we will not only be mingled with God in spirit but will also be mingled with others into one spirit. We will be built together into a dwelling place of God in spirit (Eph. 2:22), and we will no longer need to spend much time discussing other matters. (*CWWL, 1961-1962*, vol. 1, "Exercising the Spirit in Prayer for the Priesthood," ch. 7, p. 377)

### **LIVING IN THE SPIRIT**

Living in the spirit includes walking, praying, and serving God in the spirit. As priests, we are those who live in the Holy of Holies, which is our spirit. The Bible reveals that to live in the spirit is to pray, sing, and walk in the spirit.

### **PRAYING IN THE SPIRIT**

Jude 20 says, "Building up yourselves upon your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Spirit," and Ephesians 6:18 tells us to pray at every time in spirit. This is not praying for practical affairs, for the environment, or for difficulties that are on our heart. This is simply to turn to the spirit to follow the sense of the spirit to pray. Sometimes we do not know how to pray, and we do not have any words to pray. At such a time, the Spirit intercedes inwardly with groanings which cannot be uttered (Rom. 8:26).

### **SINGING IN THE SPIRIT**

Ephesians 5:18-19 says, "Do not be drunk with wine, in which is dissoluteness, but be filled in spirit, speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and psalming with your heart to the Lord." We should not only pray in the spirit but also sing in the spirit...

### **WALKING IN THE SPIRIT**

Romans 8:4 says, "That the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us, who do not walk according to the flesh but according to the spirit." Galatians 5:16 says, "Walk by the Spirit and you shall by no means fulfill the lust of the flesh," and verse 25 says, "If we live by the Spirit, let us also walk by the Spirit." To live in the spirit is to walk according to and by the spirit. This means that our actions and behavior in our daily life must be in the spirit, by the spirit, and according to the spirit. This includes daily habits such as eating, getting dressed, resting, and fellowshiping with others.

## **LEARNING TO KNOW THE INWARD SENSE OF THE SPIRIT**

We know Christ and the Spirit by the sense in our spirit. If our spirit has no sense, it cannot touch or know God. The sense in our spirit is the expression and manifestation of the Spirit, just as light, heat, and power are the expression of electricity. Human beings are higher than animals because we are rich in feelings, such as glory, shame, joy, sadness, and so forth. In addition to these feelings, we have the sense of the spirit. Animals do not have such a sense. The sense of the spirit is inward and deep, not outward or superficial. Some sisters may be too shy to speak. However, when they are full of the inward sense of the spirit, they must release their spirit and fellowship with others. They should leave their natural shyness behind and follow this sense to speak boldly.

We should allow the sense of the spirit to have the preeminence in our being. Our spirit should be the strongest part of our whole being. Our body and soul are not our real, subjective person; thus, the feelings in our body and soul should not be allowed to direct the sense of our spirit. In other words, our spirit should be divided from the soul (Heb. 4:12) so that the inward sense of the spirit is not affected by the outward feelings of our body and soul. As priests, we should live in the Holy of Holies to live a spiritual life. When we live in the spirit, we will have the sense of the spirit in the depths of our being. If we live and walk according to the sense of our spirit, we will be spiritual and will have a spiritual life...

We need to touch the deep, inward sense in a serious way in order to know the sense in the spirit and to pray according to this sense. We should not be influenced by our family or by the condition of the church and the work. Rather, we must pass through the riven veil to enter into the Holy of Holies to pray according to God's intention. We must pray according to God's desire. We must repent if the spirit gives us the sense to repent, and we must give thanks and offer praises in the same way. To touch the sense of the spirit in this way is the highest experience. Only by living in the spirit can we be spiritual. Those who live in the spirit and follow the sense of the spirit are built up to become a spiritual house (1 Pet. 2:5).

We must practice these things. We need to bring these matters into our daily life to practice them in a solid way. Whether we are in a meeting, reading the Bible in private, working, studying, grocery shopping, riding in the car, or having a conversation, we must exercise to live in the spirit to be persons in the spirit. We need to live in the spirit constantly, have intimate fellowship with the Lord, inquire of the Lord's will, and touch the sense of the spirit. (*CWWL, 1961-1962, "Exercising the Spirit in Prayer for the Priesthood,"* ch. 4, pp. 371-372)

## **OUR NEEDING TO PRACTICE LIVING WITH THE LORD IN OUR DAILY LIVING**

God's desire is only this—to work Himself into us to be our life and person and to be one with us. Today God has come into us to abide in us and to be our person. He desires that we would live Him, that is, live by Him, live with Him, and walk together with Him. Every time that I stand up to speak for the Lord, I inwardly exercise faith and say, "Lord, as I speak, You are speaking in my speaking. I am not speaking by myself. I have nothing to say in myself, so when I speak, You speak in my speaking. Lord, You and I, I and You, are united. When I open my mouth, speak through me, and when I speak, flow out through me." We should be this way when we give a message and in our daily living. Every action in our living should be done in one accord with the Lord. When we love, the Lord should flow out of our love. When we are humble, the Lord should flow out of our humility. Every action that we take in our daily living should be the Lord living Himself out through us. I have spoken concerning this matter again and again, but many of us still have not opened ourselves to receive the Lord's grace to live entirely in this reality. May the Lord have mercy on us to wake us up out of our stupor so that we would see clearly that we should not live or do, but that the Lord Jesus—the great God who is inside of us, who has become our life, who has put us on, and who is joined with us—should be the One who is living and doing. Our living must be His living, our speaking must be His speaking, and our moving must be His moving.

## **OUR NEEDING TO DO TWO THINGS TO LIVE WITH THE LORD**

What do we need to do in order to live this kind of life? What do we need to do in order to live by and with the Lord and to abide together with Him? We need to do only two things. In telling you these two things, I do not wish to give you methods; my intention is simply to tell you the way to live this kind of life. First, we must always be open to the Lord. The easiest way to open to the Lord is to learn to open up our whole being—our spirit, our heart, and even our mouth. We need to learn to open up our whole being and call on the name of the Lord, calling, “O Lord Jesus! O Lord Jesus!” We must learn to open ourselves to the Lord and to call on the name of the Lord. This is the simplest and the best way. This way causes us to meet and touch the Lord. The best way to meet and touch the Lord is not to ponder or meditate on the Lord; the best way is to open ourselves to the Lord by calling “O Lord Jesus!” Each of us should practice this a little at home. We do not need to be very loud; neither do we need to scream and yell in a crazy way. We need simply to learn to open ourselves up to the Lord and to call on His name. The Bible says that the Lord is rich to all who call upon Him (Rom. 10:12). The Lord is living and real. Moreover, He is within us. When we call on Him, opening ourselves to Him, we will contact Him within.

The second thing that we need to do in order to live with the Lord is to contact the Lord’s word in a proper way. The way to do this is to genuinely pray-read and eat His word. To eat the Lord’s word is to eat the Lord Himself.

## **OUR NEEDING TO SEE AND TO LIVE THIS VISION**

Every one of us must see the simple vision that the Lord Jesus is the all-inclusive Spirit dwelling in our spirit. Then we must live by the Lord, daily receiving His supply, contacting Him, and being joined to Him. This requires us to open our entire being to Him from deep within. Opening to the Lord in this way is exceedingly easy. We simply need to call on His name and pray-read His Word. We can use our spirit to contact the word, to eat the word, and to receive the word into us. We can also use the word to pray to Him, to seek Him, and to fellowship with Him. If daily and moment by moment we contact Him anew, receiving His fresh supply, we will be continuously refreshed, nourished, enlightened, and supplied within. Then we will be able to live, move, and walk in Him in spirit at all times. This is what the Lord desires. (*CWWL, 1975-1976, vol. 1, “Living with the Lord,” ch. 1, pp. 517-521*)

## **TO WALK WITH GOD**

Do you expect to be raptured? If you do, you need to walk with God. We should not only call upon the name of the Lord, but should also walk with God. The calling must be followed by the walking. To walk with God is not to override God, not to be presumptuous, not to do things according to our own concept and desire, nor to do anything without God. To walk with God is to take Him as our center and everything, to do things according to His revelation and leading, and to do everything with Him. It is not only to live for God and to do things for God, but to live and to do things according to God and with God. Enoch walked with God in such a way, living and doing things according to God and with God, not according to his own desire or concept, nor according to the current of the age in which he lived. (*Life-study of Genesis, msg. 26, p. 352*)

## **A GENUINE MAN’S LIVING BY GOD’S LIFE TO EXPRESS GOD IN GOD’S ATTRIBUTES**

The Lord Jesus had a genuine man’s living by God’s mind, will, and emotion—to express God in God’s attributes. The Lord did not seek His own will but God’s will. He came not to do His own will but to do God’s will. This means that He came to live as a man not by man’s life, but by God’s life. He lived by God’s mind, will, and emotion to express God in God’s attributes. These attributes are contained in and mingled with His human virtues.

In the Gospel of Luke we have many examples of the Man-Savior’s God-man living. Consider the case of the good Samaritan (10:25-37). In the human living of the good Samaritan God was expressed.

God was there empowering Him. The love expressed was not simply the Samaritan's human love; it was a human love strengthened, empowered, and enriched by the divine love. Hence, it was a superior love, a surpassing love.

Consider also the case of Zaccheus (19:1-10). In the Man-Savior's coming to Zaccheus and His dealing with him we see something divine. It is hard to explain what we see expressed in the man Jesus. Within Him there is something more than the divine omniscience. In Him the excellent divine attributes are present strengthening His human virtues. The Lord Jesus lived in the way of having His human virtues empowered by the divine attributes.

This was true of the Lord Jesus even at the age of twelve. When the Lord Jesus was twelve, He was a human child. But as we read the account in Luke 2, we see that in this child there was the divine element. God's attributes were expressed in His human living.

The Lord Jesus lived a genuine human life, yet in His life we see the divine element and also certain divine factors. This life did not express man; it expressed God. This is the God-man's life and living...

### **CONSTITUTING THE MAN-SAVIOR'S QUALIFICATION AND A PROTOTYPE TO HIS BELIEVERS**

The Lord's God-man living constituted His qualification to be the Man-Savior. At the same time, this living constituted a prototype to His believers. As we shall see in the next message, this prototype is for the "mass production," the reproduction, of the God-man in the believers. In a factory, a great deal of time may be spent to produce a prototype. Once the prototype has been produced, it is then used for mass production. In a similar way, the Man-Savior's God-man living constituted Him a prototype so that He may now be reproduced in us. Praise the Lord for the prototype and for the mass production! (*Life-study of Luke*, msg. 61, pp. 524-525, 526)

The book of Philippians speaks of the reproduction of the God-man. Whoever lives Christ, the God-man, is His reproduction. Whoever lives Christ is a duplicate of the unique God-man, a reproduction of the prototype.

In Luke we see how Christ was incarnated and lived the life of a God-man. In Philippians we see how Christ is lived out from us in order to have many duplicates of Himself. All Christians should be duplicates of the unique God-man.

How can we be such duplicates, such reproductions? First, we need to be reborn of the pneumatic Christ in our spirit, and then we need to be gradually transformed by the pneumatic Christ in our soul. Then spontaneously we shall live Christ, the God-man, by the bountiful supply of His Spirit, taking His mind and shining the word of life as luminaries reflecting His brightness. We shall also be found in Christ with Him as our surpassing righteousness, in the power of His resurrection, and conformed to His death. Then we shall express Him in all the human virtues created by God for man. With the divine attributes of the God-man these virtues are strengthened, enriched, and filled. I trust that the Spirit will speak more to you concerning this. (*Life-study of Luke*, msg. 63, p. 543)

**References and Further Reading:** *The Collected Works of Witness Lee*, 1994-1997, vol. 4, "My Autobiography—an Oral Presentation to My Children," ch. 5; *The Collected Works of Witness Lee*, 1966, vol. 1, "The Exercise of Our Spirit," ch. 4; *The Collected Works of Witness Lee*, 1961-1962, vol. 1, "Exercising the Spirit in Prayer for the Priesthood," chs. 3, 4, 7, 10; *The Collected Works of Witness Lee*, 1975-1976, vol. 1, "Living with the Lord," ch. 1; *Life-study of Genesis*, msg. 26; *Life-study of Luke*, msg. 61, 63; *The Ministry*, September 2023, ch. 5; *The Collected Works of Witness Lee*, 1991-1992, vol. 4, "The Overcomers," ch. 1.

## GENERAL SUBJECT:

### The Secret of How to Conduct Myself, Serve the Lord, and Work for the Lord

#### Message Three

### Reading the Bible, Pray-reading the Word Living and Walking according to the Light Received, and Learning, Entering into, and Walking According to the Truth

Scripture Reading: Isa. 34:16; Acts 17:11; Eph. 6:17-18a; Psa. 119:147, 15, 105;  
John 5:39-40; 1 Tim. 2:4; Col. 3:16; Heb. 5:13-14; 2 Tim. 2:2;  
Gal. 2:14; 1 John 1:6; 2 John 1:4; 3 John 1:3-4

#### I. We need to read the Bible deeply, pray-read the Lord's word, and live and walk according to the light that we receive:

- A. We need to read the Bible deeply and earnestly, not superficially—Isa. 34:16; Acts 17:11:
1. From the time Brother Lee was saved in 1925, and he read the Bible earnestly.
  2. The worn Bibles on his bookshelf testified that he read the Bible deeply and diligently; both the Chinese versions and English versions were filled with records, crucial points, and notes from his study of the Bible.
  3. We need to have a private time to read the Word; we need to lay a good foundation in the Word of God by reading through it consecutively from Genesis to Revelation.
  4. Read book after book without selection, choice, or preference; try to read the Bible through once every year or every two years.
  5. The best way to read the Bible is to read it daily (Acts 17:11) and morning is the best time to read the Bible (Psa. 119:147).
  6. The first step we should take when we open the Scriptures is to prepare ourselves to contact God—cf. John 5:39-40; *Hymns*, #812:
    - a. When we come to the Bible, we have the sweet consciousness that we are coming to our God, our Father, our Lord.
    - b. Whenever we come to the Word, it would be good to pray, “Lord grant me a sweet taste for Your Word. Make it so precious to me”; if we have this taste for the Word, surely it will bring us life.
  7. It is important to build up the habit of reading the Word; if you build up the habit of reading the Word, you will be healthy spiritually and you will grow.
- B. We need to pray-read the Lord's word; receiving the word of God, by means of all prayer—Eph. 6:17-18; *Hymns*, #811:
1. We should not simply have one way of prayer, but every means of prayer, exercising our spirit to pray in various ways to take the Word of God—v. 18.
  2. There is no need for us to pray only after we understand some words in the Bible, we should simply pray-read the Bible.
  3. We should exercise our spirit to pray-read; if we pray-read a portion of the Word for five to ten minutes, we will receive some nourishment from the word.
  4. By pray-reading the Word, we will truly understand it; furthermore, we will receive nourishment and strengthening within, which will empower us and give us life all the time.
  5. The way to live Christ is to take the Word by exercising our spirit; we must exercise our spirit by praying the Word and singing it—Col. 3:16.
  6. Let us first read the Word and then pray-read it; following this, let us sing the Word.
  7. The more we take the Word by reading, pray-reading, and especially sing-reading, the

- more the riches of the Word will saturate us and make us one with the Lord—v. 16a.
8. We should also muse on the word (Psalm 119:15); musing upon the Word in this way is even richer, broader, and more inclusive than pray-reading, for it includes prayer, worship, enjoyment, conversation, bowing down, and even lifting up our hands to receive God's word. It also includes rejoicing, praising, shouting, and even weeping before the Lord.
- C. We need to live and walk according to the light that we receive—1 John 1:7:
1. The Lord's words are spirit and are life (John 6:63) and full of light (1:1-2, 4).
  2. When God's word is opened, or unfolded, to us, it gives us light, shining inwardly over our heart and our spirit to impart wisdom and revelation to us—Eph. 1:17-18a.
  3. Whenever we come to the Word in a proper way, we have the conviction that we have come into the light and are in a sphere of light; then spontaneously we receive light, and we become people who are absolutely in light.
  4. In Psalm 119:105 the psalmist says a practical word about light: "Your word is a lamp to my feet, and a light to my path"; this is the experience in the daily life of the psalmist; step after step in his daily life, the Word was his light.

## **II. We need to learn and understand the truth, enter into the truth, and walk according to the truth:**

- A. We need to learn and understand the truth; for example, we should ask: what is justification, what is sanctification, and what is life-impartation?
- B. There is the need of a thorough study of the holy Word; in regard to learning the truth we need to pay attention to several matters:
1. The need to teach the believers to observe all that the Lord commanded—Matt. 28:20.
  2. The need for the believers to continue steadfastly in the teaching of the apostles—Acts 2:42.
  3. The need for the believers to always learn and to come to the full knowledge of the truth—1 Tim. 2:4.
  4. The need for the believers to let the word of Christ dwell in them richly—Col. 3:16.
  5. The need for the believers to be experienced in the Lord's word through exercise and practice—Heb. 5:13-14.
  6. The need for those who are learned in the Lord's word to commit what they have learned to those who will be competent to teach others also—2 Tim. 2:2.
- C. The best way to be constituted with the New Testament truths, the best way to gain the knowledge of God's New Testament economy is to use the Recovery Version with the footnotes and the Life-study messages:
1. In order to be constituted with the truth, we need to pray-read and then study.
  2. We need to consider the text of the Recovery Version with the footnotes and the life-study messages as a textbook; we must study them as a textbook.
  3. We need to acquire the crucial points of the truth and a bird's-eye view of the Scriptures.
- D. We need to build up a habit of spending time in the Word; we should help the saints to build up a practice or a habit that every day they would spend at least thirty minutes in the Word.
- E. We must also walk according to the truth—2 John 4; 3 John 3-4:
1. The truth concerning the person of Christ is the basic and central element of John's mending ministry; when John found the children of the faithful believer walking in truth, he rejoiced greatly—vv. 3-4.
  2. To walk in the truth is to live in the truth; the truth concerning the person of Christ should be not only our belief but also our living, a living that testifies to our belief—2



- John 4; 3 John 3-4:
3. Truth is the reality of the Trinity; when we walk in truth, we walk in the divine reality we enjoy daily; as we walk in the divine reality, spontaneously we love others; this love is the expression of the divine reality we enjoy day by day.

## **Excerpts from the Ministry:**

### **READING THE WORD TO CONTACT GOD HIMSELF**

When we contact the Word, we need to be clear that we are contacting God Himself. Whenever we open the Bible, our first thought should be to contact the living God. The living God has breathed out all that is within Himself as the Word. All the riches within Him are breathed out in the form of the word. Every word of the Bible, from the first to the last, is the breath of God. The Bible is not for us to study philosophy or literature. It is for us to contact what God has breathed out, what He has exhaled.

Brothers and sisters, this is not a light matter. Unless we have the concept that we are coming to God and contacting Him, our focus will be wrong. The first thought we should have, the first step we should take, when we open the Scriptures is to prepare ourselves to contact God. We are reading what God has breathed out. God has breathed His breath upon these words. We should not have the thought that we are reading teachings or literature. Rather, we are altogether contacting the manifested God, the God who has revealed Himself through His speaking. The God who dwells in unapproachable light, who cannot be touched or known, has revealed Himself through the Word. In fact He Himself is the Word, and He is embodied in the Word. Now He has put the Word, which is His breath, before us. When we study the Word, contact the Word, we are actually contacting God Himself. (*CWWL, 1958, vol. 1, "How to Enjoy God and Practice the Enjoyment of God," ch. 6, pp. 421-422*)

### **HOW TO READ THE BIBLE**

#### **Reading Daily**

**"Examining the Scriptures daily"** (Acts 17:11).

Many can testify that the best way to read the Bible is to read it daily. Since the Bible is closely related to our living and actions, we need it in every area of our life. Therefore, we should read the Bible daily. Since the Bible is food for our spiritual life, we must receive spiritual nourishment from it daily. We need physical nourishment every day, and we similarly need spiritual nourishment every day. Just as we need to eat physical food every day, we need to read the Bible every day. We are healthy when we eat food every day, and we are healthy when we read the Bible every day. We should not eat food one day and then fast for three days. Likewise, we should not read the Bible in fits and starts. Just as our food should be apportioned to us throughout the day, our Bible reading should be apportioned in a measured and daily way. We should not receive too much or too little, reading too much one day and very little the next.

Furthermore, eating at specific times is the most healthy way to eat. Similarly, we should set aside specific times to read the Bible every day. Just as it is best for our body to eat a specific amount of food at specific times every day, it is best for our spirit to read a specific amount of the Bible at specific times every day. May we practice this by the Lord's grace...

#### **Asking the Lord to Open Our Mind**

**"Open my eyes that I may behold / Wondrous things"** (Psa. 119:18; see also Luke 24:45).

We should not depend merely on our own intellect to read the Bible. We must ask the Lord to open our mind so that we might understand the truth in the Word and behold wondrous things. If we want to understand and know the Bible, we need an opened mind and opened eyes. Only the Lord can open our mind and eyes; therefore, we must ask the Lord.

#### **Seeking the Enlightenment of the Holy Spirit**

**“Revealed them through the Spirit, for the Spirit searches all things, even the depths of God” (1 Cor. 2:10).**

Even though the Bible has been revealed through the Holy Spirit, there are yet many deep and mysterious things of God in the Bible that only the Spirit can search out and reveal to us. The depths of the Bible are out of God, of God, and concerning God. No one knows the things of God except the Spirit of God. Therefore, if we want to read the Bible and understand it, we must seek the Spirit’s enlightenment. Our natural intellect is unable to understand the Bible. We must be enlightened by the Holy Spirit. We need the Holy Spirit’s revelation so that we can understand the Bible. Therefore, when we read the Bible, we should not depend on our intelligence but seek the enlightenment and revelation of the Holy Spirit.

Furthermore, if we want to understand the Bible, we need to do more than seek the enlightenment of the Holy Spirit; we also need to live in the Holy Spirit and become a spiritual person. The word of the Bible is a spiritual word, and the Bible speaks of spiritual matters. Only those who are spiritual can understand spiritual words and matters. Certain kinds of people understand certain kinds of words and matters. It takes a spiritual person to understand spiritual words, and it takes a spiritual person to understand spiritual matters. Only the spiritual can understand the spiritual. Since the Bible is spiritual, we must be spiritual in order to understand the words that it contains. The degree of our understanding of the Bible is based on the degree of our spirituality. Therefore, if we want to understand the Bible, we must be spiritual, learn to live in the Spirit, and become a spiritual person.

### **Turning Our Heart to the Lord**

**“Whenever their heart turns to the Lord, the veil is taken away” (2 Cor. 3:16).**

We must not only be spiritual to read the Bible, but we must turn our heart to the Lord. Whether we understand the Bible and receive light when we read it depends on our spiritual condition and our heart. There will be a problem if our spirit is not right, and there will be a problem if our heart is not right. If we want to understand the Bible when we read it, our heart must turn to the Lord. If our heart is not turned to the Lord, it will be difficult for us to understand the Bible and see its light; there will be a veil on our heart that prevents us from seeing the light in the Bible. Once our heart turns to the Lord, however, the veil is taken away. Then we will see the Lord in the light of His Word, and we will understand and know the Bible. If we want to know the Bible, we must turn our heart to the Lord; that is, we must turn away from every person, thing, and matter outside of the Lord and return to the Lord.

### **Resolving to Do His Will**

**“If anyone resolves to do His will, he will know concerning the teaching” (John 7:17).**

When we read the Bible, we must resolve to do His will in order to understand the Word. The Lord does not reveal His teachings to those who have no heart to keep them. He makes them known to those who have a heart to keep them and who resolve to keep them. Therefore, we must be a person of such resolve in order to understand the words in the Bible.

### **Searching and Studying**

**“Search”; “Study diligently” (John 5:39...)**

The Bible is a book that must be searched and studied. This requires time and effort, so we need to pay the price. Anyone who is not willing to pay the price to spend the time and make the effort to diligently search and study the Bible will not be able to understand much of the Bible, especially its depths. If we read the Bible in a light way, we will not understand much. We must make an effort to search and diligently study the Bible in order to truly understand.

The Bible is too rich and mysterious. It really is worthy of searching and study. Even though many have spent much time to study the Bible throughout the ages, there are still many portions that need to be studied...May we be willing to take the time to study the Bible. May there be some among us who are willing to rise up and apply special effort to study this marvelous book.

### **Meditating and Considering [Musing]**

**“Meditates by day and by night”**; **“Muse upon”**; **“Consider”** (Psa. 1:2; 119:15, 95; see also Matt. 9:13).

When we read the Bible, we need to meditate and consider. Sometimes we need to muse upon the Word. This requires carefulness and time. It also requires quiet concentration. Many times we need to meditate, consider carefully, or concentrate quietly in order to understand the Bible and touch its essence. (*CWWL, 1932-1949*, vol. 3, “Crucial Truths in the Holy Scriptures, Volume 3,” ch. 31, pp. 560-564)

Rich in meaning, the Hebrew word for *muse* (often translated *meditate* in the KJV) implies to worship, to converse with oneself, and to speak aloud. To muse on the word is to taste and enjoy it through careful considering. Prayer, speaking to oneself, and praising the Lord may also be included in musing on the word. To muse on the word of God is to enjoy His word as His breath (2 Tim. 3:16) and thus to be infused with God, to breathe God in, and to receive spiritual nourishment. (*Holy Bible Recovery Version*, Psa. 119:15, footnote 1)

### **Believing**

**“Slow of heart to believe”** (Luke 24:25; see also John 2:22).

We must believe when we read the Bible. Sometimes we understand, and then we believe and receive. Sometimes we believe and receive, and then we understand. In any case, we must always believe. Whoever does not read the Bible in faith, whoever is slow of heart to believe, cannot understand the Bible in a clear way. Even if we could understand some portion, we would not receive much benefit. We must mix faith with the word of the Bible in order to understand the Bible and receive the benefit (Heb. 4:2).

### **Adding Prayer**

**“Cried out...hoped”** (Psa. 119:147).

Reading the Bible also requires cooperation through prayer. Reading the Bible and prayer cannot be separated. Therefore, the early psalmists called on the Lord on the one hand and hoped in the Lord’s word on the other. Before we read the Bible, we should pray and ask the Lord to cleanse us, to open the eyes of our heart, to prepare our spirit, and to open His Word and shine His light upon it to reveal His truth in it by the Spirit. As we read, we should turn the inspiration that we receive into prayer, praying for ourselves and for others. After we finish reading, we need to continue to pray, asking the Lord to preserve what we have understood so that we might keep it in faith and love and to give us strength and grace so that we might practice what we have seen. Thus, reading the Bible should begin with prayer, be accompanied by prayer, and end with prayer. Reading the Bible must be accompanied by prayer.

### **Praying and Reading**

**“Receive...the word of God, by means of all prayer and petition”** (Eph. 6:17-18).

Our reading of the Bible should not only be with prayer but should be mingled with prayer. Any portion or sentence of the Bible can become our prayer. This is not simply to read the word of the Bible; this is to pray the word of the Bible. We should not use our mind to understand the Word but our spirit to taste and chew a portion of the Word so that it becomes our supply. Paul refers to receiving the word of God by means of all prayer and petition in Ephesians 6:17-18. This kind of praying and reading, that is, pray-reading, enables us to not only understand the true spiritual meaning of the Bible—the will of God—but also to enjoy the reality of the content of the Bible—God Himself. This is the most beneficial way to read the Bible for our spiritual growth.

### **Letting the Word Dwell in Us**

**“Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom”** (Col. 3:16; see also Psa. 119:98).

We should let the word dwell in us when we read the Bible. If we read it and forget it, it will be

difficult for us to thoroughly understand the Word. If we let the important points, the important chapters and verses, and the important truths of the Bible dwell in us, the Holy Spirit can enable us to understand the meaning of the Bible. Moreover, He can reveal the truths of the Bible to us at any time and in any place. Therefore, we must let the word of the Bible dwell in us richly in all wisdom and by all means. Remembering the Bible and memorizing the Bible are necessary to reading the Bible and a way to read the Bible. We should practice this, especially the young brothers and sisters. We should memorize one book of the Bible or choose a few golden verses from our daily reading to remember and memorize. Regardless of how well we remember or memorize the Word, this is always beneficial. (CWWL, 1932-1949, vol. 3, "Crucial Truths in the Holy Scriptures, Volume 3," ch. 31, pp. 564-566)

### **READING THE BIBLE AND SPIRITUAL BOOKS**

During our private time with the Lord, we should also read and study the Bible. I am concerned that many of the young people do not read the Bible or study it. Yes, you may read the Bible in times of corporate fellowship or in the meetings. But you also need to have a private time to read the Word. You need to lay a good foundation in the Word of God by reading through it consecutively from Genesis to Revelation. Read book after book without selection, choice, or preference. Try to read the Bible through once every year or every two years. It is important to build up the habit of reading and studying the Word.

Ephesians 6:17 and 18 cover both the matter of prayer and the word. These verses tell us to receive the word by means of all prayer. This refers to pray-reading, or, at least, to reading the Bible prayerfully. We need to pray and to read the Word, putting these things together.

Along with prayer and reading the Word, we should also read some spiritual books or Life-study messages. It may not be adequate to read the messages just once. I can testify that although I give the messages, I am nourished by reading the printed messages again and again. I do not care who prepared the food, whether I prepared it or someone else did. As long as it is food, I take it and I am nourished by it.

In our eating we need variety. For example, for breakfast it is not sufficient to have toast and milk every morning. My breakfast includes more than twenty items, a real variety of food. This rich nourishment makes me very energetic. The principle is the same in reading spiritual books. Along with reading the Bible, we need to develop the habit of reading some profitable and nourishing spiritual books, doing this in a very balanced way and not eating too much at one time. Rather, it is better to eat several times a day. You may read four pages of a message at one time and then read more later in the day or the next day. In reading spiritual books, do not try to take in too much at once. If you build up the habit of reading the Word and spiritual books, you will be healthy spiritually and you will grow. (CWWL, 1978, vol. 2, "Life Messages, Volume 1", ch. 2, pp. 176-177)

**References and Further Reading:** *The Collected Works of Witness Lee*, 1994-1997, vol. 4, "My Autobiography—an Oral Presentation to My Children," ch. 5; *The Collected Works of Witness Lee*, 1978, vol. 2, "Life Messages, Volume 1," chs. 2, 10, 11; *The Collected Works of Witness Lee*, 1932-1949, vol. 3, "Crucial Truths in the Holy Scriptures, Volume 3," ch. 31; *The Collected Works of Witness Lee*, 1958, vol. 1, "How to Enjoy God and Practice the Enjoyment of God," ch. 6; *The Collected Works of Witness Lee*, 1967, vol. 1, "Pray-reading the Word", ch. 1; *Life-study of Exodus*, msg. 59; *The Collected Works of Witness Lee*, 1988, vol. 2, "Crucial Words of Leading, Book 2," ch. 8; *The Collected Works of Witness Lee*, 1984, vol. 2, "Elders' Training, Book 3," chs. 1, 10, 12; *The Collected Works of Watchman Nee*, vol. 48, "Messages for Building Up New Believers (1)," ln. 15; *Life-study of 2 John*, msgs. 1, 2.

## GENERAL SUBJECT:

### The Secret of How to Conduct Myself, Serve the Lord, and Work for the Lord

#### Message Four

### Enjoying the Holy Spirit Every Day, Taking Christ as our Satisfaction and Rest, and Praising, Giving Thanks, and Singing at All Times

Scripture Reading: Eph. 4:30; Rom. 14:17; Jude 20; Rom. 8:4; Psa. 22:3; 119:164;  
Heb. 13:15; Col. 4:2; 3:17; 1 Thes. 5:16-18; Eph. 5:19-20; Acts 16:25

#### I. We need to enjoy the Holy Spirit every day—Hymns, #255, #267:

- A. We should pray to the extent that our whole being is refreshed, light-hearted, and so full of joy; this is proof that the Holy Spirit in us is joyful.
- B. If we simply speak or pray according to the inner sense of life, our spirit will be liberated, and we will sense and enjoy the Holy Spirit, who imparts all the riches of Christ into us.
- C. Day by day we enjoy the Holy Spirit with the all-inclusive Christ as our supply; we are under the headship, the kingship, and the authority of God in Christ in the fellowship of the flowing Holy Spirit; in this way the Triune God is mingled with us, and the work of the Holy Spirit produces precious stones that are good for the building.
- D. Obedience is the way and the requirement for us to enjoy the Holy Spirit—Acts 5:32.
- E. We who are under the New Testament dispensation enjoy the double blessings of the Holy Spirit, namely, the aspect of His being power to us and the aspect of His being our life and nature—Judg. 3:10; 6:34; Acts 4:31; 13:52; John 7:37-39; 20:22; *Hymns*, #278.

#### II. We need take Christ as our satisfaction and rest:

- A. We need pursue Christ for our satisfaction—S. S. 1:2-4, 16-17; 2:6:
  1. Christ's love is attracting, His name is charming, and His person is captivating; He has drawn His lovers to pursue after Him, therefore, all His lovers would run after Him for their satisfaction; as His seeker we should pray, "draw me; we will run after you"—1:2-4a:
  2. We all need a personal, affectionate, intimate contact with the Lord every day.
  3. At the beginning the Christ-seeker was seeking her personal satisfaction, but then she was taught to seek satisfaction mutually with Christ; first, it has to be personal; then gradually it has to be mutual with the very Christ whom we seek for our satisfaction.
- B. We need to take Christ as our satisfaction and rest—S. S. 1:16-17; 2:6:
  1. The lover's gain and enjoyment of Christ, and Christ's gain and enjoyment of His lover, result in the mutual satisfaction and rest of Christ and His lover in the churches.
  2. We need to consider the difference between rest and satisfaction; we need something to nourish and refresh us to satisfy us; satisfaction comes from the supply, whereas rest comes from the environment, condition, and circumstances; if there is no problem or disturbance, we have rest.
  3. Christ and His lover have mutual satisfaction and rest in their mutual enjoyment of all that they are respectively.
  4. The lover has her gain and enjoyment, and the Beloved, Christ, has His gain and enjoyment; when both are put together, there is mutual satisfaction and rest, especially their mutual satisfaction and rest in their bridal love and marriage life—vv. 16-17; 2:6.

#### III. We need to praise, give thanks, and sing at all times; we should praise God

**unceasingly and give thanks in everything; we also need to sing in praise to God—1 Thes. 5:18; Eph. 5:19-20:**

- A. Praise is the highest work carried out by God's children; we can say that the highest expression of a saint's spiritual life is his praise to God:
1. God's throne is the highest point in the universe, yet He sits "enthroned upon the praises of Israel"; God's name and even God Himself are exalted through praise—Psa. 22:3.
  2. David said in a psalm that he prayed to God three times a day (Psa. 55:17); yet in another psalm, he said that he praised God seven times a day (119:164); David was inspired by the Holy Spirit when he acknowledged the importance of praising.
  3. It is a good exercise, a very good lesson, and a very good spiritual practice to praise God every day; we should praise God at least seven times a day; do not let David beat us in his praise—v. 164.
  4. We should learn to praise Him when we encounter problems, when we are at a meeting, or when we are alone.
  5. To praise is to transcend everything to touch the Lord (Acts 16:19-34); the Christian life soars through praises; a person who praises God transcends everything; he overcomes continually by his praise.
- B. The Christian life is ultimately a matter of giving thanks in everything—1 Thes. 5:18; Col. 3:17; Eph. 5:20:
1. Among the twenty-seven books of the New Testament, only three—1 Thessalonians, Colossians, and Ephesians—mention the matter of giving thanks in everything.
  2. From these three books we can see clearly that whether it is the proper Christian life (1 Thes. 5:18), the life of experiencing Christ (Col. 3:17), or the church life (Eph. 5:20), each concludes with giving thanks in all things.
  3. Our Christian life is of three stages: the general Christian life; the life of experiencing Christ, abiding in Christ, and living Christ; and the church life, the life of experiencing the Body; every stage of our Christian life involves the giving of thanks in everything.
  4. We should give thanks in everything because all things work together for our good that we may be transformed and conformed to the image of Christ—Rom. 8:28-29.
  5. The secret, the key to remaining in the enjoyment of the Lord is prayer with thanksgiving; if we pray and also give thanks, even if before we were not abiding in the Lord, we will spontaneously enter into the Lord and abide in Him.
- C. After a person believes in the Lord, he must learn to sing hymns—Psa. 104:33:
1. We must learn to sing hymns; we are not trying to be musicians, but we should be familiar with the hymns; this is an important matter.
  2. Songs are the expression of man's finest feelings; the sentiments of man's prayer before God cannot match the sentiments of his songs before God; God wants us to have fine and tender feelings; this is why He gives us many kinds of songs in the Bible.
  3. To be a good Christian, one must have fine and tender feelings; the deepest feelings that flow from a man's heart are the feelings expressed in songs—*Hymns*, #152.
  4. Singing is an outstanding trait of a Christian; we may not be an accomplished singer, yet we should still enjoy singing to the Lord—Acts 16:25; Psa. 95:1.
  5. When we sing in the spirit and with the spirit and with Christ as the content, this is pleasing to God; this kind of singing is sweet to the Triune God—1 Cor. 14:15.
  6. Whenever we have some free time at home, we should sing the hymns; we should sing the hymns until we know them well; in this way it will be easy for us to sing hymns in the meetings.

## **Excerpts from the Ministry:**

### **IN THE OLD TESTAMENT THE SPIRIT OF GOD BEING OF A SINGLE ASPECT, WHEREAS IN THE NEW TESTAMENT THE HOLY SPIRIT BEING OF A DOUBLE ASPECT**

We who are under the New Testament dispensation enjoy the double blessings of the Holy Spirit, namely, the aspect of His being power to us and the aspect of His being our life and nature. Those living under the dispensation of the Old Testament enjoyed the Spirit of God only as the outward power, whereas those of the New Testament enjoy the Holy Spirit as the inward life as well. This does not mean that in New Testament times God terminates the aspect of the work that was done in the Old Testament, but rather He continues even more the former aspect and adds another aspect. In the Old Testament there was only one aspect, but in the New Testament there are two aspects. In the Old Testament there was only the outward, but in the New Testament there are both the outward and the inward. Therefore, under the dispensation of the New Testament, we can not only rely upon the Holy Spirit as the outward power to perform the work committed to us by God, but through the Holy Spirit as life within, we can mingle with God as one. What a glorious grace of God this is! (*CWWL, 1953*, vol. 3, "The Experience of Life," ch. 14, p. 465.)

His love is attracting, His name is charming, and His person is captivating. He has drawn and captivated millions of His lovers to pursue after Him and is still doing the same today. Therefore, all His lovers would run after Him for their satisfaction. This is why the seeker prays, "Draw me; we will run after you" (S.S. 1:4a).

### **THE NEED FOR A PERSONAL AND AFFECTIONATE RELATIONSHIP WITH CHRIST**

Dear saints, in this chapter I want to impress you with something particular. After you have received Christ as your life, you must have a very personal seeking after Christ. No one can represent you or do anything for you in this matter. It must be personal. Every believer's relationship with Christ must be personal and affectionate...

We all need this kind of personal, affectionate, intimate contact with the Lord every day. This has become my habit. Every morning after rising up I go to my desk, and the first thing I say is, "Lord Jesus, I love You." I am not just a poor man praying to a merciful God, but I am contacting a Savior who is personal and affectionate to me, as I am personal and affectionate to Him. We all need to take heed to what the seeker says: "Let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth!" Right away her tone changes: "Your love is better than wine." This is a personal, intimate prayer. "Draw me; we will run after you." This is personal and affectionate. We need this kind of personal and affectionate seeking after Him, and we need to build up such a relationship with Him that is so personal and affectionate. (*CWWL, 1994-1997*, vol. 3, "Crystallization-study of Song of Songs," ch. 1, pp. 257, 260)

### **MUTUAL SATISFACTION WITH CHRIST**

Now we need to see how the Christ-seeker goes on to experience being satisfied with Christ mutually in the churches. At the beginning she was seeking her personal satisfaction, but then she was taught to seek satisfaction mutually with Christ. Is our spiritual satisfaction personal or mutual? First, it has to be personal; then gradually it has to be mutual with the very Christ whom we seek for our satisfaction. We should not be seeking our personal satisfaction so much that we forget about Christ's satisfaction. When we satisfy Him, we surely will be satisfied. If Christ has not been satisfied by us, we can never be satisfied by Christ. This satisfaction is mutual. (*CWWL, 1994-1997*, vol. 3, "Crystallization-study of Song of Songs," ch. 4, p. 283)

### **UNTO THE MUTUAL SATISFACTION AND REST OF CHRIST AND HIS LOVER IN THE CHURCHES**

The lover's gain and enjoyment of Christ, and Christ's gain and enjoyment of His lover, result in the mutual satisfaction and rest of Christ and His lover in the churches. We need to consider the difference between rest and satisfaction. The lover asked the Lord where He pastured His flock for satisfaction and where He made it lie down at noon for rest (1:7). Rest concerns the environment, the situation, and the condition. Sometimes our environment, condition, and circumstances do not allow us rest. If there is no problem or disturbance, we have rest. But on that day of rest we may be short of food. We need something to nourish and refresh us to satisfy us. Satisfaction comes from the supply, whereas rest comes from the environment, condition, and circumstances. When the environment is all right, we have rest. When the food supply is sufficient, we have satisfaction.

Christ and His lover have mutual satisfaction and rest in their mutual enjoyment of all that they are respectively. The lover has her gain and enjoyment, and the Beloved, Christ, has His gain and enjoyment. When both are put together, there is mutual satisfaction and rest, especially their mutual satisfaction and rest in their bridal love and marriage life (vv. 16-17; 2:6). (*CWWL, 1994-1997*, vol. 3, "Crystallization-study of Song of Songs," ch. 4, p. 288)

### **PRAISING**

Praise is the highest work carried out by God's children. We can say that the highest expression of a saint's spiritual life is his praise to God. God's throne is the highest point in the universe, yet He sits "enthroned upon the praises of Israel" (Psa. 22:3). God's name and even God Himself are exalted through praise.

David said in a psalm that he prayed to God three times a day (Psa. 55:17). Yet in another psalm, he said that he praised God seven times a day (119:164). David was inspired by the Holy Spirit when he acknowledged the importance of praising. He prayed only three times a day, but he praised seven times a day. Furthermore, he appointed Levites to play psalteries and harps to exalt, thank, and praise God before the ark of His covenant (1 Chron. 16:4-6). When Solomon completed the building of Jehovah's temple, the priests carried the ark of the covenant into the Holy of Holies. When the priests came out of the Holy Place, the Levites stood beside the altar, sounded the trumpets, and sang with cymbals, psalteries, and harps. Together they sounded praises to God. At that moment, the glory of Jehovah filled His house (2 Chron. 5:12-14). Both David and Solomon touched God's heart and offered up sacrifices of praise that were pleasing to God. Jehovah is enthroned upon the praises of Israel. We should praise the Lord all our life. We should sing praises to our God...

We should not only pray to God but also learn all the more to praise God. We need to see the significance of praise at the very beginning of our Christian walk. We must praise God unceasingly. David received grace from God to praise seven times a day. It is a good exercise, a very good lesson, and a very good spiritual practice to praise God every day. We should learn to praise God when we get up early in the morning. We should learn to praise Him when we encounter problems, when we are at a meeting, or when we are alone. We should praise God at least seven times a day. Do not let David beat us in his praise. If we have not learned to praise God every day, it is hard to have the kind of sacrifice of praise spoken of in Hebrews 13.

As you learn to praise, you will find that there are days in which you cannot gather yourself to praise. Perhaps you praised God seven times today, yesterday, and the day before. Perhaps you praised Him a week or a month ago. But one day you will find that you cannot utter a praise. On such days you are in pain, total darkness, or dire trouble. On such days you suffer misunderstanding and slander. You are busy shedding tears of self-pity. How can you praise God on such days? You cannot praise because you are wounded, suffering pain, and in difficulty. You feel that the most obvious response would be complaint rather than praise. You feel that the most obvious thing to do would be to murmur rather than give thanks. You do not feel like praising, and you have no intention to praise. You feel that praise is not suitable under this kind of circumstance and mood. At that very moment, you should remember that Jehovah's throne has not changed, His name has not changed, and His glory has not changed. You should praise Him simply because He is worthy of praise. You should bless Him simply



because He is worthy of all blessings...God desires His children to praise Him in everything and through every situation. (*CWWN*, vol. 48, "Messages for Building Up New Believers (1)," ch. 16, pp. 247-250)

### **UNCEASINGLY PRAYING AND IN EVERYTHING THANKS ENABLING US TO ABIDE IN THE LORD CONTINUOUSLY**

The secret, the key to remaining in the enjoyment of the Lord is prayer with thanksgiving.

We all can understand what it means to pray and to give thanks. When we pray, we are shining within, but if we also give thanks, we will become enlivened within. Prayer may be likened to connecting the wires, and thanksgiving, to shining the light. Sometimes our "wires" have been connected, yet it seems that we do not sense any reaction. The light does not shine if there is only prayer but no thanksgiving. Therefore, if we want to have a life that is always shining without flickering, we need to pray unceasingly and give thanks in everything. According to our experience, if we pray and also give thanks, even if before we were not abiding in the Lord, we will spontaneously enter into the Lord and abide in Him. If we want to get in and not come out but remain inside all the time, we need to pray unceasingly and give thanks in everything...

### **THE CHRISTIAN LIFE ULTIMATELY BEING A MATTER OF GIVING THANKS IN EVERYTHING**

Apparently, we cannot find the truth of giving thanks in everything throughout the whole Bible. Actually, the Bible, which is a book of mysteries, contains an untold measure of light beneath the surface. Among the twenty-seven books of the New Testament, only three—1 Thessalonians, Colossians, and Ephesians—mention the matter of giving thanks in everything. All three of these books were written by the apostle Paul, and their contents show a sequence that is mysterious and wonderful.

The first of these books, 1 Thessalonians, speaks of how we can be saved and how we should have a holy life so that our spirit, soul, and body may be wholly sanctified, making us ready to meet the Lord at His coming. This concerns a proper, general Christian life. The second book is Colossians, which concerns Christ and which eventually speaks about experiencing Christ. The life of experiencing Christ is a life of giving thanks in everything. Not only is the proper, general Christian life a life of giving thanks in everything, but also the life of experiencing Christ is ultimately a matter of giving thanks for all things. The third book, Ephesians, which is a sister book to Colossians, concerns the church, and at the end it speaks about the experience of the church. We can have the church life only by living in the spirit. Likewise, such a church life is a matter of giving thanks in all things.

Hence, we can see clearly that whether it is the proper Christian life, the life of experiencing Christ, or the church life, each concludes with giving thanks in all things. Our Christian life is of three stages: the general Christian life; the life of experiencing Christ, abiding in Christ, and living Christ; and the church life, the life of experiencing the Body. Every stage of our Christian life involves the giving of thanks in everything. Our Christian life becomes deformed whenever it is separated from the matter of giving thanks in all things.

The first ten years after I was saved was a life in 1 Thessalonians. As a saved one, I desired to learn to be sanctified in everything and to preserve myself daily from uncleanness that my spirit, soul, and body might be preserved and I could be ready to meet the Lord. This was the initial stage of my Christian life. As I gradually progressed, I began to study the Bible and some of the books concerning the inner life; thus, I gained more knowledge concerning Christ. I began to know Christ as my life...

After experiencing Christ in a deeper way, I began to realize that the life of experiencing Christ is not for me individually but for His church and for the testimony of the church. We have all received Christ by grace, and the result is that we are the church. Hence, eventually we need to live in the church, to have the church life. This is the deepest stage of the Christian life. All these three stages of life conclude with the matter of giving thanks in everything. Without giving thanks in all things, we

cannot live the proper Christian life. (*CWWL*, 1983, vol. 3, “Abiding in the Lord to Enjoy His Life,” ch. 3, pp. 320-322)

### **Practical Training**

We must first familiarize ourselves with the table of contents of the hymnal. We must remember clearly how the hymns are classified. If you understand the principle of classification, memorize the nature and use of every category, and know the location of each hymn, you readily will find the desired hymn when you have a need.

Find a hymn which is most applicable to you and learn it. Understand the words and the punctuation, and find how the writer’s thoughts unfold from beginning to end. Your heart has to be open. You have to have sensitive feelings, a pliable will, and a clear mind.

After all this, you still need to learn to sing. You can learn two to three hymns a week. At the beginning, if you cannot sing, you can hum a few tunes every morning, or you can make up simple tunes to hum to the hymn. Through this you will touch the spirit of the hymn and increase your spiritual senses. However, you still have to learn to sing according to the proper notes. After you have learned the proper notes, you can sing in whatever way the Spirit leads, whether it be congregational singing, mutual singing, or solo singing.

Hymns cultivate fine and tender spiritual feelings in a Christian. I hope that we can all learn something before God. If we can come to God in a fine and tender way, we will develop a more intimate fellowship with God. Thank the Lord that in eternity all our feelings will be fine and tender. We know that the praises in the heavens are more than the prayers on earth. Prayers will go away, but praises will fill the universe in eternity. On that day all of our feelings will be fine and tender. That will be the sweetest and happiest day. (*CWWN*, vol. 48, “Messages for Building Up New Believers (1),” ch. 15, pp. 244-245)

### **SINGING TO THE LORD**

Because many of us were born into Christianity, raised in Christianity, and even constituted of Christianity, we must admit that, at least to some extent, we are still under the influence of the religion of Christianity, especially in the way we gather together for the meetings. Nowhere in the New Testament are Christians told that we should gather together and sit quietly, waiting for someone to start the meeting. According to the book of Psalms, when the children of Israel came together for the feasts three times a year, they began their meetings not in the temple, but at the foot of Mount Zion. As they ascended the mountain, they psalmed the songs of ascent (Psalms 120 through 134). Likewise, the church meetings should begin not in the meeting hall, but either in our homes or on our way to the meeting. The meeting should be an exhibition of our daily life, of the way we live at home, at school, or at work. The meeting should be full of singing and praising because we sing and praise the Lord day by day. I appreciate the chorus of the hymn, “This is my story, this is my song, praising my Savior all the day long.” But where can you find a Christian who praises the Lord all day long? Many Christians who sing this hymn do not praise their Savior in their daily living. But our daily life should be filled with singing to the Lord. (*Life-study of Philippians*, msg. 40, p. 355)

**References and Further Reading:** *The Collected Works of Witness Lee*, 1994-1997, vol. 4, “My Autobiography—an Oral Presentation to My Children,” ch. 5; *The Collected Works of Witness Lee*, 1994-1997, vol. 3, “Crystallization-study of Song of Songs,” chs. 1, 4; *The Collected Works of Witness Lee*, 1985, vol. 5, “Vessels Useful to the Lord,” ch. 10; *The Collected Works of Witness Lee*, 1983, vol. 3, “Abiding in the Lord to Enjoy His Life,” ch. 3; *The Collected Works of Watchman Nee*, vol. 48, “Messages for Building Up New Believers (1),” ln. 15; *Life-study of Philippians*, msg. 40.

## **GENERAL SUBJECT:**

### **The Secret of How to Conduct Myself, Serve the Lord, and Work for the Lord**

#### **Message Five**

### **The Secret of How I Conduct Myself, Serve the Lord, and Work for the Lord**

#### **I. BEING RIGHT TOWARD GOD:**

- A. Always Praying and Repenting to God, Thoroughly Confessing Our Sins.
- B. Continually Surrendering to the Lord, Completely Consecrating Ourselves and Everything to Him, and Committing All into His Hand.
- C. Unceasingly Exercising the Spirit to Fellowship with the Lord, and Living and Walking according to His Leading in the Spirit in Order to Please Him.
- D. Studying the Bible in Depth, Pray-reading the Lord's Word, and Walking and Living according to the Light That We Receive.
- E. Learning and Understanding the Truth, Entering into the Truths, and Walking according to the Truth.
- F. Living and Walking with the Lord and Being United and Mingled with Him as One to Live the God-man life, and Be the Lord's Overcomers.
- G. Enjoying the Holy Spirit Every Day and Taking Christ as Our Satisfaction and Rest.
- H. Praising, Giving Thanks, and Singing at All Time.

#### **II. BEING PEACEFUL TOWARD PEOPLE:**

- A. Living Out the Gentleness and Meekness of Christ.
- B. Being Amiable, Kind, and Peaceful toward Others and Being Able to Get Along with Them.
- C. Abhorring Pride, Arrogance, Boastfulness, and Self-righteousness.
- D. Avoiding Anger and Wrath.
- E. Not Taking Account of Others' Mistakes and Not Spreading News about Their Mistakes and Shortcomings.
- F. Having a Broad Heart and Being Willing to Pardon and Forgive Others.
- G. Dealing with People in Genuineness and Sincerity, without Hypocrisy or Pretense.
- H. Being Able to Preach the Gospel to People Anytime and Anywhere.
- I. Living Our Life in a Way That Enables Us to Minister Christ to Others.
- J. Living the Body Life in the Church with All the Saints.

#### **III. BEING OPEN TOWARD THE WORK:**

- A. Taking Openness as the Principle:
  - 1. Not Considering the Work as Our Private Possession.
  - 2. Not Hiding the Church in Our "Pocket".
  - 3. Taking the Local Church as Our Basis and the Universal Church as Our Goal.
- B. Not Being Covetous:
  - 1. Not Being Selfish.
  - 2. Not Seeking Profits.
  - 3. Not to be the Head.
  - 4. Not Seeking Position.
  - 5. Not Highly Regard Our Reputation.
- C. Being Led by the Entire Revelation of the Bible, the Holy Spirit, and the Lord Himself:
  - 1. Not Desiring to Be First.

2. Being Willing to be Submissive.
3. Keeping the Order in the Body.
4. Being Led by the Entire Revelation of the Bible.
5. Putting Our Own Views and Opinions Completely on the Cross.

**References and Further Reading:**

*The Collective Work of Witness Lee, 1994-1997*, Volume 4, pp. 539-549.