

# PREFACE

1. This book is intended as an aid to believers in developing a daily time of morning revival with the Lord in His word. At the same time, it provides a limited review of the International Training for Elders and Responsible Ones held in Águas de Lindóia, Brazil on October 1-3, 2015. The general subject of the training was “The Crucial Points of the Major Items of the Lord’s Recovery Today.” Through intimate contact with the Lord in His word, the believers can be constituted with life and truth and thereby equipped to prophesy in the meetings of the church unto the building up of the Body of Christ.

2. The book is divided into weeks. One training message is covered per week. Each week presents first the message outline, followed by six daily portions, a hymn, and then some space for writing. The message outline has been divided into days, corresponding to the six daily portions. Each daily portion covers certain points and begins with a section entitled “Morning Nourishment.” This section contains selected verses and a short reading that can provide rich spiritual nourishment through intimate fellowship with the Lord. The “Morning Nourishment” is followed by a section entitled “Today’s Reading,” a longer portion of ministry related to the day’s main points. Each day’s portion concludes with a short list of references for further reading and some space for the saints to make notes concerning their spiritual inspiration, enlightenment, and enjoyment to serve as a reminder of what they have received of the Lord that day.

3. We recommend the use of the reader annotation function (on devices where it is supported) for composing a short prophesy. This prophecy can be composed by considering all of our daily notes, the “harvest” of our inspirations during the week, and preparing a main point with some sub-points to be spoken in the church meetings for the organic building up of the Body of Christ.

4. The content of this book is taken primarily from the published training outlines, the text and footnotes of the Recovery Version of the Bible, selections from the writings of Witness Lee and Watchman Nee, and Hymns, all of which are published by Living Stream Ministry.

5. The training message outlines were compiled by Living Stream Ministry from the writings of Witness Lee and Watchman Nee. The outlines, footnotes, and cross-references in the Recovery Version of the Bible are by Witness Lee. Unless otherwise noted, the references cited in this publication are by Witness Lee.

6. For the sake of space, references to The Collected Works of Watchman Nee and The Collected Works of Witness Lee are abbreviated to CWWN and CWWL, respectively.

7. Week 9 contains excerpts from a message by Witness Lee entitled “The Eschatology of the Church according to the Divine Revelation of the Scriptures.” This message can be found at the end of the soft-bound volume of Life-study of 1 & 2 Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther. For the sake of space this reference has been abbreviated to “The Eschatology of the Church.”

# WEEK 1 — OUTLINE

## The Recovery of the Economy of God

Scripture Reading: Acts 26:16-19; 1 Tim. 1:3-6; 6:3-4; 2 Cor. 11:2-3; Rom. 16:17; 2 Tim. 4:22

### « DAY 1 »

**I. We must walk in the truth of the heavenly vision of God's economy, of the mark of God's economy, and of the goal of God's economy; this vision must be renewed in us day by day to be the controlling vision of all our life, work, and activity (Prov. 29:18a; Acts 26:16-19; 1 John 1:7; 3 John 3-4):**

A. God's economy is His plan to dispense Himself into His chosen, predestinated, and redeemed people as their life, their life supply, and their everything to produce, constitute, and build up the organic Body of Christ (1 Tim. 1:3-6; 6:3-4; 2 Cor. 11:2-3; Titus 1:9; Col. 2:19).

### « DAY 2 »

B. The mark of God's economy, the strategic and central point of God's economy, is the indwelling, subjective Christ as the Spirit in our spirit, our mingled spirit (2 Cor. 3:17; 2 Tim. 4:22; Rom. 8:16; 1 Cor. 6:17):

1. We must be narrowed down to and even zeroed in on the all-inclusive divine Spirit in our human spirit so that we may be kept from missing the mark of the divine economy (1 Tim. 1:6; Mal. 2:15-16; Rom. 1:9; 8:4, 6; Gal. 5:25; Phil. 3:3; 2 Cor. 2:13).
2. In the "blueprint" of God's original intention, man is the center of the entire universe, and the center of man is his spirit (Gen. 2:7; Prov. 20:27):
  - a. The heavens are for the earth, the earth is for man, and man was created by God with a spirit that he may contact God, receive God, contain God, worship God, live God, fulfill God's purpose for God, express God, and be one with God (Zech. 12:1; John 4:24).
  - b. Without God being the Spirit and without our having a spirit to contact God, to be one with God, the whole universe is empty and we are nothing (Eccl. 1:2; 3:11; Job 32:8; cf. Rom. 9:21, 23; 2 Cor. 4:7).
3. Christ as the life-giving Spirit can be everything to us when we live in and exercise our spirit; to live in our soul is to live in the principle of antichrist (Zech. 4:6; 12:1; 1 Cor. 15:45b; 6:17; 1 John 2:18-19).
4. The Lord's recovery is the recovery of the oneness in our spirit; to be in our spirit is to be in Jerusalem, the place of simplicity and oneness, whereas to be in our mind is to be in Babylon, the place of confusion and division (John 4:24; Eph. 2:22;

Rom. 1:9; 2 Tim. 1:6-7).

5. Our spirit is a “country” of grace to swallow up race for the one new man; our mind is a “country” of quarreling; to enjoy the Lord as the Spirit being in our spirit is to have grace with us; when this is lost, the degradation of the church is present (4:22; Gal. 6:18; 5:15; Col. 3:10-11).

### « DAY 3 »

C. The goal of God’s eternal economy is the reality of the organic Body of Christ, consummating in the New Jerusalem (Eph. 1:22-23; Rev. 21:2-3, 9-10):

1. Without the local churches, there is no practical expression of the Body of Christ, and there can be no reality of the Body of Christ (1:10-13; 2:7).
2. God’s eternal economy is to obtain the Body of Christ; any work outside of this is not on the central lane of God’s economy (Eph. 4:1-6, 11-16).
3. We must follow the footsteps of the apostle Paul to bring all the saints into the blending life of the entire Body of Christ (1 Cor. 12:24; Rom. 16:1-20).
4. For the Lord’s recovery in this age, we must cooperate with the Lord to be the overcomers as today’s Zion in today’s Jerusalem (the church life) for the building up of the Body of Christ to consummate the New Jerusalem (Rev. 3:21-22; 14:1-5; Judg. 5:15-16, 31).

D. Teachings that differ from the unique and healthy teaching of God’s economy, the teaching of the apostles, separate us from the genuine appreciation, love, and enjoyment of the precious person of the Lord Jesus Christ Himself as our life and our everything (1 Tim. 1:3-4; Acts 2:42; 2 Cor. 11:2-3).

E. Today we can be in one accord because we have only one vision, the vision of the eternal economy of God (Acts 1:14; 1 Cor. 1:9-10; Jer. 32:39).

## **II. God’s economy was unveiled through the apostles, but because the believers lost the proper understanding of God’s economy, there is the need for it to be recovered by the Lord:**

- A. The words recovery and economy refer to one thing as seen from two different viewpoints; with God it is a matter of economy; with us it is a matter of recovery (1 Tim. 1:4; Eph. 1:10; 3:9).
- B. Recovery means to go back to the beginning; we need to go back to the beginning, receiving the Lord’s grace to go back to God’s original intention, to what God ordained in the beginning (Matt. 19:8).
- C. There is a strong and solid principle that whenever the majority of the people of God fail to carry out God’s purpose, God comes in to have a

recovery; His recovery is always with the minority, with a remnant of overcomers, not with the majority (2 Kings 22:8; Ezra 1:3-11; Neh. 2:11, 17; Rev. 3:21; 18:4).

#### « DAY 4 »

- D. Our vision should be governed not by the present situation nor by traditional practice but by God's original intention and standard as revealed in the Scriptures according to the present advance of His recovery:
1. The Lord's recovery is the recovery of Christ as our center, reality, life, and everything (Col. 1:17b, 18b; Rev. 2:4, 7, 17; 3:20; Psa. 80:1, 15, 17-19).
  2. The Lord's recovery is the recovery of the oneness of the Body of Christ (John 17:11, 21-23; Eph. 4:3-4a; Rev. 1:11).
  3. The Lord's recovery is the recovery of the function of all the members of the Body of Christ (Eph. 4:15-16; 1 Cor. 14:4b, 26, 31).
- E. We in the Lord's recovery must have a clear vision of God's economy and then be governed, controlled, and directed by this vision, for we are here to carry out God's economy in His recovery (Acts 26:18-19; Prov. 29:18a).

#### « DAY 5 »

### **III. In order to realize the recovery of the Lord for the carrying out of the economy of God, we must stay away from death and division:**

- A. We must stay away from death and be swallowed up by Christ as life; everything in the church must be in the nature of life, with the content of life, and in the flow and imparting of life (2 Cor. 5:4; John 7:38; 1 John 5:16a).
- B. We must reject any kind of division (1 Cor. 1:10), stand against any wind of teaching and any spreading of spiritual death (Eph. 4:14; 2 Tim. 2:16-17), and mark and turn away from those who make divisions and causes of stumbling contrary to the teaching of God's economy (Rom. 16:17; Titus 3:10).
- C. Leviticus reveals that the first thing that we as God's priests need to deal with is our listening; our moving (feet) and working (hands) are always under the direction of our hearing (8:23-24; 14:14-17):
1. If we do not take care of our hearing but give ear to negative speaking, our deeds and our work will be affected in a negative way.
  2. If any church would stop hearing negative things, that church would be very healthy and living; the church that is the weakest and the most deadened is the

one full of criticism, gossip, and reasoning.

3. Because we often hear unclean things, things that are unhealthy and contagious, we need to wash our ears with the blood of Christ; after the washing of the blood, we will enjoy the anointing of the Spirit.
4. Positive listening will rescue us from negative listening; if we listen to God's word from morning to evening, we will not have an ear to listen to any negative speaking (Rev. 2:7; John 10:3-5, 16, 27; S.S. 2:8, 14).

## « DAY 6 »

**D. In order to enjoy Christ as our meal offering to live a meal offering church life, we must be purified from any leaven (ambition for leadership) and honey (natural affection) (Lev. 2:11):**

1. Ambition and natural affection go together; a person who is ambitious will love anyone who helps him to gain what he desires, but whoever hinders him from fulfilling his ambition will be regarded as his enemy (3 John 9).
2. We should neither take the way of the Lord's recovery nor leave this way because of any person; we are following the vision of God's economy in the realization of the Lord's recovery (Acts 26:19; 2 Tim. 1:15; 2:1-15).

**E. For us to live a holy life for the church life, we must be careful about the kind of people we contact; in Leviticus 11 all the animals signify different kinds of people, and eating signifies our contacting of people (cf. Acts 10:9b-14, 27-29):**

1. To eat is to contact things outside of us and to receive them into us with the result that they eventually become our inner constitution; whatever we contact, we will receive, and whatever we receive will reconstitute us, making us a different person from what we are now.
2. "Do not be deceived: Evil companionships corrupt good morals" (1 Cor. 15:33).
3. "He who walks with wise men will be wise, / But the companion of fools will be troubled" (Prov. 13:20).
4. "Avoid profane, vain babblings, for they will advance to more ungodliness, and their word will spread like gangrene, of whom are Hymenaeus and Philetus, who concerning the truth have misaimed...But flee youthful lusts, and pursue righteousness, faith, love, peace with those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart" (2 Tim. 2:16-18, 22).

## << WEEK 1 — DAY 1 >>

### Morning Nourishment

1 Tim. 1:3-6 Even as I exhorted you...that you might charge certain ones not to teach different things nor to give heed to myths and unending genealogies, which produce questionings rather than God's economy, which is in faith. But the end of the charge is love out of a pure heart and out of a good conscience and out of unfeigned faith; from which things some, having misaimed, have turned aside to vain talking.

My burden...is to share with you something of God's economy...[First Timothy 1:3-7] contains two very important expressions as indicated in Greek, the original language of the New Testament: God's economy and misaimed. The apostle Paul was chosen by God to bear the responsibility for God's economy, and he trained his spiritual son Timothy in this economy. It is quite interesting to note that Paul's Epistles to Timothy were written at a time when many Christians had drifted from the original pathway. They had missed the central mark of God's economy and were paying attention to something else. (CWWL, 1964, vol. 3, "The Economy of God," p. 151)

### Today's Reading

God's economy in faith is His household economy, His household administration..., which is to dispense Himself in Christ into His chosen people that He may have a house to express Himself, which house is the church (1 Tim. 3:15), the Body of Christ. The apostle's ministry was centered on this economy of God (Col. 1:25; 1 Cor. 9:17), whereas the different teachings of the dissenting ones were used by God's enemy to distract His people from this economy. In the administration and shepherding of a local church, this divine economy must be made fully clear to the saints. (1 Tim. 1:4, footnote 3)

According to history two prevailing elements distracted the early Christians from the right track: Judaism and Gnosticism....Apparently, it was the good elements of Judaism and Gnosticism that sidetracked these early Christians....The Judaizers strongly stressed the Mosaic Law of the Old Testament.

Today, even though there are no Judaizers or Gnostics to disturb us, there is still much to distract us....If we spend time with the Lord, we will realize that the enemy is persistent in utilizing even the good things of Christianity to distract the Lord's children from the mark of God's economy.

What is God's economy?...If we would make a thorough and careful study of the Scriptures with spiritual insight, we would realize that God's economy is simply His plan to dispense Himself into humanity. God's economy is God's dispensation, which means nothing else than God dispensing Himself into the human race....In this divine dispensation God, who is almighty and all-inclusive, intends to dispense nothing other than Himself to us.

God is exceedingly rich....[His] capital is simply Himself, and with it He intends to "manufacture" Himself in mass production. God Himself is the Businessman, the capital, and the product. His intention is to dispense Himself to many people in mass production and free of charge. Therefore, God requires such a divine arrangement, a divine management, a divine dispensation, a divine economy in order to bring Himself into humanity.

Let us be more specific. Now that we know God's purpose is to dispense Himself, we must discover what God is in order to know what He is dispensing. In other words, what is the substance of God? When a businessman plans to manufacture a product, he must first of all be clear about the substance, or its basic constituent. God's substance is Spirit (John 4:24). The very essence of the almighty, all-inclusive, universal God is simply Spirit. God is the Manufacturer, and He intends to reproduce Himself as the product; therefore, whatever He reproduces must be Spirit, the very substance of Himself. (CWWL, 1964, vol. 3, "The Economy of God," pp. 151-153)

Further Reading: CWWL, 1964, vol. 3, "The Economy of God," chs. 1, 4-5; The High Peak of the Vision and the Reality of the Body of Christ, ch. 1

## << WEEK 1 — DAY 2 >>

### Morning Nourishment

Zech. 12:1 ...Thus declares Jehovah, who stretches forth the heavens and lays the foundations of the earth and forms the spirit of man within him.

2 Cor. 3:17 And the Lord is the Spirit; and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom.

2 Tim. 4:22 The Lord be with your spirit. Grace be with you.

In His creation God made three crucial, equally important items—the heavens, the earth, and the spirit of man. The heavens are for the earth, the earth is for man, and man was created by God with a spirit that he may contact God, receive God, worship God, live God, fulfill God's purpose for God, and be one with God. In His economy God planned to have Christ as the centrality and universality of His move on earth. For His chosen people, who would care for Him as the Creator and as the Redeemer, there was the need for Him to create a receiving organ so that they would have the capacity to receive all that God had planned for Christ to be....(Eph. 1:17-18a; 3:5). (Zech. 12:1, footnote 2)

### Today's Reading

The Holy Spirit of God, dwelling in our human spirit to dispense all that God is in Christ into our being, is the focus, the very mark, of this mysterious distribution of the Triune God. This is the battleground of the spiritual warfare. How much the subtle enemy has been and still is distracting the saints of God, even the seeking ones, from this mark of God's economy by many good and even scriptural things! In such a time of confusion, as in the time when the Epistles to Timothy were written, we must be narrowed down and even zeroed in to the all-inclusive divine Spirit in our human spirit that we may be kept from missing the mark of the divine economy. Therefore, returning to, abiding in, and exercising our spirit to realize the Spirit of God are fundamentally necessary today. It is by so doing that we can partake of all the fullness of God by enjoying the unsearchable riches of Christ. May the Lord grant us grace that we may be brought into such a realization and practice it in our daily life and in all that we do.

The all-inclusive Christ as the good land is in the spirit, and His dwelling in the Holy of Holies is also in our spirit. If you do not know how to discern the spirit from the soul, you will miss the mark and cannot enjoy Christ. Every day you must deal with the living Christ, who is subjective to you. Christ is within you, and He is living, real, and practical....I do look to the Lord that our eyes will be opened to see the heavenly vision and the inner revelation of this living, indwelling, subjective Christ in our spirit as the mark of God's economy. (CWWL, 1964, vol. 3, "The Economy of God," pp. 149-150, 341)

The church life is...the grace that swallows up race. Race is short of a letter, G. If we add G to our race, there will be no more race, only grace. If there is still race, it indicates we are short of grace. (Practical Talks to the Elders, p. 21)

Galatians 6:18 says that the Lord's grace is with our spirit. When we get into our spirit, we enjoy the Lord as grace. When we begin to quarrel with our wife or husband, we must run back to the spirit....The mind is a quarreling country, but the spirit is a country of grace. It is not a matter of trying to overcome; it is a matter of being in the right country. The right country is in our spirit. (CWWL, 1973-1974, vol. 1, "The Indwelling Christ in the Canon of the New Testament," p. 613)

Paul said, "The Lord be with your spirit. Grace be with you" (2 Tim. 4:22). If we do not experience the Lord's being with our spirit and therefore lose the presence of grace, that is the degradation of the church. We need to be careful about this. Our highest enjoyment and experience are that our Lord is with our spirit....To enjoy the Lord's Spirit being in our spirit is to have grace with us. When this is lost, the degradation of the church is present. (How to Be a Co-worker and an Elder and How to Fulfill Their Obligations, p. 45)

Further Reading: The Economy of God, ch. 24; How to Be a Co-worker and an Elder and How to Fulfill Their Obligations, ch. 3; Living in the Spirit, ch. 5; Life-study of Job, msgs. 19, 24, 27

## << WEEK 1 — DAY 3 >>

### Morning Nourishment

Rom. 16:20 Now the God of peace will crush Satan under your feet shortly. The grace of our Lord Jesus be with you.

Eph. 4:3-5 Being diligent to keep the oneness of the Spirit in the uniting bond of peace: One Body and one Spirit, even as also you were called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism.

The last three chapters of Romans show us the blending and fellowship of the Body life brought forth through the apostle's receiving according to God and Christ; such an explanation was not seen by the Bible expositors throughout the generations. Romans 16 gives us an excellent pattern of the apostle in bringing all the saints into the blending life of the entire Body of Christ. It is in such a life that we can truly reign in life.

We must follow in the footsteps of the apostle. He brought us into the blending life of the entire Body of Christ by recommendations and greetings that the God of peace may crush Satan under our feet and that we may enjoy the rich grace of Christ (16:1-16, 21-24, 20). (The Experience of God's Organic Salvation Equaling Reigning in Christ's Life, p. 70)

### Today's Reading

Today we can be in one accord because we have only one vision and one view. We are all in this up-to-date, all-inheriting vision. We have only one viewpoint. We speak the same thing with one heart, one mouth, one voice, and one tone, serving the Lord together. The result is a power that will become our strong morale and our impact. This is our strength. Once the Lord's recovery possesses this power, there will be the glory of increase and multiplication. (The Vision of the Age, p. 54)

The words recovery and economy refer to one thing as seen from two viewpoints. With God, it is a matter of economy; with us, it is a matter of recovery. God's economy was unveiled through the apostles, but because the believers lost the proper understanding of God's economy, there is the need for it to be recovered. Therefore, what is being recovered today is God's economy.

The Lord's recovery is also to recover the oneness of the Body. This means that in the recovery we must see the universal Body and do everything in the limitation, the regulation, of the one Body. We all need to learn how to practice the Lord's recovery of the one Body. (Life-study of 1 & 2 Samuel, p. 195)

We believe that God is recovering the most difficult thing today...the fulfillment of Ephesians 4...God is doing a recovery work everywhere. The ultimate work among all these works may very well be the recovery of the Body testimony. God's leading today is to bring us back to the beginning and to recover us to the condition at the beginning. (CWWN, vol. 57, "The Resumption of Watchman Nee's Ministry," pp. 220-221)

In the Bible, both in the Old and New Testaments, there is a strong and solid principle that whenever the majority of the people of God fail to carry out God's purpose, God comes in to have a recovery...God would never give up His purpose...The temple was destroyed, and the people were carried away. God then came in to carry out His recovery work, but that recovery was not with the whole body of the people of God. Only a small number of the scattered people returned to rebuild the temple for God's recovery...It was through them that the nation, in a sense, was recovered. They rebuilt the destroyed temple and recovered the city.

We can be assured that the Lord will fulfill His prophecy about the building of the Body by the principle of His recovery. His recovery is always with the minority, not the majority. (CWWL, 1972, vol. 3, "The Greatest Prophecy in the Bible and Its Fulfillment," pp. 433-435)

Further Reading: The Practical Points concerning Blending, ch. 3; The Experience of God's Organic Salvation Equaling Reigning in Christ's Life, msg. 6; The Vision of the Age, chs. 2-3; Life-study of 1 & 2 Samuel, msg. 30; Messages Given During the Resumption of Watchman Nee's Ministry, vol. 2, chs. 50, 64; The Greatest Prophecy in the Bible and Its Fulfillment, ch. 2; The Training and the Practice of the Vital Groups, msg. 1

## << WEEK 1 — DAY 4 >>

### Morning Nourishment

Eph. 4:12 For the perfecting of the saints unto the work of the ministry, unto the building up of the Body of Christ.

15-16 ...The Head, Christ, out from whom all the Body, being joined together and being knit together through every joint of the rich supply and through the operation in the measure of each one part, causes the growth of the Body unto the building up of itself in love.

The first major item of the Lord's recovery is the recovery of Christ and of Christ as life to the believers for the church (Col. 1:15-19; 3:4a; Matt. 16:16-18). Christ is the central item of the entire Bible...The situation of today's Christianity is like that of the church in Laodicea in the Lord's epistle in Revelation 3:14-22. According to verse 20, Christ was outside the door of the church in Laodicea. Likewise, in today's Christianity the name of Christ is there, but the person and the reality of Christ are absent. (The Practice of the Church Life according to the God-ordained Way, p. 13)

### Today's Reading

The second main item of the Lord's recovery is the recovery of the local church life (Acts 9:31; 14:23). Brother Nee stressed this very much....We all need to see that in the recovery, that is, in the local churches, we are all pastors and we are all pastored ones.

The third major item of the Lord's recovery is the recovery of the unique oneness of the Body of Christ (John 17:11, 22-23; Eph. 4:3-6)....According to Paul's teaching, differences among Christians are unavoidable, but no difference is qualified to be a factor of division. In Romans 14 Paul pointed out that there were differences among the believers, using the matters of eating and the observing of days as examples (vv. 2-6). Although Paul taught that such differences should not be factors of division among the believers, some Christians have used differences to build up divisions as their glory. However, to us this kind of practice is a shame. (The Practice of the Church Life according to the God-ordained Way, pp. 14-15)

The Lord's recovery is the recovery of three main items. These items are vital for our practice of the church life, and it is crucial for us not to miss any of them.

First, the Lord's recovery is the recovery of the oneness of the Body of Christ. Throughout the past centuries, Christians have been divided again and again....The Lord's recovery is testifying that regardless of differing races, cultures, or levels of education, all Christians should be one. There is no reason for us to be divided.

Second, the Lord's recovery is the recovery, not of any doctrine, but of Christ as our all in all. Christ is everything. He is the center, and He is also the circumference. We only care for Christ. In the past sixty years, the Lord has used us to put out many publications concerning Christ, the church, and the Body of Christ in oneness.

Third, the Lord's recovery is the recovery of the function of all the members of the Body of Christ. The Lord desires that every member of His Body be a functioning member. Almost all Christian groups practice the system of the clergy and laity. The clergy are the professional preachers, pastors, and ministers, who serve God in place of the other members of the church. Actually, the clergy replaces the members of the Body of Christ, and this replacement spontaneously annuls and kills the function, the capacity, and the usefulness of the members of Christ. This is an offense to the Lord. The Lord's recovery is for the annulling of the clergy and laity and the developing of the gifts, functions, and capacity of all the members of the organic Body of Christ (Eph. 4:11-16).

According to the parable in Matthew 25:14-30, the Lord has distributed talents to all of us....Every member of the Body, regardless of how long he has been saved and how many talents he has received, must serve. As long as he has been saved, he must participate in the church service. (The Basic Principles for the Practice of the God-ordained Way, pp. 1-4)

Further Reading: The Practice of the Church Life according to the God-ordained Way, ch. 1; The Basic Principles for the Practice of the God-ordained Way; CWWL, 1973-1974, vol. 1, "The History of the Church and the Local Churches," ch. 9

## « WEEK 1 — DAY 5 »

### Morning Nourishment

2 Cor. 5:4 ...What is mortal may be swallowed up by life.

John 7:38 He who believes into Me, as the Scripture said, out of his innermost being shall flow rivers of living water.

1 John 5:16 If anyone sees his brother sinning a sin not unto death, he shall ask and he will give life to him, to those sinning not unto death...

As those who have been born again, we have the divine life. However, we may not exercise the divine life much in the church service. We may simply do things and talk, gossip, ask questions, and exercise our mind and emotions in the name of “fellowship,” yet without the exercise of the divine life in us...Genuine fellowship is the flow and the mutual imparting of life. I minister life to you, and you return life to me, and in this life current there is the real fellowship...Everything in the church must be in the nature of life, with the content of life, and in the imparting of life...Our work, speaking, fellowship, service, ministry, message, Bible study, and prayer must be in the flow and imparting of life. (CWWL, 1973-1974, vol. 2, “The Normal Way of Fruit-bearing and Shepherding for the Building Up of the Church,” p. 549)

### Today's Reading

We...need to turn away from those who make divisions (Rom. 16:17; Titus 3:10; 1 Cor. 1:13). Even if a close relative such as our husband, wife, father, mother, brother, or sister is a division-maker, we must turn away from their division. The same applies to our intimate and close friends...When Moses' sister, Miriam, became leprous, she was quarantined in Moses' presence (Num. 12). To quarantine is a medical term that means to separate. To separate, or to quarantine, a leper was not to give him up or to cast him away; it was simply to keep the leprous one separate from the rest of God's people so that they would not be contaminated by the leprosy. Once the leprosy was healed, that man was declared clean, and he could come back into the fellowship of God's people. According to Leviticus 13 and 14, to discern whether or not a person was leprous or was cleansed from leprosy was a difficult thing. This could not be discerned by ordinary people; it could be discerned only with great care and by a proper priest. (The Practice of the Church Life according to the God-ordained Way, pp. 17-18)

Wherever we go, we need to take care of our hearing. If we do this, whatever we hear will be right and positive. Then we will go the right way and do the right work. However, if we do not take care of our hearing but give ear to negative speaking, our deeds and work will be affected in a negative way.

If any church would stop hearing negative things, that church would be very healthy and living. The church that is the weakest and the most deadened is the one full of criticism, gossip, and reasoning.

Since we are God's priests, we need to ask ourselves what kind of things we are willing to hear. Do we intend to hear positive things or negative things? Because we often hear unclean things, things that are unhealthy and contagious, we need to wash our ears with the blood of Christ. According to the Bible, where the blood washes, there the Spirit anoints. After the washing of the blood, we will enjoy the anointing of the Spirit. Then we will forget the negative things we heard, or at least we will not repeat these things. We will also become healthy and living, and the church will go on in our health.

The first thing that we as God's priests need to deal with is our listening. Positive listening will rescue us from negative listening. If we listen to God's word from morning to evening, we will not have an ear to listen to any negative speaking. (Life-study of Leviticus, pp. 261, 260-261, 266)

Further Reading: The Normal Way of Fruit-bearing and Shepherding for the Building Up of the Church, chs. 1, 3; The Ministry of the New Testament and the Teaching and Fellowship of the Apostles, ch. 2; Life-study of Leviticus, msgs. 22, 29-30, 37; CWWL, 1973-1974, vol. 1, “The History of the Church and the Local Churches,” ch. 10

## << WEEK 1 — DAY 6 >>

### Morning Nourishment

Lev. 2:11 No meal offering that you present to Jehovah shall be made with leaven, for you shall not burn any leaven or any honey as an offering by fire to Jehovah.

2 Tim. 2:22 But flee youthful lusts, and pursue righteousness, faith, love, peace with those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart.

In the meal offering there is no honey, which will ferment (Lev. 2:11). This signifies that there is no natural affection or natural good in Christ...Nothing damages the church life, the Lord's ministry, and the Lord's work more than ambition and natural affection. Ambition for leadership is leaven, and leaven brings in corruption. Natural affection is honey, and honey brings in rottenness.

Ambition and affection are closely related. Suppose a brother has a particular ambition. If his ambition is fulfilled, he will be happy. If it is not fulfilled, he will be unhappy. He will love anyone who helps him to gain what he desires. But anyone who hinders him in fulfilling his ambition will be regarded as an enemy.

If we want to serve the Lord for a long period of time, we must look to the Lord to purify us from ambition and natural affection....We should have only the crossing out of the Lord's death [signified by the salt of the meal offering in verse 13]. Then we will have pure humility and pure love. We will be pure, and we will live a life like that of the Lord Jesus when He was on earth, a life without leaven and honey but full of salt. (Life-study of Leviticus, pp. 115-117)

### Today's Reading

It is the Lord's mercy that He has revealed to me the vision. I advise you not to follow me but to follow this vision which Brother Nee and all the servants of the Lord throughout the ages have left to us and which I have handed to you. This is indeed the vision that extends from the first scene of Adam to the last scene of the New Jerusalem. More than fifty years have passed. I have seen with my own eyes that those who take the way of the Lord's recovery for a while and then leave do not come to a proper ending. There is only one way. All spiritual things are one. There is one God, one Lord, one Spirit, one church, one Body, one testimony, one way, one flow, and one work. If you do not take this way, you will have no way to take. (The Vision of the Age, p. 51)

The animals mentioned in Leviticus 11...bear a great significance, for they typify persons; they are figures that describe different kinds of persons. This is proved by Acts 10:9b-14, 27-29. Peter "beheld heaven opened, and a certain vessel like a great sheet descending, being let down by four corners onto the earth, in which were all the four-footed animals and reptiles of the earth and birds of heaven" (vv. 11-12). At first, Peter did not understand that these animals, reptiles, and birds were figures of people. Eventually he came to understand this, for in the house of Cornelius there were people, not beasts (vv. 27-28).

To eat is to contact the things outside of us that could affect us inside. This especially refers to our contacting of people. When we eat we contact something that is outside of us, something that has nothing to do with us. However, if we eat that thing, it can affect us inside. In Leviticus 11 the things we eat signify people, and eating signifies our contacting of people.

To eat is not merely to contact something but also to receive something into us. Once a thing is received into us, that thing can be digested inside to become our constituent, that is, our being, our constitution. We all are a constitution of the food we eat and digest. Eventually, what we digest becomes us; it becomes our very constitution. This indicates that contacting people is an important matter. If we intend to live a holy life as required by the holy God, we need to be careful about our contact with people. Our contact with certain kinds of people can cause us to be reconstituted and thus make us another kind of person. Whatever we contact we will receive, and whatever we receive will reconstitute us, making us a different kind of person from what we are now. (Life-study of Leviticus, pp. 313-314)

Further Reading: Life-study of Leviticus, msgs. 13, 36

## « WEEK 1 — HYMN

What Miracle! What Mystery!

1

What miracle! What mystery!

That God and man should blended be!

God became man to make man God,

Untraceable economy!

From His good pleasure, heart's desire,

His highest goal attained will be.

2

Flesh He became, the first God-man,

His pleasure that I God may be:

In life and nature I'm God's kind,

Though Godhead's His exclusively.

His attributes my virtues are;

His glorious image shines through me.

3

No longer I alone that live,

But God together lives with me.

Built with the saints in the Triune God,

His universal house we'll be,

And His organic Body we

For His expression corp'rately.

4

Jerusalem, the ultimate,

Of visions the totality;

The Triune God, tripartite man—

A loving pair eternally—

As man yet God they coinhere,

A mutual dwelling place to be;

God's glory in humanity

Shines forth in splendor radiantly!