

The Holy Word for Morning Revival

2016 Memorial Day Conference

**THE INCREASE OF CHRIST
FOR THE BUILDING UP OF THE CHURCH**

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BANNERS

The Acts of the Apostles is a book without an ending because this book is still being continued for the increase of Christ; the work of the Holy Spirit in preaching Christ for His increase, propagation, multiplication, and spread through the believers of Christ has not yet been completed and has needed to be continued for a long period of time.

The increase and spread of the church is the increase and spread of Christ, who passed through death and entered into resurrection to impart His divine life into those who believe into Him so that they could become His reproduction.

Everything in the church must be in the nature of life, with the content of life, and in the imparting of life; when the branches of the vine receive a sufficient supply of the life-giving Spirit as the life-juice of Christ, they bear fruit as the overflow of the inner life supply.

God's desire is for Christ to increase and grow in the church and for Christ to become the content and element of the church so that the church would arrive "at a full-grown man, at the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ."

Message 1

The Increase of Christ in the Continuation of the Book of Acts

Scripture Reading: Acts 28:31; John 5:17; Acts 1:13-14; 6:7; 11:23-24; 19:20; 26:18

OUTLINE

<< DAY 1 >>

I. The Acts of the Apostles is a book without an ending because this book is still being continued for the increase of Christ (28:31):

- A. The Lord said, “My Father is working until now, and I also am working” (John 5:17); this shows that since the rebellion of Satan and the fall of man, God has been working until now, and the Lord also is working.
- B. The book of Acts is a record of the work of God; after Acts 28 many vessels are still carrying on with His work; His work is continuing and has not stopped.
- C. His work will go on until the kingdom and even until the new heaven and new earth; God is always advancing; He never stops; if we know this and believe in this, we will praise the Lord; even as the New Jerusalem, His slaves will serve Him as priests (Rev. 22:3; cf. Acts 13:36a).
- D. The work of the Holy Spirit in preaching Christ for His propagation, multiplication, and spread through the believers of Christ was not yet completed and needed to be continued for a long period of time.
- E. Such an evangelistic work for Christ’s increase, propagation, multiplication, and spread is according to God’s New Testament economy for the producing of many sons for God (Rom. 8:29) that they might be the members of Christ to constitute His Body (12:5) for the carrying out of God’s eternal plan and the fulfillment of His eternal will; this is revealed in detail in the twenty-one Epistles and the book of Revelation, which follow the book of Acts.

<< DAY 2 >>

- F. Since God is after a corporate, shining vessel, a vessel of testimony, His children must be brought to the awareness of the Body of Christ and learn to live the Body life; otherwise, they are useless in His hand and can never fulfill His goal (Rom. 12:1-3; 1 Cor. 12:12; Rev. 1:10-12).
- G. Even the testimony of the overcomers is maintained on behalf of the whole church; they do the work, and the whole church receives the benefit (12:5-9; 2:7, 11, 17, 26-28; 3:3, 5, 12, 20-21).
- H. The overcomers are not for themselves; they stand on the ground of the

church, and they are there to bring the whole church to perfection; even the victories of the overcomers are corporate victories (cf. Phil. 1:19).

« DAY 3 »

II. The word of God is still growing and being multiplied for the increase of Christ (Acts 6:7; 12:24; 19:20):

- A. Grew in Acts 6:7 refers to the growth in life, indicating that the word of God is a matter of life that grows as a seed sown into man's heart for the increase of Christ, the growth of God, within us (Mark 4:14; Col. 2:19).
- B. Multiplied in Acts 12:24 refers to the increase of Christ in numbers; actually, the multiplication of the disciples depends on the growth of the word.
- C. New disciples are "added to the Lord" to become the parts of Christ, the members of Christ (5:14; 11:24; Rom. 15:16).
- D. We need to encourage the new believers "to remain with the Lord with purpose of heart"; this is to be persistently faithful to the Lord, cleave to Him, and live in close fellowship with Him (Acts 11:23).

III. The continuation of the book of Acts is the continuation of Christ with the corporate living of the perfected God-men as the reality of the Body of Christ; the apostle Paul, as a pattern to all the believers, the members of the Body of Christ, lived Christ for His magnification as His continuation (Phil. 1:19-21a; Acts 9:4-5, 15; 26:19; 1 Tim. 1:16):

- A. Paul was a disciple of Christ—seeing Christ, hearing Christ, and learning Christ as the reality is in Jesus (Acts 9:1-19, 25-27; 22:14-15; Eph. 4:20-21).
- B. Paul was a chosen vessel of Christ to contain Him, be filled with Him, and overflow with Him for His fullness (Acts 9:15; 2 Cor. 4:7; Eph. 1:22-23; 3:19).
- C. Paul was a man of prayer (Acts 9:11; 13:1-3; 14:23; 16:13, 25; 20:36; 21:5; 22:17; 28:8; Eph. 6:18; Col. 4:2).
- D. Paul depended on the Body, doing everything in the Body, through the Body, and for the Body (Acts 9:11, 17-18, 25-27; 1 Cor. 1:1; 12:14-27).
- E. Paul practiced calling on the name of the Lord (Acts 9:14, 21; 22:16; 2 Tim. 2:22; Rom. 10:12-13; Phil. 2:9-11).
- F. Paul lived by the all-inclusive Spirit of Jesus (the Spirit of a man with abundant strength for suffering) for his preaching ministry, a ministry of suffering carried out among human beings and for human beings in the human life for the building up of the Body of Christ (John 7:37-39; Acts 9:16;

16:7, 22-34; Phil. 3:10; Col. 1:24; 2 Cor. 6:4; 11:23; Heb. 6:19-20; 13:13).

- G. Paul lived in his mingled spirit (the divine Spirit mingled with his human spirit as one spirit) (Acts 17:16; 19:21; Rom. 8:4, 6, 16; 1 Cor. 6:17).
- H. Paul was filled with the Spirit of joy, essentially for his existence, and with the Spirit of power, economically for his function (Acts 13:9, 52; Eph. 5:18).
- I. Paul exercised himself to always have a good and pure conscience (Acts 23:1; 24:16; 1 Tim. 1:19; 3:9).
- J. Paul lived a life of always rejoicing in the Lord and thanking Him (Acts 16:25; 27:35; Phil. 4:4; Col. 3:16; 1 Thes. 5:16-18).

« DAY 4 »

- K. Paul was allied with God and assisted by God to speak the gospel boldly in the name of Jesus to spread the testimony of Jesus unto the uttermost part of the earth (Acts 9:20, 27; 26:22-29; 28:31; 1:8; 1 Thes. 2:2; cf. Rom. 15:24, 28).
- L. Paul cherished the saints in the humanity of Jesus and nourished them in the divinity of Christ with all the truths of God's eternal economy, displaying in his living the word of the Lord Jesus that it is better to give than to receive (Acts 20:18-38; 1 Thes. 2:1-12).
- M. Paul's fourth ministry journey (Acts 27—28) shows in a particular way his life of living Christ, magnifying Christ, doing all things in Christ, and pursuing Christ in order to be found in Christ (Phil. 1:19-21a; 3:8-9, 14; 4:13):
 1. All during the apostle's long and unfortunate imprisonment-voyage, the Lord kept the apostle in His ascendancy and enabled him to live a life far beyond the realm of anxiety; this life was fully dignified, with the highest standard of human virtues expressing the most excellent divine attributes (vv. 5-9).
 2. This was Jesus living again on the earth in His divinely enriched humanity! This was the wonderful, excellent, and mysterious God-man, who lived in the Gospels, continuing to live in the Acts through one of His many members! This was a living witness of the incarnated, crucified, resurrected, and God-exalted Christ!
 3. In Paul's living and ministry he expressed the very true God, who in Jesus Christ had gone through the processes of incarnation, human living, crucifixion, and resurrection, and who, as the all-inclusive Spirit, was then living in him and through him (Gal. 1:15-16, 24; 2:20; 3:14; cf. Acts 28:6).
 4. On the sea in the storm, the Lord had made the apostle not only the owner of his fellow voyagers (27:24) but also their life-guarantor and comforter (vv. 22, 25); now, on the land in peace, the Lord made him furthermore not only a magical attraction in the eyes of the superstitious people (28:1-6) but also a healer and a joy to them (vv. 7-10).

5. The warm welcome that Paul received from the brothers in Rome and the loving care of those in Puteoli (vv. 13-15) show the beautiful Body life that existed in the early days among the churches and apostles:
 - a. Apparently, the apostle, as a prisoner in bonds, had entered the region of the dark capital of the Satan-usurped empire; actually, as the ambassador of Christ with His authority (Eph. 6:20; Matt. 28:18-19), he had come into another part of the participation in the Body life of Christ's church in the kingdom of God on earth.
 - b. While he was suffering the persecution of religion in the empire of Satan (the satanic chaos in the old creation), he was enjoying the church life in the kingdom of God (the divine economy for the new creation); this was a comfort and an encouragement to him.
- N. The ultimate issue of the church will be the New Jerusalem in eternity future as God's full and eternal expression; this should be the reality and goal of all our gospel preaching today as we follow the pattern of the apostle Paul—"proclaiming the kingdom of God and teaching the things concerning the Lord Jesus Christ with all boldness, unhindered" (Acts 28:31).

« DAY 5 »

IV. Acts 26:18 reveals the work that we must do today for the increase and building up of the Body of Christ; this verse unveils the all-inclusive contents of our divine commission—"to open their eyes, to turn them from darkness to light and from the authority of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and an inheritance among those who have been sanctified by faith in Me":

- A. This is to carry out the fulfillment of God's jubilee, the acceptable year of the Lord, proclaimed by the Lord Jesus in Luke 4:18-21 according to God's New Testament economy.
- B. We need to pray over the contents of our divine commission in Acts 26:18, asking the Lord to make them our experience and reality so that we can bring others into this experience and reality (Eph. 3:8-9).

« DAY 6 »

V. If we would be in the continuation of the book of Acts, we need to continue to live in the divine history in the unique stream of the work of the Lord by having an upper-room consecration (1:13-14; Hymns, #907):

- A. We are not here for a movement but for the Lord's recovery, and the recovery can be carried out only by the specific and extraordinary consecration in the upper room.

- B. The Lord's move was with those in the upper room, with those whose eyes had been opened and whose hearts had been touched (Luke 12:49-50; Acts 2:3-4; 17:6b; Rom. 12:11).
- C. It is a small number who will turn the world and change the age; if we would be in the upper room, we need to pray in a specific way and say, "Lord, I am willing to be in the upper room for the recovery of Your testimony."

<< WEEK 1 — DAY 1 >>

Morning Nourishment

Acts 28:30-31 “And he remained two whole years in his own rented dwelling and welcomed all those who came to him, proclaiming the kingdom of God and teaching the things concerning the Lord Jesus Christ with all boldness, unhindered.”

John 5:17 “...My Father is working until now, and I also am working.”

There are sixty-six books in the Bible. When we come to the end of many of these books, we can say that the book is finished....But there is one book in the Bible which does not have an end. All the other sixty-five books have an end. But one book does not have an end. This book is the Acts of the Apostles. Why does Acts 28 end the way it does? When you read Acts 28, you feel as if the book has not yet concluded. This book does not have an ending. The Acts of the Apostles is a book without an ending because this book is still being continued. Perhaps the acts of the first-century apostles have ended, but the book of Acts as a whole has not yet ended. Until now we still have the Acts of the Apostles with us. This book has not yet ended. (CWWN, vol. 37, p. 121)

Today's Reading

[The Lord's word in John 5:17] shows that since the rebellion of Satan and the fall of man, God has been working until now, and the Lord is also working. What is the book of Acts? The book of Acts is not a record of the work of Paul or a record of the work of Peter or John. The book of Acts is a record of the work of God. Who can say that God has done no work after Acts 28? Who can say that God's work stopped after Acts 28?

The book of Acts does not have an ending. After chapter 28, many of God's vessels are still carrying on with His work. His work is continuing and has not stopped. Everything was not over after Paul worked in Rome for two years. Paul lived in Rome and was later martyred. None of these things are recorded in the book of Acts. Peter, Paul, and John are three important persons, yet none of their endings were recorded. How can we say that the book of Acts has ended? God's testimony can never be finished. We could say the same thing even if there was a twenty-ninth chapter, or a thirtieth chapter, or even a hundredth chapter. If one wanted to write more, new things could always be added. This is why Acts stops at chapter 28. Although the written record no longer continued after chapter 28, God's work has been going on. The work in the first century was not the peak. For four thousand years, God has been working. If we say that Acts 28 was the peak, we must be at the bottom of the hill; we must have come down from the peak. This is not true, because the Lord said, “My Father is working until now, and I also am working” [John 5:17]. We should not assume that God's work reached its peak at the time of Paul, and we should not consider that God's work reached its peak at the time of Martin Luther either. No, the first century was not the end of God's work, nor was the sixteenth century the end of His work. Even last century was not the end of God's work. His work will go on until the kingdom and even until the new heaven and the new earth. God is always advancing; He never stops. If we know this and believe in this, we will praise our Lord. (CWWN, vol. 37, pp. 121-122)

This book [of Acts] was not actually ended; rather, it was left open that more may be added. The reason for this must have been that the work of the Holy Spirit in preaching Christ for His propagation, multiplication, and spread through the believers of Christ was not yet completed and needed to be continued for a long period of time. Such an evangelistic work for Christ's propagation, multiplication, and spread is according to God's New Testament economy for the producing of many sons for God (Rom. 8:29) that they might be the members of Christ to constitute His Body (Rom. 12:5) for the carrying out of God's eternal plan and the fulfillment of His eternal will. This is revealed in detail in the twenty-one Epistles and the book of Revelation, which follow this book. (Acts 28:31, footnote 2)

Further Reading: CWWN, vol. 37, ch. 20

<< WEEK 1 — DAY 2 >>

Morning Nourishment

Rev. 1:11-12 “...What you see write in a scroll and send it to the seven churches....And I turned to see the voice that spoke with me; and when I turned, I saw seven golden lampstands.”

Rom. 12:1 “I exhort you therefore, brothers, through the compassions of God to present your bodies a living sacrifice...”

5 “So we who are many are one Body in Christ, and individually members one of another.”

Every time God advances, He finds some vessels. In the book of Acts, God found some vessels. At the time of Martin Luther, God found a vessel, and at the time of John Wesley, He also found a vessel. Every time there is a spiritual revival, God finds some vessels. Where is God’s vessel today? It is true that the Father is working until now. But who is continuing to work together with Him? Who can say, “I also am working”? This is the crucial question.

Brothers and sisters, if God grants us light and if we see God’s truth, we will admit that God is after the same vessel today that He ordained at the beginning. This vessel is the church. In other words, God is not after an individual vessel today, but a corporate one. Since God is after a corporate vessel, His children must be brought to the awareness of the Body of Christ and the Body life. Otherwise, they are useless in His hand and can never fulfill His goal. (CWWN, vol. 37, p. 123)

Today’s Reading

Revelation 1 tells us that the churches are golden lampstands. God does not simply say that the churches are golden; He says that the churches are golden lampstands. If the churches are just golden, they cannot satisfy God. God says that the churches are golden lampstands because golden lampstands shine and enlighten. God desires the church to be a shining vessel, a vessel of testimony. From the beginning God has ordained that the church be a lampstand. The church, not individuals, is a lampstand before the Lord. It is not enough just to be golden, and it is not enough just to be of God. There must be the shining for God and the testimony for Him before the church can be considered the lampstand.

Hence, the church exists for God’s testimony. Anything that is not golden is not the church, and anything that is not a lampstand is not the church. Anything that does not have life within is not the church, and anything that does not have the testimony within is also not the church. The church must realize what God is doing and what He is after in this age; it must realize what God’s testimony on the earth today is. Only then can the church be considered the golden lampstand.

Simply put, God’s work is always advancing. He is still seeking this vessel. His vessel today is the same vessel He intended to have at the beginning; the church is this vessel, not single individuals.

Some may ask, What does it mean that the overcomers come out of the church? It is true that there needs to be overcomers who come out of the church. But even the testimony of the overcomers is maintained on behalf of the corporate whole; it is not for individuals alone. The overcomers are not men who consider themselves extraordinary, better than others, and who put everyone else aside. The overcomers work on behalf of the whole church. They do the work, while the whole church gains the benefit. The overcomers are not for themselves; they stand on the ground of the church, and they are there to bring the whole church to perfection. They stand on the ground of the church and maintain their stand on behalf of the church. Even the victories of the overcomers are corporate victories.

The vessel God is after is a corporate one. Therefore, we have to learn to live the Body life. In order to live the Body life, we have to deny the natural life and be judged and dealt with by God in a deep way. We must learn obedience, and we must also learn fellowship. In this way, we will have the chance of becoming God’s vessel. (CWWN, vol. 37, pp. 123-124)

Further Reading: CWWL, 1963, vol.1, “The Divine Stream”

<< WEEK 1 — DAY 3 >>

Morning Nourishment

Acts 6:7 "And the word of God grew, and the number of the disciples in Jerusalem multiplied greatly..."

12:24 "But the word of God grew and multiplied."

19:20 "Thus, the word of the Lord grew mightily and prevailed."

5:14 "And believers were all the more being added to the Lord, multitudes of both men and women."

[In Acts 6:7] grew refers to growth in life, indicating that the word of God is a matter of life that grows as a seed sown into man's heart (Mark 4:14). (Acts 6:7, footnote 1)

In Acts we are told three times that the word grew and that the word multiplied (Acts 6:7; 12:24; 19:20). A lifeless thing can never grow but the word grows. Actually, the multiplication of the disciples depends upon the growth of the word. However, many who read Acts would mostly pay their attention to the Spirit. No doubt, the Spirit is stressed in Acts. But those who received the Spirit did not go out and preach the Spirit. Rather, they preached the word. Many verses in Acts tell us that what was preached and taught by the first group of believers was the word. The scattered ones in Acts 8 went out to bring the good news of the word (v. 1). People believed in the word, received the word, and the word became so prevailing in that it grew and multiplied. In Acts 12 is a very meaningful contrast. King Herod was persecuting the church and especially Peter, but eventually Herod died (v. 23). Right after his death Acts 12:24 says, "But the word of God grew and multiplied." The persecutor died but the word grew. (Elders' Training, Book 5: Fellowship concerning the Lord's Up-to-date Move, pp. 37-38)

Today's Reading

I want to impress you that the divine Word is what we really need and we should be one with the Word, full of the Word, saturated with the Word, and constituted with the Word. Then when we minister, we minister the Word by the Spirit. We do not minister the Spirit by the Word, but we minister the Word by the Spirit. In chapter 4 of Acts, while the disciples and the apostles were praying, they were filled with the Spirit and began to speak the word with boldness (Acts 4:31). They did not teach or preach the Spirit; the Spirit was only the power for them to preach the word. (Elders' Training, Book 5: Fellowship concerning the Lord's Up-to-date Move, p. 38)

Ephesians 1:11 says, "In whom also we were designated as an inheritance, having been predestinated according to the purpose of the One who works all things according to the counsel of His will." The word "counsel" can also be translated as "plan." In God's plan we have become portions of "Christ." Hence, all of us together become the Christ. We become the Christ by being in Christ. First Corinthians 12:12 says, "For even as the body is one and has many members, yet all the members of the body, being many, are one body, so also is the Christ." This Christ is the corporate Christ, who is composed of the Head and the Body. Hence, we are the Christ in the big corporate Christ, and we have all become a part of Christ. Since God's plan is in Christ, we have become a part of God's plan as well. (CWWN, vol. 44, pp. 746-747)

[To remain with the Lord means to] be persistently faithful to the Lord, cleave to Him, and live in close fellowship with Him. (Acts 11:23, footnote 2)

Luke's narration [in Acts], as an account of the Lord's move on earth, does not stress doctrine but the testimony of the Lord's witnesses (1:8). Hence, in his narration there are no details of doctrines but of the events that occurred to His witnesses, in order to portray their testimonies in their lives. It is especially so with Paul's voyage in the last two chapters.

Here Paul was a witness of the Lord. Therefore, we should not read Luke's account merely as a story of a storm at sea. Rather, we need to see in this story the description of the life of one of Christ's living witnesses. (Life-study of Acts, p. 611)

Further Reading: Elders' Training, Book 5: Fellowship concerning the Lord's Up-to-date Move, ch. 3; CWWL, 1965, vol. 1, "The All-inclusive Spirit of Christ."

<< WEEK 1 — DAY 4 >>

Morning Nourishment

Acts 26:22 "Having therefore obtained the help which is from God..."

27:23-25 "For this very night an angel of the God whose I am and whom I serve stood by me, saying, Do not fear, Paul; you must stand before Caesar. And behold, God has granted you all those who are sailing with you. Therefore, cheer up, men, for I believe God that it shall be so, even in the way in which it has been spoken to me."

The Greek word [for help, or assistance, in Acts 26:22] originally meant alliance. This implies that the apostle was allied with God and realized God's assistance in this alliance. (Acts 26:22, footnote 1)

On the sea in the storm, the Lord had made the apostle not only the owner of his fellow voyagers (Acts 27:24) but also their life-guarantor and comforter (27:22, 25)....All during the apostle's long and unfortunate imprisonment-voyage, the Lord kept the apostle in His ascendancy and enabled him to live a life far beyond the realm of anxiety. This life was fully dignified, with the highest standard of human virtues expressing the most excellent divine attributes, a life that resembled the one that the Lord Himself had lived on the earth years before. This was Jesus living again on the earth in His divinely enriched humanity! This was the wonderful, excellent, and mysterious God-man, who lived in the Gospels, continuing to live in the Acts through one of His many members! This was a living witness of the incarnated, crucified, resurrected, and God-exalted Christ! Paul in his voyage lived and magnified Christ (Phil. 1:20-21). (Acts 28:9, footnote 1)

Today's Reading

[In Acts 27 and 28], we see Paul's ascendancy over the situation. We also see the wisdom and dignity of his human life. No doubt, Paul's life was a life of living Christ and magnifying Him.

If we read this portion carefully, we shall see that here Paul was living the very life that he aspired to live in Philippians 3. In that chapter Paul says that he pursued Christ in order to be found in Him (vv. 9, 12)....Throughout a rough and difficult voyage, Paul lived a life of ascendancy and dignity and full of wisdom. Although he was a prisoner, he behaved like a king. Furthermore, he had foresight and wisdom to handle matters.

No doubt, the Lord was with Paul. On the one hand, he was a prisoner, one among two hundred seventy-six passengers. On the other hand, he was the center, the focus, of the situation, whether on the ship or on the island where they wintered after the ship was destroyed. In every circumstance Paul lived a life of ascendancy.

The warm welcome of the brothers from Rome [Acts 28:15] and the loving care of those in Puteoli (vv. 13-14) show the beautiful Body life in the early days among the churches and the apostles. This life was a part of the heavenly kingdom life on the Satan-darkened and man-inhabited earth. Apparently the apostle, as a prisoner in bonds, had entered the area of the dark capital of the Satan-usurped empire. Actually, as the ambassador of Christ with His authority (Eph. 6:20; Matt. 28:18-19), he had come into another part of the participation in His church's Body life in the kingdom of God on earth. While he was suffering the persecution of religion in the empire of Satan, he was enjoying the church life in the kingdom of God, which was a comfort and an encouragement to him.

According to Acts 28:15, when Paul saw the brothers, he thanked God and took courage. This indicates that the apostle was quite human. Although he was encouraged by the Lord directly (23:11) and he was very courageous all the way in his voyage (27:22-25, 33-36), he still took courage at the brothers' warm welcome. It was in Paul's uplifted humanity with its human virtues that Christ with His divine attributes was expressed in his voyage. He magnified Christ all the way in his adverse situation (Phil. 1:20). (Life-study of Acts, pp. 608-609, 618-619)

Further Reading: Life-study of Acts, msgs. 70-72; CWWL, 1964, vol. 2, "A General Sketch of the New Testament in the Light of Christ and the Church, Part 1: The Gospels and the Acts," chs. 6, 8; The Advance of the Lord's Recovery Today, chs. 1-2

<< WEEK 1 — DAY 5 >>

Morning Nourishment

Acts 26:16 "...I have appeared to you for this purpose, to appoint you as a minister and a witness both of the things in which you have seen Me and of the things in which I will appear to you."

18 "To open their eyes, to turn them from darkness to light and from the authority of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and an inheritance among those who have been sanctified by faith in Me."

[Acts 26:18 shows us] the work that you young people should do today. Do not preach the traditional gospel of Christianity. Rather, open the eyes of this generation that they may turn from darkness to light. The first thing we must do is to help others to see. In order to do this, we ourselves must have the vision and see the heavenly things. We must see the things concerning Christ, not by being taught but by having Christ appear to us. After you have seen the vision, you need to contact people, telling them that Jesus has appeared to you and that you have seen Him. (CWWL, 1975-1976, vol. 3, "Young People's Training," p. 310)

Today's Reading

The complete, perfect, whole gospel is found in Acts 26:18: to open people's eyes and to turn them from darkness to light and from the authority of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, be sanctified by faith, and enjoy the common portion of the saints to have the church life. In this one verse there are seven points: (1) to open people's eyes, (2) to turn them from darkness to light, (3) to turn them from the authority of Satan to God, (4) to help them receive forgiveness of sins, (5) to help them to be sanctified by faith, (6) that they may have a common portion among the saints, and (7) be in the church life. Have you ever heard such a gospel? This is the gospel that the young people must preach to this generation. Do not preach the poor gospel about going to heaven—preach the uplifted gospel revealed in Acts 26:18.

You need to go to the Lord and pray, saying, "Lord, open my eyes. I don't need knowledge, Lord. I need my eyes to be opened. Lord, turn me from anything dark. I don't want to remain in darkness. Lord, turn me from darkness to light." This is spiritual reality. When we are in it, people will realize it when we contact them. You also need to pray, "Lord, turn me from the authority, the dominion, of Satan to Yourself. I must be a person who is absolutely in God. God is my sphere, my realm, my kingdom. I must be in God." If you pray like this, you will become another person. I can assure you that you will be different. If necessary, even fast and pray about these matters, saying, "Lord, I want to have my eyes opened like they have never been opened before. I don't want to be opaque. I want to have eyes like the four living creatures in the book of Revelation." The living creatures have eyes everywhere, without and within. We need to be like this. Then when we contact people, they will realize that we are crystal clear.

We also need to pray, "Lord, grant me a full and thorough forgiveness of all my sins. I want to have a clearance of sins from the top to the bottom. I would leave nothing that has not been dealt with. Lord, I also want to be fully sanctified. I don't want to be merely a forgiven person but also a sanctified person. Then I will be able to enjoy my portion, the all-inclusive Christ." Day by day we enjoy Christ as our portion, not in an individualistic way but by enjoying Him among the saints,...those who are sanctified in the church...Oh, how we must pray over these seven matters! Pray desperately to the Lord, saying, "Lord, I want to experience the gospel that You revealed to Paul as mentioned in Acts 26:18. I want to experience this full, complete, perfect, and thorough gospel." This gospel not only covers God's kingdom but also Satan's kingdom. It includes the rich Christ as our portion and all the saints as the corporate Body, the church of Christ. How we need to experience this gospel!...Whenever you pray this way, the Lord Jesus will appear to you, and His appearing will give you a vision. (CWWL, 1975-1976, vol. 3, "Young People's Training," pp. 311-312)

Further Reading: Life-study of Acts, msg. 55; Young People's Training, ch. 1; The Triune God's Revelation and His Move, msg. 12

Morning Nourishment

Acts 1:13-14 "And when they entered, they went up to the upper room where they were residing....These all continued steadfastly with one accord in prayer, together with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with His brothers."

Acts 1 speaks of the upper room in Jerusalem. In this upper room a group of about a hundred and twenty prayed for ten days in one accord. They not only prayed, but they also consecrated themselves to the Lord, offering themselves to Him in a very real and practical way.

Three and a half years earlier, the Lord Jesus came to Peter by the seashore, and Peter offered himself to Him. Peter left his job and began to follow the Lord (Matt. 4:18-20). We may say that Peter consecrated himself to the Lord. However, Peter's experience in the upper room was something else. Here Peter had a new kind of consecration, not an ordinary consecration but something specific. At the seashore Peter gave up his job, indicated by his leaving his fishing nets, but in the upper room he gave up much more....In order to be in the upper room,...[Peter and the others] gave up Judaism, their country, their neighbors and friends, and their relatives, and they were willing to risk their lives. (CWWL, 1965, vol. 3, "The Heavenly Vision," pp. 209-210)

Today's Reading

To take the way of the Lord's recovery is not cheap. This way is expensive; it requires a costly consecration....We are here not for a movement but for the Lord's recovery. How can the recovery be realized? The recovery can be realized, carried out, only by the experience of the consecration in the upper room. This is not an ordinary consecration; it is a special consecration, a specific consecration, an extraordinary consecration. This consecration is a turning point.

What happened to those one hundred and twenty who were in the upper room in Acts 1? They all became a burnt offering. They were burning, and they burned others. We also need to be burned, and then we will burn others.

What are we expecting today? Do we expect a revival or a movement? Do we expect a new kind of Christian activity? What are we doing here? Have we come together to hear something that we cannot hear elsewhere?...We must be here for the Lord's recovery, which is the issue of an upper-room consecration.

When the Lord Jesus was on earth, great crowds followed Him. Multitudes were saved and healed, and multitudes received the favor of God. Eventually, however, there were only about one hundred and twenty in the upper room....The Lord's move was with those in the upper room, with those whose eyes had been opened and whose hearts had been touched. This small number came into the upper room to be burned, and then they turned the whole world upside down. The principle is the same today. It is a small number who will turn the world upside down and change the age.

Do you intend to be in the crowd or in the upper room? Will you remain one of the multitude, or by the Lord's mercy will you come into the upper room? I do not know who you are. Only the Lord knows who will be in the upper room.

I would urge you to pray to receive the Lord's mercy so that you might be in the upper room. If you are not willing to come here, then what you have read in these chapters will have nothing to do with you. Then you will be like those in the crowds, those the Lord did not count on. If you would be in the upper room, you need to pray in a specific way and say, "Lord, I am willing to be in the upper room for the recovery of Your testimony." (CWWL, 1965, vol. 3, "The Heavenly Vision," pp. 212-214)

What we must do today is just go along with the stream, just subject ourselves to the current of the work of the Holy Spirit. In this matter I have no personal liberty. It is not according to my thoughts, but according to His flowing [cf. Hymns, #907]. (CWWL, 1963, vol. 1, "The Divine Stream," p. 180)

Further Reading: CWWL, 1965, vol. 3, "The Heavenly Vision," ch. 6; CWWN, vol. 51, "Church Affairs," ch. 11

WEEK 1 — HYMN

Not where we elect to go Service — By the Lord's Leading

907

1. Not where we e - lect to go, But where Je - sus leads the way,
There the liv - ing wa - ters flow, There our dark - ness turns to day.

The musical notation is in treble clef with a common time signature (C). The melody is written on a single staff. Chords are indicated by letters above the notes: C, F/C, C, G, C, D, G, C, G, C. A measure number '5' is placed at the beginning of the second line of music.

2. Not our self-appointed task
Will the Lord's approval win,
But the work we did not ask,
Finished humbly, just for Him.
3. Not the prayer we long to plead
When we bend before the Throne,
But the touching deeper need
Of the Spirit's wordless groan.
4. Not the gift we proudly lay
On His altar will He heed,
If our hearts have said Him, "Nay,"
When He whispered, "I have need."
5. Thus we die, and dying live
In the heavenlies with the Lord;
Thus we serve, and pray, and give,
Christ Himself our great Reward.