

Message Three

The Need for All Our Service to Be Initiated by God

Scripture Reading: Num. 18:1; Rom. 11:36; 2 Sam. 7:1-3, 5, 11-14a; Job 38:2; 42:6; Acts 22:8, 10

OUTLINE

Day 1

I. All our work and service in the church must be initiated by God and must be according to His desire; otherwise, we will commit the iniquity of the sanctuary in our service to God—Num. 18:1; Rom. 11:36:

- A. Anything that is initiated or started by man, regardless of how much it is for God, is a religious activity devoid of the presence of Christ.
- B. A man may have no thought of God and no heart to serve God, but God comes to him, prompting and touching him, revealing Himself to him, giving him a command, a calling, and a leading, so that he receives something of God and cannot help but take action—Jer. 1:4-10, 17-19; Dan. 11:32.

Day 2

II. Abel offered sacrifices by faith according to God's revelation; his offering of a sacrifice came in response to God's word—Heb. 11:4; Gen. 3:21; 4:1-5; Rom. 10:17:

- A. After Adam's fall, God showed man redemption through the shedding of the blood of a sacrifice; because Abel heard, saw, and understood this, he offered a sacrifice according to God's instruction and ordination—Gen. 3:21; Heb. 9:22.
- B. Cain served God from himself according to his own will and opinion; he offered the fruit of the ground to God, and this offering was entirely a religious activity—Gen. 4:3.
- C. A religious activity is any service or worship that does not originate from God's revelation, command, and leading; the activities of one who serves God must originate absolutely from God, not from man.

Day 3

III. Noah served God according to God's command; even the measurements and methods of building the ark were not according

to Noah's imagination but to God's determination—6:14—7:5; Heb. 11:7.

IV. Abraham served God according to God's appearing—Acts 7:2-4; Gen. 12:1-4, 7-8; 13:14-18; 15:1; Heb. 11:8-10.

V. Moses served God according to God's instruction for the deliverance of the children of Israel and for the building of the tabernacle according to God's pattern—Exo. 3:10, 14-15; 25:9, 40; 40:16-17, 34-35; Acts 7:44; Heb. 8:5.

Day 4

VI. David feared God, cooperated with God, and let God work—Acts 13:36a:

- A. David was zealous to build a temple for God (2 Sam. 7:1-3), but God rejected David's good intention; God sent Nathan the prophet to David to ask, "Is it you who will build Me a house for Me to dwell in?"—v. 5.
- B. Our heart to serve God is acceptable, but our decision to do something for Him is not acceptable; God said, "Is it you...?"; God does not want us to decide anything on His behalf.
- C. We should love God and wait for His command; we should seek His will and wait for His revelation; just as the slave in the Old Testament loved his master and allowed his ear to be bored through with an awl to hear the word of his master, we must focus on waiting for our Master's command—Exo. 21:6; 2 Tim. 2:21b.
- D. Because David feared God, he did not react to Nathan; rather, he stopped; the act of stopping the building of the temple is a great matter.
- E. Sister M. E. Barber said, "Whoever cannot stop working for the sake of God cannot work for the sake of God."
- F. David's stopping established a twofold testimony in the universe: first, all the work in the universe should come from God, not from man; second, all that matters is what God does for man, not what man does for God.
- G. David wanted to build a temple for God, but God said that He would build David a house, from which a kingdom would come forth—2 Sam. 7:11-14a.

H. Even after God spoke this word to David, he fell twice—the son as the builder and the site for the temple both came out of David’s being forgiven of his sins:

1. First, he murdered Uriah and usurped his wife Bathsheba; after David sinned, he bore a son, Solomon, who would be the builder of God’s temple—11:2-17, 26-27.
 2. Second, he numbered the children of Israel, showing his hidden pride by putting his faith in numbers of warriors rather than in God; after David was chastised for numbering the people, he offered sacrifices on a piece of land, as instructed by God, which later became the site for the building of the temple—24:1-10, 18-25; 1 Chron. 21:1; 2 Chron. 3:1.
- I. We must learn deep within that God wants only our cooperation; He does not need us to do anything for Him; we must stop all our opinions, decisions, and ideas; we need to let Him speak, let Him come in, and let Him command—Matt. 17:5.

Day 5

VII. Paul served God according to the vision that he saw at his vanquishing conversion:

- A. Paul’s first question to the Lord was, “Who are You, Lord?”—this is related to Paul’s living, which was a quest to know Christ—Acts 22:8; Phil. 3:10a.
- B. Paul’s second question to the Lord was, “What shall I do, Lord?”—this is related to Paul’s service, which was purely initiated by God; blessed is he who asks this question!—Acts 22:10; Rom. 1:9; 2 Cor. 2:12-14.
- C. We should all ask the Lord, “What shall I do?” rather than telling Him, “This is what I will do.”

VIII. The basic principle in our service is that everything must be initiated by God:

- A. All those who serve God must see a principle from these examples: God’s work needs man’s cooperation, but it does not require man’s initiation; we should listen to Him unreservedly.
- B. The book of Job reveals that the unique prerequisite to receiving God’s revelation is to stop our speaking, our opinion, our view, and our self:
 1. The book of Job tells us that God’s counsel is darkened by man’s words (38:2); a person’s opinion is expressed in his word, and his word represents his opinion.
 2. The Lord said, “If anyone wants to come after Me, let him deny himself” (Matt. 16:24);

when Job said, “I abhor myself” (Job 42:6), he was referring to his opinions, views, and ideas.

Day 6

- C. Service from man has man’s natural enjoyment, preference, and flavor; service from God enables man to worship the Lord and advance even when facing difficulties; service from God enables man to not be anxious or quarrelsome.
- D. Although all our service is initiated by God, we must learn to bear responsibility and be absolutely faithful before the Lord; we need to rely on the Lord, carrying out our service by being joined to the Lord and being in fellowship with Him—1 Cor. 4:1-2; 7:25.
- E. This kind of service builds up the Body of Christ to consummate the New Jerusalem, and it prepares us to serve Him in and for eternity—Eph. 4:11-12; Rev. 22:3.

WEEK 3 — DAY 1

Morning Nourishment

Num. 18:1 Then Jehovah said to Aaron, You and your sons and your father's household with you shall bear the iniquity of the sanctuary; and you and your sons with you shall bear the iniquity of your priesthood.

Rom. 11:36 Because out from Him and through Him and to Him are all things. To Him be the glory forever. Amen.

God's Word shows us that some sins are committed before man, while others are committed before God. Some sins are committed against ordinary laws, while others are iniquities committed against the sanctuary. In short, there are sins committed in our daily life and sins committed in the work. The book of Numbers shows us that the sins of the priests were iniquities committed against the sanctuary. Using today's terminology, they are sins committed in God's work. Most people only commit sins in their daily life, but a worker of the Lord can commit an additional kind of sin. Most sins are common sins, but a worker of the Lord can commit some special sins—sins in God's work. We have to pay special attention to this matter. A sin pertaining to the work may not necessarily involve such things as pride or jealousy. When the flesh is manifested, when the self-will is exposed, and when one speaks rashly or makes suggestions rashly, one often commits the special sin that pertains to the work....Those who work for the Lord are liable of committing the iniquity of the sanctuary in addition to all the other common sins. Sinning in the work means offending God in His holiness, glory, and sovereignty. In God's work, everything that is incompatible with God's will is a sin and is an iniquity of the sanctuary. (CWWN, vol. 42, p. 359)

Today's Reading

There are three very important considerations in God's work which we should never forget. First, the initiation of God's work must be according to His will. Second, the advance of God's work must be according to His power, not our own power. Third, the result of God's work must be for His glory. If we fail in any of these three points, we have committed an iniquity against the sanctuary. No work can be initiated by ourselves, no work can be carried out by our own strength, and no work should result in our own glory.

Christ...is the Lord, and only He is the Head. Only He is worthy to be the Lord of all, and only He is worthy to initiate any work. In God's work, no decision should be made through the discussion of two or three brothers. The result and worth of a work, whether or not it is spiritual and pleasing to God, depend not on the amount of work that has been done, but on how much of the work is initiated by ourselves and how much is initiated by God. The less we initiate, the more spiritual, worthwhile, and acceptable it is to God... We only need to do His will and find out if something is according to His will. We do not have to worry about the result. The initiation of God's work must be His will and His will alone. (CWWN, vol. 42, pp. 359-360)

Anything that is initiated or started by man, regardless of how much it is for God, is a religious activity. In God's eyes, this kind of activity is not His service or His work. God considers only what He has initiated and started as a service and work to Him.

God wants man to cooperate with Him, but He does not want man to initiate anything....To an unbeliever, any kind of Christian activity is a religious activity, but according to our knowledge of God, there are two kinds of activities: one is a religious activity, and the other is an action initiated by God. The second type is not a religious activity. An action initiated by God will come from God's prompting within man. Often a man has no thought of God and no heart to serve God, but God comes to him, prompting and touching him, revealing Himself, giving him a command, a calling, and a leading, so that he receives something of God and cannot help but take action. This kind of action is not related to religion; rather, it comes from God and is initiated by God. (Knowing Life and the Church, pp. 191-192)

Further Reading: CWWN, vol. 42, ch. 45

WEEK 3 — DAY 2

Morning Nourishment

Heb. 11:4 By faith Abel offered to God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, through which he obtained the testimony that he was righteous, God testifying to his gifts; and through faith, though he has died, he still speaks.

Gen. 4:4 And Abel also brought an offering, from the firstlings of his flock, that is, from their fat portions. And Jehovah had regard for Abel and for his offering.

The Bible shows that the first generation that served God after Adam included his sons Abel and Cain. Cain was the older brother, and Abel was the younger brother. Outwardly speaking, both of them had a concept of God. Both Abel and Cain brought an offering to Jehovah (Gen. 4:1-5). Abel's offering was not a religious activity, but Cain's offering was a religious activity. Even though both were serving God, Abel's offering was not a religious activity because his offering was of God, not of himself. God wanted a sacrifice according to Abel's way. Hebrews 11:4 says, "By faith Abel offered to God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain." According to Romans 10:17, faith comes out of hearing; therefore, Abel's offering came out of hearing. He believed in God. His offering of a sacrifice came in response to God's word; he offered because he heard God's word. Abel received a revelation through God's word; he heard God's word. Then he believed, and by faith he offered a sacrifice to God. (Knowing Life and the Church, p. 192)

Today's Reading

After Adam's fall, God showed man redemption through the shedding of the blood of a sacrifice. Redemption through the shedding of the blood of a sacrifice was initiated and instructed by God. Because Abel heard, saw, and understood this, he offered a sacrifice according to God's instruction. Abel's offering was not of himself but of God; it was revealed, commanded, and ordained by God. Hence, Abel's offering was not a religious activity. By obeying God's command, Abel offered a sacrifice according to God's instruction and rendered service to God.

Conversely, Cain's offering was not of God but of himself. Although he knew God, thought of God, and worshipped God, his offering of a sacrifice was according to himself. Thus, it was a religious activity. He offered the fruit of the ground to God; this was not according to God's charge, commandment, or ordination; it came from his own thought. Cain's offering was entirely a religious activity. He must have thought, "If I offer the work of my hands to God whom I serve in all sincerity, He will be pleased with me. Since I worship Him, I should offer what I have labored on to Him." Cain's way of doing things according to his opinion was not of God but of himself.

In the church life, when we see someone who is very zealous for God, we usually admire and praise him. However, someone who has been enlightened by God will be concerned whether this zeal comes from God. It may seem that a person works much and is consecrated to God, but his zeal for God can be of man, not of God. It is quite possible to offer something as Cain did and not as Abel did. According to our natural understanding, we think that God will be pleased as long as we work for Him and preach the gospel to save sinners and present them to God. However, God is concerned whether we are doing this according to our opinion or His revelation. Is our zeal toward Him, and is our offering of sacrifices for ourselves or for Him? This is God's concern.

If we are enlightened, we will be fearful in our service. We may see that our service is like Cain's, not Abel's. One who serves the Lord must be fearful that his work, even the ability to preach and cast out demons, is not a service to God. A religious activity is any service and worship that does not originate from God's revelation, command, and leading. A man may know of God and be zealous in doing things for God according to his own view, but this is only a religious activity ...Beginning with Adam in the Old Testament and continuing to the end of the New Testament, the activities of one who serves God must originate absolutely from God, not from man. (Knowing Life and the Church, pp. 192-194)

Further Reading: Knowing Life and the Church, ch. 16

WEEK 3 — DAY 3

Morning Nourishment

Heb. 11:7-8 By faith Noah, having been divinely instructed concerning things not yet seen and being moved by pious fear, prepared an ark for the salvation of his house, through which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is according to faith. By faith Abraham, being called, obeyed to go out unto a place which he was to receive as an inheritance; and he went out, not knowing where he was going.

Noah served God according to God's command. Noah did not build an ark because he had a dream and then became zealous. Genesis shows that Noah did not have such a thought or idea at any time. Rather, God came to Noah one day and told him to build an ark. This was the origin of the building of the ark (Gen. 6:14—7:5). The building of the ark was not even in Noah's consideration; neither could he imagine that a flood would come one hundred and twenty years later. Even the measurements and methods of building the ark were not according to Noah's imagination but to God's determination (6:14-16). This shows that Noah's service was of God. (Knowing Life and the Church, pp. 194-195)

Today's Reading

Abraham served God according to God's appearing....Did he serve and worship according to the traditions of his fathers? No, the Bible shows that Abraham was from the land of the Chaldeans, who were involved with idols (Gen. 11:31; Josh. 24:2). Later he left his country, a land of idolatry. Abraham, however, did not leave voluntarily; neither did he initiate the move. While he was still living on the other side of the river and worshipping idols like the Gentiles, God came to him and called him, saying, "Go from your land / And from your relatives / And from your father's house" (Gen. 12:1). Abraham had no thought of leaving; rather, he was urged to leave by God who came to call him. All the moves in Abraham's life reveal the particular characteristic of Jehovah's appearing. God's appearing was the motivation for all of Abraham's actions....Except for his going down to Egypt and falling (12:9—13:4), all his actions were accepted by God because they were of God as a result of His appearing.

Moses served God according to God's instruction for the deliverance of the children of Israel....Moses feared and knew God, and he was very zealous for the children of Israel because he was educated by his family. He even struck an Egyptian for the Israelites (Exo. 2:7-12). According to the record in the Bible, however, all these things were useless to God. Moses was dealt with by God in the wilderness for a period of forty years to the extent that all his human capabilities were taken from him. At this point he had no interest in any of man's intentions or in any religious activity. Being nearly eighty years of age, he surely must have wondered whether he could do anything other than shepherd a flock. He no longer thought of worshipping God or of delivering the children of Israel. To him, these things meant nothing.

When he felt that everything was over, however, God came to him and called him, saying, "I will send you to Pharaoh, that you may bring My people, the children of Israel, out of Egypt" (3:10). God came to send Moses. Moses' deliverance of the children of Israel did not originate from himself but from God. Furthermore, all his actions related to the deliverance of the children of Israel were according to God's instruction. The actions of the children of Israel, such as slaughtering the lambs, keeping the passover, and crossing the Red Sea, did not come from Moses' imagination or idea but from God's instruction. God personally led the children of Israel through every station they passed.

When Moses came to the foot of Mount Sinai for the building of the tabernacle, he followed the pattern God showed him on the mountain; no deviation was permitted (Exo. 40). This shows that genuine service can come only from God, not from us. Anything that comes from us is a religious activity; only that which comes from God is service according to revelation. (Knowing Life and the Church, pp. 195-196)

Further Reading: Knowing Life and the Church, ch. 16

WEEK 3 — DAY 4

Morning Nourishment

2 Sam. 7:5 Go and say to My servant David, Thus says Jehovah, Is it you who will build Me a house for Me to dwell in?

11-13 ...Jehovah declares to you that Jehovah will make you a house....I will raise up your seed after you.... It is he who will build a house for My name...

David...was zealous to build a temple for God (2 Sam. 7:1-3). Did God accept David's idea? His desire to care for God and love God was accepted by God, but his intention and determination to build a house were rejected by God, who immediately sent Nathan the prophet to David to ask, "Is it you who will build Me a house for Me to dwell in?" (v. 5). God rejected David's good intention.

No matter related to our service to God should be determined by us....Our heart to serve Him is acceptable, but our decision to do something for Him is not acceptable. God said, "Is it you...?" God does not want us to decide anything on His behalf. It was not up to David to decide whether or not to build the temple. Nothing should be initiated by us; only God can initiate something. God replied to David, "Jehovah declares to you that Jehovah will make you a house" (v. 11), as if to say, "David, you do not know what you are saying when you speak of building Me a house. It is I who will build you a house." (Knowing Life and the Church, pp. 196 -197)

Today's Reading

David was one who truly feared God.... [Some] people think that as long as they have money and a heart, they can do what they want when they want. In David, however, we see one who feared God. Although he had the opportunity, saw the need, and had the ability to build the temple for God, he stopped....God is the One who decides, and we must wait. When He gives a command, we can work. We should love God and wait for His command; we should seek His will and wait for His revelation. Just as the slaves in the Old Testament loved their masters and allowed their ears to be bored through with an awl to a doorpost, we must focus on waiting for our Master's command (Exo. 21:6).

Because David feared God, ...he did not react to Nathan; rather, he stopped. It is not a small thing to stop. The act of stopping the building of the temple is a great matter.

Sister M. E. Barber said, "Whoever cannot stop working for the sake of God cannot work for the sake of God." This is a good word of experience. David knew that God needed a temple, but when God's word came to him, he immediately stopped his work....The ability of David not to work for God shows his spirituality...Many who are zealous for God cannot hear such a word.

David's stopping established a twofold testimony in the universe. First, all the work in the universe should come from God, not from man. Second, all that matters is what God does for man, not what man does for God. David wanted to build a temple for God, but God said that He would build a house for David from which a kingdom would come forth. Even after God spoke this word to David, he fell twice. First, he murdered Uriah and usurped his wife Bathsheba (2 Sam. 11:2-17, 26-27). Second, he numbered the children of Israel (24:1-10). It is amazing that after the murder of Uriah, Bathsheba bore David a son, Solomon, and after David was chastised by God for numbering the people, he offered sacrifices on a piece of land, as instructed by God, which later became the site for the building of the temple (vv. 18-25; 1 Chron. 21:1; 2 Chron. 3:1).

The son and the site for the building of the temple both came out of David's being forgiven of his sins. Those who can see this will bow their head and worship God, saying, "It is not we who can do something for You, but You who does something for man." We must learn deep within that God wants only our cooperation; He does not need us to do anything for Him. Even if we could do something for God, He does not need it; He needs only our cooperation. We must stop all our opinions, decisions, and ideas; we need to let Him speak, let Him come in, and let Him command. All we need to do is cooperate with Him. (Knowing Life and the Church, pp. 197-199)

Further Reading: Knowing Life and the Church, chs. 16-17

WEEK 3 — DAY 5

Morning Nourishment

Acts 22:8 And I answered, Who are You, Lord? And He said to me, I am Jesus the Nazarene, whom you persecute.

10 And I said, What shall I do, Lord? And the Lord said to me, Rise up and go into Damascus, and there it will be told to you concerning all the things which have been appointed to you to do.

Paul was Saul before his conversion (Acts 13:9). When he was Saul, he was not a great sinner; rather, he was a Pharisee who feared God, obeyed the law, and was zealous and pious. All his activities, however, were religious activities without revelation or God's light; they were all based on his ideas. He followed the traditions of his fathers and was taught at the feet of Gamaliel (22:3). On his way to Damascus, however, the Lord met him. It was only at this point that he asked, "What shall I do, Lord?" (v. 10). Blessed is he who asks this question! We should all ask the Lord, "What shall I do?" rather than telling Him, "This is what I will do." The Lord replied, "Rise up and enter into the city, and it will be told to you what you must do" (9:6; 22:10). The Lord told Paul what to do. Paul did not decide; rather, the Lord showed him a vision. Seeing a vision is not based on our decisions. We should not decide; only God should decide. (Knowing Life and the Church, pp. 200-201)

Today's Reading

All those who serve God must see a principle from these examples: God's work needs man's cooperation, but it does not require man's initiation. No work should be initiated by us. All work should be initiated by God. He commands, He calls, and He charges. We should listen to Him unreservedly. When He charges us, we should obey; when He demands, we should accept.

We must ask how we can know God's command, ... God's will and revelation, ... [and] what God wants us to do.... Job was a God-fearing person; he was very pious toward God....Nevertheless, Job's view and opinion were not broken....The debate between Job and his friends shows that God was quite hidden....God came in only after all the words of Job and his friends ran out.

If we do not allow God to come in because our words have not run out, we will not be able to understand God's will because we still have too much within. This is our problem. Our God is quite able to remain silent. When the friends of Job were arguing with him, God was very patient. He stepped aside and let everyone speak; He came in to speak only after everyone was finished. The unique prerequisite to receiving God's revelation is to stop our speaking, our opinion, our view, and our self. While it is easy to say the word stop, it is not so easy to stop. The best way for us to stop is to die; once we die, we stop.

God's counsel is darkened by man's words [Job 38:2]. A person's opinion is expressed in his word, and his word represents his opinion. According to God, man's words darken His counsel. Consequently, when Job spoke, God hid Himself. Later Job realized that God remained silent when he spoke. When we have an opinion and want to initiate something, God stops and hides Himself. This is what we need to see.

When the Bible speaks of Satan, it sometimes refers to man's opinion. Matthew 16 records an...incident with Peter. When Peter tried to stop the Lord from going to Jerusalem to suffer, the Lord said to him, "Get behind Me, Satan!...You are not setting your mind on the things of God, but on the things of men" (v. 23). Then He said, "If anyone wants to come after Me, let him deny himself" (v. 24). All of this speaks of man's opinions and ideas. When Job said, "I abhor myself" (Job 42:6), he was referring to his opinions, views, and ideas. When we serve in various places to lead and administrate the churches, the greatest problem we encounter is opinions. Once a person has the heart to serve the Lord and becomes zealous, his opinions come out. At such a time, God will hide Himself and withdraw His will. Everything we initiate will be interrupted by God. In the matter of serving God, we must stop ourselves in order to give God the absolute opportunity to speak. This requires our exercise. (Knowing- Life and the Church, pp. 201-202)

Further Reading: Knowing Life and the Church, ch. 17

WEEK 3 — DAY 6

Morning Nourishment

1 Cor. 4:1-2 A man should account us in this way, as servants of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God. Here, furthermore, it is sought in stewards that one be found faithful.

Eph. 4:11-12 And He Himself gave some..., for the perfecting of the saints unto the work of the ministry, unto the building up of the Body of Christ.

Service from man has man's enjoyment, preference, and flavor... When something is initiated by us, we enjoy and like it. Anything initiated by us will bear our flavor and be our boast. Hence, when a service is initiated by us according to our opinion, often our enjoyment, preference, and boast are associated with it...Moreover, we often feel that it is very good.

Service from God enables man to worship the Lord and advance even when facing difficulties. ...Negatively speaking, we often become upset when we encounter problems and difficulties in service or work that originates from us, especially when our service and work are ruined and overthrown. But when our service and work originate with the Lord, we can worship Him even when we encounter problems. (Knowing Life and the Church, p. 204)

Today's Reading

Two tests, one positive and one negative, determine whether the work and the responsibility we bear in all the localities comes from God or from ourselves. The positive test is whether or not we receive a sense of enjoyment and boasting from our work. The negative test is whether or not we are able to eat and sleep peacefully when our work is not carried out successfully. Both of these are tests to us.

[Third], service from God enables man not to be anxious or quarrelsome....If a certain work is not of God, the brothers and sisters often are not willing to carry it out. However, if a certain work is of God, the brothers and sisters are able to labor together. This is very good, but even if the brothers and sisters have some difficulty in laboring together, this is not necessarily a problem, because the work is not their responsibility. Those who are sent by the Lord are often quite patient. When a person is doing his own work, he will be anxious for success, but if he is doing the Lord's work, he will not be anxious, because it is the Lord's business. If we want to determine whether a person's work is of God or of himself, we only need to see if he is anxious in the work. If a person's work is according to God's sending, the sent one will not be anxious, and there will not be many opinions.... Anything that gives rise to quarreling is of the self, not of God.

These three tests speak of our relationship with God in our work and whether or not our work is of God. We serve in many ways, but what the Lord does through us, whether it is a success or a failure, should not give us much feeling. However, if a work is initiated by us, we will have a deep feeling regarding its success or failure. May the Lord have mercy on us and teach us in these matters so that we may see whether our work is of man or of God.

If a brother sees an improper condition in the church and is not able to eat or sleep well, this will become a problem. When our heart is set on the Lord's work, we should be able to eat and sleep well, no matter how difficult the environment. However, if a brother is able to sleep peacefully when "the sky is falling" simply because he has no real care or concern, he is useless to God.

Sometimes after we hand over certain matters to the co-workers, they make excuses when they are asked about what they have done. Such people are not competent, and they should not sleep peacefully ... [We] must be serious in whatever [we do]. An irresponsible person is useless in God's hand.

Therefore, we must all learn to bear responsibility and burden before the Lord, and we must also serve the Lord faithfully. Although these matters are not decided by us nor originate from us, we must be absolutely faithful and responsible in what we do. (Knowing Life and the Church, pp. 204-207)

Further Reading: Knowing Life and the Church, ch. 18

WEEK 3 — HYMN

The overflow of life is work

Service — The Overflow of Life

910

The musical score is written in 3/4 time with a key signature of one flat (Bb). It consists of four staves of music. The lyrics are written below the notes. Chord symbols are placed above the notes: F, Gm, C7, F, F7, Bb, F/C, C7, F, C/E, C, F, F/A, G, G/B, C7, F, F/Eb, Bb/D, Bb, F/C, C7, C, F.

1. The o - ver-flow of life is work, The work should be our
liv - ing! What we ex - pe - ri - ence e'er should be The mes - sage we are
giv - ing. When liv - ing and the work are one, The work will be ef -
fec - tual; When mes - sage and the life are one, The word will be suc - cess - ful.

2. The work must be the fruit of life,
Born thru the Spirit's flowing;
As branches of the Lord, the vine,
Fruit bearing, life bestowing.
'Tis Christ Himself thru us to work,
Himself as life expressing,
And all the riches of His life
To others manifesting.

3. 'Tis not a movement borne of man,
But by His power moving;
'Tis not the deeds done outwardly,
But inward action proving.
'Tis not the work of enterprise,
But 'tis His life confessing;
'Tis not to toil for our success,
But 'tis Himself expressing.

4. Our plans, our aims, our energy
We must abandon wholly,
That He may work His plan thru us,
His aim and object solely.
Ourselves, with all we are and have,
To death we must surrender,
That Christ may live Himself thru us
With riches and with splendor.