

WEEK 4 — OUTLINE

The Heart and Spirit of a Leading One

Scripture Reading: Ezek. 36:26-27; Matt. 5:3, 8; Eph. 3:16-17, 20-21; Rev. 1:10; 4:2; 17:3; 21:10

« DAY 1 »

I. God's promise to His chosen ones was that He would give them a new heart and a new spirit and that He would put His Spirit within them (Ezek. 36:26-27):

- A. *We all need a new start to maintain the newness of our heart and our spirit (2 Cor. 4:16; Rom. 7:6; cf. Prov. 4:23; 1 Pet. 3:4).*
- B. *Our heart is our loving organ, and our spirit is our receiving organ; while we are in a fallen or backslidden state, our heart toward the Lord is stony and hard, and our spirit is deadened (Eph. 2:1; 4:18).*
- C. *When the Lord saves us or revives us, He renews our heart, making our stony heart a heart of flesh, a heart that is soft and loving toward Him; furthermore, He enlivens and renews our spirit with His divine life (cf. 2 Cor. 3:3; Col. 2:13).*
- D. *As a result, we love the Lord and desire Him with our renewed heart, and we can contact Him, receive Him, and contain Him by exercising our renewed spirit.*

II. The New Testament begins by speaking of our heart and our spirit (Matt. 3:2; John 3:6):

- A. *John the Baptist first preached the gospel in the New Testament by declaring, "Repent, for the kingdom of the heavens has drawn*

near” (Matt. 3:2):

1. According to the Greek, to repent is to have a change in our mind or a turn in our thinking; because the mind is the main part of the heart, to repent is a matter of the heart.
 2. A thoroughly repentant heart will become a new heart; because our God is a God of life and is all-powerful, He gives us a new heart by transforming our heart (2 Cor. 3:16, 18).
- B. A softened heart is a transformed heart, a new heart; we believers need to repent again and again; every time we repent, our heart will be more transformed and renewed; in Revelation 2 and 3 the Lord repeatedly calls the churches to repent (2:5, 16, 21-22; 3:3, 19).*

« **DAY 2** »

III. As a leading one, a person must have an enlarged heart:

A. A leading one must be large in heart (Psa. 119:32):

1. We must be genuine ministers of the new covenant, having an enlarged heart with the intimate concern of the ministering life, which is a fruitful life (2 Cor. 7:2-3):
 - a. With an enlarged heart the apostles were able to embrace all believers regardless of their condition, and with an opened mouth they were able to speak to all believers frankly concerning the real situation into which they had been misled (6:11).
 - b. This kind of openness and enlargement is needed to reconcile, to bring back, the misled or distracted believers to God.
2. Solomon was competent to oversee God’s people because he had wisdom and a large heart, which are two aspects of one thing:

- a. Though he only asked for the wisdom and knowledge to go out and come in among God's people (1 Kings 3:5-9; 2 Chron. 1:10), God gave him "largeness of heart, even as the sand that is on the seashore" (1 Kings 4:29).
- b. The seashore encloses the sea, God having "set the sand as a boundary for the sea" (Jer. 5:22); this shows that Solomon's heart was larger than the sea.

B. There are difficulties in many local churches today because the elders do not have a large heart; pride, an expression of foolishness, comes from having a narrow heart:

1. Pride is an attribute of our fallen nature by birth.

« DAY 3 »

2. Even with Paul, the Lord was wary of his exceeding exaltation of himself, so He let him have a thorn in his flesh from Satan (2 Cor. 12:7-9).
3. Hence, the apostle Paul taught that a new convert should not be an overseer of the church, lest being blinded with pride he fall into the judgment prepared for the devil (1 Tim. 3:6).
4. Always remember that humility saves you from all kinds of destruction and invites God's grace (James 4:6).
5. Pride makes you a top fool.
6. Rivalry in the Lord's work is not only a sign of ambition but also a sign of pride.
7. Caring for your prestige and neglecting others' dignity are a sign of subtle pride.
8. Referring to your capacity, success, perfection, and virtue is a careless form of pride.
9. Thinking more highly of yourself than you ought to think is another form of pride and annuls the proper and organic order in the Body life (Rom. 12:3).
10. Christ in His humanity humbling Himself to wash His disciples' feet gives us a good model of how to humble ourselves to escape from pride (John 13:3-5).

11. Arguing about who is greater is an ugly form of pride (Mark 9:34).
 12. Wanting to be great and not to be a servant and wanting to be the first and not to be a slave are also signs of pride (Matt. 20:26-27).
 13. Lording it over the members of your church under your shepherding is a strong sign of your pride (1 Pet. 5:3).
 14. The apostle Paul presented us with a good model (1 Tim. 1:16):
 - a. He preached Christ as the Lord and himself as the believers' slave for the Lord's sake (2 Cor. 4:5).
 - b. He testified that whoever was weak, he also was weak, and that to the weak he became weak that he might gain the weak (11:29; 1 Cor. 9:22).
 15. To restore a brother, overtaken in some offense, with meekness (a gentle expression of humility) protects us from being tempted also (Gal. 6:1).
 16. Self-boasting, self-exaltation, self-glorification, and lusting after vainglory are all ugly and base expressions of pride (5:26).
- C. In order to enlarge their heart, the leading ones in different localities should go to visit other places; if circumstances allow, it would be even better to travel overseas; the more we participate in the Lord's move, the more we see (Ezek. 1:15-21).*
- D. The ability to forgive others when they have offended you is a matter of largeness of heart; if we have an argument with a brother, it is mostly because of the narrowness of our heart (Matt. 6:14-15).*

« **DAY 4** »

IV. The Lord Jesus followed John the Baptist by teaching that we need to be born of the Spirit in our spirit (John 3:6):

- A. *Our spirit is born again when God as the Spirit enters into it to regenerate us with the divine life; to be regenerated is to have the divine, eternal life (in addition to the human, natural life) as the new source and new element of a new person.*
- B. *We need to repent in order to have a new heart, and we need to believe into the Lord Jesus so that our spirit will be reborn to become a new spirit.*
- C. *We need a loving heart and a powerful spirit (Mark 12:30; 2 Tim. 1:7).*
- D. *A leading one must be a spiritual man with an exercised spirit; he must be dominated, governed, directed, led, and controlled by his spirit; a strong spirit is the main requirement for the leadership among God's people (1 Tim. 4:7; 1 Cor. 2:15; 14:32; John 4:24; 2 Cor. 2:13; Rom. 1:9; 8:16; 1 Cor. 6:17).*
- E. *We can maintain the newness of our spirit by serving in newness of spirit (Rom. 7:6; 1:9) and by exercising our spirit of faith (2 Cor. 4:13); faith is in our spirit, which is mingled with the Holy Spirit (Rom. 8:16; 1 Cor. 6:17), not in our mind; doubts are in our mind.*

« **DAY 5** »

V. We need to be pure in heart (Matt. 5:8) and poor in spirit (v. 3):

- A. *We need a pure heart in order to see God, and we need a spirit that is emptied in order to receive the kingdom of the heavens.*
- B. *To be pure in heart is to be single in our goal and aim; our goal should be God alone; even in our service and function in the church life, we should not have an intention to gain anything but*

God Himself.

- C. *If we come to a meeting with a sense that we are inwardly rich and have no need, this will close the door to God (Rev. 3:16-17, 20); we need to pray, “O Lord, thank You for always being with me, yet I am still short of You; I want to be emptied in my spirit so that You can have more room in me; O Lord, I open to You and ask You to gain more ground within my spirit.”*

VI. We need to be strengthened into our regenerated spirit so that Christ may make His home in our hearts (Eph. 3:16-17):

- A. *When a saved one is strengthened into his spirit and possessed by Christ in his heart, deep within he has a longing for the church life and an inner consciousness concerning what the proper church life is.*
- B. *To know the church is not outward but absolutely inward; that the highways to Zion are in our heart means that we need to take the way of the church internally, not merely externally (Psa. 84:5).*

« DAY 6 »

- C. *When we are strengthened through the Spirit into our spirit and when Christ makes His home in our heart, God is able to do superabundantly above all that we ask or think concerning the church life; if all the saints pray daily for this, the glorious church life will spread and be prevailing throughout the United States and the whole world (Eph. 3:20-21).*

VII. We need to be in our spirit in order to see the visions in the book of Revelation:

- A. *This book is composed of four major visions: the churches (chs. 1–3), the destiny of the world (chs. 4–16), Babylon the Great (chs. 17–20), and the New Jerusalem (chs. 21–22); John was in his spirit when he saw these four visions (1:10; 4:2; 17:3; 21:10); we too need to be in our spirit to see the visions in this book.*
- B. *If we pray for thirty days that the Lord would strengthen us into our spirit and take over our heart, we will have a clear view and will be assured concerning the whole situation of the universe, including the church, the world, Babylon the Great, and the New Jerusalem.*

VIII. The Lord's recovery depends upon our renewed, purified heart and our renewed, strengthened spirit; when our heart is fully possessed by Christ and our spirit is thoroughly saturated with the Spirit, God will have a way, and the recovery will be prevailing.

« WEEK 4 — DAY 1 »

Morning Nourishment

Ezek. 36:26-27 I will also give you a new heart, and a new spirit I will put within you; and I will take away the heart of stone out of your flesh, and I will give you a heart of flesh. And I will put My Spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes, and My ordinances you shall keep and do.

[Ezekiel 36:26-27] was God's promise to the children of Israel, His called ones. They were distracted, but God called them back with a promise that He would give them a new heart and a new spirit. As God-created men they already had a heart and spirit, but because they were distracted, their heart and spirit became old. However, God would not give them up and came in to promise them a new start by giving them a new heart and a new spirit. We also need this new start today. (CWWL, 1975-1976, vol. 2, p. 337)

Our heart is our loving organ, and our spirit is our receiving organ. While we are in a fallen or backslidden state, our heart toward the Lord is stony and hard, and our spirit is deadened (Eph. 2:1; 4:18). When the Lord saves us or revives us, He renews our heart, making our stony heart a heart of flesh, a heart that is soft and loving toward Him (cf. 2 Cor. 3:3). Furthermore, He enlivens and renews our spirit with His divine life (Col. 2:13). As a result, we love the Lord and desire Him with our renewed heart, and we can contact Him, receive Him, and contain Him by exercising our renewed spirit. (Ezek. 36:26, footnote 1)

Today's Reading

The New Testament begins by speaking of our heart and our spirit. John the Baptist first preached the gospel in the New Testament by declaring, "Repent, for the kingdom of the heavens has drawn near" (Matt. 3:2). According to the Greek, to repent is to have a change in our mind or a turn in our thinking. The mind is the main part of the heart. Therefore, to repent is a matter of the heart. Our experience confirms this. The preaching of the gospel in the New Testament

began with the heart.

A thoroughly repentant heart will become a new heart. Although God promised to give us a new heart, He does not take out our old heart and put in a new one like a surgeon performing a transplant. Because He is a God of life and is all-powerful, He gives us a new heart by transforming our heart. When we repent, something marvelous happens in our heart. We may feel that it is our doing when we say, “O God, I am utterly sinful. I am sorry. I repent before You. Please forgive me.” On one hand, this is our doing, but on the other hand, while we are repenting, the wonderful God gets into us and transforms our heart. We may not have any consciousness that God is doing this marvelous work, but soon after we repent to Him, we discover that our heart is changed. It was previously hardened, but after we repent, we find that it has been softened.

When I was a teenager,...no one could change me or subdue me, but one day I repented. While I was walking on the street after hearing a gospel message, I spoke to the heavens, saying, “God, I made a great mistake to not want You before. Now I want You. I love You. I repent for the past.” When I arrived home, I discovered that my heart had changed, for it was softened. My mother also noticed this change and marveled to see it. To be softened in our heart is a sign that we have truly repented. A softened heart is a transformed heart, a new heart.

Repentance is not something that only unbelievers need. We believers need to repent again and again. We may need to repent for not loving the Lord enough. Every time we repent, our heart will be more transformed and renewed. Repenting is like washing our hands—once is not enough. We need to repent all the time. In Revelation 2 and 3 the Lord repeatedly calls the churches to repent (2:5, 16, 21-22; 3:3, 19). We need to repent, because repentance is the best dose to heal our heart and the best way to regulate our heart. Repenting renews our heart. (CWWL, 1975-1976, vol. 2, pp. 337-338)

Further Reading: CWWL, 1975-1976, vol. 2, pp. 337-345; CWWL, 1970, vol. 1, pp. 431-437

<< WEEK 4 — DAY 2 >>

Morning Nourishment

2 Cor. 6:11-13 Our mouth is opened to you, Corinthians; our heart is enlarged. You are not constricted in us, but you are constricted in your inward parts. But for a recompense in kind, I speak as to children, you also be enlarged.

Psa. 119:32 I run the way of Your commandments, for You enlarge my heart.

With an enlarged heart [the all-mature and all-fitting apostles] were able to embrace all believers regardless of their condition, and with an opened mouth they were free to speak to all believers frankly concerning the real situation into which they had been misled. This kind of openness and enlargement is needed to reconcile, to bring back, the misled or distracted believers to God. (2 Cor. 6:11, footnote 1)

Today's Reading

Largeness is the first necessary condition of an elder's heart. In the Bible, there is one very good ruler, King Solomon. All readers of the Bible admit that he is a standard and a typical character concerning administration in the Bible. If we want to find a standard character on experiencing the cross, we have to go to David. But to find a standard character on managing God's people, we have to go to Solomon....King Solomon was competent at managing for two reasons: he had wisdom, and he had a large heart. Actually, these are two aspects of one thing.

You will recall that Solomon succeeded to the throne when he was very young. As soon as he succeeded to the throne, he went to offer sacrifices to God. In the night, while God appeared to him, Solomon prayed, "And now, O Jehovah my God, You have made Your servant king in the place of David my father, though I am a little child; I do not know how to go out or come in....Give therefore to Your servant an understanding heart to judge Your people and to discern between good and evil" (1 Kings 3:7-9). He wanted wisdom from God. Everyone knows

that the most necessary thing in management is wisdom. To have cleverness is not enough, because cleverness is common, whereas wisdom is extraordinary. Solomon deeply felt that for a young man to rule the myriads of God's people, he needed wisdom from God. That was why he sought for wisdom before God. Surprisingly, however, though he asked only for wisdom, God gave him, in addition to wisdom, also a large heart. First Kings 4:29 says, "And God gave Solomon wisdom and very much understanding and largeness of heart, even as the sand that is on the seashore." It says that largeness of heart is like the sand on the seashore. A Chinese proverb speaks of the heart being as large as the capacity of the sea, but here the heart is as large as the sand on the seashore. The seashore encloses the sea. The Scriptures say that God has "set the sand as a boundary for the sea" (Jer. 5:22). Therefore, Solomon's heart was larger than the sea.

At the time when God gave Solomon wisdom, He also gave him a large heart. We have to know that all wise ones have large hearts, and everyone with a narrow heart is a foolish person. If you want to be a foolish person, let me teach you a way: simply make your heart small. In the same principle, if you enlarge your heart, you will become the wisest person. You cannot separate a large heart from wisdom and prudence. This is why I say that these are two aspects of one thing.

Pride is an expression of foolishness. But from where does pride come? It comes from being narrow. When a person is narrow and his heart is narrow, it is easy for him to be proud. It is very hard for a person with a large heart to be proud....Pride is the expression of the narrowness of a person. Suppose you give a message unusually well one day, and as a result, you become proud. This pride proves your narrowness. If your heart is large, even if you have preached very well a thousand times, let alone only once, you would not feel anything. All foolishness proves that a person's heart is narrow, and all pride proves that you are too small. (The Elders' Management of the Church, pp. 39-40)

Further Reading: The Elders' Management of the Church, ch. 3

<< WEEK 4 — DAY 3 >>

Morning Nourishment

Matt. 6:14-15 For if you forgive men their offenses, your heavenly Father will forgive you also; but if you do not forgive men their offenses, neither will your Father forgive your offenses.

A person who oversees God's people needs much wisdom, but the secret of wisdom is to have a large heart...You have no idea how much this matter affects those serving as elders. Many of your inaccurate judgments are caused by your narrow heart. On the surface it appears that you lack wisdom, but actually, the problem comes because your heart is narrow. When many matters are poorly managed, you may attribute the cause to your foolishness, but actually your foolishness comes from your narrow heart. If you would only enlarge your heart, immediately you would become a person of wisdom.

Therefore, brothers, learn to enlarge your heart in all things...Whether in learning the truth, in seeking to be spiritual, in contacting the brothers and sisters, in discerning others, or in managing affairs, we must learn to be large. Whenever we touch the affairs of the church and whenever we touch any spiritual matter, we have to learn to be large in our heart. We need to continue to be large. Largeness can solve many problems. (The Elders' Management of the Church, pp. 40-41)

Today's Reading

Suppose today everyone else in the church knows about a certain matter, but this matter is concealed from you. In your heart would you blame others? If your heart is large, you will not do this. Otherwise, you will surely complain about it. Perhaps a brother offends you today. Are you able to let the matter go? It depends on whether your heart is large or small. Surely, if your heart is small, you will not be able to let it go. If it is large, you will be able to let it go. Everything in the church can be governed by this principle.

Brothers, there are difficulties in many local churches today because the elders

do not have a large heart. Therefore, I fully agree that the elders in the different localities should go to visit other places....If circumstances allow, it would be even better to travel overseas. Once a man goes out for a visit, his heart will be enlarged. It is wrong to be proud, and it is wrong to be boastful. It is also wrong to strive to be large, but you must learn to enlarge your heart. It does not mean that to have a large heart is to be loose. You must still be strict with yourself, yet your heart toward others must be large.

Of course, the natural life can never learn this lesson....In order to enlarge our own heart, we need the Lord's abundant grace. Please remember that the ability to forgive others is a matter that has to do with the largeness of heart. The ability to bless the ones who curse us also has to do with a large heart. Your heart must be so large that whenever others offend you, you can forgive them as soon as they confess to you. Though others may persecute you and inflict harm on you, you can still love them. To be able to forgive others when they have offended you is something that has to do with a large heart.

Oh, the wisdom that comes from a large heart is immeasurable! In everything we do, it is right for us to be disciplined, and it is wrong to be presumptuous. But the most important thing is that our heart has to be large. If the heart is not large enough, you must prepare yourselves to make mistakes in the future; you will surely eat the fruit of regret. Suppose a brother asks you to do something today. If your heart is not large enough and you deny his request, you will surely regret it later. Or, if a brother asks for your forgiveness today, and you would not forgive him due to your narrowness in heart, you will surely regret it later. Therefore, brothers, your heart must be enlarged. We are narrow persons, but we must learn to enlarge our hearts. If you have an argument with a brother, eight or nine times out of ten it is because of the narrowness of your heart. In these years, I have not met many people with a large heart. (The Elders' Management of the Church, pp. 41-43)

Further Reading: Life-study of 2 Corinthians, msg. 44; How to Be a Co-worker and an Elder and How to Fulfill Their Obligations, ch. 4

<< WEEK 4 — DAY 4 >>

Morning Nourishment

John 3:5-6 Jesus answered, Truly, truly, I say to you, Unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.

2 Cor. 4:13 And having the same spirit of faith according to that which is written, “I believed, therefore I spoke,” we also believe, therefore we also speak.

After John the Baptist began to preach the gospel by calling men to repent in their heart, the Lord Jesus followed by teaching that we need to be born of the Spirit in our spirit (John 3:6). To repent in our heart is only the first step. Following repentance in our heart, we need to be reborn in our spirit. A proper, balanced man has a good heart and a proper spirit. A good heart is a repenting, renewed, softened heart, and a proper spirit is a spirit that is born again....When we repent, God comes in to touch our heart; when we believe in the Lord, God enters into our spirit to beget us with His life. (CWWL, 1975-1976, vol. 2, p. 338)

To be regenerated is to have the divine, eternal life (in addition to the human, natural life) as the new source and new element of a new person. (John 3:6, footnote 2)

Today's Reading

A proper heart and a proper spirit are a new heart and a new spirit. We need to repent in order to have a new heart, and we need to believe into the Lord Jesus so that our spirit will be reborn to become a new spirit. God does not take away our old heart and replace it with a new one but transforms our old heart into a new one. In the same principle, He does not take away our old spirit and replace it with a new one. Instead, when we believe into the Lord, God as the Spirit comes into our spirit to beget our spirit by bringing His life element into our spirit. In this way, our old spirit becomes a new spirit. As believers, we have a new heart

and a new spirit; this makes us proper persons.

Mark 12:30 says, “You shall love the Lord your God from your whole heart.” Our heart needs to be a loving heart—loving not the world but God. Second Timothy 1:7 says, “God has not given us a spirit of cowardice, but of power and of love and of sobermindedness.” Our spirit should be powerful, loving, and sober. (CWWL, 1975-1976, vol. 2, pp. 339-340)

We need a strong spirit for the leadership in the churches. Many think that a leader needs knowledge, ability, and other attributes. These things do not mean much among God’s people. In the leadership for God’s move, what we are must be reduced, but the ultimate requirement is to have a strong spirit.

When a person who is fully built up in his spirit speaks for God, in a sense, there is no need for him to receive the power or inspiration of the Holy Spirit, for whatever he expresses from his spirit is something of God....The standard of the leadership among God’s people is such a built-up human spirit.

Paul concluded his second Epistle to Timothy by saying, “The Lord be with your spirit” (4:22)....Only the Lord’s presence is adequate for the leadership, and His presence is with us in our spirit. To be clever, kind, and careful does not make us adequate to be an elder. Only exercising our spirit can make us adequate as an elder.

For the leadership in the churches, we need to pay our full attention to building up our spirit. There is no excuse not to exercise our spirit. We may not have the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, but 1 Corinthians 14:32 says, “The spirits of prophets are subject to prophets.” Therefore, we do not need to wait for inspiration....To say that we should not speak because others are more qualified or more experienced is to make an excuse because we have a weak spirit. If our spirit is strong, we will exercise our spirit to function in every meeting. (CWWL, 1975-1976, vol. 1, pp. 405-407)

Faith is in our spirit, which is mingled with the Holy Spirit, not in our mind. Doubts are in our mind....By the mingled spirit...the apostles lived a crucified life in resurrection for the carrying out of their ministry. (2 Cor. 4:13, footnote 2)

Further Reading: CWWL, 1975-1976, vol. 1, pp. 405-412

<< WEEK 4 — DAY 5 >>

Morning Nourishment

Matt. 5:8 Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.

3 Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of the heavens.

Eph. 3:16-17 That He would grant you...to be strengthened with power through His Spirit into the inner man, that Christ may make His home in your hearts through faith...

When the Lord was teaching His disciples on the mount, He said, “Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God” (Matt. 5:8), and, “Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of the heavens” (v. 3). To be poor in spirit does not mean to have a poor spirit but to not be filled with things other than God. We need a pure heart in order to see God, and we need a spirit that is emptied in order to receive the kingdom of the heavens. We need to be emptied in our spirit so that our spirit will have more capacity for God to come in. (CWWL, 1975-1976, vol. 2, p. 339)

Today’s Reading

As believers, we have been renewed in our heart and regenerated in our spirit, but we still need to purify our heart and be poor in spirit. To be pure in heart is to be single in our goal and aim. Our goal should be God alone. If we are aiming at anything other than God, our heart is not pure but complicated. We need to be simplified in our heart by seeking after nothing but God. Even in our service and function in the church life, we should not have an intention to gain anything other than God Himself. If we are simplified to care only for God, our heart will be pure in whatever we do. For our Christian walk, we need to be pure in our heart, not having any goal besides God.

We also need to be poor in spirit. If we come to a meeting with a sense that we are inwardly rich and have no need, this will close the door to God. To be poor in spirit, we need to pray, “O Lord, thank You for always being with me, yet I am

still short of You. I want to be emptied in my spirit so that You can have more room in me. O Lord, I open to You and ask You to gain more ground within my spirit.” Recently, after I gave a message, a young man came to challenge me with many questions. I sensed that the answers to his questions meant nothing to him because he was not humble but full in his spirit. After repenting in our heart and being regenerated in our spirit, we still need to be pure in heart and poor in spirit.

[In] Ephesians 3:16-17...our inner man is our regenerated spirit, where God has installed Himself. We need to be strengthened into this spirit, and our heart needs to be occupied by Christ....We need to check with ourselves concerning whether we are being strengthened into our spirit and whether we are allowing the Lord to take over our heart. We need to be strengthened with power through the Spirit into our spirit, and our heart needs to be possessed by the Lord so that He can make His home in it.

If we are being strengthened by the Spirit into our inner man and are being possessed by Christ as He makes His home in our heart, we will spontaneously enter into the proper church life....As soon as believers are helped to be right in their heart and spirit, they begin to seek after the church, and it becomes easy for them to discern what the proper church life is. When a saved one is strengthened into his spirit and possessed by Christ in his heart, deep within he has a longing for the church life and an inner consciousness concerning what the proper church life is. To know the church is not outward but absolutely inward. (CWWL, 1975-1976, vol. 2, pp. 339-341)

[In Psalm 84:5] the highways to Zion signify our intention to enter into the church as the house of God....On the one hand, we have entered into God; on the other hand, we are still on the highways to enter into God. That the highways are in our heart means that we need to take the way of the church internally, not merely externally. (Psa. 84:5, footnote 1)

Further Reading: Lessons on the Eldership, vol. 1, lsn. 14

<< WEEK 4 — DAY 6 >>

Morning Nourishment

Eph. 3:20-21 But to Him who is able to do superabundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power which operates in us, to Him be the glory in the church and in Christ Jesus unto all the generations forever and ever. Amen.

[Ephesians 3:16-17] speaks of being strengthened into the inner man and Christ making His home in our heart....According to the context [in verses 20 and 21], being strengthened into our spirit and Christ making His home in our heart are for the church. When we are strengthened through the Spirit into our spirit and when Christ makes His home in our heart, God is able to do superabundantly above all that we ask or think concerning the church life.

Ephesians is a book concerning the church. Therefore, being strengthened into the inner man and Christ making His home in our heart are for the church. We praise the Lord that His recovery has come to the United States and that we have been brought into this recovery. However, we need to allow God to have a way among us by being strengthened into our spirit and allowing Christ to take full possession of our heart. If all the saints pray daily for this, within a few years the glorious church life will spread and be prevailing throughout the United States. (CWWL, 1975-1976, vol. 2, p. 342)

Today's Reading

The Lord's recovery is not an ordinary Christian work; it altogether depends on our heart and spirit. Electricity is powerful, but in order for it to operate, wires are needed to transmit it. Similarly, God is powerful; He is able to do superabundantly above all that we ask or think, but He needs our renewed heart possessed by Christ and our renewed, regenerated, and strengthened spirit in order to have a way.

The last book of the Bible, Revelation, is composed of four major visions: the churches (chs. 1—3), the destiny of the world (chs. 4—16), Babylon the Great (chs.

17—20), and the New Jerusalem (chs. 21—22). The apostle John was in spirit when he saw each of these visions. In 1:10-12 John says, “I was in spirit on the Lord’s Day and heard behind me a loud voice like a trumpet, saying, 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.” Being in spirit is the way to see the churches.

When John saw the second major vision, concerning the destiny of the world, he was also in spirit and saw God’s throne in heaven (4:2). Whatever is happening on earth is under the sovereignty of the divine throne in the heavens. Seeing this was a great encouragement and comfort to the suffering apostle.

Next John was carried away in spirit into a wilderness to see the third major vision—Babylon, which is the apostate church (17:3). He saw it clearly. Ultimately, he was carried away in spirit onto a great and high mountain to see the New Jerusalem, the fourth and final major vision (21:10).

Our inner eyes will be opened if for a period of thirty days we daily pray, “Lord, strengthen me into my spirit and make Your home in my heart.” We will see clearly the four major things going on in the universe: the churches, the world, Babylon the Great, and the New Jerusalem. The world will be judged by God, and Babylon the Great will fall, but the churches will become the New Jerusalem, which will remain forever....If we pray for thirty days that the Lord would strengthen us into our spirit and take over our heart, we will see God’s economy. We will have a clear view and will be assured concerning the whole situation of the universe, including the church, the world, Babylon the Great, and the New Jerusalem.

The Lord’s recovery depends upon our renewed, purified heart and our renewed, strengthened spirit. When our heart is fully possessed by Christ and our spirit is thoroughly saturated with the Spirit, God will have a way, and the recovery will be prevailing. (CWWL, 1975-1976, vol. 2, pp. 342-345)

Further Reading: CWWN, vol. 58, ch. 2

WEEK 4 — HYMN

Oh, strengthen my spirit, Lord Jesus

Longings — For Sanctification

1134

Musical score for the hymn "Oh, strengthen my spirit, Lord Jesus". The score is written in G major, 4/4 time, and consists of three systems of music. The first system (measures 1-4) includes the lyrics: "1. Oh, strength - en my spir - it, Lord Je - sus, Oh, strength - en my spir - it, I pray; Oh, strengthen my spir - it with pow - er And spread to my heart to - day." The second system (measures 5-8) is the chorus, marked "Chorus", with lyrics: "(C) In - to my heart, in - to my heart, Spread in - to my heart, Lord Je - sus; Make home to-day and have Your way In all of my heart, Lord Je - sus." The third system (measures 9-12) continues the chorus with the same lyrics. Chords are indicated above the notes: F, F/A, Gm, Gm/Bb, C7, C7/E, F, Bb/F, F/A, F7, Bb, G, G7, C, C7, F, C7, Bb, F/A, Gm, F, Bb, Gm, C7, F.

2. Spread into my heart, O Lord Jesus,
Spread into my heart, I pray;
Spread into my heart from my spirit,
Spread into my heart today.
3. Make home in my heart, O Lord Jesus,
Make home in my heart, I pray;
That we may be filled with Your fullness,
Make home in my heart today.
4. To Him who is able to do it
Above all we think or say,
We open our hearts wide and welcome
Him into our heart today.

