

Week Four

Abiding in Christ as the Empowering One— the Secret of Experiencing Christ

Scripture Reading: Phil. 4:12-13; John 14:23; 15:4-5; 1 John 2:27-28; 3:24; 4:13; Rev. 21:3, 22

Outline

Day 1

- I. We need to learn the secret of being in Christ as the empowering One:**
 - A. In Philippians 4:12-13 Paul says, “I know also how to be abased, and I know how to abound; in everything and in all things I have learned the secret both to be filled and to hunger, both to abound and to lack. I am able to do all things in Him who empowers me”:**
 - 1. The phrase learned the secret indicates that Paul had come into a new situation, a new environment; whenever we are put in a new environment, we need to learn the secret of living in that environment:**
 - a. I have learned the secret literally means “I have been initiated”; the metaphor here refers to a person’s being initiated into a secret society with instruction in its rudimentary principles.**
 - b. After Paul was converted to Christ, he was initiated into Christ and into the Body of Christ.**
 - c. He then learned the secret of how to take Christ as life, how to live Christ, how to magnify Christ, how to gain Christ, and how to have the church life, all of which things are rudimentary principles.**
 - 2. In everything means in each matter; in all things means in all**

matters; together, these two phrases encompass all the things in the course of human life.

- 3. Paul learned the secret of experiencing Christ in everything and in every place; this is also the secret of having more of Christ accumulated within us.**

Day 2

- 4. The secret is in Philippians 4:13: “I am able to do all things in Him who empowers me”:**

a. Paul was a man in Christ (2 Cor. 12:2), and he desired to be found in Christ by others; now he declared that he was able to do all things in Him, the very Christ who empowered him:

- (1) This is an all-inclusive and concluding word on his experience of Christ; it is the converse of the Lord’s word in John 15:5 concerning our organic relationship with Him: “Apart from Me you can do nothing.”**
- (2) The Greek word for empowers means “makes dynamic inwardly.”**
- (3) Christ dwells in us (Col. 1:27); He empowers us, makes us dynamic from within, not from without; by such inward empowering Paul was able to do all things in Christ.**

b. Paul had been altogether in the Jewish religion under the law and had always been found by others in the law, but at his conversion he was transferred from the law and his former religion into Christ and became “a man in Christ”—2 Cor. 12:2.

c. Now he expected to be found in Christ by all who observed him—the Jews, the angels, and the demons; this indicates that he aspired to have his whole being immersed in and saturated with Christ that all who observed him might find him fully in Christ; only when we are found in Christ, will Christ be expressed and magnified—Phil. 3:9a; 1:20.

- B. On the one hand, by the empowering of Christ, we can live a contented life (4:11-12); on the other hand, by the empowering of Christ, we can be true, dignified, righteous, pure, lovely, and**

well spoken of (v. 8).

- C. **Paul's word about Christ as the empowering One specifically applies to Christ's empowering us to live Him as our human virtues and thereby to magnify Him in His unlimited greatness; to live a life of these virtues is much more difficult than doing a Christian work.**

Day 3

- II. **To learn the secret of being in Christ as the empowering One is to learn the secret of abiding in Christ; to abide in Christ is to dwell in Him, to remain in fellowship with Him, that we may experience and enjoy His abiding in us—John 15:4-5; 1 John 2:27:**
 - A. **To abide in Christ is to live in the Divine Trinity—taking Christ as our dwelling place—vv. 6, 24, 27-28; 3:6, 24; 4:13:**
 - 1. **To abide in Christ is to abide in the Son and in the Father (2:24); this is to remain and dwell in the Lord (John 15:4-5).**
 - 2. **To abide in Christ is to abide in the fellowship of the divine life and to walk in the divine light, that is, to abide in the divine light—1 John 1:2-3, 6-7; 2:10.**
 - B. **To have Christ abiding in us is to live with the Divine Trinity—having Christ's presence as our enjoyment for Him to be one with us and to be with every part of our being and every aspect of our living—Matt. 1:23; 18:20; 28:20; 2 Tim. 4:22; 2 Cor. 2:10; 1 Cor. 7:24:**
 - 1. **To have Christ abiding in us is to have the words of Christ abiding in us for the bearing of remaining fruit to glorify the Father—John 15:7-8, 16.**
 - 2. **To have Christ abiding in us is to have the Spirit of reality as the presence of the Triune God abiding in us—14:17.**

Day 4

- III. We need to abide in Christ as our King and as our royal abode so that He can abide in us to make us His queen and His royal palace, His glorious church—Psa. 45:13, 8; John 15:4-5; Eph. 5:27; Rev. 22:5; Rom. 5:17; cf. S. S. 6:4:**
- A. To abide in Christ is to dwell in Him, the eternal God, as our Lord, having our living in Him and taking Him as our everything—John 15:4-5; 1 John 4:15-16; Rev. 21:22; Deut. 33:27a; Psa. 90.**
 - B. We need to dwell in God, living in Him every minute, for outside of Him there are sins and afflictions—vv. 3-11; John 16:33.**
 - C. To take God as our habitation, our eternal dwelling place, is the highest and fullest experience of God—Psa. 91.**
- IV. To abide in Christ, taking Him as our dwelling place, and to allow Him to abide in us, taking us as His dwelling place, is to live in the reality of the universal incorporation of the processed and consummated Triune God with the redeemed and regenerated believers—John 14:2, 10-11, 17, 20, 23:**
- A. The New Jerusalem is the ultimate incorporation of the processed and consummated Triune God with the regenerated, sanctified, renewed, transformed, conformed, and glorified tripartite church—Rev. 21:3, 22.**
 - B. The New Jerusalem is the tabernacle of God, and the center of the tabernacle is Christ as the hidden manna; the way to be incorporated into this universal, divine-human incorporation, the mutual abode of God and man, is to eat Christ as the hidden manna—v. 3; Exo. 16:32-34; Heb. 9:4; Rev. 2:17.**
- V. We abide in Christ so that He may abide in us by loving Him—John 14:21, 23:**
- A. When we love the Lord Jesus, He manifests Himself to us, and**

the Father comes with Him to make an abode with us for our enjoyment; this abode is a mutual abode, in which the Triune God abides in us and we abide in Him—v. 23.

- B. The more we love the Lord, the more we will have His presence, and the more we are in His presence, the more we will enjoy all that He is to us; the Lord's recovery is a recovery of loving the Lord Jesus—1 Cor. 2:9-10; Eph. 6:24.**

Day 5

VI. We abide in Christ so that He may abide in us by caring for the inward teaching of the all-inclusive anointing—1 John 2:27:

- A. We abide in the divine fellowship with Christ by experiencing the cleansing of the Lord's blood and the application of the anointing Spirit to our inner being—John 15:4-5; 1 John 1:5, 7; 2:20, 27.**
- B. Christ as the Head is the anointed One and the anointing One, and we are His members enjoying Him as the inner anointing for the fulfillment of His purpose—Heb. 1:9; 3:14; 2 Cor. 1:21-22.**
- C. The anointing, as the moving and working of the compound Spirit within us, anoints God into us so that we may be saturated with God, possess God, and understand the mind of God; the anointing communicates the mind of Christ as the Head of the Body to His members by the inner sense, the inner consciousness, of life—Psa. 133; 1 Cor. 2:16; Rom. 8:6, 27.**
- D. When the Head wants a member of the Body to move, He intimates it through the inner anointing, and as we yield to the anointing, life flows freely from the Head to us; if we resist the anointing, our relationship with the Head is interfered with, and the flow of life within us is stopped—Col. 2:19.**

- E. The teaching of the anointing of the Spirit has nothing to do with right or wrong; it is an inner sense of life—Acts 16:6-7; 2 Cor. 2:13.**
- F. If our natural life is dealt with by the cross and if we submit to the headship of Christ and live the Body life, we will have the Spirit's anointing and enjoy the fellowship of the Body—Eph. 4:3-6, 15-16.**

Day 6

VII. We abide in Christ so that He may abide in us by “switching on” the law of the Spirit of life in our spirit—Rom. 8:2, 4:

- A. The Lord's abiding in us and our abiding in Him are altogether a matter of Him being the life-giving Spirit in our spirit; by the bountiful, immeasurable Spirit in our spirit, we know with full assurance that we and God are one and that we abide in each other—1 Cor. 15:45b; Rom. 8:16; 1 Cor. 6:17; Phil. 1:19; John 3:34; 1 John 3:24; 4:13.**
- B. The way to abide in Christ as the empowering One so that He may be activated within us as the inner operating God, the law of the Spirit of life, is by rejoicing always, praying unceasingly, and giving thanks in everything—Phil. 4:13; 2:13; 1 Thes. 5:16-18; Col. 3:17.**

VIII. We abide in Christ so that He may abide in us by dealing with the constant word in the Scriptures, which is outside of us, and the present word as the Spirit, which is within us—John 5:39-40; 6:63; 2 Cor. 3:6; Rev. 2:7:

- A. By the outward, written word we have the explanation, definition, and expression of the mysterious Lord, and by the inward, living word we have the experience of the abiding Christ and the presence of the practical Lord—Eph. 5:26; 6:17-18.**

- B. If we abide in the Lord's constant and written word, His instant and living words will abide in us—John 8:31; 15:7; 1 John 2:14.**
- C. We abide in Him and His words abide in us so that we may speak in Him and He may speak in us for the building of God into man and man into God—John 15:7; 2 Cor. 2:17; 13:3; 1 Cor. 14:4b.**

WEEK 4 — DAY 1

Morning Nourishment

Phil. 4:12-13 I know also how to be abased, and I know how to abound; in everything and in all things I have learned the secret both to be filled and to hunger, both to abound and to lack. I am able to do all things in Him who empowers me.

In the book of Philippians Paul uses a number of unusual expressions. One of these expressions is found in verse 12 of chapter 4...The phrase learned the secret indicates that Paul had come into a new situation, a new environment. Whenever we are put in a new environment, we need to learn the secret of living in that environment. For someone from the West to go to the Far East is for him to go into a new environment. In order to live, he must learn the secret of life there. For example, when brothers and sisters from the United States visit the Far East, they need to learn the secret of eating with chopsticks. If they do not learn the secret, they will not be able to eat. (CWWL, 1978, vol. 1, "The Experience of Christ," p. 399)

Today's Reading

In Philippians 4:12...Paul seems to be saying, "In all things I have been instructed with the secret so that I know how to be in want and how to abound. I have been initiated with a type of secret knowledge." What is the secret Paul learned? Because Paul had been instructed with the particular secret, he could handle any situation, whether he was rich or poor, filled or hungry. The secret is in Philippians 4:13: "I am able to do all things in Him who empowers me." The secret is not that Christ is in us; it is that we are in Him.

Simply to say that Christ lives in us is to be too objective. We also need to experience living in Christ and doing all things in Him. What a salvation it is to live in Him! If we live in Him, we will enjoy His salvation day by day. This salvation can be compared to riding in a car. As long as we remain in the car, we enjoy salvation. When I ride in a car, I am not worried about what direction I am going or anything else. I may rest, pray, or enjoy

sightseeing. I simply rest and enjoy myself. In like manner, when we are in Christ, we should simply rest and enjoy ourselves. We should enjoy the life in Christ.

My burden in this chapter is that we would all learn the secret of being in Him. We can do all things in Him. This may seem to be a small secret, but actually it has great significance. This secret is the way for us to experience Christ and to enjoy Christ. It is also the secret of having more of Christ accumulated within us.

Such a secret needs to be put into practice. In order to practice this secret, we first need to realize that Christ lives in us. Second, we must deny the flesh and the natural man. We should count all things as loss and not treasure or appreciate anything of our natural man, such as our humility or other virtues. All our good points, attributes, and virtues need to be counted as loss. We should not have any confidence in anything other than Christ. Third, we should not do anything by ourselves, for we are not alone. Another person lives in us. (CWWL, 1978, vol. 1, "The Experience of Christ," pp. 399-401)

In Philippians 4:12...the phrase I have learned the secret is an interpretation of the Greek word which literally means "I have been initiated." The metaphor here refers to a person's being initiated into a secret society with instruction in its rudimentary principles. After Paul was converted to Christ, he was initiated into Christ and the Body of Christ. He then learned the secret of how to take Christ as life, how to live Christ, how to magnify Christ, how to gain Christ, and how to have the church life, all of which things are rudimentary principles. The secret of the Body is to take Christ as our life, to live Christ, to pursue Christ, to gain Christ, to magnify Christ, and to express Christ. These are the basic principles of the church, the Body of Christ. As one who had been initiated into the Body, Paul learned the secret. (The Conclusion of the New Testament, pp. 3527-3528)

Further Reading: CWWL, 1978, vol. 1, "The Experience of Christ," ch. 10; Life-study of Philippians, msg. 29

WEEK 4 — DAY 2

Morning Nourishment

Col. 1:27 To whom God willed to make known what are the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.

Phil. 4:13 I am able to do all things in Him who empowers me.

In Philippians 4:13...we find the secret [of sufficiency in Christ] to which Paul refers in verse 12: "The secret both to be filled and to hunger, both to abound and to lack." Christ was his secret of sufficiency.

To be empowered by Christ is to be made dynamic inwardly. Christ dwells in us (Col. 1:27). He empowers us, makes us dynamic from within, not from without. By such inward empowering, Paul could do all things in Christ.

Paul was a person in Christ (2 Cor. 12:2), and he desired to be found in Christ by others. Now he declared that he could do all things in Him, in the Christ who empowered him. This is an all-inclusive and concluding word concerning his experience of Christ. It is the converse of the Lord's word concerning our organic relationship with Him in John 15:5: "Apart from Me you can do nothing." As long as we have Christ and are in Him, we can do all things in Him. (The Conclusion of the New Testament, p. 3529)

Today's Reading

The "all things" in Philippians 4:13 refer to the things mentioned in verse 12 and to the virtues listed in verse 8. This means that the application of verse 13 is limited by the context of verses 8 through 12. On the one hand, by the empowering of Christ, we can live a contented life (vv. 11-12). For us to be able to do all things in Christ who empowers us is to be satisfied in any circumstance through Christ who empowers us as the secret of our daily Christian life. On the other hand, by the empowering of Christ, we can be true, dignified, righteous, pure, lovely, and well spoken of. This means that we are persons in Christ, who empowers us to live out every kind of virtue. This is to live Christ, to magnify Christ in His virtues.

We need to realize that Paul's word about Christ as the empowering

One specifically applies to Christ's empowering us to live Him as our human virtues and thereby to magnify Him in His unlimited greatness. The six virtues mentioned in verse 8 are actually the image of God. God created man in His image, that is, in His attributes of love, light, holiness, and righteousness. The fact that man was made in the image of God means that he was made in the form of love, light, holiness, and righteousness. The six items—what things are true, dignified, righteous, pure, lovely, and well spoken of—are in these four divine attributes of love, light, holiness, and righteousness. These are the real virtues, for they are the expression of Christ. Christ empowers the believers to live Him and magnify Him in all these virtues. In Christ who empowers us, we can practice these things, expressing these highest human virtues; in Christ who empowers us, we can be true, dignified, righteous, pure, lovely, and well spoken of.

To live a life of all these virtues is much more difficult than doing a Christian work. Many can preach the gospel, teach the Bible, and even establish churches, but they are not able to live this kind of life, a life full of the virtues of being true, dignified, righteous, pure, lovely, and well spoken of. In order to live Christ as our human virtues for the expression of the divine attributes, we need to be empowered by the indwelling Christ.

If we would experience Christ as the empowering One enabling us to do all things in Him, we need to let Him live in us (Gal. 2:20), be formed in us (4:19), make His home in us (Eph. 3:17), and be magnified in us (Phil. 1:20). If we fail to do these things, He will not have the way to empower us, but when Christ lives in us, is formed in us, makes His home in us, and is magnified in us, the way is prepared for Him to empower us. Then, empowered by the indwelling Christ, we will be able to do all the things spoken of in Philippians 4:8 through 12. (The Conclusion of the New Testament, pp. 3529-3530)

Further Reading: The Conclusion of the New Testament, msg. 351

WEEK 4 — DAY 3

Morning Nourishment

John 15:4-5 Abide in Me and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself unless it abides in the vine, so neither can you unless you abide in Me....Apart from Me you can do nothing.

1 John 2:24 As for you, that which you heard from the beginning, let it abide in you. If that which you heard from the beginning abides in you, you also will abide in the Son and in the Father.

To live in the Divine Trinity is to abide in Christ as the true vine (John 15:5)...To live in the Triune God is just like the branches abiding in a vine tree....Christ as the embodiment of the Triune God is a vine tree...spreading and growing over the entire earth.

The Greek word for abide means not only to remain or to stay but also to have our home, or to make our home....To live in Christ as the embodiment of the Triune God means that we take Christ as our dwelling place for our daily life....The vine tree with its branches is the very organism of the Triune God. Thus, to live in the Triune God is to abide in Christ as God's organism.

In 1 John we see that we need to abide in the Lord, in the Son, in the Father, and in God [cf. 2:24, 27-28; 3:6, 24; 4:13]. This presents a full portrait of living in the Triune God. To live in the Triune God is to have a daily life in Christ as the organism of the Triune God, in the Lord with His headship, with His lordship, in the Son with His sonship, in the Father with His fatherhood, and in God with His commandments of believing in His Son and of loving all His other sons.... We abide in God by the Spirit of God (v. 24b)... The linking, the connection, between us and God, the Father, the Son, the Lord, and Christ is the Spirit. (CWWL, 1988, vol. 1, "Living in and with the Divine Trinity," pp. 340-343)

Today's Reading

To live in Him puts us into the position of the enjoyment of the Lord. To live with Him is the enjoyment itself. To live with the Divine Trinity is to

enjoy the Divine Trinity. To live with a person is to enjoy that person. Thus, to live with the Triune God is our enjoyment of the Triune God. According to my rough estimation, one-fourth of the New Testament is for our living in the Triune God, but three-fourths of the New Testament is for our living with the Triune God. To live in the Divine Trinity is to abide in Christ, and to live with the Divine Trinity is to have Christ abide in us (John 15:5). When we abide in Christ, Christ abides in us, and His abiding is His presence with us; ...we have Him with us for our enjoyment.

To have Christ abiding in us is to have the words of Christ abiding in us for the bearing of remaining fruit (vv. 7-8, 16). In John 15:7 the Lord said, "If you abide in Me and My words abide in you, ask whatever you will, and it shall be done for you." This kind of asking is related to fruit-bearing (v. 8) and surely will be fulfilled. If we are to be those who go forth to preach the gospel, we must be those who love the word of Christ. We must be those who have the living word, the word of life, abiding in us. If we are not such persons, our preaching of the gospel will not last long. The living word of Christ stirs us up to go forth and bear fruit.

To have Christ abiding in us is to have the Spirit of reality abiding in us (14:17)... Actually, the words of Christ and the Spirit of reality are one. In John 6:63 the Lord told us that the words which He has spoken are spirit. God's word and God the Spirit are both God's breath. When this breath gets into us and remains in us, this breath is the Spirit. When this breath comes out of us through our speaking, it becomes the word. (CWWL, 1988, vol. 1, "Living in and with the Divine Trinity," pp. 355-357)

Further Reading: CWWL, 1988, vol.1, "Living in and with the Divine Trinity," chs. 4, 8-10; CWWL, 1983, vol. 3, "Abiding in the Lord to Enjoy His Life," chs. 1-2; Life-study of 1 John, msg. 25

WEEK 4 — DAY 4

Morning Nourishment

Psa. 90:1-2 O Lord, You have been our dwelling place in all generations. Before the mountains were brought forth, and before You gave birth to the earth and the world, indeed from eternity to eternity, You are God.

[In Psalm 90 Moses proclaimed] that God is our dwelling place in all generations....This was a new thought, something altogether unprecedented.

In John 15 the Lord Jesus said, "Abide in Me and I in you" (v. 4a)....To abide in Christ is to dwell in Him, not just remain or stay in Him. When we dwell in our house, we have our life and our living there.

According to Moses' word in Psalm 90:1, our house, our dwelling place, is the Triune God as our Lord... When we experience the Triune God to the degree that we take Him as our dwelling place, we have the deeper experience of God. (Life-study of the Psalms, p. 399)

Today's Reading

To take God as our habitation, our dwelling place, is the highest and fullest experience of God. To take God as our dwelling place is to experience Him to the fullest extent. Probably no one among us would dare to say that he dwells in God all the time. But this is what Christ did. When He was living His human life on earth, He continually took God the Father as His habitation. The only way that we can be identified with Christ in His death, resurrection, and ascension is to abide in Christ, and to abide in Christ is not only to remain in Him but also to dwell in Him, taking Him as our everything.... To dwell in God is to have our living in God.... I want to dwell in God, living in Him every minute, for outside of Him there are sins and afflictions. (Life-study of the Psalms, pp. 400, 402)

The Epistles reveal that God's goal is to have a great universal incorporation of Himself with His believers. Ultimately, this incorporation is the New Jerusalem, which is God's goal. The way to be incorporated into the tabernacle is to eat the hidden manna. The more we eat Christ, the

more we are incorporated into the Triune God as a universal incorporation. By eating the hidden manna we are incorporated into the tabernacle. The tabernacle in the Old Testament is a figure of the New Jerusalem, which is called the tabernacle of God. As the tabernacle of God, the New Jerusalem is the universal incorporation. This universal incorporation is God's eternal goal. The New Jerusalem is the tabernacle of God, and the center of this tabernacle is Christ as the hidden manna for us to eat. The way to be in the New Jerusalem is to eat Christ. (CWWL, 1994-1997, vol. 5, "The Issue of Christ Being Glorified by the Father with the Divine Glory," pp. 347-348, 341)

When we love [the Lord], not only does His Spirit abide in us but also He Himself will manifest Himself to us. This means that we have the presence of the One whom we love in our fellowship with Him. If we love Jesus, Jesus loves us, and the Father loves us also. When the Son manifests Himself to us, the Father comes with Him to make an abode with us, to stay with us.... By loving Him,...He will manifest Himself to us, and the Father and the Son will make Their abode with us for our enjoyment. (CWWL, 1988, vol. 1, "Living in and with the Divine Trinity" pp. 304-305)

The more we love Him, the more we enjoy His presence. What is His presence? It is simply the enjoyment of Himself. As long as we have His presence, we enjoy Him. The more we love Him, the more we shall have His presence. The more we are in His presence, the more we shall enjoy all that He is to us. We need only to love Him. Knowing means nothing; only loving counts. How we all need to love Him! I have been loving Him for fifty years, and today I feel that He is more lovable than ever. No one is as lovely as He is. Song of Songs says that He is altogether lovely (5:16). The Lord's recovery is a recovery of loving the Lord Jesus. If we do not love Him, we are finished with His recovery. (Life-study of John, p. 383)

Further Reading: CWWL, 1969, vol. 3, "Christ and the Church Revealed and Typified in the Psalms," ch. 16; CWWL, 1994-1997, vol. 3, "Crystallization-study of Song of Songs," ch. 11

WEEK 4 — DAY 5

Morning Nourishment

1 John 2:20 And you have an anointing from the Holy One, and all of you know.

27 And as for you, the anointing which you have received from Him abides in you, and you have no need that anyone teach you; but as His anointing teaches you concerning all things and is true and is not a lie, and even as it has taught you, abide in Him.

A life of abiding in the Lord and enjoying His life is a life in which we constantly experience the cleansing of the blood and enjoy the anointing moment by moment. Whenever you have even a slight feeling that something is wrong or have the sense that you are living in the flesh, in the old creation, or in the self, you should immediately confess your sin and ask for the Lord's forgiveness. When you confess according to this sense, it proves that you are in the light. Then the blood cleanses you, and the anointing follows to anoint you, increasing the element of God within you. You then enjoy more of what God is. You are practically abiding in the Lord and enjoying His life. (CWWL, 1983, vol. 3, "Abiding in the Lord to Enjoy His Life," p. 376)

Today's Reading

The Bible shows us that God's anointing is only for the One who has totally satisfied God's heart—His Son, Christ. If this is so, why does the Body receive the anointing? Psalm 133 shows us that the fine oil was poured on Aaron's head and ran down upon his beard to the hem of his garments.... After the oil is poured, it runs downward and eventually flows to the whole body. Because the Head is Christ, the anointed One, the Body is also Christ. Christ is God's Anointed. The church is His Body. When Christ was anointed, the whole Body was anointed with Him. The function of the anointing is to maintain the link between the Head and the Body, as well as the link between all the members. The anointing is the operation of the Holy Spirit within man.

When the Head wishes a member of the Body to move, He intimates it through the anointing, and as we yield to the anointing, life flows freely from the Head. If we resist the anointing, the relationship with the Head is interfered with and the flow of life stops. Many believers miss the leading of the Lord because they are not under the Head.... Believers can receive the anointing which flows from the Head to the Body only when they are directly under the Head.

The teaching of the anointing of the Spirit has nothing to do with right or wrong, what should or should not be done, or what is true or false. It is an inner feeling of life. Many people still work according to the principle of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, the tree from which Adam ate. This is to walk according to the principle of right and wrong; however, God's work in Christ is a matter of life. It is a matter of the anointing of the Spirit. Where the anointing is, there is life.

We can fellowship with one another because Christ is the life of the Body and the Head of the Body. At the same time, the enjoyment of this fellowship is the Holy Spirit. The more we live in the fellowship of the Body, the more we enjoy the anointing of the Spirit. But there is a condition to this: We have to allow the cross to deal with our flesh and our natural life in a thorough way. Whether or not a believer can enjoy this fellowship depends on whether he has dealt with his natural life. Our natural flesh only deserves to die; it only deserves to be in ashes, to be on the cross. We cannot think by ourselves; we are not qualified to propose anything by ourselves. We must allow Christ to have the absolute sovereignty over everything. We must allow Him to be the Lord in an absolute way. If our natural life is dealt with by the cross and if we submit to the headship of Christ and live the Body life, we will have the Spirit's anointing and enjoy the fellowship of the Body. (CWWN, vol. 44, "The Mystery of Christ," pp. 815-818, 820)

Further Reading: CWWL, 1983, vol. 3, "A Living of Mutually Abiding with the Lord in Spirit," ch. 3; CWWL, 1980, vol. 2, "The Mending Ministry of John," ch. 8; CWWL, 1990, vol. 1, "The Spirit," ch. 12; CWWL, 1953, vol. 3, "The Experience of Life," ch. 7

WEEK 4 — DAY 6

Morning Nourishment

1 Thes. 5:16-18 Always rejoice, unceasingly pray, in everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.

John 5:39-40 You search the Scriptures...and it is these that testify concerning Me. Yet you are not willing to come to Me that you may have life.

15:7 If you abide in Me and My words abide in you, ask whatever you will, and it shall be done for you.

The Lord's abiding in us and our abiding in Him are altogether a matter of His being the life-giving Spirit in our spirit; by the bountiful, immeasurable Spirit in our spirit, we know with full assurance that we and God are one and that we abide in each other... The way to abide in Christ as the empowering One so that He may be activated within us as the inner operating God, the law of the Spirit of life, is by rejoicing always, praying unceasingly, and giving thanks in everything... We abide in Christ so that He may abide in us by dealing with the constant word in the Scriptures, which is outside of us, and the present word as the Spirit, which is within us...By the outward, written word we have the explanation, definition, and expression of the mysterious Lord, and by the inward, living word we have the experience of the abiding Christ and the presence of the practical Lord... If we abide in the Lord's constant and written word, His instant and living words will abide in us.... We abide in Him and His words abide in us so that we may speak in Him and He may speak in us for the building of God into man and man into God. (The Conclusion of the New Testament, pp. 3994-3995)

Today's Reading

A light bulb functions properly when it "enjoys" and "abides" in the electricity. However, if the switch was not securely installed, the light bulb does not function properly and, therefore, does not shine steadily. The best way to keep the spiritual electricity from being turned off is to install a

safety box and lock the switch in. How do you lock it in? The way is to unceasingly pray and in everything give thanks.

When we pray, we are shining within, but if we also give thanks, we will become enlivened within. Prayer may be likened to connecting the wires, and thanksgiving, to shining the light. Sometimes our “wires” have been connected, yet it seems that we do not sense any reaction. The light does not shine if there is only prayer but no thanksgiving. Therefore, if we want to have a life that is always shining without flickering, we need to pray unceasingly and give thanks in everything.

Prayer and thanksgiving are like our two feet; ...prayer without thanksgiving will not work; thanksgiving without prayer also will not work. Hence, we must not only pray but also give thanks, and we must give thanks with prayer... It does not matter which comes first. As long as you have both, you can conveniently walk on the pathway of your Christian life.

What can we find in nature to signify unceasing prayer? Eventually, I found that there is only one thing: our breathing...Eating, drinking, and sleeping are intermittent;... [however], when breathing is interrupted, the result is death. While you are eating, drinking, and sleeping, you must still breathe. Therefore, our uninterrupted breathing is actually a picture of our unceasing prayer.

The spirit’s activity is to pray to the Lord. Even without opening my mouth to make a sound, my spirit automatically “breathes” in me to have fellowship with the Lord. Sometimes I may feel deflated; at that time I need to take a deep breath and call, “O Lord Jesus!” I may not make a sound, but still I am breathing in the Lord. We all should practice this kind of inaudible yet uninterrupted prayer... To pray unceasingly means that we should always exercise our spirit to contact the Lord... When we live and walk in our activated spirit, we pray unceasingly, and spontaneously we abide in the Lord and enjoy Him as our life. (CWWL, 1983, vol. 3, “Abiding in the Lord to Enjoy His Life,” pp. 319-321, 323-327)

Further Reading: CWWL, 1978, vol. 1, “The Experience of Christ,” ch. 23; Life-study of John, msg. 34

<< **WEEK 4 — HYMN** >>

Hymns, #564 I have learned the wondrous secret

Experience of Christ — Abiding in Him

1

I have learned the wondrous secret
Of abiding in the Lord;
I have tasted life's pure fountain,
I am drinking of His word;
I have found the strength and sweetness
Of abiding 'neath the blood;
I have lost myself in Jesus,
I am sinking into God.
I'm abiding in the Lord
And confiding in His word;
I am hiding in the bosom of His love.
Yes, abiding in the Lord
And confiding in His word,
I am hiding in the bosom of His love.

2

I am crucified with Jesus,
And He lives and dwells with me;
I have ceased from all my struggling,
'Tis no longer I, but He.
All my will is yielding to Him,
And His Spirit reigns within;
And His precious blood each moment
Keeps me cleansed and free from sin.

3

All my sicknesses I bring Him,

And He bears them all away;
All my fears and griefs I tell Him,
All my cares from day to day,
All my strength I draw from Jesus,
By His breath I live and move;
E'en His very mind He gives me,
And His faith, and life, and love.

4

For my words I take His wisdom,
For my works His Spirit's power;
For my ways His ceaseless presence
Guards and guides me every hour.
Of my heart, He is the portion,
Of my joy the boundless spring;
Savior, Sanctifier, Healer,
Glorious Lord, and coming King.