

Week Twelve

The Necessity of Spiritual Warfare and God's People Formed into an Army Ready for Battle

RK Hymns: 885

Scripture Reading: Num. 21:1-3, 21-35; 27:12-23; 31:13-54

Outline

Day 1

- I. **We need to realize the necessity of spiritual warfare—Num. 21:1-3, 21-35:**
 - A. **Spiritual warfare has its source in the conflict between the satanic will and the divine will; this is a warfare between the kingdom of Satan and the kingdom of God—Matt. 6:10; 7:21; 12:26, 28; Isa. 14:12-14.**
 - B. **In the Lord's recovery we are on a battlefield; in order to possess Christ as the good land for the fulfillment of God's purpose, we must fight against and defeat the satanic forces—Josh. 5:2—6:16.**

Day 2

- C. **The army of God defeated the king of Arad, Sihon the king of the Amorites, and Og the king of Bashan—Num. 21:1-3, 21-35:**
 1. **The kings of Arad (v. 1), of the Amorites (v. 21), and of Bashan (v. 33) were the "gate guards" on the east of the Jordan, guarding the land of Canaan, the kingdom of darkness, for Satan:**

- a. The kings defeated by God’s army signify the rulers, the authorities, and the world-rulers of darkness, against whom we must struggle—Eph. 6:12.
 - b. In order for the children of Israel to enter into the good land, they had to pass through the territory controlled by these kings and had to fight against them, destroy them, and take over their territory.
2. In order to gain the unsearchable riches of Christ, we must crush the spiritual enemies signified by the king of Arad, Sihon the king of the Amorites, and Og the king of Bashan and take over their territory—3:8; 6:10-12.
- D. The fighting of the children of Israel against the Canaanites that they might possess and enjoy the good land portrays the invisible spiritual warfare that is taking place behind the visible scene on earth, and it typifies the spiritual warfare of the church against”the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenlies”—Dan. 10:10-21; Eph. 6:10-12:**
- 1. In the typology of the Old Testament, Canaan has two aspects:
 - a. On the positive side, Canaan, a land of riches (Deut. 8:7-10), typifies the all-inclusive Christ with His unsearchable riches (Col. 1:12; Eph. 3:8).
 - b. On the negative side, Canaan signifies the aerial part, the heavenly part, of the dark kingdom of Satan:
 - 1) As the ruler of this world (John 12:31) and as the ruler of the authority of the air (Eph. 2:2), Satan has his authority (Acts 26:18) and his angels (Matt. 25:41), who are his subordinates as principalities, powers, and rulers of the darkness of this world (Eph. 6:12); hence, Satan has his kingdom (Matt. 12:26), the authority of darkness (Col. 1:13).
 - 2) The Canaanites typify the fallen angels, the rebellious angels who follow Satan (Rev. 12:4, 7), who have become the powers, rulers, and authorities in Satan’s kingdom (cf. Dan. 10:13, 20).
 - 3) The fighting of the children of Israel against the Canaanites that they might possess and enjoy the good land typifies the spiritual warfare of the church against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenlies so that the saints may enjoy Christ as the all-inclusive land—Eph. 6:12.

2. God wants us to gain Christ as our good land, but between us and the good land, there is a layer of devilish, demonic forces; if we would take possession of the good land, we must defeat these satanic forces—Col. 1:12-13; 2:15; Eph. 3:18; 6:10-12.
3. There is an exceedingly real spiritual warfare in which we must engage; thus, the church must be a corporate warrior fighting the battle to gain the all-inclusive Christ and for the establishing and spreading of the kingdom of God so that Christ may come back to inherit the earth—vv. 10-19.

Day 3

E. The Lord Jesus has already won the battle, and the work of the church on earth is to maintain Christ's victory—Heb. 2:14; Col. 2:15; 1 John 3:8:

1. The Son of God was manifested to destroy the works of the devil—v. 8.
2. As a man, Christ defeated Satan during the temptation in the wilderness—Matt. 4:1-11.
3. Through death the Lord Jesus destroyed the devil, who has the might of death, abolishing Satan and bringing him to nought—Heb. 2:14; 1 Cor. 1:28.
4. God openly shamed the evil angels, triumphing over them in the cross of Christ—Col. 2:15.
5. The effect of Christ's crucifixion was that the base of Satan's rebellion was shaken, that the strongholds of Satan's earthly kingdom were broken, and that the power of death and Hades was conquered and subdued—Matt. 27:51-52.
6. In the Spirit of His divinity, Christ proclaimed to the evil spirits in the abyss His victory over Satan on the cross—1 Pet. 3:18-20.
7. The overcomers, the mighty ones, realize that spiritual warfare is based on the victory of Christ—Joel 3:11b; John 12:31; Rev. 5:5:
 - a. The starting point of spiritual warfare is standing upon the victory of Christ—Eph. 6:11, 13.
 - b. We need to see that Christ has already overcome—Rev. 3:21.

8. The church is on earth to perpetuate and manifest Christ's victory over Satan—Eph. 6:13; Rev. 12:11.
- F. In order to engage in spiritual warfare, we need to know the Body, know the ascension, and reign in life—Eph. 1:22-23; 2:6; 4:16; Col. 3:1-4; Rom. 5:17, 21.**

Day 4

II. At the end of Numbers 27, God's people, the Israelites, had been formed into an army ready for battle:

- A. The children of Israel had become a new people formed into a new army with a new theocracy—vv. 12-23:**
1. The new people had been renumbered, the new army had been re-formed and strengthened, and a new leader, Joshua, had been appointed to serve.
 2. Joshua would serve not by himself but with Eleazar the priest, who would receive divine instructions by means of the Urim and the Thummim; this means that there was among the people a new theocracy—vv. 19-21.
- B. After being formed, constituted, disciplined, trained, and qualified, God's people had come to the plains of Moab, where they were waiting to enter into the good land, to take it, and to possess it—36:13.**
- C. The formation of the children of Israel into an army to fight for God typifies the New Testament believers' being built up into the organic Body of Christ to fight for God and with God for the carrying out of His economy—Eph. 4:16; 6:12.**

Day 5

- D. With the exception of Joshua and Caleb, those who were qualified and ready to take possession of the good land were the younger ones—Deut. 1:35-36; Num. 14:31:**
1. The second generation did not pass through as much as the first generation did, but they received the benefit of what the first generation

experienced—26:63-65.

2. Probably the older generation spoke to the younger generation about all that they experienced, enjoyed, and suffered, and this speaking was part of the raising up of the second generation.
3. What the older ones experienced was effective in building up the younger ones; therefore, God could prepare from the second generation more than six hundred thousand men with a rich inheritance and strong background who were qualified to be formed into an army to fight for God's kingdom.
4. The principle is the same with us in the Lord's recovery today; what the older ones have experienced is being passed on to the younger ones and will be very effective in building them up and preparing them to fight with God and for God.

Day 6

E. In Numbers 31:13-54 we see a beautiful picture of the one accord among God's people who had been formed into an army ready for battle—v. 31:

1. The entire situation among the different categories of people was peaceful, pleasant, and harmonious because they were all in one accord—Acts 1:14.
2. The genuine one accord in the church is the practice of the oneness of the Body, which is the oneness of the Spirit—Eph. 4:3-6:
 - a. One accord refers to the harmony in our inner being, in our mind and will—Acts 1:14; Matt. 18:19.
 - b. To be in one accord is to be one in our whole being, and this results in our being one in our outward speaking—Rom. 15:5-6.
 - c. In order to be in one accord, we need to have one heart and one way; this one heart and one way are the one accord—Jer. 32:39.
 - d. For the Lord's move, all the churches need to be in one accord; we should all voice the same thing, trumpet the same thing, teach the same thing, and be the same in practice—Josh. 1:16-18; 6:1-16; Acts 2:42; 4:24, 32; 1 Cor. 4:17; 7:17; 11:16; 14:34; 1 Tim. 1:3-4; 6:3.

F. God's army was prepared and ready to take the good land

under the blessing of God in His Divine Trinity and also under the blessing of Moses, the man of God—Num. 6:22-27; 2 Cor. 13:14; Deut. 30:16; 33:1.

WEEK 12 — DAY 1

Morning Nourishment

Matt. 6:10 Your kingdom come; Your will be done, as in heaven, so also on earth.

12:28 But if I, by the Spirit of God, cast out the demons, then the kingdom of God has come upon you.

Isa. 14:13-14 ...You said in your heart: I will ascend to heaven; above the stars of God I will exalt my throne. And I will sit upon the mount of assembly....I will ascend above the heights...; I will make myself like the Most High.

In the universe there are three wills: the divine will, the satanic will, and the human will. If we would know how the church can be God's warrior to engage in spiritual warfare, we must know these three wills, these three intentions. God's will, being self-existing, is eternal, uncreated. As created beings, the angels also have a will. One of these angels, an archangel, was appointed by God to rule the universe that existed before the creation of Adam. Because of his high position and his beauty, this archangel became proud. This pride gave rise to an evil intention, which became the satanic will. Therefore, in addition to God's intention, God's will, there is a second intention, a second will, for now the satanic will is set against God's will. (Life-study of Ephesians, p. 527)

Today's Reading

All warfare has its source in this conflict of wills. Before the satanic will rose up to contradict the divine will, there was no war in the universe. The controversy in the universe began with the rebellion of the archangel against God.... Throughout history there have been wars between nations, groups, persons, and even within individuals. For example, you may experience an inner warfare between your reason and your lust. All the different kinds of warfare have their source in the controversy between the divine will and the satanic will.

In His greatness God gave man freedom of choice....The crucial issue

was whether man would choose the divine will or the satanic will. If the human will stood with the divine will, then God's will would be accomplished. But if the human will took sides with the satanic will, Satan's will would be carried out, at least temporarily. As we all know, the human will took sides with the satanic will. This means that man chose to follow Satan and sided with the satanic will. Therefore, Satan was victorious temporarily.

However, through repentance man can turn from the satanic will to the divine will, from Satan's side to God's side. The first commandment in the gospel is to repent. The next two commandments are to believe and to be baptized. Any sinner who desires to be saved must obey these three commandments. He must repent to God, believe in the Lord Jesus, and be baptized in water. To repent is to have a turn from the satanic will to the divine will. From the day we were saved, our Christian life has been a life of warfare. The same was true of the children of Israel after they made their exodus from Egypt. (Life-study of Ephesians, pp. 527-529)

Without [the book of] Joshua we cannot fully understand the spiritual warfare in Ephesians 6. There is spiritual warfare in the invisible scene behind the visible scene. This means that in addition to war on the earth, there is a war between God and Satan in the air. The heavenlies are full of Satan's forces. Christ is our good land, and God wants us to gain Christ, but there is a layer of devilish, demonic forces between us and the good land. If we would take possession of the good land for our enjoyment, we have to defeat these satanic forces.

In the Lord's recovery today we are on a battlefield. We should be today's Joshua and Caleb, fighting against Satan's aerial forces so that we can gain more of Christ for the building up of the Body of Christ, setting up and spreading the kingdom of God so that Christ can come back to inherit the earth....We need to learn of Joshua and Caleb to represent God's interest in this age to fight down the enemies that Christ can be gained by people and that Christ can be increased by His pursuers. (Life-study of Joshua, pp. 60-61)

Further Reading: Life-study of Ephesians, msgs. 63-65; Life-study of Numbers, msgs. 33, 50

WEEK 12 — DAY 2

Morning Nourishment

Eph. 6:11-12 Put on the whole armor of God that you may be able to stand against the stratagems of the devil, for our wrestling is...against the rulers, against the authorities, against the world-rulers of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenlies.

Dan. 10:13 But the prince of the kingdom of Persia withstood me for twenty-one days; but now Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me...

The kings of Arad, of the Amorites (Num. 21:21), and of Bashan (v. 33) were the "gate guards" on the east of the Jordan, guarding the land of Canaan, the kingdom of darkness, for Satan. In order for the children of Israel to enter into the good land, they had to pass through the territory controlled by these kings and had to fight against them, destroy them, and take over their territory. This signifies that in order to enjoy the unsearchably rich Christ, the church must defeat and take over the territory of the enemies signified by these kings. (Num. 21:1, footnote 2)

Today's Reading

[In Daniel 10] we see something regarding the spiritual struggle in the air. According to verses 10 through 17, the evil prince of the kingdom of Persia withstood the sent angelic messenger, probably one of the chief princes, for twenty-one days. Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help the sent angelic messenger....The evil prince of the kingdom of Persia must have been an evil spirit, a rebellious angel, who followed Satan in his rebellion against God and who was commissioned by Satan to help Persia....While Daniel was praying for all those days, a spiritual struggle was taking place in the air between two spirits, one belonging to Satan and the other belonging to God. They were fighting because the...angelic messenger...had been sent by God in answer to Daniel's prayer....The crucial

point we need to see is that behind the scene a spiritual struggle, a struggle not seen with physical eyes, was taking place.

In verses 18 through 21 we see more of the spiritual struggle behind the scene. The angelic messenger would return to fight with the evil prince of Persia. The evil prince of Greece was then about to come. No one would hold with the angelic messenger against these two evil princes except Michael, the prince of Israel. The name Michael means "Who is like God?" The angelic messenger stood up to support and strengthen Darius (11:1)...in order [for him] to receive the kingdom....This scene also includes both good and evil spirits, spirits that are engaged in an invisible spiritual war. (Life-study of Daniel, pp. 96-97)

In the typology of the Old Testament, Canaan has two aspects: on the positive side, Canaan, a land of riches (Deut. 8:7-10 and footnote 1 on v. 7), typifies the all-inclusive Christ with His unsearchable riches (Col. 1:12; Eph. 3:8), and on the negative side, it signifies the aerial part, the heavenly part, of the dark kingdom of Satan. As the ruler of this world (John 12:31) and as the ruler of the authority of the air (Eph. 2:2), Satan has his authority (Acts 26:18) and his angels (Matt. 25:41), who are his subordinates as principalities, powers, and rulers of the darkness of this world (Eph. 6:12). Hence, he has his kingdom (Matt. 12:26), the authority of darkness (Col. 1:13). The Canaanites typify the fallen angels, the rebellious angels who follow Satan (Rev. 12:4, 7), who have become the powers, rulers, and authorities in Satan's kingdom (cf. Dan. 10:13, 20). The fighting of the children of Israel against the Canaanites that they might possess and enjoy the good land typifies the spiritual warfare of the church as a whole, including all the members, against "the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenlies" (Eph. 6:12) that the saints may enjoy Christ as the all-inclusive land. The church must be such a corporate warrior, fighting against Satan's aerial forces so that God's people may gain more of Christ for the building up of the Body of Christ, establishing and spreading the kingdom of God so that Christ can come back to inherit the earth. (Num. 21:1, footnote 1)

Further Reading: Life-study of Daniel, msg. 15; CWWL, 1961-1962, vol. 4, "The All-inclusive Christ," chs. 11-13

WEEK 12 — DAY 3

Morning Nourishment

Heb. 2:14 ...He also Himself...partook of [blood and flesh], that through death He might destroy him who has the might of death, that is, the devil.

1 John 3:8 ...For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil.

Col. 2:15 Stripping off the rulers and the authorities, He made a display of them openly, triumphing over them in it.

Ephesians 6:10-12... [indicates] that the work and responsibility of the church is spiritual warfare. The opponents in this warfare are not flesh and blood, but spiritual beings whose dwelling is in the air...Verses 13 and 14...[tell us] that we should stand, not that we should attack. The spiritual warfare is defensive, not offensive, because the Lord Jesus has already fought the battle and won the victory...The Lord has already won the battle, and the church is here to maintain His victory...The strong man has already been bound. Her work is not to let him be loosed. There is no need to attack; simply guarding is sufficient. The starting point of spiritual warfare is standing upon the victory of Christ; it is seeing that Christ has already overcome. It is not dealing with Satan, but trusting in the Lord. It is not hoping that we will win the victory, because the victory has already been won. The devil can do nothing. The church's work and responsibility is spiritual warfare. It is a matter of the conflict between God's authority and Satan's power. (CWWN, vol. 34,"The Glorious Church," pp. 60-61)

Today's Reading

Since the work of the church is to stand for God and not give any ground to Satan, what manner of living should we have to accomplish this task? All our sins and unrighteousness must be dealt with, our consecration to God must be thorough, our soul-life must be put to death, and our natural man must be abandoned. The ability of the flesh is absolutely

useless in spiritual warfare."I" cannot resist Satan."I" must go! Whenever"I" goes out, the Lord Jesus will come in....Satan recognizes only one person—the Lord Jesus. We cannot resist Satan. The fiery darts of Satan can penetrate our flesh, but, praise God, we can put on Christ who has won the victory. The Lord Jesus will [not] automatically come if we sit and passively wait.... As the Body of Christ, we must learn to work together with God. We should never think that it is enough just to be saved. It is not. We must be concerned with God's need.

Today God has caused us to share the victory of the Lord Jesus. Wherever the victory of the Lord Jesus is displayed, there Satan must leave. We must simply stand steadfast, because the Lord Jesus has already won the victory. In His redemptive work, the Lord Jesus destroyed all the...ground of the devil....Now the responsibility of executing this sentence is upon the church. When God sees that the church has sufficiently fulfilled this task, the kingdom will come, and the new heaven and the new earth will follow. (CWWN, vol. 34,"The Glorious Church," pp. 64-66)

Nothing requires us to know the Body so urgently as spiritual warfare, because spiritual warfare is not an individual matter but a Body matter. No individual believer can fight with the enemy; it takes the whole Body.

Only one kind of people...can engage in spiritual warfare—those who have received salvation, have been raised from death, and are now sitting with Christ in the heavens. Only this kind of men can attack the enemy in the air from a transcendent position in the heavens. Therefore, in order to engage in spiritual warfare, we must keep the heavenly position.

God's kingdom is legal, whereas the kingdom of Satan is illegal. The whole universe was created by God and belongs to Him; hence, God has the legal right to reign. On the contrary, Satan's kingdom was established by rebellion against God; hence, it is entirely illegal. (CWWL, 1953, vol. 3,"The Experience of Life," pp. 479, 525, 520)

Further Reading: CWWN, vol. 34,"The Glorious Church," chs. 1, 3; CWWL, 1953, vol. 3,"The Experience of Life," chs. 15-18; CWWL, 1972, vol. 2,"The Kingdom," chs. 6-8

WEEK 12 — DAY 4

Morning Nourishment

Eph. 6:11-12 Put on the whole armor of God that you may be able to stand against the stratagems of the devil, for our wrestling is not against blood and flesh but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the world-rulers of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenlies.

God...was not finished with the children of Israel, [which] is proved by the renumbering in Numbers 26.... At the time of the first numbering, there had not been any trouble or reduction in number through God's punishment. The renumbering took place after much trouble and reduction through judgment. Nevertheless, in spite of all the trials, turmoils, temptations, failures, and reductions, God still had almost the same number for Himself as He had had in the beginning. Regardless of what the enemy had done and regardless of the people's failures, God, by His sovereign grace and acts, still had a number greater than six hundred thousand. (Life-study of Numbers, p. 288)

Today's Reading

[In] Numbers 27:12-23...Moses did not consider his loss of the leadership. His heart was not set on his situation but on God's people [vv. 16-17] ...The Lord [told Moses] to take Joshua and cause him to stand before the priest and the whole assembly, to lay his hands on him...and then to charge him to be the leader (vv. 18-23). In this way God raised up a new leader.

At the end of chapter 27 we see a wonderful picture....The new people had been renumbered, the new army had been re-formed and strengthened, and the new leader had been appointed to serve, not by himself but with Eleazar the priest, who would receive divine instructions by means of the Urim and Thummim. This means that there was among the people a new theocracy. Hence, at the end of this chapter we see a new people, a new army, and a new theocracy. (Life-study of Numbers, p. 289)

To fight the battle is a matter of the Body. We must be built together. We must be in oneness and harmony as the living Body, the living building, and the living house of God. Then we can be the army....Warfare is something of the Body, which is in Christ, in the Spirit, and in the heavenly places.

Spiritual warfare is not a fighting against humans, that is, against flesh and blood. Rather, we fight with the spiritual forces, the evil spirits....Evil spirits are working to damage the kingdom of God in order to frustrate the fulfillment of God's purpose. This is a real fighting.

In mainland China, Brother Nee was very exposed to attack because he was taking the lead.... As early as 1934 I was brought into this fighting because from that time on I began to share the responsibility to deal with this warfare. I saw the wiles, the tactics, and the subtle ways of the enemy and how our brother was attacked very much. The most serious attacks were the rumors.

The real enemy is not the people. The real enemy is the evil forces behind the people. The people are merely the puppets of the enemy to be utilized by him. We should not fight the people; we should fight the evil forces behind them. The way to fight the evil forces is not by the flesh but by the Spirit, in the Spirit, and by prayer. The only way we can deal with the enemy who is working, fighting, behind certain people is to pray, to appeal to the throne in the heavens as the highest authority. Therefore, there is the need for real and prevailing corporate prayer. The church needs to come together to pray, not to deal with people. I have learned the lesson that whenever there is a rumor, we should not deal with it directly....We should not talk to people or explain things to them....We should simply go to the Lord and appeal to the highest authority. Through the throne we deal with the evil forces which are behind the blood and flesh. (CWWL, 1963, vol. 3,"Basic Principles for the Practice of the Church Life," pp. 333-335)

Further Reading: Life-study of Numbers, msgs. 39-40; CWWL, 1963, vol. 3,"Basic Principles for the Practice of the Church Life," ch. 6; CWWL, 1970, vol.1, pp. 93-107; The Conclusion of the New Testament, msg. 218

WEEK 12 — DAY 5

Morning Nourishment

Deut. 1:35-39 Not one of these men, this evil generation, shall by any means see the good land which I have sworn to give to your fathers, except Caleb the son of Jephunneh...[and] Joshua the son of Nun...Moreover your little ones, who you said would be prey, and your children...shall enter there. And to them I will give it, and they will possess it.

The more difficulties we pass through, the more useful we will be to the Lord....God's chosen and redeemed people needed to undergo different kinds of frustrations. As a result of all these things, God's people were ready to take possession of the God-promised land.

With the exception of Joshua and Caleb, those who were qualified and ready to take possession of the land were younger ones. They were of the second generation. The older ones, those of the first generation, had passed through many things and had learned many lessons. However, they were not qualified to enter into the land. The lessons learned by the first generation surely became part of the heritage passed on to the second generation....By their birth the younger ones were put into a position to inherit the tradition of their family and all that their parents had experienced. (Life-study of Numbers, pp. 367-368)

Today's Reading

I believe that the fathers spoke to their children about their experiences in Egypt, in the exodus from Egypt, and in the wilderness. No doubt, the fathers spoke about how they were cruelly treated as slaves in Egypt, about how God in His mercy sent Moses to deliver them from bondage, about how they kept the Passover on the fourteenth day of the second month, and about how they marched out of Egypt and crossed the Red Sea. The fathers must have also explained to their children that they entered into the wilderness without food but that God fed them with manna and supplied them with water from the smitten rock. They might

have also explained that although they eventually felt that manna was loathsome, they nevertheless appreciated it...Furthermore, the younger ones learned about Moses and about the great help he rendered to the people of Israel. Moses himself was not allowed to enter into the good land, but he contributed many constructive factors to God's people.

The second generation did not pass through as much as the first generation did, but they received the benefit of what the first generation experienced. I believe that the older generation told the younger generation about all they experienced, enjoyed, and suffered. This speaking was part of the raising up, or the building up, of the second generation. What the first generation experienced was not experienced in vain, for it was passed on to the second generation. What the older ones experienced actually was not effective for them, but it was very effective in building up the younger ones. Therefore, God was able to prepare from the second generation more than six hundred thousand men with a rich inheritance and strong background who were qualified to be formed into an army to fight with Him and for Him.

The principle is the same with us in the Lord's recovery today. The recovery has been in the United States for twenty-seven years and has passed through many things. Do you think that all these things have been in vain? They certainly have not been in vain. These things are being passed on to the younger ones in the Lord's recovery and will be very effective in building them up and preparing them to fight with God and for God. The younger ones in the Lord's recovery have a rich inheritance. Because this inheritance is being passed on to the younger ones and even being constituted into them, I have the full assurance that when a further testing comes, there will be a very positive result.

In the Old Testament, what the second generation received from the first generation made the younger ones ready to take possession of the good land. (Life-study of Numbers, pp. 368-369)

Further Reading: Life-study of Numbers, msg. 52

WEEK 12 — DAY 6

Morning Nourishment

Acts 1:14 These all continued steadfastly with one accord in prayer, together with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with His brothers.

Eph. 4:3-4 Being diligent to keep the oneness of the Spirit in the uniting bond of peace: One Body and one Spirit...

Rom. 15:6 That with one accord you may with one mouth glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

What the Lord desire[s] in His Body is oneness...When the church came into being, there was the need of the practice of this oneness. The practice of the genuine oneness is the one accord,...not merely a matter of our meeting together...Our oneness is the oneness of the organic Body of Christ, ... [which] is a mingling of the Triune God with His redeemed and transformed people. Because it is such a mingling, the Body itself is the oneness. The three of the Triune God—the Father, the Son, and the Spirit—are three divine factors of this oneness, and these three divine factors are mingled with one human factor, consummating in the Body.

The oneness that we have is the accomplished oneness, the oneness of the Spirit [Eph. 4:3-4]. We all have the Spirit in our "bank account," that is, in our spirit (Rom. 8:9,16), ...but we may not write "checks of oneness" because we may not remain in the spirit. Instead, we may remain in our mind. When a certain brother prays, we may be in our mind discerning whether that brother's prayer is genuine or whether there is hidden intention in his prayer. Thus, we may not say Amen to his prayer. In such a situation there is no practice of oneness. The one accord actually is the using of the oneness, which is the using of our possession. (CWWL, 1989, vol. 4, "Elders' Training, Book 10," pp. 359-360, 373-374)

Today's Reading

By the time of Acts 1, there were one hundred twenty people praying

steadfastly in one accord (vv. 14-15a). All of them had one mind, which was to receive power from on high and to testify of the crucified, resurrected, and ascended Lord, whom they loved and followed.

First Corinthians 1:10 says that we have to speak the same thing and to be attuned in the same mind and in the same opinion. How can we speak the same thing and have the same mind and the same opinion? The whole book of 1 Corinthians shows us that this same speaking is Christ, and the same mind and same opinion are also Christ. In our daily life, if we take Christ as our center and everything, what we speak, think, and understand will all be Christ. This is the one accord, which is the practice of oneness.

Furthermore, Philippians 2:2 says, "Think the same thing, having the same love, joined in soul, thinking the one thing." What is it to think the same thing? And what is it to think the one thing? After reading through the whole book of Philippians, and especially after reading through chapter 3, we can see that this refers to the subjective knowledge and experience of Christ.

The practice of oneness touches our mind, our love, and our speaking.... If we would first consider and think a little before we speak and would ask if it is Christ or not, there would be no problem. If we love the saints, we should ask ourselves if our love has different classes, degrees, or depths, and we should be adjusted by the Lord accordingly. The same is true with our speaking. We should speak only if our speaking is Christ; otherwise, we should not speak. I have a heavy burden within me. We all want the church here to receive grace and blessing. But do not forget Psalm 133. The commanded blessing of the Lord, which is life forever, is upon the brethren dwelling together in oneness.... In order for us to receive God's blessing, we must practice the oneness, and the way to practice the oneness is by the one accord. (CWWL, 1990, vol. 2, "The Oneness and the One Accord according to the Lord's Aspiration and the Body Life and Service according to His Pleasure," pp. 73-76)

Further Reading: Fellowship concerning the Urgent Need of the Vital Groups, chs. 7, 9-10, 12; The Governing and Controlling Vision in the Bible, ch. 2; Life-study of Deuteronomy, msg. 19; Life-study of Philippians, msgs. 2, 8; Life-study of Romans, msg. 29

<< WEEK 12 — HYMN >>

Hymns, #893 Conflict today is fierce

Spiritual Warfare — By the Lord's Coming

- 1 Conflict today is fierce,
The strength of Satan more;
The cry of battle calling now
Is louder than before.
The rebel voice of hell
E'en stronger now becomes;
But list, the midnight cry resounds,
Behold, I quickly come!**
- 2 Trials more bitter grow,
The fighting doth enlarge;
Hell's forces rally all their pow'rs
And gather for the charge.
Yet while we wait and watch
And feel the war severe,
We hear the joyful song ring out,
Jesus, the Lord. is near!**
- 3 'Tis harder at the end
The word to testify,
For Satan fights with all his pow'r
Our witness to defy.
Much greater strength we need
The foe to overcome;**

How happy when the Lord we see
And all our sighing's done!

4 Who then will forward go
Strong in His mighty power?
Who then will firmly trust the Lord
Until the vict'ry hour;
Till with the conqu'rors blest,
The triumph song's begun?
That man will then rejoice to hear,
Behold, I quickly come!

5 Who then will choose God's best,
And take the narrow track,
Though passing thru the wildest storms,
Yet never turning back?
Who now will dare press on,
Enduring pain and fear?
All such will then rejoice to see
Jesus, the Lord, is near!

6 Though deep the darkness be
We still would onward go,
Till we the day of rapture greet
And glory 'round shall glow.
'Tis there we'll see the Lord,
And Satan overcome;
The overcomers will rejoice,
Jesus, the Lord. has come!