

Week Ten

Avoiding Division, Which Is versus the Oneness That We Keep, and Rejecting Apostasy, Which Is versus the Faith That We Contend For

EM Hymns: 853, 1339

Scripture Reading: Deut. 12—13; Psa. 133; John 17:21-23; Eph. 4:3-6; Jude 1-3, 19-21

Outline

Day 1

- I. According to Moses' word in Deuteronomy 12 and 13, we must avoid division and reject apostasy:**
 - A. We must keep the unique oneness of God's people and the unique faith in the person and redemptive work of Christ.**
 - B. Apostasy in the Old Testament denotes giving up God and turning away from God to idols; in the New Testament apostasy is heresy, denoting the denial of Christ's deity and not believing that Jesus Christ is God incarnated to be a man—John 1:1, 14; 1 John 2:18, 22; 4:2-3.**
 - C. Apostasy, or heresy, insults and damages the person of Christ, and division destroys the Body of Christ as Christ's corporate expression; thus, apostasy and division damage the entire economy of God.**
 - D. Because of this, the apostle Paul charges us to turn away from the divisive ones (Rom. 16:17), and the apostle John enjoins us to reject the heretical ones (2 John 9-11).**
 - E. Like Moses in Deuteronomy and the apostles in the New**

Testament, we must be very strict concerning division and apostasy; we must keep the unique oneness of God's people and the unique faith in the person and redemptive work of Christ—Eph. 4:3, 13.

Day 2

- II. Division is all-inclusive; it includes all negative things, such as Satan, sin, worldliness, the flesh, the self, the old man, and evil temper—Rom. 16:17-18; Titus 3:10:**
 - A. We should not think that division stands by itself and is not related to the flesh, the self, and worldliness—Gal. 5:19-21; Matt. 16:23-24; 1 John 2:15-16.**
 - B. If we are enlightened concerning the nature of division, we will see that it is not only related to all negative things but includes all negative things.**
 - C. To be in division is to be in death; Christianity is filled with death and darkness because the genuine oneness in life is lacking.**
 - D. Divisions come out of different teachings, teachings other than God's economy—1 Tim. 1:3-4:**
 - 1. Whatever we teach should not be measured by whether it is wrong or right; it must be measured by whether it is divisive or not; only one kind of ministry builds up and never divides—this is the unique ministry of God's economy.
 - 2. It kills people to teach differently; to teach differently tears down God's building and annuls God's entire economy; we all must realize that even a small amount of teaching in a different way destroys the recovery.
 - 3. The only way that can preserve us in the recovery is the unique ministry; if we say that we are in the recovery, yet we teach something so lightly, even in a concealed way, that is different from God's economy, we sow the seed that will grow up in division; therefore, the only way that we can be preserved in the eternal oneness is to teach the same thing in God's economy.
 - 4. The different teachings of the dissenting ones are winds used by God's

enemy to distract His people and carry them away from His economy—Eph. 4:14.

5. The dividing teachings are organized and systematized by Satan to cause serious error and thus damage the practical oneness of the Body life—v. 14.
6. The different teachings are the major source of the church's decline, degradation, and deterioration—1 Tim. 1:3-4, 6-7; 6:3-5, 20-21.

Day 3

E. The apostles taught the same thing to all the saints in all the places and in all the churches—1 Cor. 4:17; 7:17; 11:16; 14:33b-34:

1. We also must teach the same thing in all the churches in every country throughout the earth—Matt. 28:19-20.
2. There is no thought in the New Testament that a teaching is good for one church but not for the other churches; rather, the New Testament reveals that all the churches were the same in receiving the teachings—Titus 1:9.

III. The genuine oneness is an all-inclusive, comprehensive oneness that includes all positive things—Psa. 23:6; 36:8-9; 43:3-4; 84:1-8, 10-12; 92:10; 133:1, 3b:

A. The Lord has given us the glory that the Father has given Him so that we may be one in the Father and in the Son; this points to a oneness in the divine nature and the Divine Being; oneness is actually the mingling of the processed and consummated Triune God with the believers—John 17:21-23; Eph. 4:3-6.

B. When the oneness is recovered, all the spiritual riches and all the positive things are recovered with it, because they all exist in the oneness—v. 3; 3:8:

1. All the godly things and all the spiritual riches are ours on the genuine ground of oneness—Deut. 8:7-9; 12:12, 26-28.
2. The genuine oneness is not a partial oneness; it is a great, complete, comprehensive oneness, a oneness in entirety.

C. Psalm 133 is a psalm on the oneness that includes all positive attributes and virtues; if we see the vision of the oneness of entirety, all the germs of division will be killed, and we will be

delivered from every kind of division.

Day 4

- D. **For the recovery and preservation of the genuine, all-inclusive oneness, we must destroy the high places—1 Kings 11:7-8; 12:26-33; 13:33-34; 14:22-23; 15:14; 22:43; 2 Kings 12:2-3; 14:3-4; 15:3-4, 34-35:**
1. In His wisdom God required His people to destroy all the places in which the nations served their gods; to set up a high place is to have a division; hence, the significance of high places is division—Deut. 12:1-3.
 2. To preserve the oneness of His people, God required that they come to the unique place of His choice; the high places were a substitute and an alternative for this unique place—vv. 8, 11, 13-14, 18.
 3. A high place is an elevation, something lifted above the common level; in principle, every high place, every division, involves the uplifting, the exaltation, of something other than Christ—cf. Col. 1:18.
 4. The record of the building of the high places under Solomon and Jeroboam has a spiritual significance; it was written for our spiritual instruction—Rom. 15:4-6:
 - a. According to this record, division is caused by lust and ambition; Solomon is an example of the former, and Jeroboam is an example of the latter.
 - b. The high places built by Solomon and Jeroboam seriously damaged the ground of oneness—1 Kings 11:7-8; 12:26-33.
 - c. In the church life we should not have any high places; instead, we should all be on one level to exalt Christ—Col. 1:18; 3:10-11.
 - d. The divisions in Christianity are caused by selfishness and ambition—Phil. 2:21; 3 John 9-10; Rom. 16:17-18; 1 Kings 12:26-33.
 5. Spiritually speaking, we must destroy every place other than the church and every name other than the name of Christ; this means that we must destroy our culture, disposition, temperament, habits, natural characteristics, preferences, and religious background with its influence—everything that damages the genuine oneness—Gal. 2:20; 5:24; 6:14.

Day 5

E. In the Lord's recovery we elevate Christ and Christ alone—Col. 1:18:

1. We can testify that, in contrast to today's Christianity, we have no high places.
2. Having come to the church, we should have no "high places," elevations where something other than Christ is uplifted; we should have nothing other than the person of Christ and the unique way of the cross—1 Cor. 1:30; 2:4; Col. 1:20; 2:11; 3:11.
3. In the church we enjoy Christ as the rich produce of the land; our enjoyment of Christ in the presence of God becomes our worship, our church life, and even our Christian living, and we grow and mature on the ground of oneness—Eph. 3:8; 4:3, 14-16.

IV. We must be fully exercised to separate ourselves from any heresy (apostasy) and heretics (apostates):

- A. Heretics do not confess that Jesus is God incarnate (not confessing that He has come in the flesh through the divine conception of the Holy Spirit); thus, they deny the deity of Christ—1 John 4:3; 2 John 7; cf. Luke 1:31-35; John 20:28-29; Rom. 9:5.**
- B. The Spirit works in the believers to confess to them that Christ came in the flesh—1 John 4:1-2:**
 1. Anyone who rejects Christ's incarnation and thereby rejects His redemption also denies Christ's resurrection.
 2. If anyone denies Christ's incarnation, that one denies Christ's holy birth, humanity, human living, redemption through crucifixion, and resurrection; this utterly annuls the enjoyment of the life-giving Spirit as the reality of the processed Triune God—2:23.
- C. A heretic is one who denies the divine conception and deity of Christ, as today's modernists do; such a one we must reject, not receiving him into our house nor greeting him; thus, we will not have any contact with him or any share in his heresy, heresy that is blasphemous to God and contagious like leprosy—2 Pet. 2:1-3; 2 John 10.**
- D. Just as bringing to others the divine truth of the wonderful Christ is an excellent deed (Rom. 10:15), so spreading the**

satanic heresy, which defiles the glorious deity of Christ, is an evil work; it is a blasphemy and abomination to God; it is also a damage and curse to men.

- E. **No one who is a believer in Christ and a child of God should have any share in this evil! Even to greet such an evil one is prohibited! A severe and clear separation from this evil should be maintained!—2 John 8-11.**

Day 6

V. Jude exhorts us to earnestly contend for the faith—Jude 1-3:

- A. **“The faith” in Jude is not subjective faith as our believing but objective faith as our belief, referring to the things we believe in, the contents of the New Testament as our faith, in which we believe for our common salvation—Acts 6:7; 1 Tim. 1:19; 3:9; 4:1; 5:8; 6:10, 21; 2 Tim. 3:8; 4:7; Titus 1:13.**
- B. **Our Christian faith is composed of our belief concerning six basic items: the Bible, God, Christ, the work of Christ, salvation, and the church—Eph. 4:13:**
 - 1. The Bible, word by word, is divinely inspired by God, as the breath of God—2 Pet. 1:21; 2 Tim. 3:16.
 - 2. God is uniquely one but triune—the Father, the Son, and the Spirit—Matt. 3:16-17; 28:19; 2 Cor. 13:14; Eph. 2:18; 3:14-17; Rev. 1:4-5.
 - 3. Christ was the very God in eternity (John 1:1) and became a man in time (v. 14); His deity is complete, and His humanity is perfect; hence, He is both God and man (20:28; Rom. 9:5; John 19:5; 1 Tim. 2:5), possessing both divinity and humanity.
 - 4. Christ first became a man in incarnation (John 1:14) and died on the cross for our redemption (1 Pet. 2:24; Rev. 5:9); then He rose from the dead for our regeneration (1 Pet. 1:3), ascended to the heavens to be the Lord of all (Acts 2:33, 36; 10:36), and will come back as the Bridegroom to the church (John 3:29; Rev. 19:7) and the King of kings to all the nations (v. 16); these are the main aspects of the work of Christ.
 - 5. A sinner must repent to God (Acts 2:38; 26:20) and believe into Christ (John 3:16; Acts 16:31) for forgiveness of sins (10:43), for redemption (Rom. 3:24), for justification (Acts 13:39), and for regeneration (John 3:6)

in order that he may have eternal life (v. 36) to become a child of God (1:12) and a member of Christ (1 Cor. 12:27); this is our salvation through faith (Eph. 2:4-9).

6. The church, composed of all the genuine believers in Christ, as the Body of Christ (1:22-23; Col. 1:24), is universally one (Eph. 4:4), and a local church as the expression of the Body of Christ is locally one—one city, one church (Rev. 1:11):

a. This does not mean, however, that a real believer in Christ who does not agree with one city, one church is not saved; he or she is saved, but there is something lacking, not for salvation but for the proper church life.

b. By standing on the proper ground of the church, we are choosing to love all the brothers, not only those who are meeting with us.

C. **This faith, not any doctrine, has been delivered once for all to the saints; for this faith we should earnestly contend—1 Tim. 6:12.**

D. **We build up ourselves upon the foundation of this most holy faith by enjoying the entire Blessed Trinity so that we may become the New Jerusalem as the totality of the eternal life—Jude 19-21; cf. John 4:14b.**

E. **The entire Blessed Trinity is employed and enjoyed by us as we exercise our spirit by “praying in the Holy Spirit” to keep ourselves “in the love of God, awaiting the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life”—Jude 20-21:**

1. Unto eternal life (v. 21), or into eternal life (John 4:14b), is a particular expression; unto, or into, speaks of destination and also means “to become.”

2. By exercising our spirit to enjoy the Blessed Trinity and contend for the faith, we become the New Jerusalem as the totality of the eternal life—Rev. 22:1-2a; 21:10-11.

WEEK 10 — DAY 1

Morning Nourishment

Deut. 13:3-4 You shall not listen to the words of that prophet or to that dreamer of dreams; for Jehovah your God is testing you in order to know whether you love Jehovah your God with all your heart and with all your soul. You shall follow Jehovah your God; and you shall fear Him, keep His commandments, listen to His voice, serve Him, and hold fast to Him.

In Deuteronomy 12 Moses was strict in the matter of division, and in Deuteronomy 13 he was strict in the matter of apostasy.

In the Old Testament, apostasy denotes the giving up of God and the turning away from God to idols. In the New Testament, apostasy denotes the denial of Christ's deity; it refers to not believing that Christ is God incarnated to be a man. (Life-study of Deuteronomy, pp. 86, 81)

Today's Reading

We need to be clear regarding the difference between teaching apostasy and being wrong in doctrine. Someone may not be correct in his teaching about a certain doctrine, but this does not mean that he is apostate. For example, suppose a brother in the Lord, a genuine believer in Christ, is somewhat mistaken in his teaching regarding the rapture....According to the New Testament, someone becomes apostate not by teaching incorrectly about the rapture but by giving up the faith that Jesus Christ is God and that He came in the flesh to be a man.

In Romans 14 and 15 Paul is generous, broad-minded, and all-embracing, but in Romans 16:17 he is very narrow and strict. "I exhort you, brothers, to mark those who make divisions and causes of stumbling contrary to the teaching which you have learned, and turn away from them." On the one hand, we need to receive all kinds of genuine believers; on the other hand, we need to be narrow and strict in dealing with divisive ones. In 16:17 Paul does not say, "These divisive ones are brothers. We need to receive them and love them." No, he tells us to mark them and to turn away from them. To turn away from those who make divisions and causes of

falling is to quarantine them.

Like the apostles in the New Testament,...we also must be very strict concerning division and apostasy. This means that we must keep the unique oneness of God's people and the unique faith in the person and redemptive work of Christ.

The New Testament term for apostasy is heresy. Apostasy and heresy are an insult to the person of God. In the Old Testament the apostates turned away from God and followed idols....In the New Testament the heretics denied that Jesus Christ is God incarnated to become a man. Such a denial is heresy, New Testament apostasy. This heresy damages the person of Christ. In both the Old Testament and the New Testament, God does not tolerate apostasy or heresy.

The Lord hates division because it destroys His people as His expression. In the Old Testament the children of Israel were God's people for His corporate expression. In the New Testament the corporate expression of the Lord is the Body of Christ. Whereas heresy insults and damages the person of Christ, division damages the Body of Christ. Division kills the Body of Christ and cuts it into pieces. Because heresy damages the Head and because division kills the Body, the Lord, in both the New Testament and the Old Testament, will never tolerate heresy and division.

Instead of sympathizing with those who make divisions and causes of falling, we are charged by Paul to turn away from them. The reason we must turn away from those who cause divisions is that division is extremely serious—it destroys the Body of Christ....Apostasy and division damage the entire economy of God. (Life-study of Deuteronomy, pp. 82-84, 86-89)

Further Reading: Life-study of Deuteronomy, msgs. 12-13; CWWL, 1979, vol. 2, "The Genuine Ground of Oneness," chs. 1, 4

WEEK 10 — DAY 2

Morning Nourishment

Eph. 4:14 That we may be no longer little children tossed by waves and carried about by every wind of teaching in the sleight of men, in craftiness with a view to a system of error.

1 Tim. 1:3-4 Even as I exhorted you...to remain in Ephesus in order that you might charge certain ones not to teach different things...which produce questionings rather than God's economy, which is in faith.

The dividing teachings are organized and systematized by Satan to cause serious error and thus damage the practical oneness of the Body life. The sleight is of men, but the system of error is of Satan and is related to the deceitful teachings that are designed by the evil one to distract the saints from Christ and the church life. (Eph. 4:14, footnote 5)

Never regard division as an insignificant matter....To be in oneness is to be in life, but to be in division is to be in death.

Division is all-inclusive. It comprises such negative things as Satan, sin, worldliness, the flesh, the self, the old man, and evil temper. If we are enlightened concerning the nature of division, we will see that it includes every negative thing. Do not think that division stands by itself and that it is not related to such things as the flesh, the self, and worldliness. Division is not only related to all negative things; it includes all negative things. (CWWL, 1979, vol. 2, "The Genuine Ground of Oneness," pp. 253-254)

Today's Reading

Throughout the twenty centuries of church history, the divisions, confusions, and problems that have taken place among all the Christians were all due to a ministry....All the different kinds of Christian groups come out of different ministries. A ministry is mainly a teaching. We must realize that the teaching that a Christian teaches ministers something....A teaching always issues in something. Based upon the issue of your teaching, your teaching may be considered as a ministry. ...To serve others with something

is to minister.

Poison after poison was injected into the Christian church while the church was going on. At the conclusion of his writing ministry, Paul wrote 1 Timothy to inoculate the church against all these poisons....This phrase not to teach different things [1:3] seems so simple....We may not think that this is serious, but actually it is more than serious. It kills people to teach differently. To teach differently tears down God's building and annuls God's entire economy. We all must realize that even a small amount of teaching in a different way destroys the recovery. There is a proverb that says, "One sentence can build up the nation, and one sentence can destroy the entire nation."...Just speaking one sentence that conveys your kind of concept tears down everything.

The only way that can preserve us in the recovery is the unique ministry. If we say that we are in the recovery, yet we teach something so lightly, even in a concealed way, that is different from God's economy, we sow the seed that will grow up in division. Therefore, the only way that we can be preserved in the eternal oneness is to teach the same thing, God's economy. This kind of teaching is called the New Testament ministry, the ministry of the new covenant. The ministry of the new covenant is to minister only the processed Triune God to be dispensed into His chosen people as life and life supply to produce members of Christ to form the Body to express the Triune God. This is the New Testament economy. To teach anything, even good things and scriptural things, that is even a little apart from God's New Testament economy will still issue in division, and that will be very much used by the subtle one, the evil one. We must, therefore, be on the alert. (CWWL, 1984, vol. 2, "Elders' Training, Book 3: The Way to Carry Out the Vision," pp. 267-268, 273)

Further Reading: CWWL, 1979, vol. 2, "The Genuine Ground of Oneness," chs. 3, 9; CWWL, 1984, vol. 2, "Elders' Training, Book 3: The Way to Carry Out the Vision," ch. 4

WEEK 10 — DAY 3

Morning Nourishment

1 Cor. 4:17 Because of this I have sent Timothy to you, who is my beloved and faithful child in the Lord, who will remind you of my ways which are in Christ, even as I teach everywhere in every church.

11:16 But if anyone seems to be contentious, we do not have such a custom of being so, neither the churches of God.

Oneness is all-inclusive. It includes God, Christ, and the Spirit....In the oneness revealed in [Ephesians 4:3-6], we have God the Father, Christ the Lord, and the Spirit as the Giver of life. This oneness includes such positive things as our regenerated spirit and our transformed and renewed mind. Everything positive is included in the proper oneness. (CWWL, 1979, vol. 2, "The Genuine Ground of Oneness," p. 254)

Today's Reading

Our practice of oneness is based upon the attribute of the oneness of the church: one Spirit, one Lord, one God, one Body, one faith, one baptism, and one hope [Eph. 4:4-6]....Moreover, the practice of this oneness is according to the apostles' teaching (1 Cor. 4:17b; 7:17b; 11:16; 14:34a). The apostles taught the same thing to all the saints in all the places and in all the churches. At the same time, the practice of this oneness is also according to the same speaking of the Spirit to the churches (Rev. 2:7, 11a, 17a, 29; 3:6, 13, 22). The seven epistles to the seven churches in Revelation 2 and 3 are words spoken to all the churches....All the churches have the same Bible, and everyone is practicing oneness according to the same speaking. Finally, the practice of oneness indicates that the seven churches as the seven lampstands are completely identical (1:20)....Although they are distinct and self-contained, they are completely identical in nature, shape, function, and expression. (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. 74-75)

The reason for this oneness is that God Himself is one. Oneness is His nature. In all God's acts we see one origin, one element, and one essence. In God's creation we see one God and one corporate man. In His selection we also have the one God and one man. Moreover, in the church we have the one Spirit and one new man. Eventually, in the New Jerusalem we have the unique Triune God in the one city characterized by the one throne, the one street, the one river, and the one tree. Therefore, the oneness about which we are speaking is not a partial oneness; it is a great, complete, comprehensive oneness, a oneness in entirety....If we see the vision of the oneness of entirety, all the germs of division will be killed, and we will be delivered from every kind of division.

The oneness [in John 17:21-23] is not merely that of individual units coming together in harmony and agreement. Here the Lord said that He has given us the very glory the Father has given Him in order that we may be one in the Father and the Son. This points to a oneness that exists in the divine nature and the Divine Being. The three of the Triune God are one in Their nature and being. The oneness of the believers in Christ should be essentially the same.

[In Ephesians 4:4-6] Paul speaks of the Body and of the one Spirit, the one Lord, and the one God and Father. The fact that the Body and the Triune God are mentioned together indicates that oneness is actually the mingling of the Triune God with the believers.

When we come back to the oneness, all the godly, heavenly, spiritual things return...[and] are ours on the ground of oneness. (CW WL, 1979, vol. 2, "The Genuine Ground of Oneness," pp. 243, 292-293, 330)

Further Reading: CW WL, 1978, vol. 3, "Truth Messages," ch. 7; CW WL, 1990, vol. 2, "The Intrinsic Problem in the Lord's Recovery Today and Its Scriptural Remedy," chs. 1-2

WEEK 10 — DAY 4

Morning Nourishment

Col. 1:18 And He is the Head of the Body, the church; He is the beginning, the Firstborn from the dead, that He Himself might have the first place in all things.

3:10-11 And have put on the new man...where there cannot be Greek and Jew, circumcision and uncircumcision, barbarian, Scythian, slave, free man, but Christ is all and in all.

In Deuteronomy 12 Moses charged the children of Israel to "completely destroy all the places where the nations...have served their gods, on the high mountains and on the hills and under every flourishing tree" (v. 2). He also charged them to tear down their altars...(v. 3). Having destroyed all these things, they were to come to the unique place of God's choice. According to 1 Kings, the temple was built in Jerusalem, the place God had chosen,...a unique place for His presence. This one place protected God's people from division.

Although the children of Israel destroyed the places wherein the nations served their gods,...eventually the very things that had been destroyed came back....In fact, Solomon, the very one who built the temple according to God's desire on the ground of oneness, took the lead to build up the high places once again (1 Kings 11:6-8). (CWWL, 1979, vol. 2, "The Genuine Ground of Oneness," p. 313)

Today's Reading

To set up a high place is to have a division. Hence, the significance of high places is division....To preserve the oneness of His people, God required that they come to the unique place of His choice. The high places, however, were a substitute and an alternative for this unique place....The unique place, Jerusalem, signifies oneness, whereas the high places signify division. Just as all manner of evil and abominable things were related to the setting up of the high places, so, in New Testament terms, all manner of

evil is related to division.

According to the record in 1 Kings, two kings...took the lead to set up the high places. In the case of Solomon, the building of the high places was related to the indulgence of lust. Solomon had hundreds of wives and concubines....His wives had "turned his heart after other gods" (11:4). In the case of Jeroboam, the building of the high places was related to ambition (12:26-32)....Fearing that the kingdom would return to the house of David if the people went to Jerusalem to worship, Jeroboam "made a house of high places" (v. 31). A high place is an elevation, something lifted above the common level....In principle, every high place, every division, in Christianity today involves the uplifting, the exaltation, of something other than Christ. The things that are exalted may not be evil. On the contrary, they may be very good and may include even Bible study or Bible teaching.

What was written concerning Solomon and Jeroboam was written for our spiritual instruction today [cf. Rom. 15:4]. According to the Old Testament record, division is caused by lust and ambition. Solomon is an example of the former, and Jeroboam is an example of the latter. The high places built by Solomon and Jeroboam seriously damaged the ground of oneness.

The ground of oneness is not simply a matter of one city, one church. The ground of oneness is deeper, richer, higher, and fuller than this. We all must learn that in this universe God has chosen only one place, and that place is the church. God requires us to go to this place He has chosen. Spiritually speaking, we must destroy every place other than the church and every name other than the name of Christ. This means that we must destroy our culture and religious background....The places that we must destroy include our disposition, temperament, and habits. We must destroy everything that damages the oneness of the one new man. (CWWL, 1979, vol. 2, "The Genuine Ground of Oneness," pp. 314-316, 319, 288)

Further Reading: CWWL, 1979, vol. 2, "The Genuine Ground of Oneness," chs. 5, 8

WEEK 10 — DAY 5

Morning Nourishment

1 Cor. 1:30 But of Him you are in Christ Jesus, who became wisdom to us from God: both righteousness and sanctification and redemption.

1 John 4:2 In this you know the Spirit of God: Every spirit which confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is of God.

We should have nothing other than the person of Christ and the unique way of the cross. Then we will enjoy Christ in the church as the top portion of the rich produce of the land. (CWWL, 1979, vol. 2, "The Genuine Ground of Oneness," p. 289)

Second John 7 says, "Many deceivers went out into the world, those who do not confess Jesus Christ coming in the flesh. This is the deceiver and the antichrist." The deceivers mentioned here were heretics, like the Cerinthians, the false prophets (1 John 4:1). These deceivers do not confess Jesus Christ coming in the flesh. This means that they do not confess that Jesus is God incarnate. Thus, they deny the deity of Christ. Jesus was conceived of the Spirit (Matt. 1:18). To confess Jesus coming in the flesh is to confess that, as the Son of God, He was divinely conceived to be born in the flesh (Luke 1:31-35). The deceivers, the false prophets, would not make such a confession. An antichrist is one who denies Christ's deity, denying that Jesus is the Christ, that is, denying the Father and the Son by denying that Jesus is the Son of God (1 John 2:22), not confessing that He has come in the flesh through the divine conception of the Holy Spirit (4:2-3). (Life-study of 2 John, p. 7)

Today's Reading

The Spirit works in the believers to confess to them that Christ came in the flesh....According to 1 John 4:2, the discernment of spirits is based upon whether or not a spirit confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh. Because the spirit of a genuine prophet is motivated by the Holy Spirit of truth, this spirit will confess the divine conception of Jesus and affirm that

He was born as the Son of God. To deny that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is to deny His divine conception, His incarnation, His birth, His humanity, His human living, and also His redemption. The New Testament makes it emphatically clear that Christ's redemption was accomplished in His human body and by the shedding of His blood. Anyone who rejects Christ's incarnation and thereby rejects His redemption also denies Christ's resurrection. If Christ had never passed through death, it would not have been possible for Him to enter into resurrection. If anyone denies Christ's incarnation, that one denies Christ's holy birth, humanity, human living, redemption through crucifixion, and resurrection. This utterly annuls the enjoyment of the genuine Trinity. In the light of this we see the crucial importance of the Spirit's work in the believers to confess that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh.

In 2 John 10 John...says, "If anyone comes to you and does not bring this teaching, do not receive him into your house, and do not say to him, Rejoice!" The pronoun him refers to a heretic, an antichrist, a false prophet, who denies the divine conception and deity of Christ, as today's modernists do. Such a one we must reject, not receiving him into our house or greeting him. Thus, we shall not have any contact with him or share in his heresy, heresy that is blasphemous to God and contagious like leprosy.

Just as bringing to others the divine truth of the wonderful Christ is an excellent deed (Rom. 10:15), so spreading the satanic heresy, which defiles the glorious divinity of Christ, is an evil work [cf. 2 John 11]. It is a blasphemy and abomination to God, and it is also a damage and curse to men. No believer in Christ and child of God should have any share in this evil. Even to greet such an evil one is prohibited. A severe and clear separation from this evil should be maintained. (The Conclusion of the New Testament, pp. 995-997, 2394)

Further Reading: Life-study of 2 John, msg. 2; The Conclusion of the New Testament, msgs. 93, 224

WEEK 10 — DAY 6

Morning Nourishment

Jude 3 Beloved, while using all diligence to write to you concerning our common salvation, I...exhort you to earnestly contend for the faith once for all delivered to the saints.

20-21 But you, beloved, building up yourselves upon your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Spirit, keep yourselves in the love of God, awaiting the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life.

[“The faith” in Jude 3 is] not subjective faith as our believing but objective faith as our belief, referring to the things we believe in, the contents of the New Testament as our faith (Acts 6:7; 1 Tim. 1:19; 3:9; 4:1; 5:8; 6:10, 21; 2 Tim. 3:8; 4:7; Titus 1:13), in which we believe for our common salvation. This faith, not any doctrine, has been delivered once for all to the saints. For this faith we should earnestly contend (1 Tim. 6:12). (Jude 3, footnote 3)

Today's Reading

We believe that the Bible, word by word, is divinely inspired by God (2 Pet. 1:21), as the breath of God (2 Tim. 3:16)....We must believe that the Bible is God's infallible Word.

God is uniquely one but triune, the Father, the Son, and the Spirit (Matt. 3:16-17; 28:19; 2 Cor. 13:14; Eph. 2:18; 3:14-17; Rev. 1:4-5). The Godhead is distinctively three, but They are not three Gods separately. In the Old Testament and in the New Testament, the Bible tells us definitely that God is one (Deut. 4:35, 39; Psa. 86:10; 1 Cor. 8:4; 1 Tim. 2:5).

Christ was the very God in eternity (John 1:1) and became a man in time (v. 14). His deity is complete, and His humanity is perfect. Hence, He is both God and man (20:28; Rom. 9:5; John 19:5; 1 Tim. 2:5), possessing both divinity and humanity.

Christ first became a man in incarnation (John 1:14) and died on the cross for our redemption (1 Pet. 2:24; Rev. 5:9). Then He rose from the

dead for our regeneration (1 Pet. 1:3), ascended to the heavens to be the Lord of all (Acts 2:33, 36; 10:36), and will come back as the Bridegroom to the church (John 3:29; Rev. 19:7) and the King of kings to all the nations (v. 16). These are the main aspects of the work of Christ.

A sinner must repent to God (Acts 2:38; 26:20) and believe in Christ (John 3:16; Acts 16:31) for forgiveness of sins (10:43), for redemption (Rom. 3:24), for justification (Acts 13:39), and for regeneration (John 3:6) in order that he may have the eternal life (v. 36) to become a child of God (1:12) and a member of Christ (1 Cor. 12:27). This is our salvation by God through faith (Eph. 2:4-9).

The church, composed of all the genuine believers in Christ, as the Body of Christ (1:22-23; Col. 1:24), is universally one (Eph. 4:4), and a local church as the expression of the Body of Christ is locally one—one city, one church (Rev. 1:11).

[The above items] are the six main items of the proper Christian faith. All real Christians do not have any disputation about these items....As the Body of Christ, the church is universally one; as the expression of the Body of Christ, a local church is locally one. This does not mean, however, that a real believer in Christ who does not agree with one city, one church is not saved. He or she is saved, but there is something lacking, not for salvation but for the proper church life. The faith is the speciality of the church life....Concerning these points of our Christian faith there should be no argument....There is no need for us to fight for other things. We have to fight the good fight of such a faith (1 Tim. 6:12). We have to contend for such a faith (Jude 3). We have to teach and preach such a faith. (CWWL, 1971, vol. 3, "The Speciality, Generality, and Practicality of the Church Life," pp. 416, 418-419)

The entire Blessed Trinity is employed and enjoyed by the believers by their praying in the Holy Spirit, keeping themselves in the love of God, and awaiting the mercy of our Lord unto eternal life. (Life-study of Jude, p. 21)

Further Reading: Life-study of Jude, msgs. 1-3; CWWL, 1971, vol. 3, "The Speciality, Generality, and Practicality of the Church Life," ch. 1

<< WEEK 10 — HYMN >>

Hymns, #981 In His Christ to head up all things

Ultimate Manifestation — Christ Heading Up All Things

1 In His Christ to head up all things

Is our God's economy;
Taking Christ as Head and Center,
All is one in harmony.

2 Christ as Head will be the Center;

God within will be the Light;
Christ enthroned, with God, His substance,
Will fulfill His heart's delight.

3 Christ as life will be the content,

Heading up all things in light;
All the saints will be the vessel,
To express His glory bright.

4 Satan hath himself injected

Into man all things to spoil,
Bringing darkness and corruption
God's eternal plan to foil.

5 Christ has come, Himself imparting

Into man as life to save,
That the pow'r of death and darkness
May no more all things enslave.

6 Thru the Church which is His Body

Christ as Head will sum up all;
All will fitly join together,
All things either great or small.

7 Under Christ, by His full headship,

All in union will subsist;

In the light the Church expresses

All in oneness will exist.

8 Owning Christ as Head and Center,

All will be in harmony;

Thru the shining of His Body

All will share His liberty.

9 No more darkness and corruption,

No more death and vanity;

All will be released from bondage

Throughout all eternity.