

Week Ten

Living a Godly Life

Hymns: 744

Scripture Reading: Prov. 29:18a; 23:23; 20:27; 4:23; 10:12b; 17:9

Outline

§Day 1

- I. **“Where there is no vision, the people cast off restraint”—Prov. 29:18a:**
 - A. In the Bible vision denotes an extraordinary scene; it refers to a special kind of seeing—a glorious, inward seeing—and to the spiritual scenery that we see from God—Ezek. 1:1, 4-28; Dan. 7:1, 9-10, 13-14.
 - B. In order to have a vision, we need revelation, light, and sight—Eph. 1:17-18a.
 - C. The heavenly vision governs us, restricts us, controls us, directs us, preserves us, revolutionizes us, keeps us in the genuine oneness, and gives us the boldness to go on—Prov. 29:18a.
 - D. When we see this vision, our entire inner being has an inward turn, and we are changed in thought, concept, and attitude.
 - E. The heavenly vision motivates us, energizes us, holds us, gives us endurance, brings us into the Lord’s up-to-date move, and causes our life to be full of meaning and purpose—Heb. 1:8; 12:1-2; Eph. 3:11; 2 Tim. 1:9; 3:10; Rev. 1:9; 3:10.
 - F. Everyone who serves the Lord must be a person with a vision; the inner vision will revolutionize the way we serve the Lord—Acts 26:13-19; Rom. 1:9.
 - G. Under the heavenly vision we are directed toward God’s destination, and our life is controlled according to God’s

economy—Phil. 3:13-14; 1 Tim. 1:4.

- H. **The governing vision of the Bible is the Triune God working Himself into His chosen and redeemed people in order to saturate their entire being with the Divine Trinity for the producing and building up of the Body of Christ consummating in the New Jerusalem—Eph. 4:4-6; Rev. 21:2, 9-10.**

§Day 2

II. **“Buy truth, and do not sell it”—Prov. 23:23a:**

- A. **Truth is something that we have to buy, something that has a price—v. 23a:**

1. Buying requires the paying of a price.
2. If we want to please the Lord and stand for the truth, we must pay the price—cf. Rev. 3:18.
3. If our hearts are ready to receive the love of the truth and buy the truth at any price, we will be blessed—2 Thes. 2:10-11; Prov. 23:23.

- B. **The divine truth is absolute, and we must be absolute for the truth and uphold the absoluteness of the truth—John 14:6; 18:37; 3 John 3-4, 8:**

1. To be absolute for the truth means to set aside feelings, to ignore personal relationships, and to not stand for the self—Matt. 16:24-25; 1 Pet. 1:22.
2. The truth is the unique standard, and we must stand on the side of the truth to oppose ourselves; upholding the absoluteness of the truth is possible only when we are delivered from ourselves—John 8:32; 2 John 2; 3 John 3-4.
3. We should honor God’s truth, take the way of the truth, and not compromise the truth in any way—2 Pet. 2:2.

- C. **For the consummation of the divine economy, we need to be absolute for the present truth—1:12:**

1. The present truth is the truth that is present with the believers, which they have already received and now possess—v. 12.
2. The present truth includes the revelation concerning the eternal economy

of God (Eph. 1:10; 3:9), the Divine Trinity (2 Cor. 13:14; Rev. 1:4-5), the person and work of the all-inclusive Christ (Col. 2:9, 16-17; 3:11), the consummated life-giving Spirit (John 7:39; 1 Cor. 15:45b; Rev. 22:17), the eternal life of God (John 3:15-16), the church as the Body of Christ (Eph. 1:22-23), and the New Jerusalem (Rev. 21:2, 10-11).

3. The present truth includes the high peak of the divine revelation—the revelation that God became man so that man may become God in life and nature but not in the Godhead—to produce and build up the organic Body of Christ for the fulfillment of God’s economy to close this age and bring Christ back to set up His kingdom—John 1:12-14; 1 John 3:1-2; Rom. 8:3; 1:3-4; 12:4-5; Rev. 11:15.

§Day 3

III. “The spirit of man is the lamp of Jehovah, / Searching all the innermost parts of the inner being”—Prov. 20:27:

A. Man’s spirit is God’s lamp within man—Matt. 25:1:

1. The light shining within man’s regenerated spirit is God Himself—1 John 1:5.
2. Just as a lamp contains light and expresses it, man’s spirit was created to contain God and express Him.
3. In order for the divine light to shine into man’s inward parts, God’s Spirit as the oil must soak (mingle with) man’s spirit as the wick and “burn” together with man’s spirit—Rom. 8:16; 12:11.
4. If we respond to the spirit’s shining, we will walk according to the spirit—8:4.

B. The Spirit of God is also a lamp, with a sevenfold intensity to His shining—Rev. 4:5:

1. Our regenerated spirit is a lamp indwelt by the Spirit of God, who is also a lamp.
2. Man’s spirit and God’s spirit are both lamps, together enlightening the inward parts—Prov. 20:27; Rev. 4:5.
3. The spirit wants to enlighten every part of our soul.

C. When we exercise our spirit to pray properly, there is a lamp

shining—Eph. 6:18; 1:17-18; 5:8-9:

1. As we pray, our spirit functions as a shining lamp, searching all the parts of our soul—Prov. 20:27.
2. The more we exercise our spirit in prayer, the more we are enlightened—2 Cor. 4:6:
 - a. The lamp may shine on our thoughts, emotions, and will.
 - b. Our inward parts will be thoroughly searched by the Lord—Psa. 139:23-24.
3. After such a time of prayer, we will feel bright and transparent, filled with God—Eph. 5:8-9.

§Day 4

IV. “Keep your heart with all vigilance, / For from it are the issues of life”—Prov. 4:23:

- A. The soul is the person himself, but the heart is the person in action—Luke 1:66; 2:19, 51; Acts 11:23; Eph. 3:17; 1 Thes. 3:13:**
 1. We have something in our inner being that represents us, and this representative is our heart—Luke 6:45; John 16:22; 2 Cor. 3:16.
 2. The relationship that we have with God first depends on our heart, because the heart is the organ by which we express ourselves and by which we make decisions to receive or reject things—Acts 8:37; Rom. 10:9-10.
 3. Although our spirit is pure, what is expressed from our spirit depends on our heart—2 Thes. 2:17; 3:5.
- B. The heart is the entrance and exit to our whole being—Matt. 13:19; 15:18-19:**
 1. It is through our heart that our real being comes out because the traffic of our being is through our heart—Luke 6:45.
 2. Our spirit is the source of our being, but our heart is the passage, the entrance and the exit, through which the traffic in our being passes—Matt. 12:34-35.
 3. In order to be a proper Christian, we need to exercise our spirit and guard our heart by keeping it with all vigilance—Prov. 4:23.

§Day 5

C. The Hebrew word rendered “keep” in Proverbs 4:23 means “guard”:

1. We should guard our heart above all because out of it are the issues of life.
2. Issues in Proverbs 4:23 implies sources and springs as well as issues:
 - a. The issues of life are the flowing out of life—cf. John 4:14.
 - b. The heart is related to the sources of life, the springs of life, and the issues of life—cf. Isa. 12:3.
 - c. The fountain, the source, of what we are, of our real being, flows out from our heart—cf. John 7:37-38.

D. We guard our heart by caring for our heart and having a thorough dealing with our heart before the Lord in the way of life; the more we deal with our heart, the more we guard our heart—Psa. 26:2; 139:23-24; Prov. 4:23; Rom. 8:27; Rev. 2:23; Matt. 13:18-23; 5:8.

E. In order to grow in life for God’s building, we need to love the Lord, take heed to our spirit, and guard our heart with all vigilance to stay on the pathway of life—1 Pet. 1:8; 2:2, 5; 3:4, 15; Prov. 21:2; 4:18-23; Deut. 10:12; Mark 12:30.

§Day 6

V. “Love covers all transgressions”—Prov. 10:12b:

A. “He who covers a transgression seeks love, / But he who repeats a matter separates close friends”—17:9.

B. To cover is love; to uncover is not love—James 5:20.

C. Covering brings in blessing, but uncovering brings in a curse—Gen. 9:22-27:

1. Those who uncover others suffer the curse.
2. Those who cover others’ sins, defects, and shortcomings enjoy gain and receive blessing.

D. “Love covers all things” (1 Cor. 13:7a), not only the good things

but also the bad things:

1. “The elders need to realize that in their shepherding, they have to cover others’ sins, to not take account of others’ evils”—The Vital Groups, p. 72:
 - a. “Whoever uncovers the defects, shortcomings, and sins of the members of the church is disqualified from the eldership”—p. 72.
 - b. “Our uncovering of the members under our eldership, our shepherding, annuls our qualification”—p. 72.
 2. We need to shepherd others according to God, with a love that covers all transgressions—1 Pet. 5:2; Prov. 10:12b.
- E. “Above all, have fervent love among yourselves, because love covers a multitude of sins”—1 Pet. 4:8.**

WEEK 10 — DAY 1

Morning Nourishment

Prov. 29:18 Where there is no vision, the people cast off restraint...

Acts 26:19 Therefore, King Agrippa, I was not disobedient to the heavenly vision.

Proverbs 29:18 says, “Where there is no vision, the people cast off restraint.” This means that without a vision, the people will become loose, like wild horses in their untamed state. The clearest instance in the New Testament where the word vision is mentioned is in the case of Paul. In Acts 26:19, while he was defending himself before King Agrippa, he uttered this word: “I was not disobedient to the heavenly vision.”

When Paul was serving God in the Jewish religion, he was serving by tradition, not by vision, but from the day the Lord met him, called him, and chose him on the way to Damascus, he became a man with a vision. From that time onward, his service was governed by that vision. (CWWL, 1986, vol. 2, “Crucial Words of Leading in the Lord’s Recovery, Book 1: The Vision and Definite Steps for the Practice of the New Way,” pp. 4-5)

Today’s Reading

When the divine light shines over the divine revelation, the divine revelation becomes the divine vision (Acts 26:19). A vision is a view whereby we may see something. If a person’s eyes are covered by a thick veil, there may be some wonderful scenery in front of him, but he is not able to see it. He cannot see because he has no vision, but when the veil is taken away, he can see.

Many Christians read the Bible with a veil. This is why Paul says that we should look unto Christ with an unveiled face (2 Cor. 3:18).... Paul says that when the sons of Israel read the books of Moses, they have a veil upon them and see nothing (vv. 13-15). Paul then says that whenever their heart turns to the Lord, the veil is taken away and that wherever the Spirit is, there is freedom (vv. 16-17). This means that when we are veiled, we are bound; we are imprisoned; we do not have freedom. When the veil is gone,

we are released. This freedom comes from the Spirit of God.

We need to learn to come to the Bible every day by coming to God. We should confess our sins to make a clear situation so that we can have fellowship with God in the Spirit. Then we should read His Word by pray-reading. Every day we will receive revelation; the Spirit will also shine over the revelation, and we will receive a vision. There is a progression from the Word to revelation and from revelation to vision.

In Ephesians 1:17 Paul asked the Lord to grant us a spirit of wisdom and revelation. When the Spirit shines over the revelation, the vision is here. Without the light we cannot receive the vision, even if the veil is taken away. The veil should be gone, and the light should come. Furthermore, we need the sight. If we are blind, we will not be able to see anything, even if the veil is removed and the light is here. We need the revelation, the light, the vision through the light, and the sight. Then the veil is gone, the vision is here, and we have the light with the sight. We also have the understanding of the vision through the Spirit's wisdom.

We are one with the Lord in our spirit, so we must review the divine revelation in our spirit with the Lord. Then the light shines to bring us the vision. Otherwise, at most we can have only revelation but no vision. After we review the divine revelation again and again in our spirit with the Lord Himself, more light comes, and the vision is here for us to see.

Paul prayed in Ephesians 1:18 that the eyes of our heart would be enlightened that we might see. We need not only the light but also the sight...We need the revelation plus the light plus the sight. The light comes from God; the sight is within us. The revelation plus the divine light with our sight brings us the vision. (CWWL, 1994-1997, vol. 3, "The Triune God's Revelation and His Move," pp. 68-69, 85-86)

Further Reading: CWWL, 1994-1997, vol. 3, "The Triune God's Revelation and His Move," chs. 1-2, 4

WEEK 10 — DAY 2

Morning Nourishment

Prov. 23:23 Buy the truth, and do not sell it; buy wisdom and instruction and understanding.

3 John 3 For I rejoiced greatly at the brothers' coming and testifying to your steadfastness in the truth, even as you walk in truth.

Truth is something that we have to buy; it is something that has a price. If we want to please the Lord and stand for the truth, we have to pay the price. If we are clear about the truth, we have to obey it all the way. Many Christians cannot pay the price because they want to please men; they try to dodge the truth.... Truth is like a pillar in a house. A pillar is not like a window or a door, which can be enlarged or reduced at will. A pillar cannot be moved; it cannot be made higher or lower, and it cannot be tilted. In other words, truth can never be changed. If we cannot pay the price to obey any part of the truth, we can only condemn ourselves and confess our weakness; we cannot lower the standard of the truth just because we cannot make it or because it creates dire consequences for us. (CWWN, vol. 37, p. 254)

Today's Reading

Every worker of the Lord must uphold the absoluteness of the truth. This is possible only when a man is delivered from himself. Many brothers and sisters are not absolute to the truth; they are affected by people, things, and personal feelings. If a man is not absolute to the truth, he will, in the course of his work, sacrifice God's truth for man, himself, or his own desires. A basic requirement for being a servant of the Lord is to not sacrifice the truth.... The problems with many workers stem from the relationship with their friends, intimate acquaintances, and family. The truth is compromised by their friends, immediate family, or relatives.... If the truth is the truth, it should not be compromised, whether by our own brothers, our relatives, or our intimate friends.... [For example], in a certain

place a controversy arises. A number of the saints may be favorably disposed toward a particular group of brothers and side with them, whereas a number of others may have a preference for another group of people and line up on their side. Instead of sitting down and counting the cost of being absolute for the truth and of following the truth, they are influenced and directed by their own emotions. This does not mean that the brothers are not speaking about the truth....They have not brushed the truth completely aside; they still have some care for the truth. But they are not absolute to the truth. Being absolute to the truth means that no personal feelings or family relationships are allowed to stand in the way of the truth. In spiritual matters, the truth is compromised as soon as human relationships are taken into account. As soon as human relationships become involved, God's word and His commandments are discounted through human factors, and the truth is compromised.

The Bible contains many ordinances and commandments. These ordinances and commandments are from God, and God's servants need to preach and announce them....We cannot be a servant of God if we cannot preach beyond what we can practice. This is because the truth is absolute. The standard of the divine Word must not be lowered to the level of our personal attainment. We cannot tamper with the truth in any way in order to justify our own deficiencies....We have to transcend ourselves, our own feelings, and our own personal interest in our speaking. This is a high requirement for the servants of the Lord. We must beware of doing things one way as they affect other brothers and sisters but doing them another way as they are applied to our spouse or our children.... If God's Word says something, it is so, no matter who is involved....We have to learn to uphold the absoluteness of the truth. (CWWN, vol. 52, "The Character of the Lord's Worker," pp. 151-153)

Further Reading: Life-study of Proverbs, msgs. 5, 7; Life-study of Genesis, msg. 33; CWWL, 1978, vol. 1, "Basic Training," ch. 2; CWWL, 1978, vol. 2, "Life Messages, Volume 1," ch. 31

WEEK 10 — DAY 3

Morning Nourishment

Prov. 20:27 The spirit of man is the lamp of Jehovah, searching all the innermost parts of the inner being.

Rev. 4:5 ...And there were seven lamps of fire burning before the throne, which are the seven Spirits of God.

Man's spirit is the lamp of Jehovah, searching all the innermost parts of the inner being (Prov. 20:27). The Spirit of God is also God's lamp (Rev. 4:5); in fact, there is a sevenfold intensity to His shining. This is the meaning of the seven lamps of fire... which are the seven Spirits of God. Man's spirit and God's Spirit are both lamps, together enlightening the inward parts. (CWWL, 1979, vol. 1, "Life Messages, Volume 2," p. 424)

Today's Reading

There are some people who live according to the flesh. Their only concern is the pleasure of the moment.

Others live according to their soul. They are elated when things go well for them but depressed when their circumstances are not favorable. Sometimes they are pleasant toward their associates, but other times they are critical or even hateful.

There are others who also live according to their soul but are highly regarded by those who know them. Rather than being changeable like the weather, they act rationally and think ahead as to what course of action they will take. Their behavior is controlled by their thoughts.

These three kinds of people include almost everyone. There are very few who live according to the spirit. You were in one of these three categories until one day when you heard the gospel. The Spirit of God touched your conscience, which is part of the spirit. Your spirit was activated, leading you to repent and confess your sins. Your spirit is now a lamp indwelt by the Spirit of God, who is also a lamp. The spirit wants to enlighten every part of your soul. By responding to the spirit's shining, you

will be walking “according to the spirit” (Rom. 8:4).

Sometimes when God wants to shine in us, we will not open to Him. This is why, after we have been praying for a while, we sometimes have nothing more to say. When we use our spirit to pray, it functions as a shining lamp, searching all the parts of our soul. It may shine on our thoughts, but we refuse to have the Lord probe there....The spirit may shine on our emotions, especially the sisters’, but we close up, sometimes even weeping, begging the Lord not to touch that area. The same thing may happen with our will, especially the brothers’; if we close our will, the spirit cannot fulfill its function of shining.

When we pray properly, using our spirit, there is a lamp shining. If we sense it shining on our thoughts, we can say, “Lord, I open my mind to You. Shine in me. Expose my thoughts.” In His light we confess our sins. When He shines on our emotions, we can open and confess what He reveals to be wrong. Then He will shine on our will, and we can open this room also to Him. As we open all these chambers one by one, the spirit will shine, and we will confess our sins....The more we [keep praying], the more we are enlightened. Our inward parts will all be thoroughly searched by the Lord. After such a time of prayer, we will feel bright and transparent, filled with God. This is one aspect of the lamp—our spirit shining within.

The other aspect is that of the seven Spirits. The Spirit of God today is the seven lamps shining on us in an intensified way. Many of us have experienced this intensified shining, far stronger than a simple prick of the conscience, condemning a wrong thought or wrong motive. What did not bother us in the past we can no longer do. If we open our mouth to tell a joke, the seven Spirits shine, and our sentence is cut off in midair. If we begin to make some critical comments about a certain sister, the seven Spirits shine, and our words fail. Even when we are off just a little, the Spirit is there as the light shining. (CWWL, 1979, vol. 1, “Life Messages, Volume 2,” pp. 424-425)

Further Reading: CWWL, 1979, vol. 1, “Life Messages, Volume 2,” ch. 75; CWWL, 1986, vol. 3, “The Revelation and Vision of God,” ch. 1

WEEK 10 — DAY 4

Morning Nourishment

Prov. 4:23 Keep your heart with all vigilance, for from it are the issues of life.

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

The relationship that we have with God first depends on the heart, because the heart is the very organ by which we express ourselves and by which we make decisions to receive or reject things....The main entrance of a building is its guard, controlling what should remain outside and what should come in. In the same way, our heart is our guard. It is the entrance into ourselves. Whatever goes out or comes in does so through our heart. There is at least one verse in the Scriptures that tells us this. Proverbs 4:23 says, "Keep your heart with all vigilance, / For from it are the issues of life." This can also be translated "Guard your heart." The issues of life are the flowing out of life. By this verse we can realize that the heart is the entrance, the guard, of our whole being. We believe in the Lord Jesus, but by what organ do we believe? It is by the heart (Rom. 10:10), because the heart is the organ that we use to make a decision, to reject or receive something. (CWWL, 1964, vol. 4, "Practical Lessons on the Experience of Life," p. 459)

Today's Reading

Ezekiel 36:26 says that at the time of our conversion, God renewed our heart. In God's salvation, in His way of conversion, the first part within us that He recovered and touched was not the spirit but the heart; then the spirit follows. In verse 26 there is first the heart and then the spirit. The heart is the first thing God must deal with and touch. The first thing we touch when we come to a building is the entrance; we have to find a way to get through the entrance. In the same way, God must deal with us to open an entrance to Himself. What is the entrance? It is the heart. When God comes to deal with us, it is first to deal with our heart.

We have the fellowship of life, the sense of life, and the law of life within, and we have the anointing of the Triune God within us. However,

this requires our cooperation, and our cooperation depends first on the heart. We speak much about the exercise of the spirit. This is good, but before we learn how to exercise our spirit, we must learn how to deal with our heart—to be renewed in our mind, to have a loving emotion, to be right in our conscience, and to have a soft will.

If we deal with our mind, emotion, conscience, and will, we will have a proper heart, and it will be a useful entrance for God. We will have a good dealing with the Lord, and we will allow Him to have the ground and the way to deal with us in a proper way. Then we will have the Triune God within us as life and the anointing. This requires our cooperation.... Put all this into practice. Practice to be clear in your mind, love the Lord with your emotion, have a right conscience, and be softened in your will. The only way to do this is by praying. We need to go to the Lord to pray, “Lord, give me a clear mind, an understanding heart.” The prayer in Song of Songs 1:4, “Draw me; we will run after you,” is a prayer for a loving heart. We also have to pray, “Lord, give me a loving heart toward You and emotions that love only You.” We also must pray for this, and also pray for our conscience to be right. Then when we pray, we will see that our will is not only hardened but stubborn, so we need to pray for our will to be softened.

What does it mean for a person to have a pure heart? It is these four matters—the mind is clear, the emotion is loving, the conscience is right, and the will is soft. This kind of heart is a pure and right heart. It is a proper heart. We all need to deal with our heart in this way. We need such a heart, so we must pray for this. (CWWL, 1964, vol. 4, “Practical Lessons on the Experience of Life,” pp. 459-460, 464-465)

Further Reading: CWWL, 1970, vol. 1, “The Fulfillment of God’s Purpose by the Growth of Christ in Us,” chs. 6-9; CWWL, 1989, vol. 1, “The Glorious Vision and the Way of the Cross,” chs. 1-5

WEEK 10 — DAY 5

Morning Nourishment

Deut. 10:12 And now, O Israel, what does Jehovah your God ask of you except that you fear Jehovah your God so that you would walk in all His ways and love Him and serve Jehovah your God with all your heart and with all your soul.

1 Thes. 3:13 So that He may establish your hearts blameless in holiness before our God and Father at the coming of our Lord Jesus with all His saints.

Because the heart is our representative, Solomon says in Proverbs 4:23, “Keep your heart with all vigilance; for from it are the issues of life.”...The Hebrew word rendered “keep” means guard. We should guard our heart above all because out of it are the issues of life....The heart is related to the sources of life, the springs of life, and the issues of life. First we have the source, then the spring, and then the issue.

Out of the heart come all the issues of our daily life. As human beings, we have life, and this life acts through our heart.... As the flow of electricity depends on the switch, so our daily living is dependent on what our heart switches on and off. Our heart is the switch of our human life, of our daily life, of our being. The word life in Proverbs 4:23 implies an organic element, the element of life; it also implies our daily living and activities, in fact, our entire human life. Hence, the word life in this verse is inclusive. As human beings, we have a human life, and this human life has an organic element and also a daily living. The switch of this life is the heart. (Life-study of 1 Thessalonians, p. 182)

Today's Reading

Suppose as a brother is studying the Bible he is disturbed by the barking of a dog.... As he is reading the Bible and is disturbed by the dog's barking, something within this brother's heart motivates him to shout at the dog. This shouting is an issue that springs out from the source of the heart. This is an illustration of the heart as the acting representative of our

entire being. The activities and movements of our physical body depend on our physical heart. In like manner, our daily living depends on our psychological heart. The way we act and behave depends on the kind of heart we have.

To be a living believer involves both our spirit and our heart. Doctrinally, we may say that we can become living by exercising our spirit. But in practice often it seems that the exercise of our spirit does not work....The reason the exercise of the spirit may not work is that the heart does not act. This means that there is something wrong in the heart. Perhaps the mind is not renewed, sanctified, transformed; it may not be saturated with the Lord and occupied by Him. Instead, it may be filled with worldly things. We may exercise our spirit and say, "Praise the Lord!" However, this exercise may not work to make us living. The exercise of the spirit works only when our heart is active.

If our heart is dormant or asleep, exercising our spirit to call on the name of the Lord will not be effective. This exercise cannot work if our acting agent, our heart, is dormant. This is the reason we need to deal thoroughly with our heart. This dealing must include our mind, emotion, and will. Our mind must be the mind of Christ, our emotion must be saturated with the love of Christ, and our will must be one with His will. If this is the condition of our heart, our heart will be active and functioning. Then if we call on the Lord when our heart is active, this calling will be very effective.

We need to pray, "Lord, have mercy on me. I want to have my mind renewed. I want to have my emotion filled with Your love. I want to have a will that is truly one with Your will." If we have such a heart, then the heart as our acting agent will be established blameless in holiness, blameless in the state of being made holy. (Life-study of 1 Thessalonians, pp. 182-183, 194-195)

Further Reading: CWWL, 1975-1976, vol. 2, "The Central Vision for Serving the Church," ch. 5

WEEK 10 — DAY 6

Morning Nourishment

Prov. 10:12 Hatred stirs up strife, but love covers all transgressions.

17:9 He who covers a transgression seeks love, but he who repeats a matter separates close friends.

1 Pet. 4:8 Above all, have fervent love among yourselves, because love covers a multitude of sins.

Love is not provoked. People are easily provoked because of the shortage of love. Regardless of how much we are rebuked, we will not be provoked if we are filled with the divine love. Love does not take account of evil. We have to confess that we have taken account of other people's evil. Some wives have a record, an account, of their husband's failures and defects. This record may not be written, but it is in their mind.

The elders need to realize that in their shepherding, they have to cover others' sins, to not take account of others' evils. Love covers all things [1 Cor. 13:7], not only the good things but also the bad things. Whoever uncovers the defects, shortcomings, and sins of the members of the church is disqualified from the eldership. Our uncovering of the members under our eldership, our shepherding, annuls our qualification. Love also endures all things and never falls away. First Corinthians 13 concludes by saying, "Now there abide faith, hope, love, these three; and the greatest of these is love" (v. 13).

According to my observation throughout the years, most of the co-workers have a human spirit of "power" but not of love. We need a spirit of love to conquer the degradation of today's church. We should not say or do anything to threaten people. Instead, we should always say and do things with a spirit of love, which has been fanned into flame. (CWWL, 1994-1997, vol. 5, "The Vital Groups," pp. 123-125)

Today's Reading

If we hate each other, we will have endless strife, but love covers not

only one sin or some sins but all sins [Prov. 10:12]. James ends his writing by saying, “My brothers,... he who turns a sinner back from the error of his way will save that one’s soul from death and will cover a multitude of sins” (James 5:19-20). Should we hate one who is not up to the standard, who is led astray from the truth, or should we love him? We may not love those who are not able to live in corporate living. We may love only the particular group of those who live properly in our homes. This is altogether not according to the Spirit of the Lord as revealed in the Bible. If a brother is good, he does not need our love very much, because he has already been sufficiently loved. Nearly everyone loves a good person, but what about one who is led astray from the truth? If a brother is led astray from the truth to attend the denominations or go to the movies, our small group may feel that we do not need him, and we do not accept him because he is not qualified. This is not love; this is hate. Love covers many sins. Even if we know that he goes to the movies, we should not tell others. This is to cover him. We do not like to uncover him or expose him. To uncover is not love. Hatred stirs up strife, but love covers all sins. We would rather be like the sons of Noah who covered their father’s nakedness, which was due to his drunkenness. We do not like to uncover others. Covering brings in blessing, but uncovering brings in a curse. This is not a small matter. Those who uncover suffer the curse, but those who cover others’ sins, defects, and shortcomings enjoy, gain, and receive blessing. Cover a multitude of sins in James 5:20 is an Old Testament expression used by James to indicate that turning an erring brother back is to cover his sins so that he is not condemned. Cover...sins here equals sins...forgiven in verse 15, as in Psalm 32:1, which says, “Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven; / Whose sin is covered.” (CWWL, 1994-1997, vol. 5, “A Word of Love to the Co-workers, Elders, Lovers, and Seekers of the Lord,” pp. 15-16)

Further Reading: CWWN, vol. 46, ch. 174; CWWL, 1952, vol. 2, “The Vision, Ministry, and Leading of the Lord’s Serving Ones,” ch. 1

<< WEEK 10 — HYMN >>

Hymns, #744 In dealings with the Lord as life

Various Aspects of the Inner Life — The Proper Heart

1 In dealings with the Lord as life

**We need a proper heart,
That of His riches, in His grace,
We fully may take part.**

2 We need a heart in all things pure,

**With mind both sound and clear,
To understand His mind and heart
In trembling and in fear.**

3 We need a fervent, loving heart,

**A heart on fire with love,
With an emotion filled with zeal
For Him, all else above.**

4 We need a true, obedient heart,

**With a submissive will,
A will made pliable, yet strong,
God's purpose to fulfill.**

5 We need a heart condemning not,

**In all things right with God;
A heart which has a conscience purged
And covered with the blood.**

6 Lord, grant us such a heart as this,

**Forever fixed on Thee,
That of Thyself we may partake**

And Thy true fulness be.