

Week Six

Gaining God to Be Transformed by God for the Purpose of God

Hymns: 548

Scripture Reading: Job 42:1-6; 2 Cor. 3:8-9; 4:10-12, 16-18; 5:18-20

Outline

§Day 1

- I. **God's intention with Job was for him to become a person who lived in the heavenly vision and the reality of God's economy:**
 - A. **Job's experience was a step taken by God in His divine economy to carry out the consuming and stripping of the contented Job in order to tear Job down that God might have a way to rebuild him with God Himself and to usher him into a deeper seeking after God so that he might gain God instead of His blessings and his attainments in his perfection and integrity—Phil. 3:10-14; 1 Cor. 2:9; 8:3; Exo. 20:6; 1 Chron. 16:10-11; 22:19a; 2 Chron. 12:14; 26:3-5; 34:1-3a; Psa. 24:6; 27:4, 8; 105:4; 119:2, 10; Heb. 11:6.**
 - B. **The one who does not care for God may gain many things and may seem to prosper (Psa. 73:1-15); however, the one who cares for God will be restricted by God and even stripped by God of many things; God's intention with His seekers is that they may find everything in Him and not be distracted from the absolute enjoyment of Himself (vv. 16-28).**
 - C. **God's purpose in dealing with His holy people is that they would be emptied of everything and receive only God as their gain (Phil. 3:8; cf. Psa. 73:25-26); the desire of God's heart is that we would gain Him in full as life, as the life supply, and as everything to our being (Rom. 8:10, 6, 11; cf. Col. 1:17b, 18b).**

D. In order to live in the reality of God's economy with His divine dispensing, we need God to build Himself into our intrinsic constitution so that our entire being will be reconstituted with Christ:

1. As unveiled in Paul's Epistles, God's purpose in dealing with us is to strip us of all things and to consume us so that we may gain God more and more—2 Cor. 4:16-18.
2. The building up of the church is by Christ's making His home in our hearts, that is, by His building Himself into us, making our heart, our intrinsic constitution, His home—Eph. 3:16-21.

E. In Christ God was constituted into man, man was constituted into God, and God and man were mingled together to be one entity, the God-man; this implies that God's intention in His economy is to make Himself man in order to make man God in life and in nature but not in the Godhead—2 Sam. 7:12-14a; Rom. 1:3-4; Matt. 22:41-45; John 14:6a; 10:10b; 1 Cor. 15:45b; John 6:63; 2 Cor. 3:6; 1 John 5:16a.

§Day 2

II. God's economy is God becoming a man in the flesh through incarnation that man might become God in the Spirit through transformation for the building of God into man and man into God to gain a corporate God-man:

A. The most marvelous, excellent, mysterious, and all-inclusive transformations of the eternal and Triune God in His becoming a man are God's move in man for the accomplishment of His eternal economy—Micah 5:2; John 1:14, 29; 3:14; 12:24; Acts 13:33; 1 Pet. 1:3; 1 Cor. 15:45b; Acts 2:36; 5:31; Heb. 4:14; 9:15; 7:22; 8:2:

1. These transformations are the processes through which the Triune God passed in His becoming a God-man, bringing divinity into humanity and mingling divinity with humanity as a prototype for the mass reproduction of many God-men; He became the embodiment of the Triune God, bringing God to man and making God contactable, touchable, receivable,

experienceable, enterable, and enjoyable—John 1:14; Col. 2:9; Rom. 8:28-29.

§Day 3

2. God speaks of these transformations in Hosea 11:4 by saying, “I drew them with cords of a man, / With bands of love”; the phrase with cords of a man, with bands of love indicates that God loves us with His divine love not on the level of divinity but on the level of humanity; God’s love is divine, but it reaches us in the cords of a man, that is, through Christ’s humanity:
 - a. The cords (the transformations, the processes) through which God draws us include Christ’s incarnation, human living, crucifixion, resurrection, and ascension; it is by all these steps of Christ in His humanity that God’s love in His salvation reaches us—Jer. 31:3; John 3:14, 16; 6:44; 12:32; Rom. 5:5, 8; 1 John 4:8-10, 16, 19.
 - b. Apart from Christ, God’s everlasting love, His unchanging, subduing love, could not be prevailing in relation to us; God’s unchanging love is prevailing because it is a love in Christ, with Christ, by Christ, and for Christ.
 - c. God’s everlasting love is always victorious; eventually, in spite of our failures and mistakes, God’s love will gain the victory—Rom. 8:35-39.

§Day 4

- B. The transformation of the tripartite man is God’s move to deify man, to constitute man with the processed and consummated Triune God; in God’s appearing to him, Job saw God in order to gain God to be transformed by God for the purpose of God—Job 38:1-3; 42:1-6; 2 Cor. 3:16-18; Heb. 12:1-2a:**
 1. Seeing God issues in the transformation of our being into God’s image; hence, the more we look at Him as the consummated Spirit in our spirit, the more we receive all His ingredients into our being as the divine element to discharge our old element so that our whole being becomes new; our Christian life is not a matter of changing outwardly but of being transformed from within—2 Cor. 3:18; Psa. 27:4; Gal. 6:15-16.
 2. We can remain in the daily process of transformation by turning our heart

to the Lord so that we can behold and reflect Him with an unveiled face; an unveiled face is a heart that turns to the Lord—2 Cor. 3:16, 18:

- a. To turn our heart to the Lord is to love the Lord; the more we love the Lord, the more our heart will be open to the Lord, and He will have a way to spread out from our spirit into all the parts of our heart.
- b. To turn our heart to the Lord, to open our heart to the Lord, is the key to our growing in life; we can open our heart to the Lord simply by telling the Lord, “O Lord, I love You; I want to please You.”
- c. As we behold the Lord day after day in all our situations (Psa. 27:4), we will reflect the Lord’s glory and be transformed into His image from glory to glory.
- d. Many Christians are not joyful because the Spirit within them is not joyful (Eph. 4:30; cf. Psa. 16:11; 43:4; Acts 3:19-20; Exo. 33:11, 14-17; Heb. 1:9; Jer. 15:16; John 15:9-11; 1 John 1:3-4; 2 John 12; Phil. 4:4); if we do not turn our heart to the Lord to let the Spirit of the Lord spread out of our spirit into our heart, we will feel restrained and depressed.
- e. Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom (2 Cor. 3:17); if someone says that a meeting is boring, we must realize that it is he himself who is bored within; but when we turn our heart to the Lord, we enjoy the Spirit as our freedom.
- f. Once the liberating Spirit has the way to spread into all the parts of our heart, we are released, transcendent, and free; this freedom is glory, which is the presence of God and the expression of God; we feel noble, honorable, and glorious because we are being transformed into His image—v. 18; Gen. 1:26.

§Day 5

C. Transformation transfers us from one form, the form of the old man, to another form, the form of the new man; the Lord accomplishes this transformation work by the killing of Christ’s death—2 Cor. 4:10-12, 16-18:

1. In 2 Corinthians 4:10 Paul says that we are always bearing about in our body the putting to death of Jesus; putting to death means killing; the death of Christ kills us—1 Cor. 15:31, 36; John 12:24-26; 2 Cor. 1:8-9.

2. The death of Christ is in the compound Spirit; the Spirit is the application of the death of Christ and its effectiveness—Exo. 30:22-25; Rom. 8:13.
3. The Christian life is a life that is all the time under the killing by the compound Spirit; this daily killing is carried out by the indwelling Spirit with the environment as the killing weapon.
4. Under God's divine and sovereign arrangement, everything works for our good, for our transformation, through the killing of Christ's death; the "good" in Romans 8:28 is not related to physical persons, matters, or things; only One is good—God—Luke 18:19:
 - a. All persons, all matters, and all things related to us are the means of the Holy Spirit to work good for us so that we can be loaded with good (Psa. 68:19a), with the Triune God Himself (cf. Gen. 45:5; 50:20).
 - b. All persons and all situations related to us are arranged by the Spirit of God to match His work within us so that we may be transformed and conformed to the image of the firstborn Son of God—cf. Matt. 10:29-31.

D. Transformation is carried out in us as we experience the discipline of the Holy Spirit—Rom. 8:2, 28-29; Heb. 12:5-14:

1. The work of the Spirit within us is to constitute a new being for us, but the work of the Spirit without is to tear down every aspect of our natural being through our environment—cf. Jer. 48:11.
2. We should cooperate with the inner operating Spirit and accept the environment that God has arranged for us—Phil. 4:12; Eph. 3:1; 4:1; 6:20; 1 Cor. 7:24.

§Day 6

III. Ministry is the issue of revelation plus suffering—what we see is wrought into us through suffering; hence, what we minister is what we are:

- A. Although the ministers are many, they have only one ministry—the ministry of the new covenant for the accomplishing of God's New Testament economy; our working together with Christ is to carry out this unique ministry, the ministering of Christ to people for the building up of His**

Body—Acts 1:17; Eph. 4:11-12; 1 Tim. 1:12; 2 Cor. 4:1; 6:1a.

- B. As a whole, the Body has one, unique corporate ministry, but because this ministry is the service of the Body of Christ and because the Body has many members, all the members have their own ministry for the carrying out of the unique ministry—Acts 20:24; 21:19; 2 Tim. 4:5; Col. 4:17.**
- C. The ministry is for ministering the Christ whom we have experienced, and it is constituted with, and produced and formed by, the experiences of the riches of Christ gained through sufferings, consuming pressures, and the killing work of the cross—Acts 9:15-16; Col. 1:24; Phil. 3:10; 1 Tim. 4:6; 2 Cor. 1:4-6, 8-9, 12; 3:3, 6:**
1. The ministry of the Spirit is for us to arrive at the high peak of the divine revelation by our ministering Christ as the Spirit, who gives life—vv. 8-9, 6, 3; Rev. 22:17a.
 2. The ministry of righteousness is for us to enter into the God-man living by our ministering Christ not only as our objective righteousness but also as our subjective and lived-out righteousness for the genuine expression of Christ—Rom. 5:17; Phil. 3:9; Rev. 19:8.
 3. The ministry of reconciliation is for us to shepherd people according to God (in oneness with Christ in His heavenly ministry of shepherding) by our ministering Christ as the word of reconciliation so that we can bring God's people into their spirit as the Holy of Holies for them to become persons in the spirit—2 Cor. 5:18-20; John 21:15-17; 1 Pet. 5:2-4; 2:25; Rev. 1:12-13; Heb. 10:19, 22; 1 Cor. 2:15.
 4. By our fully entering into such a wonderful ministry in its three aspects, the Lord will have a way to bring the churches into a new revival.
- D. Tribulation is the sweet visitation and incarnation of grace with all the riches of Christ; grace visits us mainly in the form of tribulation—2 Cor. 12:7-10:**
1. Through tribulations the killing effect of the cross of Christ on our natural being is applied to us by the Holy Spirit, making the way for the God of resurrection to add Himself into us—1:8-9; 4:16-18.

2. Tribulation produces endurance, which brings forth the quality of approvedness—an approved quality or attribute resulting from the enduring and experiencing of tribulation and testing—Rom. 5:3-4.
- E. God poured out Himself as love in our hearts with the Holy Spirit, who has been given to us, as the motivating power within us, that we may more than conquer in all our tribulations; therefore, when we endure any kind of tribulation, we are not put to shame but live Christ for His magnification—v. 5; 8:31-39; 2 Cor. 5:14-15; Phil. 1:19-21a.**

WEEK 6 — DAY 1

Morning Nourishment

Phil. 3:13-14 Brothers, I do not account of myself to have laid hold; but one thing I do: Forgetting the things which are behind and stretching forward to the things which are before, I pursue toward the goal for the prize to which God in Christ Jesus has called me upward.

Psa. 73:26 My flesh and my heart fail, but God is the rock of my heart and my portion forever.

Job's three friends could not speak anything because they had no knowledge, no understanding, concerning the purpose of what had happened to Job. The scene here indicates that Job and his friends were ignorant concerning that most painful and most terrifying occurrence, and were puzzled in their godliness, unable to discern what the reason was, what the purpose was, and what the result would be. Actually, Job's experience was a step taken by God in His divine economy to carry out the consuming and stripping of the contented Job in order to usher Job into a deeper seeking after God, that he might gain God instead of His blessings and his attainments in his perfection and integrity. God's stripping and consuming were exercised over Job to tear Job down that God might have a base and a way to rebuild him with God Himself that he might become a God-man, the same as God in His life and nature but not in His Godhead, in order to express God. (Job 2:13, footnote 1)

Today's Reading

The divine revelation in the Bible is progressive. Up to Job's time the progression of the divine revelation had reached only the level of Abraham's time, that is, that sinners need God's redemption with the shedding of the blood of the burnt offering (Job 1:5; 42:8). The divine truths regarding such matters as regeneration (John 3:6; 1 Pet. 1:23), renewing (2 Cor. 4:16...), transformation (Rom. 12:2...), conformation (8:29), and glorification (vv. 23, 30...) were not explicitly revealed to man in

God's Old Testament economy. God could not speak such things to Job and his friends because they were in a primitive stage of the divine revelation (cf. John 3:7-12; 16:12-13). These things were not revealed in completion until the apostle Paul's time. Paul received a full and explicit revelation of things concerning which Job and his friends had no understanding (Eph. 3:3-6, 9-11; Col. 1:25-27). Without the Epistles of Paul it would be difficult to understand the book of Job, because the conclusion of Job does not give us an explicit view concerning the purpose of God's dealing with His people. However, in the view of the New Testament it is very clear that God's purpose in dealing with His holy people is that they would be emptied of everything and receive only God as their gain (Phil. 3:8; cf. Psa. 73:25-26). The desire of God's heart is that we would gain Him in full as life, as the life supply, and as everything to our being. (Job 2:13, footnote 1)

In God's sanctuary the psalmist was instructed to take only God Himself as his portion, not anything other than God. The one who does not care for God may gain many things and seem to prosper. However, the one who cares for God will be restricted by God and even stripped by God of many things, as was the case with Job (Job 1:6—2:10) and the apostle Paul (Phil. 3:7-8). God's intention with His seekers is that they may find everything in Him and not be distracted from the absolute enjoyment of Himself. It is not a matter of keeping the law, as in Psalm 1, or of being right or wrong, but of gaining God and keeping God as everything. (Psa. 73:26, footnote 1)

The book of Job, written early in the progression of the divine revelation..., does not contain a clear revelation of God's purpose in dealing with His people. This revelation was given not to Job but to Paul. As unveiled in Paul's Epistles, God's purpose in dealing with us is to strip us of all things and to consume us so that we may gain God more and more (Phil. 3:8; 2 Cor. 4:16). (Job 1:1, footnote 1)

Further Reading: Life-study of Job, msgs. 30-31

WEEK 6 — DAY 2

Morning Nourishment

John 1:14 And the Word became flesh and tabernacled among us...

1 Cor. 15:45 ...The last Adam became a life-giving Spirit.

Rom. 8:29 ...Whom He foreknew, He also predestinated to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the Firstborn among many brothers.

We want to see the most marvelous, excellent, mysterious, and all-inclusive transformations of the eternal and Triune God in His becoming a man. God is complete, perfect, and unchanging, but He has had many transformations. In my youth I was taught that the Lord Jesus is the same yesterday, today, and forever (Heb. 13:8). But after I got into the intrinsic depths of the Scriptures, I found out that merely to say this is not adequate in the interpretation of the deep mysteries concerning Christ, because the Bible shows that God has been transformed. God became a man. Is this not a transformation? (CWWL, 1994-1997, vol. 1, "Crystallization-study of the Epistle to the Romans," p. 378)

Today's Reading

The Triune God became a God-man, bringing divinity into humanity and mingling divinity with humanity as a prototype for the mass reproduction of many God-men. He became the embodiment of the Triune God (John 1:14), bringing God to man and making God contactable, touchable, receivable, experienceable, enterable, and enjoyable.

He could not have lived a human life unless He had been transformed into a man. He lived a human life, yet He lived not by His human life but by His divine life to express the divine attributes in His human virtues. Such a living is the model of the human living of His mass reproduction of the many God-men (1 Pet. 2:21).

His death was not merely the all-inclusive death. It...was the all-problems-solving death. To accomplish such a death, He became the

flesh of sin (but only in its likeness—Rom. 8:3). He had the likeness of the flesh of sin, but within Him there is no sin (1 John 3:5). It was by this that He was made sin (2 Cor. 5:21) and condemned sin in the flesh (Rom. 8:3).... We need to pay our full attention to this. He was God. First, He became a man. Second, He became the embodiment of God, which was the real tabernacle. Then He became the Lamb [John 1:29].

In His becoming a man, He also became a serpent (only in its likeness as the bronze serpent—Num. 21:4-9; John 3:14).... By becoming a serpent, He destroyed the devil, the ancient serpent (Rev. 12:9; 20:2), who has the might of death (Heb. 2:14), and He judged the world, which is the system (invented by the satanic systematization), the cosmos, of the devil, its ruler (John 12:31). As the last Adam (1 Cor. 15:45b), He ended the old man. As the end of the old man, He crucified the old man (Rom. 6:6) and terminated the old creation. The old man is the representative, the center, of the old creation, so by destroying the old man He terminated the old creation.

In His all-conquering resurrection He accomplished three main things. First, He uplifted His humanity for Him to be begotten of God as God's firstborn Son (Acts 13:33; Rom. 8:29). Second, He became...the many sons of God as His many brothers (1 Pet. 1:3; Rom. 8:29). He was born to be the firstborn Son, and He became the many sons of God.... In the new man, Christ is all the members and in all the members [Col. 3:10b-11] . We became Christ in His resurrection....Third, Christ, as the last Adam, became the life-giving Spirit, the pneumatic Christ, the all-inclusive compounded Spirit, as the consummation of the processed and consummated Triune God (1 Cor. 15:45b; Exo. 30:23-25). (CWWL, 1994-1997, vol. 1, "Crystallization-study of the Epistle to the Romans," pp. 378-380)

Further Reading: CWWL, 1994-1997, vol. 1, "Crystallization-study of the Epistle to the Romans," msg. 17

WEEK 6 — DAY 3

Morning Nourishment

Hosea 11:4 I drew them with cords of a man, with bands of love...

Rom. 8:37-39 ...In all these things we more than conquer through Him who loved us....Neither death nor life...nor things present nor things to come nor powers nor height nor depth nor any other creature will be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

The phrase with cords of a man, with bands of love indicates that God loves us with His divine love not on the level of divinity but on the level of humanity. God's love is divine, but it reaches us in the cords of a man, that is, through Christ's humanity. The cords through which God draws us include Christ's incarnation, human living, crucifixion, resurrection, and ascension. It is by all these steps of Christ in His humanity that God's love in His salvation reaches us (Rom. 5:8; 1 John 4:9-10). Apart from Christ, God's everlasting love, His unchanging, subduing love, could not be prevailing in relation to us. God's unchanging love is prevailing because it is a love in Christ, with Christ, by Christ, and for Christ. (Hosea 11:4, footnote 1)

Because of God's unchanging love for us and the fact that Christ has accomplished everything on our behalf, neither tribulation nor persecution can suppress or defeat us; rather, in all these things we more than overcome and conquer through Him who loved us. (Rom. 8:37, footnote 1)

Today's Reading

The love of God is the source of His eternal salvation. This love is in Christ and has been poured out in our hearts through the Holy Spirit (Rom. 5:5). Nothing can separate us from this love of God (8:38-39). In God's salvation this love to us has become the love of Christ (v. 35), which does many marvelous things for us through the grace of Christ until God's complete salvation is accomplished in us. These marvelous things provoke God's enemy to attack us with all kinds of sufferings and calamities (vv. 35-36). However, because of our response to the love of God in Christ, these

attacks have become benefits to us (v. 28). Hence, we more than conquer in all our afflictions and calamities (v. 37).

By the end of chapter 8 Romans has covered the first half of God's salvation in Christ. This salvation has saved us to the extent that, on the one hand, we are in God's acceptance enjoying the source of this salvation, which is God's love in Christ, from which we cannot be separated by any person, matter, or thing; and, on the other hand, we are in God's life being conformed by the Lord Spirit to reach the ultimate goal of this salvation, that is, to enter into the incomparable divine glory and be glorified together with God (vv. 18, 30). (Rom. 8:39, footnote 1)

In His all-transcending ascension He became the Head of all things to be the Head of the Body of Christ (Eph. 1:22-23; Col. 1:18). He was made the Head of all things that He might be the Head of the Body. He also became the Lord and Christ (Acts 2:36), the Leader (of all the kings) and Savior (5:31), our High Priest in God's New Testament economy (Heb. 4:14; 7:26; 9:11), the Mediator of the new covenant (v. 15), the surety of the better covenant (7:22), the Paraclete (Advocate, Comforter) of the New Testament believers (1 John 2:1; John 14:16, 26; 15:26; 16:7), the New Testament believers' Intercessor at the right hand of God and within them as well (Rom. 8:34, 26), and the heavenly Minister (Heb. 8:2). In eternity past He was not all these items. He became all these items in His all-transcending ascension.

The transformations of the eternal and Triune God in His becoming a man are for the accomplishment of God's eternal economy. Such a vision should control, direct, and be our goal for our whole life until we see Him. (CWWL, 1994-1997, vol. 1, "Crystallization-study of the Epistle to the Romans," pp. 380-381)

Further Reading: CWWL, 1994-1997, vol. 1, "Crystallization-study of the Epistle to the Romans," msg. 17

WEEK 6 — DAY 4

Morning Nourishment

2 Cor. 3:16-18 ...Whenever their heart turns to the Lord, the veil is taken away. And the Lord is the Spirit; and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom. But we all with unveiled face, beholding and reflecting like a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, even as from the Lord Spirit.

How do we open our heart to the Lord? Whenever we have to make a determination or decision, we should first say to the Lord, “O Lord, I love You. I am willing to please You.” This kind of prayer opens our will to the Lord, and once our will is opened, the Lord will enter into it. In addition, whenever we love or desire something, we should stop for a moment and say to the Lord, “O Lord, I love You. I want to please You.” This opens our emotion to the Lord. When we do this, the Lord will surely enter into our emotion. Similarly, whenever we begin to think about something, we should stop our thinking for a moment and say to the Lord, “O Lord, I love You. I want to please You.” This kind of statement opens our mind to the Lord, and through this opening, the Lord will be able to enter into our mind. Whenever we open to the Lord in our mind, the Lord’s Spirit will gain the opportunity to enter into the different parts of our soul. (CWWL, 1955, vol. 3, “The Way for a Christian to Mature in Life,” pp. 307-308)

Today’s Reading

Whenever our heart opens to the Lord, this Spirit spreads out from within us into our mind, emotion, and will....One obvious proof [of this] is the freedom mentioned in 2 Corinthians 3:17...Once you have the Spirit of the Lord in your mind, your mind will have freedom. Once you have the Spirit of the Lord in your emotion, your emotion will also have freedom. And once you have the Spirit of the Lord in your will, it will surely be freed.

If someone says that a meeting is boring, we must realize that it is he himself who is bored within. Because his spirit, his inner being, is bored, he feels that everything is boring.... If you do not let the Spirit of the Lord

spread out of you, you will be restrained and depressed....Your mind, emotion, and will are not released and thus have no joy.... If you do not let the Spirit pass through you, surely you will not have freedom.

Second Corinthians 3:18... includes the phrase reflecting like a mirror. If we have our face covered with a veil, there will be a barrier between the light and us. It is not until we have the veil taken away that our face and the light can be face to face. Then we can see the light. This is like the reflecting of a mirror. Because the Spirit is in us, we have freedom, our face is unveiled to the Lord, and we are face to face with Him. His glory shines upon our face, and we reflect His glory like a mirror. We cannot pretend to do this.

If day by day we love the Lord and give Him the opportunities, day by day the Lord will spread out from within us. Then we will grow and be transformed day by day. Ultimately, we will be transformed into the image of the Lord....This image is the Lord Himself. People will realize that we have a certain condition. This condition is the image of the Lord. We can also call this a condition of having glory, freedom, release, the presence of the Lord, and the Lord's Spirit. These five things are actually one. The Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom. When we have freedom, our face is unveiled to see the glory of the Lord. Then, from glory to glory, we are transformed into the image of the Lord.

When the Lord lives out from within us, we grow and become mature. Therefore, we need to open our heart to the Lord and let Him spread out from our spirit into our mind, emotion, and will....When our mind is like His mind, our desires are like His desires, and our decisions are like His decisions, we will have His image. (CWWL, 1955, vol. 3, "The Way for a Christian to Mature in Life," pp. 308-310, 313-315)

Further Reading: CWWL, 1955, vol. 3, "The Way for a Christian to Mature in Life," chs. 17-19

WEEK 6 — DAY 5

Morning Nourishment

2 Cor. 4:10 Always bearing about in the body the putting to death of Jesus that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our body.

16 Therefore we do not lose heart; but though our outer man is decaying, yet our inner man is being renewed day by day.

Through regeneration,...the second birth, we all became a new man. Now outwardly we are old [by our natural birth], but inwardly we are new. However, God is not satisfied to leave us in the old man. He wants our old man to be renewed by transformation. Transformation transfers us from one form, the form of the old man, to another form, the form of the new man....The Lord accomplishes this by the killing of Christ's death.

Putting to death here [in 2 Corinthians 4:10] means "killing." The death of Christ kills us. His death is the killing capacity within us. (CWWL, 1991-1992, vol. 2, "The Christian Life," pp. 479-480)

Today's Reading

We should not forget that His death is included in the all-inclusive, compound Spirit..., typified by the compound ointment in Exodus 30:23-25. This compound Spirit has God as the base, typified by one hin of olive oil. This oil is compounded with four spices—myrrh, cinnamon, calamus, and cassia. These spices typify the elements of Christ's death and resurrection. Furthermore, the number four typifies the created man. Thus, the Spirit, typified by the ointment, is a compound of God and man. The God-man, Jesus, has been compounded together with the elements of His death and resurrection.

Within today's antibiotics there is some element that is very active to kill the germs. In like manner, within this compound Spirit as a big dose, there is the element of Christ's death, which is active in killing all the negative things within us.

Under God's divine and sovereign arrangement, our entire

environment is a killing....The wives, the husbands, the children, the brothers, and everything in our environment are used by the Lord as knives to kill us.

The killing of the cross, the killing of Christ's death, ushers in resurrection. When we are willing to suffer and be killed, we live Christ, we magnify Christ, and Christ is manifested in us. Then we are transformed. We enjoy Christ under the killing of His death.

Everything related to us is under the Lord's sovereign arrangement. What kind of job we have and whom we marry are altogether not up to us. A brother may choose a sister to be his wife, but later this brother may think that he made a mistake. This is why the Lord charges the husbands to love their wives (Eph. 5:25). Under the Lord's sovereign arrangement, we are like lambs brought to the slaughter every day.... Every day we are under the killing of Christ's death that His life may be manifested in our body in the renewing of our inner man. (CWWL, 1991-1992, vol. 2, "The Christian Life," pp. 480-483)

Whatever we are by birth, whether good or bad, whether useful or not, is natural and altogether a hindrance to the Holy Spirit in constituting the divine life into our being. For this reason our natural strength, natural wisdom, natural cleverness, natural disposition, natural shortcomings, natural virtues, and natural attributes, plus our character and habits, must all be torn down in order that the Holy Spirit may form in us a new disposition, new character, new habits, new virtues, and new attributes. In order to accomplish this work of reconstitution, the Holy Spirit of God moves within us to enlighten, inspire, lead, and saturate us with the divine life. He also works in our environment to arrange every detail, person, matter, and thing in our situation to tear down what we are naturally. (Watchman Nee—a Seer of the Divine Revelation in the Present Age, p. 115)

Further Reading: CWWL, 1991-1992, vol. 2, "The Christian Life," chs. 9, 14-15; CWWL, 1967, vol. 2, "An Autobiography of a Person in the Spirit," chs. 1-2

WEEK 6 — DAY 6

Morning Nourishment

2 Cor. 4:1 Therefore having this ministry as we have been shown mercy, we do not lose heart.

Rom. 5:3-4 And not only so, but we also boast in our tribulations, knowing that tribulation produces endurance; and endurance, approvedness; and approvedness, hope.

Ministry is the issue of revelation plus suffering. Without revelation, one...has nothing to minister. But though one may have revelation, if he lacks suffering, he still has no ministry....Ministry is something higher and deeper [than teaching]. Gift is superficial and costs little, while ministry is weighty and costly. If you have received revelation from God, He will put you into suffering in order that you may have ministry.

From the writings of the apostle Paul, we can see that before he endured suffering, he received revelation. When he received the revelation, he did not immediately go out to pass it on as teaching or knowledge. To do so would not have been ministry; it would have been a sort of teaching or an exercise of gift. But after receiving the revelation, the Lord put him into some suffering. Hence, in all his Epistles we have this sequence: first, the revelation; second, the sufferings; and third, the ministry which came out of the first two. To receive revelation is one thing; to have that revelation wrought into our being is something else. (Watchman Nee—a Seer of the Divine Revelation in the Present Age, p. 193)

Today's Reading

The measure of life, the amount of reality, and the riches of Christ we are able to minister to others depend entirely upon two elements: how much revelation we have received and how much suffering we have undergone regarding that which has been revealed to us.

I was with Watchman Nee for years.... He was a person of the cross. The sufferings he received from all directions were just the working of the cross, and the revelation he received concerning the cross was wrought

into him.... I can testify from the depths of my being that what he did was a ministry; what he did was what he was. (Watchman Nee—a Seer of the Divine Revelation in the Present Age, pp. 194-195)

Our natural being needs to be sanctified, transformed, and conformed. Therefore, God brings in certain tribulations and sufferings for our good....Tribulation and suffering are for our transformation. We all appreciate peace, grace, and glory, but no one likes tribulation.

Tribulation is actually the incarnation of grace with all the riches of Christ.... If we say that we appreciate grace but not tribulation, it is like saying that we love God but not Jesus. However, to reject Jesus is to reject God. Likewise, to reject tribulation is to reject grace....The incarnation of God was His gracious visitation.... If we love His visit, we must love His incarnation. It is the same with grace and tribulation. Tribulation is the incarnation of grace visiting us. Although we love God's grace, we must also kiss the tribulation, which is the incarnation of grace, the sweet visitation of grace.

The experience of tribulation produces endurance (Rom. 5:3). Endurance is more than patience; it is the product of patience plus suffering. None of us was born with endurance; it is produced by the suffering of tribulation. Endurance produces approvedness (v. 4). Approvedness is an approved quality resulting from the endurance of tribulation and testing. Thus, approvedness is a quality or attribute that can be approved. At times, it is difficult for young brothers to have the approval of others. They need the endurance which produces a quality that is easily approved by others. Tribulation issues in endurance, and endurance brings forth the quality of approvedness. (Life-study of Romans, pp. 105-106)

Further Reading: Watchman Nee—a Seer of the Divine Revelation in the Present Age, chs. 14-16, 22; Watchman Nee, The Treasure in Earthen Vessels (booklet); Life-study of Romans, msg. 9

<< WEEK 6 — HYMN >>

Hymns, #548 Earthen vessel I was made

Experience of Christ — Containing Him

- 1 Earthen vessel I was made,
Christ in me the treasure laid;
His container I must be,
As the content He in me.**
- 2 In His image I was made,
Fit that Christ should all pervade;
Thus the vessel God did form
With the content uniform.**
- 3 In my spirit He remains,
With His power He sustains;
As the Spirit one with me,
He is my reality.**
- 4 Moving in me day by day,
Mingling with me all the way,
All my steps He regulates,
Every part He saturates.**
- 5 Him expressing from within,
Making Him to others seen,
I transparent have to be
That He may be shown thru me.**
- 6 Transformation is my need,
To be broken more indeed,
That the clay may change in form,**

To the treasure to conform.