

Week Five

Answering God's Call to Be His Dispensational Instrument, His Overcomers, to Turn the Age

Outline

Scripture Reading: Dan. 1:4-9; 2:17-19; 4:25-26, 32; 6:10-11; 9:1-4, 23; 10:11, 19; 11:32b; 12:3

Day 1

I Every time God wants to make a dispensational move, an age-turning move, He must obtain His dispensational instrument; we must be those who have dispensational value to God—Rev. 12:5-11; 1:20; Dan. 12:3; Matt. 13:43:

A We need to consider what we are doing to bring in the next age; this is a special time, so there is the need of special Christians to do a special work—16:18; Rev. 19:7; 1 Cor. 1:9; Rev. 2:4-7; Col. 1:18b; John 17:21; 1 Cor. 14:4b; Eph. 4:16; Col. 2:19.

Day 2

B The principle of the Lord's recovery is seen with Daniel ("God is my judge"), Hananiah ("Jah has graciously given," or "favored of Jah"), Mishael ("Who is what God is?"), and Azariah ("Jah has helped"); "Daniel and his companions" were absolutely one with God in their victory over Satan's devices; they were men who turned the age of the captivity of God's

people to the age of their return to the land of Immanuel for the building of God's house and God's city for God's expression and authority—Dan. 2:13, 17; Isa. 8:8; cf. Rev. 17:14:

1 In God's sight, an overcomer is a "man of preciousness," even "preciousness itself," a person whom God can use to turn the age—1 Pet. 2:7; Dan. 9:23; 10:11, 19.

2 Christ as the unique Overcomer includes all the overcomers; the unique Overcomer dwells in our spirit to make us His overcomers—John 14:30; Dan. 2:34-35; Rev. 19:7-21; 1 John 5:4, 18-19; Rev. 3:21.

C The Lord needs to raise up men who turn the age for the recovery of God's expression and authority; among fallen mankind God's expression is torn down and His authority is denied; Daniel and his companions truly allowed God to be expressed through them and were truly under God's authority—Gen. 1:26; Dan. 3:14-30; 4:17, 26; Rev. 22:1-2.

II Daniel had companions with whom he was absolutely consecrated to God and separated unto God from an age that follows Satan—Dan. 1:4-8; 5:12, 22; 6:10:

A All those who are used by God to turn the age must be Nazarites—voluntarily consecrated ones who are sanctified absolutely and ultimately to God—Num. 6:1-8, 22-27; Psa. 110:3; Luke 9:62; Phil. 3:13-14.

B Although Daniel and his companions were still very young, they stood up as an anti-testimony, similar to the way that Antipas did in the church in Pergamos—Rev. 2:13.

Day 3

III Daniel joined himself to God's desire through God's

Word—Dan. 9:1-4; Deut. 17:18-20; 2 Tim. 3:16-17; Eph. 6:17-18; Psa. 119:11, 24:

A Daniel was not only a person who read God's Word regularly but also a person who was joined to God's Word:

1 When Daniel read from the book of Jeremiah that God had ordained seventy years of captivity for the Israelites and that after seventy years God would turn back to bless them, he immediately fasted and prayed; as soon as he touched God's desire through the Word, he joined himself to that desire—Dan. 9:2-3.

2 After Daniel read the book of Leviticus, he could no longer eat the unclean food (Dan. 1:8-21); after he read the book of Jeremiah, he could not help but fast and pray for the restoration of God's people (29:10-14).

B We must read God's Word in a spirit and atmosphere of prayer and touch God's desire from His Word; then we must immediately join ourselves to that desire; the Bible should affect our living, and we should be joined to the Bible—cf. Psa. 119:11, 15-16, 133, 140; 2 Cor.6:14-18.

IV Daniel was a man of prayer with an excellent spirit, a man living under God's rule in the reality of the kingdom of the heavens, the ruling of the heavens—Dan. 2:17-19, 28; 6:10; 9:1-4, 17; 5:12, 14; 6:3; 5:22-23; 4:25-26, 32:

A The center of Daniel 6 is man's prayer for the carrying out of God's economy; man's prayers are like the rails that pave the way for God's move to go on; there is no other way to bring God's economy into fullness and into fulfillment except by prayer; this is the inner secret of this chapter.

B The highest expression of a man who cooperates with God is in prayer;

God carries out His economy on the earth through His faithful channels of prayer—Matt. 26:41; Acts 6:4; Eph. 6:17-18; Col. 4:2.

C Prayer is the lifeline in the Lord's recovery; the more Satan tries to frustrate our prayer, the more we should pray—Dan. 6:10, cf. vv. 4-9:

1 Daniel was a person living before God; he depended on prayer to do what man could not do, and he depended on prayer to understand what man could not understand—2:17-19; 9:1-4; 10:1-3, 11-13.

2 Daniel's prayer was totally for God and not for himself; through prayer he afforded God the highest cooperation—9:2b; Jer. 25:11; Dan. 9:17; 1 Kings 8:48.

3 Because Daniel was a man of prayer, he was acknowledged by God, qualified to be used by God, and capable of speaking forth the mystery of God—cf. Acts 6:4.

4 Daniel's prayer reached the highest peak; he asked God to do something for Himself; he prayed, "Now hear, O our God, the prayer of Your servant and his supplications, and cause Your face to shine upon Your sanctuary that has been desolated, for the Lord's sake"—Dan. 9:17.

5 Only a person like Daniel, who prayed to God single-heartedly with an age-turning prayer, can be used by Him to turn the age.

V Daniel was a self-sacrificing person with the spirit of martyrdom—6:10-11:

A Daniel's companions had a true spirit of martyrdom; they stood for the Lord as the unique God and against idol worship at the cost of their lives, being thrown at the command of Nebuchadnezzar into a blazing furnace—3:19-23.

B Daniel prayed at the risk of his life; the intention of the chief ministers and satraps was to destroy Daniel, but the intention of Satan, who was

behind them, was to cut off the channel of prayer that God was using for the carrying out of His economy—6:4-24.

- C Everyone whom God uses to turn the age is afraid of only one thing, that is, of offending God and losing His presence—3:17-18; 2 Cor. 5:9-10; cf. Psa. 51:11; Josh. 7:4.

Day 4

VI In order to be today's overcomers as God's dispensational instrument who turn the age, we must redeem the time; Colossians 4:5 says, "Redeeming the time," and Ephesians 5:16 says, "Redeeming the time":

- A One could translate the word time in these passages as redeeming the "opportunity"; we who are learning to serve the Lord must not let the Head have a sense that we are dull to His direction and numb to His leading; we need to allow the Lord to train our spiritual sense and our spiritual sight to sense the opportunities whenever they come and make the most of them.
- B Of the days that the Lord has ordained for us, perhaps yesterday should have been the greatest day of our life, but we may have lived yesterday in an ordinary way; this is what it means to miss the opportunity; there is never a day without God's arrangement for us.
- C Perhaps the Lord gave us a thought that we should seek out a certain person who could potentially be very useful to the Lord (cf. Acts 9:10-19; 22:12-16), but on that day we did not go, because we were afraid the weather was too hot, and we were too lazy.
- D One day we will face the Lord; perhaps we will regret the things in our life that now provide us with satisfaction; many times we have come short of God's will and have acted foolishly; we have not been faithful to live Christ, to grow Christ, to express Christ, and to propagate Christ in every

respect for the building up of His Body—2 Cor. 5:10; Matt. 25:21-23, 25-26, 30; Col. 1:9-10; Matt. 7:26; 25:2-3, 8.

Day 5

- E Daniel 11:32b says, “The people who know their God will show strength and take action”; this means that the people of God will open up new horizons; the more we know God’s will, the more we will seize the opportunities; those who know God will never live in a habitual way day after day—cf. Deut. 4:25 and footnote.
- F “We have seen how God has blessed Brother Witness’s work. His strong point is that he does not allow any opportunity to slip by. It is hard to find him missing an opportunity. Once the opportunity arises, he takes advantage of it”—speaking from Brother Watchman Nee on July 19, 1950 (The Collected Works of Watchman Nee, vol. 55, p. 199).
- G If our service is according to God’s will, one day will equal many days, but the days spent outside the will of God are not counted; outside the kingdom of God, no human beings are employed by God (Matt. 20:6-7); Nebuchadnezzar was satisfied with his own work (Dan. 4:30, 37b)—this is the principle of Babylon.
- H However, thank the Lord for His word of comfort, the words of Joel 2:25—the years that the locust has eaten will be restored to us; if we waste our days, ten years may be equal to one day, but if we redeem the time, one day may equal ten years.
- I Psalm 90:12 says, “Teach us then to number our days / That we may gain a heart of wisdom,” and 84:10 says, “A day in Your courts is better than a thousand”; the days in heaven are not counted by a cycle of twenty-four hours; God has a different way of counting days.

Day 6

VII Today the way to become vitalized is to answer the Lord's call to be an overcomer; an overcomer is a vital person, and a vital person (one who is living and active) is a praying person—119:88, 159; Dan. 11:32b:

A Our intention in forming the new groups is to have groups of overcomers; this is the reason that the groups are called the “vital groups”; the full-time training is also for the producing of the overcomers, those who are desperate to conquer the deadness of Sardis (Rev. 3:1), the lukewarmness of Laodicea (vv. 15-16), and the barrenness dealt with by the Lord in John 15 concerning the vine and the branches (vv. 1-8, 16).

B If we are going to be vitalized, we need to have close, intimate, and thorough fellowship with the Lord and with the seeking saints; we need the Lord to lead us to some companions, with whom we can labor, just as Daniel had three companions—Dan. 1:6.

C Within today's church life (typified by Jerusalem), we must be the Lord's overcomers (typified by Zion); this is to be in the age of the overcomers according to the Lord's calling (Rev. 2:7, 11, 17, 26-28; 3:5, 12, 20-21; 21:7); it is one thing to be in the church life, but it is another thing to be an overcomer in the church life (14:1-5).

D We have to make a resolution to be the overcomers, the vitalized ones; an overcomer is one who overcomes anything that is replacing Christ or that is against Christ—Judg. 5:15-16; 1 John 2:18-20, 27.

VIII As today's overcomers, we should be like the children of Issachar, “men who understood the times that they

might know what Israel should do” (1 Chron. 12:32a); see Brother Lee’s applicable experience on the next page.

On the eve of the revival in Chefoo, when the Japanese had invaded China and had made life in China, which was hard enough, to be even harder, Brother Lee wrote the following in his personal notes in Chefoo, 1942:

People on earth are suffering calamities, and the churches are in hardship; this is not the age of God’s heart’s desire but the age of God’s procedures. God is using His procedures to fulfill His heart’s desire. To turn from the age of procedures to the age of God’s heart’s desire, man must pray the age-turning prayer. Daniel was such a man.

The earth is suffering calamities because people on the earth do not want God and do not care for God’s affairs. Therefore, if the saints are to pray to end the time of calamities, they must answer God’s demands and care for God and His needs. Oh! These many calamities today should wake us up to no longer live to the earth! Oh! Today we should truly consecrate ourselves to answer God’s demands on behalf of the church so that God may have a way to come in and to turn this age of procedures into the age of His heart’s desire. (The Collected Works of Witness Lee, 1932–1949, vol. 2, p. 27)

WEEK 5 — DAY 1

Morning Nourishment

Rev. 12:5 And she brought forth a son, a man-child, who is to shepherd all the nations with an iron rod; and her child was caught up to God and to His throne.

10-11 ...Now has come the salvation and the power and the kingdom of our God and the authority of His Christ, for the accuser of our brothers has been cast down....And they overcame him...

According to the Bible, the seed of the woman will bruise the head of the enemy. The seed of the woman in Genesis 3 primarily refers to the Lord Jesus, but the overcomers also have a part in this seed. The seed of the woman includes the church, especially the overcomers. Even though the Lord bruised Satan's head, he is still at work. The fulfillment of the seed of the woman bruising Satan can be seen in the man-child in Revelation 12. The only Overcomer includes all the overcomers (vv. 10-11).

When God changes His attitude toward a certain matter, He makes a dispensational move. Every dispensational move brings in God's new way. His most important dispensational move is in Revelation 12. He wants to end this age and bring in the age of the kingdom.... How can He bring this age to a close and bring in another? He must have His dispensational instrument. (CWWN, vol. 34, "The Glorious Church," p. 153)

Today's Reading

The rapture of the man-child brings an end to the church age and introduces the kingdom age. The man-child enables God to move...We should never forget that God can be limited. He waits for man in all of His moves. God's binding in heaven is based on our binding on earth; God's loosing in heaven is based on our loosing on earth. Everything depends on the church.

It is God's desire that created beings would deal with fallen created beings. According to His purpose, the whole church should deal with Satan; however, the church has failed. Therefore, there is the need for the overcomers to rise up. God's purpose is fulfilled in the overcomers because they work with Him. We can see the principle of the overcomers throughout the Word of God. God always lays hold of a group of overcomers to make a dispensational move.

The Lord has two works on earth: redemption and building the church. The church is built on "this rock" (Matt. 16:18). The apostles were the first to stand on this rock. Even though they were weak in the flesh, their spirits were not weak.... They were a dispensational instrument....The apostles and disciples waited for ten days, praying in Jerusalem....There were one hundred and twenty, but where were the others who had followed the Lord? Clearly, not everyone will work with God. These one hundred and twenty were overcomers.

Are we at the end of the age? If we are, the kingdom will soon begin. If a dispensational move is near, then God needs an instrument. General work is no longer adequate. The children of God lack a vision; they do not see the seriousness and intensity of the situation. Now is a matter of dispensation. Just being a good servant of the Lord is no longer good enough; this is not of great use to God....This is a special time, so there is the need of special Christians to do a special work.

Today God is waiting for the man-child. Only the rapture can precipitate the events in Revelation 12:10. God has an order, and He works according to that order. His eyes have left the church; they are now on the kingdom. An overcomer works according to the principle of the Body. The principle of the Body annuls sectarianism and individualism.

Of all the dispensational moves, the man-child is the greatest because it removes man's power and the devil's power, and it brings in the kingdom. We live in the most privileged time; we can do the most for God. Light will show us the way, but strength and power will enable us to walk the road. A great price must be paid in order to be used now. (CWWN, vol. 34, "The Glorious Church," pp. 153-157)

Further Reading: CWWN, vol. 34, "The Glorious Church," pp. 153-157

WEEK 5 — DAY 2

Morning Nourishment

Dan. 1:8 But Daniel set his heart not to defile himself with the king's choice provision and with the wine that the king drank, so he requested of the leader of the eunuchs that he might not defile himself.

Rev. 2:13 ...You hold fast My name and have not denied My faith, even in the days of Antipas, My witness, My faithful one, who was killed among you, where Satan dwells.

How did God use Daniel to turn that age? There is an important principle with Daniel as also with Samuel. It is voluntary consecration. Samuel was a Nazarite. A Nazarite was a person who consecrated himself voluntarily (Num. 6). We can see the same principle in Daniel. Apparently, Daniel was not a Nazarite. Actually, he was, because a Nazarite was a person who did not drink any wine or strong drink. What is the meaning of not drinking wine or strong drink? It means to not enjoy any pleasures of this life. This is the principle with Daniel.

What the king of Babylon drank, as well as his meat and grains, must have been offered to the idols. At least those meals were not clean according to the ordinances on cleanliness in Leviticus 11; it was defiled food. (CWWL, 1957, vol. 3, "Men Who Turn the Age," p. 511)

Today's Reading

Daniel refused everything that men enjoyed and boasted of. He refused everything that would offer him some position in the world. He was a voluntarily consecrated one.

A little spiritual pursuit or a little godly living before the Lord is not enough to be used by the Lord to turn the age. All those who are used by the Lord to

turn the age must be Nazarites; they must be voluntarily consecrated ones.... [Voluntary consecration] means that when everyone else on earth seeks after the world and enjoys the world, I separate myself from it....The Bible records that in those days the king of Babylon chose a group of young men from different races to stand before him. The opportunity of being chosen was something beyond one's dream because the king would give them good food and drink for three years so that they would be fair and fat in the flesh to stand before him in the palace....Yet Daniel and his three companions vowed, saying, "We forsake such opportunity. We will not enjoy the food and drink here. We cannot be the same as other people. We must take another stand. Other people do not have God and are not for God, but we are for God."

They expressed God this way because they submitted themselves to His authority. While the whole earth denied God's authority, they acknowledged God's authority. While the whole earth had men as kings, they had God as their King. The first characteristic of Daniel was that he was a separated person.... Although Daniel and his three friends were still very young, they stood up to be an anti-testimony. This anti-testimony is a separation....When we read Daniel 1, we must grasp the meaning of this picture. These men did not follow the tide of Babylon at all. They were the separated ones. They could not eat what others could eat. They could not drink what others could drink. They could not do what others could do. They were clearly different from others in everything. (CWWL, 1957, vol. 3, "Men Who Turn the Age," pp. 512-513, 519)

In Greek Antipas means "against all." Antipas, a faithful witness of the Lord, stood against all that the worldly church brought in and practiced. Hence, he became a martyr of the Lord. In Greek the word for martyr is the same as that for witness. Antipas, as an anti-witness, bore an anti-testimony, a testimony against anything that deviated from the testimony of Jesus. It must have been through his anti-testimony that in his days the church in Pergamos still held fast the Lord's name and did not deny the proper Christian faith. (Revelation 2:13, footnote 3)

Further Reading: CWWL, 1957, vol. 3, "Men Who Turn the Age," chs. 1-2

WEEK 5 — DAY 3

Morning Nourishment

Dan. 9:2-3 In the first year of his reign I, Daniel, understood by means of the Scriptures the number of the years, which came as the word of Jehovah to Jeremiah the prophet, for the completion of the desolations of Jerusalem, that is, seventy years. So I set my face toward the Lord God to seek Him in prayer and supplications with fasting and sackcloth and ashes.

[The second characteristic of] Daniel was [that he was] not only a person who read God's Word regularly but a person who was joined to God's Word.... When he read from the book of Jeremiah that God had ordained seventy years of captivity for the Israelites and that after seventy years God would turn back to bless them, he immediately fasted and prayed....As soon as he touched God's desire through the Word, he joined himself to that desire.

This was the way that he read the Bible.... After he read the book of Leviticus, he could no longer eat the unclean food. After he read the book of Jeremiah, he could not help but fast and pray for the restoration of God's people. Whichever point he read, he joined himself to that point....Whenever we find out God's desire, we must immediately join ourselves to that desire. (CWWL, 1957, vol. 3, "Men Who Turn the Age," pp. 521-522)

Today's Reading

Many young brothers and sisters read the Bible regularly. However, I am afraid that when you read the Bible, the Bible remains the Bible, and you are still you. For instance, the Bible clearly says that a believer and an unbeliever should not be yoked together. This word is very clear. Nevertheless, after you read it, perhaps you still make friends with unbelievers.... The Bible cannot affect your living, and you cannot be joined to the Bible.... [If] you still befriend unbelievers and even consider marrying unbelievers, this means that your living is totally separate from the Bible. Such a person cannot turn the age;

neither can he be an anti-testimony in a degrading age.

Daniel had a third characteristic. He was a man who was always praying. His prayers were not at all common. His prayers were prayers that turned the age. Every time he encountered some crucial matter, he prayed before God.... He believed in prayer because he believed in God and not in himself. (CWWL, 1957, vol. 3, "Men Who Turn the Age," pp. 522-523)

God's move is like a train which must have rails for its move. Man's prayers are like the rails which pave the way for God's move to go on. There is no other way to bring God's economy into fullness and into fulfillment except by prayer. Today, prayer is the lifeline in the Lord's recovery. The more Satan tries to frustrate our prayer, the more we should pray. (Life-study of Daniel, pp. 45, 47)

[In Daniel 2] Daniel...was acknowledged by God, qualified to be used by God, and capable of speaking forth the mystery of God....In [Daniel and his three friends'] single-hearted prayer, God revealed to Daniel the [king's] dream....This shows that Daniel was a person living before God; he depended on prayer to do what man could not do, and he depended on prayer to understand what man could not understand....The only reason he could see King Nebuchadnezzar's dream and could know its meaning was that he was a person living in prayer. Through prayer he afforded God the highest cooperation.

Daniel's prayer reached the highest peak. He asked God to do something for Himself. He prayed, "Cause Your face to shine upon Your sanctuary that has been desolated, for the Lord's sake" (Dan. 9:17). I hope that we would circle the words for the Lord's sake. We can see that his prayer was totally for God and not for himself....This was a very special prayer; it was also the highest prayer. Our prayers are ninety-nine and nine tenths percent for ourselves. Very few of them are for God. Only a person like Daniel, who prayed to God single-heartedly, can be used by Him to turn the age. (CWWL, 1957, vol. 3, "Men Who Turn the Age," pp. 524, 526)

Further Reading: Life-study of Daniel, msgs. 2-8

WEEK 5 — DAY 4

Morning Nourishment

Eph. 5:15-16 Look therefore carefully how you walk, not as unwise, but as wise, redeeming the time, because the days are evil.

Col. 4:5 Walk in wisdom toward those who are without, redeeming the time.

One could translate the word time in the passages from Colossians 4:5 and Ephesians 5:16 as redeeming the “opportunity.”...In many matters...we do not know how many opportunities we have missed. Many things which we can do are all too easily missed by us. Many people whom we can save are all too easily neglected by us. Many cities where we can start an assembly are all too easily overlooked by us. Many brothers whom we can gain are lost through us. We have lost so many opportunities! When we face the Lord in the future, we will truly have much regret to face! (CWWN, vol. 55, pp. 193-194)

Today's Reading

Of the days that the Lord has ordained for us, perhaps yesterday should have been the greatest day of our life, but we may have lived yesterday in an ordinary way. This is what it means to miss the opportunity. One who is learning to serve should not do the same thing today as he did yesterday. If he is the same today as yesterday, he has squandered his opportunities. If we do not know what the Lord is doing today or what is going to happen today, we are missing the opportunity.

Perhaps the Lord gave me a thought that I should seek out a certain person who could have turned out to be a great vessel in the hand of the Lord in the next five years. Perhaps the Lord wanted to use such a person to save tens of thousands of souls, but on that day I did not go because I was afraid the weather was too hot, and I was too lazy. I lost an opportunity and neglected a

person who was potentially very useful to the Lord. Day by day, the Lord gives us countless opportunities in our life, and we miss them all!

Why does the Bible translate time as “opportunity”? Because “opportunity” is something that is found in time. Every day the Lord gives us opportunities. Today we can only bow our heads and say to the Lord, “I do not know what opportunities You have given me today. There is never a day without Your arrangement. Every day You have ordained something to happen to me.” Those whom God can use never miss the opportunities He has provided....Things happen continually, and we do not know how great any one of them will be.... Who would have guessed that one day an illiterate cobbler could become a Moody? If someone had missed the opportunity to preach to him, the world would not have had a Moody. Who would have guessed that Philip would meet the eunuch the day he went into the wilderness (Acts 8:26-39)? The entire church in Africa owes its beginning to that day, and we know that the church in Africa began earlier than the church in Europe!

In order to not miss the opportunities, we need spiritual training. We also need spiritual sensitivity...With spiritual training, we can identify opportunities when they come our way. We cannot allow opportunities to go away. We must not be dull to any direction from the Head. We must not let the Head have a sense that we are numb to His leading. We have to be desperate for this. We should grasp whatever opportunity we have. If we do not have this kind of training and feeling, we will miss the opportunities the Lord has arranged.

One day we will face the Lord. Perhaps we will regret the things in our life that now provide us with satisfaction. We have come short of God’s will. We have not been faithful. We have acted foolishly. The Lord may have put ten opportunities before us, but we have not even touched one. Woe to us when we stand before the judgment seat!...Woe to us, for we have acted thoughtlessly and have missed many opportunities that God has given us!...We must bring God’s children into His ordained way. Day by day we must take the opportunity to go on and to do the work before us. (CWWN, vol. 55, pp. 194-198)

Further Reading: CWWN, vol. 55, pp. 193-202

WEEK 5 — DAY 5

Morning Nourishment

Joel 2:25 [Jehovah said], I will restore to you the years that the swarming locust has eaten...

Psa. 90:12 Teach us then to number our days that we may gain a heart of wisdom.

84:10 For a day in Your courts is better than a thousand...

[May the Lord] train our spiritual sense and spiritual sight. If we are short in these two things, we will not know how to deal with situations when they come up. We should give ourselves to Him in this way daily...Time is constant, but opportunities are not. Opportunities appear in time. Time is continuous, but opportunities come and go. Therefore, we must grasp the opportunities. We must sense the opportunities whenever they come and make the most of them. (CWWN, vol. 55, p. 198)

Today's Reading

Today the problem is not that the Lord does not give us opportunities, but that we miss the opportunities. Every one of us must rise up...We do not want to let the opportunities from God go by. We have seen how God has blessed Brother Witness's work. His strong point is that he does not allow any opportunity to slip by. It is hard to find him missing an opportunity. Once the opportunity arises, he takes advantage of it. If we let the opportunity go, we will limit God's work.

When we stand before God, we will see that most of God's will lies in the opportunities He has given us. If we can identify the opportunities, we can identify God's will. This is a very serious matter. Daniel 11:32 says, "The people who know their God will...take action." This means that the people of God will open up new horizons. The more we know God's will, the more we will seize

the opportunities. Anyone who hesitates is living in a habitual way. Those who know God will never act in a habitual way....Once God moves, we should move. We should not give up any opportunity. (CWWN, vol. 55, pp. 199-200)

Every time I think of [lost days], I become sorrowful and find the thought unbearable. However, I still thank the Lord who gives me comfort in my despair. In Joel 2:25 He said, "I will restore to you the years / That the swarming locust has eaten." Thank the Lord that He still has a way. You may be sixty years old this year and have wasted thirty or forty years.

Once there was a young girl who fell into sin and contracted tuberculosis. She was dying in the hospital. An old servant of the Lord preached the gospel to her, telling her that the Lord Jesus had borne all her sin and persuading her to confess her sins, repent, and accept Jesus as her Savior.... After she accepted the Lord, she was saved and became very happy, and peace filled her heart. After a few days, this old servant went to see her again. He was surprised to find her with a very sad face and very sorrowful.... [She said], "When I stand in front of the Lord, the Lord may reckon me as saved. But what do I have to bring to Him? I can only tell the Lord that I have come empty-handed! How can I face my Lord with empty hands?"...The old servant said to her, "Sister, do not worry. I will take what you have just said and will write a song right next to your bed to encourage others to preach the gospel. In this way, all those who preach the gospel and save souls because of this song will share their rewards with you." He wrote the now well-known song: " 'Must I go, and empty-handed,' / Thus my dear Redeemer meet?" [Hymns, #930]. Because of this song, many were touched to go out to preach the gospel. That is what the Lord means when He says, "I will restore to you the years / That the swarming locust has eaten."

Ten years of a man's life on earth may be counted for only one day. But then one day may also be counted as one thousand days. David said that a day in the Lord's courts is better than a thousand. Therefore, our service is not in vain. The days in heaven are not measured by twenty-four hours. This is spiritual accounting. The way we reckon a day is not necessarily the same way God reckons it. (CWWN, vol. 19, pp. 475-477)

Further Reading: CWWN, vol. 19, pp. 463-478; CWWN, vol. 38, pp. 317-328

WEEK 5 — DAY 6

Morning Nourishment

Psa. 119:88 Enliven me according to Your lovingkindness, and I will keep the testimony of Your mouth.

Dan. 11:32 ...But the people who know their God will show strength and take action.

1 Chron. 12:32 And of the children of Issachar, men who understood the times that they might know what Israel should do...

We need to remember that our groups must be vital groups. The Bible talks about vital people.... An overcomer is a vital person.... A vital person, an overcomer, is a praying person. You must have the real burden for the real prayer.... If we come together just to shout a few sentences, is this a burden of prayer? This is formality. It is a formal performance.

Our intention in forming the new groups is to have groups of overcomers. This is the reason that the groups are called the “vital groups.”...There is still the need for some vital groups to fulfill the purpose of the groups and to discharge our burden. (CWWL, 1991-1992, vol. 3, “Fellowship concerning the Urgent Need of the Vital Groups,” pp. 562, 405)

Today's Reading

We must carry out the practice of the vital groups in desperation. We should pray desperately for the Lord to give us some fruit and remove our barrenness. This should be a matter of life or death with us. If we are desperate, I believe that the fish will come to us. The Lord will send them to us. But if we are indifferent, no fish will come to us....The most crucial thing for us today is to be desperate to conquer the deadness of Sardis, the lukewarmness of Laodicea, and the barrenness dealt with by the Lord in John 15.

We need to have close, intimate, and thorough fellowship with the Lord and with the seeking saints....We need to get companions with whom we can labor. According to the example in the Bible, Daniel had three companions (Dan. 1:6). I would encourage you to get three companions. Do not ask the elders to give them to you. Ask the Lord to lead you to someone, making this one your companion in fellowship. Then you can get a few others. Spontaneously, you and your companions will be a very good small group.

There are two ways before us today. We can either choose to be vitalized or choose not to be vitalized...Which way will we take? Are we going to be vitalized or not? We have to make a resolution. In Judges 5:15 Deborah said, "Among the divisions of Reuben / There were great resolutions in heart." We have to make a resolution to be the overcomers, the vitalized ones. An overcomer overcomes anything that is replacing Christ or that is against Christ. In the Bible there is the age of the overcomers, and there is the calling for the overcomers. Furthermore, there is a way for us to be vitalized so that we can be the overcomers. (CWWL, 1993, vol. 2, "The Training and the Practice of the Vital Groups," pp. 283, 272, 275)

People on earth are suffering calamities, and the churches are in hardship; this is not the age of God's heart's desire, but the age of God's procedures. God is using His procedures to fulfill His heart's desire. To turn from the age of procedures to the age of God's heart's desire, man must pray the age-turning prayer. Daniel was such a man.

The earth is suffering calamities because people on the earth do not want God and do not care for God's affairs. Therefore, if the saints are to pray to end the time of calamities, they must answer God's demands and care for God and His needs. Oh! These many calamities today should wake us up to no longer live to the earth! Oh! Today we should truly consecrate ourselves to answer God's demands on behalf of the church so that God may have a way to come in and to turn the age of procedures into the age of His heart's desire." (CWWL, 1932-1949, vol. 2, p. 27)

Further Reading: CWWL, 1991-1992, vol. 3, "The Satanic Chaos in the Old Creation and the Divine Economy for the New Creation," ch. 3

WEEK 5 — HYMN

Will you be an overcomer

Spiritual Warfare — The Overcomer

894

The musical score is written in 2/4 time and consists of four staves. The first staff begins with the lyrics '1. Will you be an o - ver-com - er? Christ is call - ing now!' and includes chords C, F, Em, Am, Dm, and G7. The second staff continues with 'Will you then be such a fol - lower, Though you know not how?' and includes chords C, F, G/D, D7, and G7. The third staff is labeled 'Chorus' and begins with '(C) Will you be an o - ver - com - er? Will you make this choice?' and includes chords C, F/C, C, C/E, F, Dm, and G. The fourth staff concludes with 'Christ is call - ing, Christ is call - ing, List - en to His voice!' and includes chords C, C7/E, F, Dm, C/G, G7, and C.

2. Will you be an overcomer?
To the Lord be drawn!
Keep the “first love,” never leave it,
Till the break of dawn.
3. Will you be an overcomer?
On His life depend!
Dare to suffer persecution,
Faithful to the end.
4. Will you be an overcomer?
Testimony bear!
Keep away from false religion,
“Hidden manna” share.
5. Will you be an overcomer,
Simple, real, and pure?
Overcome all evil mixture,
Ruling pow’r secure.
6. Will you be an overcomer?
Trust the living Lord!
Keep your “garments” from the deadness,
Win the life-reward.
7. Will you be an overcomer?
Never lukewarm be,
Ne’er content with what you’ve gotten,
More you need to see.
8. Will you be an overcomer?
Christ is calling still!
Will you now be loyal to Him,
His demand fulfill.

