

Week Four

The Factor of Authority in the Body of Christ and in the Local Churches

Hymns:

Scripture Reading: Rom. 9:23; Matt. 28:18; Eph. 1:22-23; Heb. 4:16; Rev. 4:2; 22:1-2

Outline

Day 1

- I. God is the supreme authority; He has all authority—Rom. 9:21-22:**
 - A. God's authority is actually God Himself; authority issues out from God's own being—Rev. 22:1.**
 - B. All authority—spiritual, positional, and governmental—derives from God—2 Cor. 10:8; 13:10; John 19:10-11; Gen. 9:6.**
 - C. Knowing authority is an inward revelation rather than an outward teaching—Acts 22:6-16.**
 - D. The Lord Jesus was a man under authority; He humbled Himself, did the Father's will, and was obedient unto death, even the death of the cross—Matt. 8:9; John 4:34; 6:38; Phil. 2:7-8.**
 - E. In His divinity, as the only begotten Son of God, the Lord had authority over all, but in His humanity, as the Son of Man and the King of the heavenly kingdom, all authority in heaven and on earth was given to Him after His resurrection—Matt. 28:18.**
 - F. Now as the Ruler of the kings of the earth, the God-exalted Jesus is the Ruler over all the ones who are in power; He is the chief Ruler in the divine government for the fulfillment of God's**

eternal plan—Acts 2:23, 36; 5:31; Rev. 1:5.

- G. In Christ's ascension God made Him the unique Head of the Body, the church, and inaugurated Him into the headship of the universe; the Head of the whole universe is Jesus—Col. 1:18; Acts 2:36; Eph. 1:22-23.**

Day 2

II. Christ is both the Head corporately of the Body, the church, and individually of all the believers; He is the Head directly of every one of us, and we all are under His authority—Col. 1:18; 1 Cor. 11:3:

A. For Christ to be the Head is for Him to have all the authority in the Body—Rom. 9:21, 23; Matt. 28:18:

1. The Body cannot move freely; it can move only at the direction of the Head.
2. The authority to direct the Body and all its members rests with the Head.

B. Whether we are under the authority of the Head determines whether we know the life of the Body—1 Cor. 11:3; Eph. 4:15-16; Col. 1:18; 3:4:

1. The Body can have only one Head and can submit only to one Head—1:18.
2. Only Christ is the unique Head, and we must submit to Him, honoring and testifying to the unique headship of the God-exalted Christ—Eph. 1:22-23; Matt. 23:8-12.

C. In order to live in the Body, we need to recognize the authority in the Body—Eph. 1:22-23; Col. 1:18; 2:19:

1. Concerning the authority in the Body, first and foremost is the need for the authority of the Head flowing throughout the whole Body—Eph. 5:23-24:
 - a. When we submit directly to the Head, we also care for the Body; it is impossible for us to say that we are submitting to the authority of the Head without caring for the Body.
 - b. Only the Lord is our Head, and only He has the authority to direct the moves of the members of His Body.
2. In the Body the elders and the apostles are deputy authorities, carrying out

the authority of the Head—Acts 14:23; 1 Tim. 5:17a; 1 Cor. 12:28:

- a. On the one hand, all the members of the Body submit directly to the Head—Eph. 5:24a.
- b. On the other hand, the members submit to the deputies of the Head—Heb. 13:17.

Day 3

III. The order of the church comes out of the authority in the church—the honoring of the unique headship of Christ—Col. 1:18; Phil. 1:1:

- A. In the church there is no human organization, but there is a spiritual order—v. 1; 1 Cor. 14:40; 11:34b.**
- B. The Head of the church is Christ the Lord, and the authority in the church is the headship of Christ—Matt. 28:18; Col. 1:18.**
- C. In the church there must be order, but this order comes from the headship of Christ—Eph. 1:22-23.**
- D. We can have the real practice of the church life only by submitting to the unique headship of Christ—Col. 1:18; 2:19:**
 - 1. The order in the church comes from the headship of Christ being realized by us in a practical way—1 Cor. 11:3, 16; Eph. 1:22.
 - 2. If we do not have the spiritual order in the church that comes from realizing the headship of Christ in a practical way, there is no possibility for us to practice the real church life—1 Cor. 11:3; 14:40.

Day 4

IV. In the church God's authority is expressed and represented by the apostles and elders—12:28; 1 Pet. 5:1-3:

- A. God has appointed elders and apostles to be the authority in the church—1 Cor. 12:28; Acts 14:23.**
- B. Apostles and elders have no authority in themselves; they have authority only as they stand under the authority of the Head; they exercise authority in the church by representing the**

authority of the Head.

C. In order to manifest His authority in the church, God appoints elders in every local church to represent His authority—v. 23; Titus 1:5:

1. In the universal church there is the office of apostleship, which gives the apostles the position and the right to appoint elders for the administration of the local churches—1 Cor. 12:28; Acts 14:23; Titus 1:5.
2. The Holy Spirit was one with the apostles in their appointment of the elders, and the apostles did this according to the leading of the Holy Spirit—Acts 20:28.
3. The authority of the elders is for representing and expressing God's authority—1 Pet. 5:1-3.
4. The main responsibility of the elders as overseers is not to rule but to shepherd, to take all-inclusive tender care of the flock, the church of God—Acts 20:28.
5. The scriptural principle with regard to eldership is plurality; with the plurality of the eldership, there is no definite leader, and the unique headship of Christ is regarded, preserved, and respected—14:23; Titus 1:5.
6. In the church life we need to obey the ones leading us and submit to them (Heb. 13:17); if we cannot submit to God's appointed deputy authority, we cannot submit to God.

Day 5

V. There is a divine government in the church life today, and this government comes from the throne of God and of the Lamb—Rev. 22:1-2:

- A. The divine authority in the church is for God to dispense Himself into us as life, as the life supply, and as the all-sufficient grace; only by submitting to the throne can we share in His all-sufficient source of the flowing grace—2 Cor. 13:14; Rev. 22:1-2, 16a.
- B. The throne of grace in Hebrews 4:16 is the throne of authority in Revelation 4, which becomes in Revelation 22:1-2 the throne

of God and of the Lamb, out from which flows “a river of water of life, bright as crystal” (v. 1):

1. Although the throne is the throne of authority, the throne of headship, out of the throne flows the river of water of life—v. 1.
2. The fact that the throne is not only the throne of God but the throne of God and of the Lamb means that God in the Lamb is flowing out as grace for our enjoyment:
 - a. We should never separate authority from grace or grace from authority; grace and authority are one—Heb. 4:16; Rev. 22:1.
 - b. Whenever we come to this throne, we have the sense that the grace of God is like a river flowing into us—Heb. 4:16; Rev. 22:1-2.
3. Today the Lord Jesus does not reign merely with authority; He is reigning in the church, among the churches, and over all the churches through the flowing of His life as grace—4:2-3; 5:6; 7:9; 22:1-2.

Day 6

C. The throne, the authority, of God and of the Lamb is not only the source of the divine administration; it is also the source of the divine fellowship—vv. 1-2:

1. Authority and fellowship are two lines in the Body—1 Cor. 11:3; 12:12-13, 18; 1:9; 10:16-17.
2. Whereas the throne is a matter of authority, the flowing river is a matter of fellowship, signified by the street, which is of “pure gold, like transparent glass”—Rev. 21:21:
 - a. The throne represents the divine authority, and from the throne flows the river of water of life for us to enjoy the divine fellowship—22:1-2.
 - b. In this fellowship there is the divine authority, for in God’s economy authority always goes together with fellowship—2 Cor. 10:8; 13:10, 14.
3. In order to build up a local church in a practical way, we need both the throne of God and of the Lamb and the water of life, bright as crystal, proceeding out of the throne and flowing on the street—Rev. 22:1-2.

WEEK 4 — DAY 1

Morning Nourishment

Matt. 28:18 And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth.

Eph. 1:22 And He subjected all things under His feet and gave Him to be Head over all things to the church.

The headship of Christ was not fully established in the Old Testament because Christ was not yet incarnated. In the Old Testament times Christ was only the Son of God, not yet the Son of Man. This is very significant. For Christ to have the full headship, He needs two natures, the divine nature and the human nature. Being God alone is not adequate for Him to be the Head. To be the Head, He needs to be both God and man.... According to the human concept, being God is adequate for Christ to be the Head of the universe. However, according to God's economy, God will not exercise His judgment in His administration as God alone. Acts 17:31 says, "He has set a day in which He is to judge the world in righteousness by the man whom He has designated, having furnished proof to all by raising Him from the dead." (CWWL, 1978, vol. 2, "Crucial Principles for the Christian Life and the Church Life," pp. 597-598)

Today's Reading

On the positive side, God needs an administration in order to carry out His eternal purpose. On the negative side, God needs a government to deal with His enemy and all the evil powers.... Because God is the Creator and Satan is a creature, God would never lower His status to deal directly with Satan. Therefore, God needs man, another creature, to deal with Satan.... Man is needed to carry out God's eternal purpose and to deal with God's enemy. Hence, before Christ became a man, His headship could not be fully completed, fully established.

In incarnation Christ became no longer only the Son of God but also the Son of Man. He now has two elements, the divine element and the

human element. In order to be the Head over all things in God's government, Christ needed to have divinity and humanity, and He needed to accomplish two things. To take care of God's two needs, Christ needed to carry out God's eternal purpose and defeat God's enemy. By dying on the cross, on the one hand, Christ accomplished God's purpose, and on the other hand, He also defeated Satan and destroyed the power of death on the cross (Heb. 2:14). Therefore, Christ has accomplished everything. By incarnation He picked up the human element, and by being crucified He accomplished God's purpose and defeated and destroyed God's enemy.

After resting in the tomb for three days, Christ resurrected and then ascended into the heavens. In His ascension He was inaugurated into the full headship of the entire universe. In the third heaven Christ was given to be Head over all things to the church. Christ is also the head of every man (1 Cor. 11:3a).

Christ's headship was not fully established until His ascension, because He needed to become a man and be crucified in order to accomplish God's eternal purpose and to defeat and destroy God's enemy. This truth is in the Bible, yet if we do not have the light, we will not be able to see it. Because the human mentality can only know doctrine, we need heavenly light, vision, and revelation in order to see a vision of the truth. We need to repeat this truth again and again until our inner eyes are opened and we see it. Once Christ picked up humanity through incarnation and was crucified to accomplish God's eternal purpose and defeat and destroy God's enemy, He was qualified both in element and in achievement to be the Head over all things. Thus, in His ascension God inaugurated Him into the universal headship over all things for God's administration. Today the headship of Christ is fully established. (CWWL, 1978, vol. 2, "Crucial Principles for the Christian Life and the Church Life," pp. 598-599)

Further Reading: CWWN, vol. 47, "Authority and Submission," chs. 9-10, 12-20; Life-study of Matthew, msg. 72

WEEK 4 — DAY 2

Morning Nourishment

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

Eph. 4:15 But holding to truth in love, we may grow up into Him in all things, who is the Head, Christ.

According to the human concept, our bodies are arranged in such a way that the shoulder is the head of the arm, the arm is the head of the hand, and the hand is the head of the fingers. Thus, our concept is that a body has many heads. However, according to medical science, there is only one head, and it gives orders directly to every member of the body.... The shoulder, the arm, the hand, and the fingers are all equal in receiving orders directly from the head.... Paul, the greatest apostle, received orders directly from Christ the Head, and we, the smallest members, also receive orders directly from Christ the Head. This honors the Head. The headship of Christ does not allow for there to be any other heads or subheads. Any other head is an insult to Christ. Therefore, in the church there is no head other than Christ. (CWWL, 1978, vol. 2, "Crucial Principles for the Christian Life and the Church Life," p. 605)

Today's Reading

If one brother is a shoulder in the Body of Christ and another brother is a little finger, the first brother should say to the second, "Do not exalt me. I have the same standing as you. You are not the head, and neither am I. You receive orders directly from the Head, and I do too." In Christianity today and even among some of the local churches this truth has been almost completely lost. We know how to receive orders from higher brothers, but we do not know how to receive orders directly from our Head. This is wrong.

The church is constituted absolutely not according to the human mentality or worldly organizational methods but with Christ as life and with Christ as the unique Head. In the church, the Body of Christ, there is no other head. Regardless of his or her location or function, every member is related directly to the Head; every member has the same standing. There are no intermediary members, contrary to the teaching of the Catholic Church that the so-called holy mother mediates between the believers and Jesus. We all know that this teaching of the Catholic Church is wrong, but in our actual practice we may consider that certain persons are intermediaries between us and the Lord.

On the one hand, we must never be an intermediary between God's people and the Lord Himself. We need to allow the Lord's people to receive orders directly from the Lord. By the Lord's mercy, in all the times that saints have come to me for fellowship throughout the years, I have never given them a decision, an order, or a commandment. Instead, I always tell them, "You need to go to the Lord. Pray to seek the Lord's leading directly." On the other hand, we must never take someone else as an intermediary between us and the Lord. Because most believers are weak, they prefer to depend upon others rather than going directly to the Lord.... This is terrible.

By the Lord's mercy, since the beginning of the Lord's recovery among us over fifty years ago, the Lord has shown us the truth that every member is related directly to the Head. Brother Watchman Nee was the first to practice being careful not to come between any member and the Head.... I was with him for many years and saw many cases. He never told anyone what to do or what not to do.... He made it clear that he was not the head or the leader but only a brother with a burden to minister God's word to His people.... How shameful it is that some among us today claim to be the leader or the future leader! The fact that many saints accepted such claims indicates that we do not know or practice the truth. (CWWL, 1978, vol. 2, "Crucial Principles for the Christian Life and the Church Life," pp. 605-606)

Further Reading: CWWL, 1978, vol. 3, "Crucial Principles for the Proper Church Life," ch. 3; Life-study of 2 Corinthians, msgs. 50-51

WEEK 4 — DAY 3

Morning Nourishment

1 Cor. 11:3 But I want you to know that Christ is the head of every man, and the man is the head of the woman, and God is the head of Christ.

14:40 But all things must be done becomingly and in order.

The order of the church comes out of the authority in the church.... We are told clearly that the church is the Body of Christ and the house of God. To be sure, there is authority in our body, and there is also authority in a house, that is, in a family.... As long as a body is living and standing, there is authority in it.... As long as there is a body, there must be authority, and as long as we have a family, a home, there also must be authority. This illustrates that in the church there truly is an authority. (CWWL, 1963, vol. 3, "Basic Principles for the Practice of the Church Life," pp. 299-300)

Today's Reading

The authority of a body is the head. When a person is standing, does his body bear his head, or does his head hold up his body? If we were to cut off a man's head, his body would fall down. Without the head, the body cannot stand. It seems that the body bears the head, but in actuality, it is the head that holds up the body. Therefore, the head is the authority. The Head of the church is Christ the Lord, and the authority in the church is the headship of Christ. It is clear that in the church there should be an order, but this order comes from the headship of Christ. We must realize, honor, and respect the headship of the Lord. If we are not under the headship of the Lord, we can never be right in the order of the church. Many times in the past years, brothers or sisters have come to me and said, "Brother Lee, I simply cannot go along with some of the elders." Every time someone has brought a problem like this to me, I ask them, "At this moment and concerning this very issue, are you under the headship of the Lord?" Invariably, the one asking admits that he or she is not under His headship. I

reply, "First, you must be right with the Lord. Submit yourself to the headship of the Lord, and then you will be clear."

There is only one way to be an elder, and that is to submit to the headship of the Lord. The more you submit yourself to the headship of the Lord, the more you are qualified and equipped to be an elder. The headship of the Lord is the authority in the church. If we want to practice the church life, we have to learn the lesson of always submitting ourselves to the headship of the Lord. The Lord is the Head, and we are all members under His headship. If our relationship is wrong with the Head, we will be wrong with the Body, and to be sure, we will be wrong with the other members. It is when we are right with the Head that we are right with all the members and with the Body. If we are not under the headship, we have no ground to say anything to the brothers and sisters in an adjusting way. If we want to say something to them, we must submit ourselves under the headship of the Lord. To not submit to the headship of the Lord and yet say something to the brothers and sisters simply means that we are rebellious. We are rebellious to the Lord and rebellious to the Body, the church.

The best way to glorify Christ and honor the Lord is to take Him as the Head, praying, "Lord, You are the Head. I take You as the Head, and I speak and act in a genuine way. I am under Your headship."

The order in the church comes from the headship of Christ being realized by us in a practical way.... If each one of us would submit to the headship of Christ and pray, "Lord, You are the Head, and I realize Your headship in my life in a practical way," every problem will be solved. Problems are solved not by doctrine or by teaching but by realizing the headship of Christ. (CWWL, 1963, vol. 3, "Basic Principles for the Practice of the Church Life," pp. 300-303, 305)

Further Reading: CWWL, 1956, vol. 2, "Three Aspects of the Church, Book 3: The Organization of the Church," chs. 2, 4, 6

WEEK 4 — DAY 4

Morning Nourishment

1 Cor. 12:28 And God has placed some in the church: first apostles, second prophets, third teachers; then works of power, then gifts of healing, helps, administrations, various kinds of tongues.

Acts 20:28 Take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, among whom the Holy Spirit has placed you as overseers to shepherd the church of God, which He obtained through His own blood.

In the universal church there is only one office—the apostleship. Paul refers to this office in Romans 1:5, where he says that he had received “grace and apostleship unto the obedience of faith among all the Gentiles on behalf of His name.”

Only the apostles have the position and right to appoint elders in the local churches. It is important for us to see this so that we may abandon hierarchy and any kind of organization. In the New Testament we see God’s way to establish the churches and to carry them on. God’s way is that in the universal church there is the one office of apostleship. This apostleship gives the apostles the position and right to appoint the elders for the administration of the local churches. (The Conclusion of the New Testament, pp. 2158-2159)

Today’s Reading

Acts 14:23 tells us that the apostles “had appointed elders for them in every church.” In Titus 1:5 Paul says, “For this cause I left you in Crete, that you might set in order the things which I have begun that remain, and appoint elders in every city, as I directed you.” We would emphasize the fact that “in every city” here compared with “in every church” in Acts 14:23 indicates that the jurisdiction of a local church is that of the city in which it is located and also that in one city there should be only one church.... To establish elders in every city is to establish elders in every church.

In the church certain brothers serve as elders. In the first local church, the church at Jerusalem (Acts 8:1), there were elders taking care of the government of the church (Acts 11:30; 15:2, 4, 6, 22; 16:4; 21:18). Eventually, elders were appointed in every church. Thus, there were elders in the church in Ephesus (Acts 20:17). The New Testament reveals that the elders were not voted in by their congregations, but were appointed by the apostles according to their maturity of life and were charged by the apostles to care for the leadership and the shepherding in the churches.

The elders...bear the burden of shepherding the local church. The local church is like a flock, and the elders are the shepherds to shepherd this flock, taking care of the situation of the flock and meeting the needs.

In Acts 20:28 Paul charges the elders of the church in Ephesus “to shepherd the church of God.” The main responsibility of the elders as overseers is not to rule over but to shepherd, to take all-inclusive tender care of the flock, the church of God.

According to 1 Peter 5:2, the elders are not rulers but shepherds. Shepherding is a proper care exercised over the flock. The flock needs to be cared for, protected, led in the right direction, and brought to a place where they can eat and drink. This is shepherding.

In 5:2 Peter does not tell the elders to shepherd their own flock; he charges them to shepherd the flock of God.... Therefore, the elders should not consider the church in which they are taking the lead as belonging to them.... The church is called the church of Christ, the church of God, and the church of the saints (Rom. 16:16; 1 Cor. 1:2; 14:33). But the church is not the church of the apostles or the church of the elders. Because the church is composed of the saints, it is the church of the saints. Because the church has been redeemed by Christ, it is the church of Christ. Because the church has been regenerated by God, it is the church of God. (The Conclusion of the New Testament, pp. 2159-2160, 2163)

Further Reading: CWWL, 1956, vol. 2, “Three Aspects of the Church, Book 3: The Organization of the Church,” chs. 2, 4, 6

WEEK 4 — DAY 5

Morning Nourishment

Rev. 4:2 Immediately I was in spirit; and behold, there was a throne set in heaven, and upon the throne there was One sitting.

Heb. 4:16 Let us therefore come forward with boldness to the throne of grace that we may receive mercy and find grace for timely help.

The throne of God in the center of the New Jerusalem is the unique source of the life supply. It is by His administration that God dispenses Himself into us as life, as the life supply, and as the eternal, absolute, all-inclusive grace. His dispensing of Himself into us depends upon His administration. For this reason, in the church life today there is divine authority and church government, ... [which] comes from the throne of God. The divine authority in the church is for God to dispense Himself into us as life, as the life supply, and as the all-sufficient grace. Only by submitting ourselves to God's authority, God's government, can we share in His all-sufficient grace. (The Conclusion of the New Testament, pp. 4418-4419)

Today's Reading

The throne of grace in Hebrews 4:16 is the throne of authority in Revelation 4, which becomes in Revelation 22:1 and 2 the throne of God and of the Lamb, out of which proceeds the crystal clear river of water of life. This river flows through the whole city of New Jerusalem. Within this river grows the tree of life, revealing that the rich Christ with the living Spirit flows out of the throne of grace. Grace is the flowing river in which the tree of life grows. To the unbelievers and to the demons, the throne of God and of the Lamb is a throne merely of authority; to us, it is the throne of grace. Whenever we come to this throne, we have the sense that something is flowing to water and supply us. This is grace. We can surely drink and eat of this supply.

In Hebrews 4 the throne is the throne of grace, but in Revelation 4 the

throne is mainly the throne of authority. At the end of the Bible, the throne is both the throne of authority and the throne of grace. The throne of God and of the Lamb is certainly for God's divine administration. Thus, it is the throne of authority. However, proceeding out of the throne is not authority but the river of water of life with the tree of life as the life supply. This is not only authority but also grace.

We should never separate authority from grace or grace from authority. Grace and authority are one. If we have grace, we are under authority, and if we are under authority, we partake of grace.... The eldership, the representation of the headship, must be exercised through the flow of life. Although the throne is the throne of authority, the throne of headship, out of the throne flows the river of water of life. When we look at the throne, we see authority and headship. But when we look at the river, we see the water of life and the tree of life. This indicates that proper eldership is not the exercise of authority over others; it is the flowing of life into them. We are reigning, but we do not reign by authority; we reign through the flowing of the inner life.

Today the Lord Jesus does not reign merely with authority. He is reigning in the church, among the churches, and over all the churches through the flowing of His life as grace. The more we partake of His life, the more authority we have. The ones whom you respect in the church life are those who are mature in life. However, no one who assumes authority will be respected. Deep in the spirits of the saints there is no respect for that kind of eldership. Life is the expression of authority. Instead of assuming authority, we need to live out Christ. The Christ whom we live out will be our authority over others. We will enjoy this kind of authority for eternity. (The Conclusion of the New Testament, pp. 4419-4421)

Further Reading: The Conclusion of the New Testament, msgs. 18, 175, 201, 432; CWWL, 1984, vol. 4, "Vital Factors for the Recovery of the Church Life," ch. 5; Leadership in the New Testament, ch. 4

WEEK 4 — DAY 6

Morning Nourishment

Rev. 22:1-2 And he showed me a river of water of life, bright as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb in the middle of its street. And on this side and on that side of the river was the tree of life, producing twelve fruits, yielding its fruit each month; and the leaves of the tree are for the healing of the nations.

In the New Jerusalem there is a river of water of life flowing from the throne. The throne is a matter of authority, and the flowing water of life is a matter of fellowship. The flow of water signifies fellowship, and this flow is related to authority. This is the source of the building up of the New Jerusalem. In the church today the water of life from the throne should be flowing freely among us. (CWWL, 1961-1962, vol. 2, "The Priesthood and God's Building," p. 18)

Today's Reading

When we observe the human body carefully, we see that there are two indispensable lines, or systems, that function in the human body. In spiritual terms these two lines are authority and fellowship. Authority is often described in relation to order and coordination. For example, my upper arm is below my head, my forearm is below my upper arm, my wrist is below my forearm, my palm is below my wrist, and my fingers are below my palm.... If my wrist or upper arm becomes dislocated, my entire body will be affected. Thus, there is a line related to authority and order in the human body.

Our body also depends on the circulation of blood, which is its "fellowship." Although there are many members in my body, there is only one circulation of blood.... Every member is connected with the other members in my body through the circulation of blood. Every member renders a supply to the other members and receives a supply from the other members. We depend completely on the authority and fellowship of

the members of our body. If there is a problem with either line, our body will be sick. (CWWL, 1961-1962, vol. 2, "The Priesthood and God's Building," pp. 6-7)

The throne has a source, and the throne is the source; the throne has a goal, and the throne is the goal. It is the source flowing out and the goal coming back. This is the divine traffic, and this traffic is the administration. This traffic, this administration, is signified by a golden street, which is the base itself.

The throne is the source not only of God's administration but also of the divine fellowship. The street signifies not only the traffic of God's administration but also the fellowship of God's redeemed. This divine fellowship, signified by the street with its communication, flows with the divine supply. This supply is the river of the water of life and the tree of life. The river is for beverage, and the tree is for food, for life supply.

Revelation 22 shows that the river of water of life proceeds out of the throne of God and of the Lamb (vv. 1-2). Hence, when God and the Lamb are enthroned in our being and are able to rule and reign in us, this life will be manifested as power that supplies us inwardly. Because the Lord desires to set up His throne within us, He cares for the authority, the ground, and the dominion within us. We must give Him the dominion.

The church is the place where God exercises His authority, and the throne of God's Son is set up among the churches. His authority and reign should have the ground in all the saints. Although they all have God's life, the Lord Himself, and the Lord's throne, authority, and kingdom in them, many will not submit to the Lord's authority, allow the Lord to be seated on the throne within them, or allow Him to establish His kingdom and obtain His domain in their being. We must realize that if this is our situation, we cannot be living and strong Christians, the power of the Lord Jesus cannot be expressed through us, and the divine life cannot be a supply to us. (The Conclusion of the New Testament, pp. 4416-4418)

Further Reading: CWWL, 1961-1962, vol. 2, "The Priesthood and God's Building," ch. 8; CWWL, 1957, vol. 2, "What the Kingdom Is to the Believers," chs. 2-3

<< **WEEK 4 — HYMN** >>

Hymns, #984 River of living water

Ultimate Manifestation — Life in Eternity

- 1 River of living water,
River that flows from the throne,
Fellowship giving and making
God's own authority known.

Chorus

- River of living water,
Fellowship freely bestows;
Bringing authority with it,
Through every place where it flows.
- 2 Water of life is the Spirit,
God as the life in it flows;
Carrying with it His Lordship,
Through every place where it goes.
- 3 Midst the gold street it floweth,
Thus showing to us the way;
As in God's nature it floweth,
So in His way we will stay.
- 4 The tree of life by the river,
Shows to us God as our food;
We by the river's full flowing
Take of the tree's plenitude.

