

Week Two

God's Good Pleasure

Hymns:

Scripture Reading: Eph. 4:11-16; Phil. 2:13; Matt. 3:13-17; 17:5; Gal. 1:15-16; Rom. 14:17-18

Outline

§Day 1

- I. God's good pleasure, His heart's desire, is to meet the demand of this age, which is God's need in this age:**
 - A. God does not need "spiritual giants" any longer in this age; what He needs is the Body testimony, which is the reality of the Body of Christ consummating in the New Jerusalem; this is to fulfill the Lord's heart's desire according to His word concerning the building up of His Body—Matt. 16:18; Eph. 4:1-16.**
 - B. Verses 15 and 16 say that all the members of the Body grow up into the Head and function out from the Head; thus, "all the Body" (with the supplying joints and the functioning of each one part) "causes the growth of the Body unto the building up of itself in love."**
 - C. As ministers of the present age, Brother Nee and Brother Lee are patterns to us so that we may be perfected "unto the work of the ministry, unto the building up of the Body of Christ"; we are being perfected in this present age to become functioning members of the Body of Christ—vv. 11-12; 1 Tim. 1:16; 4:12; 1 Cor. 4:16-17.**
 - D. "Spiritual giants" are a hindrance to the producing of the church ministry; we need to see what the church is intrinsically;**

the church as the Body of Christ is brought forth when all the one-talented ones are functioning; talents signify spiritual gifts, and each member of the Body of Christ has at least one talent—Matt. 25:14-30; Rom. 12:6; 1 Cor. 12:4, 12-27; 1 Pet. 4:10:

1. For the work of the Lord, we need the talent, the spiritual gift, that we may be equipped as good slaves to accomplish God's eternal economy; surely, we must make all the five-talented ones serve and the two-talented ones serve, but even more, we must make all the one-talented ones serve.
2. When five one-talented ones are put together, they equal one who has five talents; if all the one-talented ones in the church today would bring forth their talents, there would be no need for so many great gifts among us; just by the coming forth of the one-talented ones, the whole world will be conquered (cf. Acts 17:6b)!
3. If our work does not bring out the one-talented ones, our work is a failure; 2 Timothy 2:2 and Ephesians 4:11-12 are the way of our work today; only those who teach others to work will succeed in the work; today the building up of the church hinges on the perfecting, building up, and raising up of the one-talented ones; what is needed today is men who can lead others into their function in serving the Lord for the church, not men who will replace others in their service.

§Day 2

- E. God is recovering the most difficult thing today, which is the fulfillment of Ephesians 4:11-16; God's ultimate work is the recovery of the Body testimony.**
- F. We need to see that the Body can be damaged by the misuse of "spiritual pursuit" (see Brother Lee's testimony about this in *The History and Revelation of the Lord's Recovery*, vol. 2, pp. 346-354):**
1. In the twentieth century Mrs. Penn-Lewis and T. Austin-Sparks were people with high spiritual attainment who began to work together, but they were divided and could not be spiritual together; this shows that being "spiritual" can result in division.

2. Mrs. Penn-Lewis knew the subjective experience of the Lord's death, and T. Austin-Sparks saw the resurrection of Christ and the resurrection life; but because he had his own spiritual knowledge and felt that his spiritual knowledge was higher than that of Mrs. Penn-Lewis, he left and started his own work; there was even a sense of rivalry between them.
3. Although T. Austin-Sparks was "spiritual, " he was shallow in his understanding of the church; because he did not have a sufficient understanding of the church (the oneness of the church and the ground of the church), during his second and final visit to Taiwan, he expressed dissenting views, and the loss brought about by this was ten times, even fifty times, greater than the help he rendered.
4. Before that time we had the one accord and were in harmony, but those who said that they were "helped" by Brother Austin-Sparks became factors of division.
5. We surely need to be genuine spiritual men, those who are dominated, governed, directed, moved, ruled, controlled, and led by our mingled spirit; a true spiritual man, who lives according to the spirit, will do everything and speak everything not only in his spirit but also in the Body, through the Body, and for the Body; if we are truly spiritual, we will be diligent to "keep the oneness of the Spirit in the uniting bond of peace"—Eph. 4:3; 1 Cor. 2:14-15; 3:1, 3.

§Day 3

II. God's good pleasure, God's heart's desire, is what makes God happy:

- A. **God is happy with the creation of the earth; His kingdom will be set up on the earth—Job 38:4, 7; Matt. 6:10; Rev. 5:10; 11:15; 21:1; Zech. 12:1.**
- B. **God is happy with the creation of man; for each of the items that God had created, He said "good" (Gen. 1:4, 10, 12, 21, 25), but for the creation of man, He said "very good" because man had God's image and had been given God's dominion for the glory of God and the kingdom of God (vv. 26, 31; Isa. 43:7; Matt. 6:10, 13b).**

- C. God is happy with the incarnation (Luke 2:9-14); Jesus is the Wonderful Counselor, the Mighty God, the Eternal Father, and the Prince of Peace to be the unique Governor, and the government of the Triune God is upon His shoulder (Isa. 9:6-7); He is our Savior and our Emmanuel, the God-man, the One who is united, mingled, and incorporated with man (Matt. 1:21, 23; John 14:9-11, 16-20).**
- D. God is happy with Christ's baptism; when He was baptized to begin His public ministry, "the heavens were opened to Him.... And behold, a voice out of the heavens, saying, This is My Son, the Beloved, in whom I have found My delight"; the Lord Jesus, taking the standing of a typical man, was baptized to fulfill all righteousness and to allow Himself to be put into death and resurrection so that He might live and minister in resurrection—Matt. 3:13-17.**
- E. God is happy with the resurrected and glorified Christ; when Christ was transfigured, as a foreshadowing of His resurrection, "behold, a voice out of the cloud, saying, This is My Son, the Beloved, in whom I have found My delight. Hear Him!" (17:5); God took pleasure in the resurrection and glorification of His Son (Luke 24:26).**
- F. God is happy when His prodigal sons return to Him; the parable of the prodigal son in Luke 15 may be called the parable of a happy father; after the father "ran" to his returning son (v. 20), he told his servants to bring the fattened calf and slaughter it, and he said, "Let us eat and be merry" (v. 23); here we see the merriment of God.**
- G. God is happy when His Son is revealed in us—"It pleased God...to reveal His Son in me" (Gal. 1:15-16)—and when we are fully brought into the sonship of God (4:4-6; Eph. 1:4-5); this fulfills God's good pleasure to have many sons for His corporate expression; the Son revealed in us has brought us into the meaning of the earth, of man, and of the incarnate, crucified, and resurrected Lord.**

§Day 4 & §Day 5

- H. God is happy to operate in us "both the willing and the working for His good pleasure" (Phil. 2:13); the Christian life with the supply of the Body life (1:19) is a happy life; our inward joy is an indication that we are living and walking according to God's good pleasure; since the book of Philippians, written by Paul in prison (v. 13; 4:22), is concerned with the experience and enjoyment of Christ, which issue in joy, it is a book filled with joy and rejoicing (1:4, 18, 25; 2:2, 17-18, 28-29; 3:1; 4:1, 4).**
- I. God is happy to have a man of God (Psa. 90, title; Deut. 33:1; Ezra 3:2) who lives God and lives out God in order to gain God by being one with God (2 Tim. 3:16-17; 1 Tim. 6:11-12; Phil. 3:8, 14); Jesus of Nazareth is the standard pattern of a man of God who lived out God (John 6:57; 5:19, 30; 10:30); the Lord said that He did not come to do His own will or to seek His own glory (5:19, 30; 6:38; 7:18); when we take Christ as our crucified life for His manifestation as the resurrection life, we will experience Him as the indwelling and enabling power of resurrection to deny our will and our glory (Phil. 3:10; 2 Cor. 4:5-7; Rom. 14:7-9).**
- J. God is happy when we eat Christ as our spiritual food in order to live because of Him (John 6:57); to eat Christ is to eat His words by exercising our spirit to both pray-read and muse upon His words so that His words become the gladness and joy of our heart (Jer. 15:16; Psa. 119:15-16; Josh. 1:8-9); to live because of Christ means that the energizing element of Christ becomes the supplying factor for us to live Christ.**
- K. God is happy when we are daily strengthened into our inner man so that Christ may make His home in our hearts through faith; our inner man is our regenerated spirit, which has God's life as its life (Eph. 3:16-17; John 3:6b; Rom. 8:10).**
- L. God is happy when we remain in our spirit and pay attention to our spirit (v. 6b); when the Lord says, "Abide in Me" (John 15:4),**

this wonderful "Me" is in our spirit, and when we are in Him by being in our spirit, in us the ruler of this world has nothing—no ground, no chance, no hope, and no possibility in anything (14:30; cf. 12:31-32).

- M. God is happy when we serve Him as a slave by living in the reality of the kingdom of God in the way of righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit; this is well pleasing to God and approved by men, and it preserves the oneness of the church for the practical Body life—Rom. 14:17-18.**

§Day 6

- N. God is happy when we worship Him in spirit; God's eternal economy is focused on and is carried out by our mingled spirit—the divine Spirit mingled together with our human spirit as one spirit—John 4:23-24; Rom. 8:16; 1 Cor. 6:17; Rom. 1:9.**
- O. God is happy when we are one with Him in His ministry to carry out His eternal economy; in the Lord's ministry we care only for the divine dispensing of the Triune God, embodied in Christ and realized as the Spirit, into His chosen people—Eph. 1:9-11; 3:2, 9-10; 2 Cor. 3:3, 6; 1 Pet. 4:10.**
- P. We must be a people in whom, with whom, and through whom God may have His good pleasure; we must be "determined...to gain the honor of being well pleasing to Him" (2 Cor. 5:9) by being one with Christ as the One who sacrificed Himself on the cross to produce new wine to cheer God and men (Judg. 9:12-13; Matt. 9:17).**
- Q. God will be happy with our glorification—"The sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the coming glory to be revealed upon us. For the anxious watching of the creation eagerly awaits the revelation of the sons of God...The creation itself will also be freed from the slavery of corruption into the freedom of the glory of the children of God.**

For we know that the whole creation groans together and travails in pain together until now. And not only so, but we ourselves also, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan in ourselves, eagerly awaiting sonship, the redemption of our body"—Rom. 8:18-19, 21-23; cf. Eph. 1:4-5.

WEEK 2 — DAY 1

Morning Nourishment

Eph. 4:15-16 But holding to truth in love, we may grow up into Him in all things, who is the Head, Christ, out from whom all the Body, being joined together and being knit together through every joint of the rich supply and through the operation in the measure of each one part, causes the growth of the Body unto the building up of itself in love.

Today...God no longer needs spiritual giants. He needs the testimony of the Body. Today we only need to be members. A small member is a member, and a big member is also a member. No member can be the whole Body. When the whole church rises up to preach the gospel, others will say that the church saved them; they will not say that Dr. So-and-so saved them.... This is not the time for the co-workers to serve the Lord by themselves but the time for the whole church to rise up to serve Him together. (CWWL, 1932-1949, vol. 2, p. 242)

Today God is doing the work of recovering the Body testimony. The gifts that He has given are for the perfecting of the saints for the ministry. One or two specially gifted workers no longer can fulfill the task; all the brothers and sisters can preach the gospel, heal the sick, edify the saints, and save the lost. The church can beget, be established, be revived, be firm, and rise up to serve. It will be built up like the New Jerusalem and be strong. (CWWN, vol. 62, p. 271)

Today's Reading

We have to recover the kind of preaching [of the gospel] that is done by the whole church. We do not need to invite people with big advertisements. Rather, we should ask all the brothers and sisters to invite people individually.... In this way the whole church will be able to rise up to serve. This kind of service will be the whole Body serving together. If we have only a few serving today, we have not reached God's standard. [Today] God wants to bring in the ministry of the church and the service of the

church. In China and even in the whole world, there seem to be no great evangelists being raised up. Not only are there no new ones being raised up, but the old ones are passing away. Some should not have passed away according to their age or their ministry, but they did pass away. This is probably because spiritual giants are a hindrance to producing the church ministry....Even among the co-workers now, there is always the sense of loneliness. Although the term coordination is not there, there is a cry for the reality of coordination. (Messages Given during the Resumption of Watchman Nee's Ministry, 1st ed., vol. 2, pp. 324, 327-328)

All the problems in the church today issue from the one-talented ones. The Lord has shown us that there is not one whose gift exceeds five talents. For a span of twenty years the church may have only one with five talents, but every day the church can have five persons, each with one talent. Any one of the children of God, even the one in the poorest condition, still has one talent; and when you put five of the one-talented ones together, it equals one who has five talents. If all the one-talented ones in the church today would bring forth their talents, there would be no need of so many great gifts among us. Just by the coming forth of the one-talented ones, let me tell you, the whole world will be conquered.

You must be clear, therefore, that it is not how much work you yourselves can do or how much burden you yourselves can bear, but it is how much you are able to cause all the brothers and sisters, all the one-talented ones, to come forth to work and serve.... If it is you alone who are busy from dawn to dusk, this is not the church. If you are busy from morning to evening and you cause all the one-talented ones to work and be busy, this is the church serving, this is the church preaching the gospel. It is the church that is working; it is the Body that is acting and not several members replacing the activity of the Body. (Watchman Nee, Further Talks on the Church Life, The Stream Publishers, 1974, pp. 143-144)

Further Reading: Messages Given during the Resumption of Watchman Nee's Ministry, 2nd ed., vol. 1, chs. 26, 45-46, 49-50

WEEK 2 — DAY 2

Morning Nourishment

Eph. 4:12-13 For the perfecting of the saints unto the work of the ministry, unto the building up of the Body of Christ, until we all arrive at the oneness of the faith...

3 Being diligent to keep the oneness of the Spirit in the uniting bond of peace.

God is recovering the most difficult thing today.... Ephesians 4 says that the work of the ministry is to arrive at the oneness of the faith. The church is the Body of Christ, and it builds itself up in love. We are not concerned about things like the new heaven, the new earth, and the lake of fire. But when I lie on my bed, I am always apprehensive about the fulfillment of Ephesians 4.... Among God's children today, there is much confusion, and there are all kinds of divisions. When will we be one? Today there are all kinds of ministries; the situation is very complicated. How can this chapter be recovered?

Yet...we believe that there will be a day when God's recovery will reach the fulfillment of Ephesians 4. God is doing a recovery work everywhere. The ultimate work among all these works may very well be the recovery of the Body testimony. God's leading today is to bring us back to the beginning and to recover us to the condition at the beginning. (Messages Given during the Resumption of Watchman Nee's Ministry, 1st ed., vol. 2, pp. 486-487)

Today's Reading

For two thousand years the church has been severely damaged by so-called "spiritual pursuit." It may be hard to accept this word, because nothing seems to be wrong with spiritual pursuit. Yes, spiritual pursuit is very good, but it also can damage and ensnare people. In the past two thousand years a few have been helped by spiritual pursuit. However, a great number have been hurt due to spiritual pursuit. This does not mean that spiritual pursuit in itself is wrong, nor does it mean that we should not

have spiritual pursuit. Rather, it means that people have misused spiritual pursuit.

Around the age of fifty Mrs. Penn-Lewis, [a person with high spiritual attainment], gained a young co-worker named T. Austin-Sparks....They worked together for a short time, and then he left and started his own meeting...because she completely spiritualized the Lord's table and baptism. Mrs. Penn-Lewis felt that there was no need of actual water in a baptism because as long as a person experienced the Holy Spirit, he was truly baptized. It was the same with the Lord's table. Mrs. Penn-Lewis and T. Austin-Sparks, who were quite spiritual, were divided and could not be spiritual together. This shows that being "spiritual" can result in division. Mrs. Penn-Lewis knew the subjective experience of the Lord's death. This was truly precious. T. Austin-Sparks saw the resurrection of Christ, the resurrection life, and the principle of the Body. This seeing was also extremely precious.... Why did T. Austin-Sparks leave after both of them had worked together for a period of time? It was because he had his own spiritual knowledge and felt that his spiritual knowledge was higher than that of Mrs. Penn-Lewis. Thus, he left and started his own work.

T. Austin-Sparks came twice and gave some spiritual messages that rendered us help in some respects. However, because he did not have a sufficient understanding of the church, the oneness of the church, the ground of the church, and the keeping of the oneness on the ground of the church, but instead expressed dissent, the loss brought about by this was ten times, even fifty times, greater than the help he rendered. For a period of ten years we were suffering because he wiped out all our labor from 1949 and damaged many excellent young people. Thankfully, this is not an ordinary Christian work. Otherwise, it would have collapsed a long time ago. Since this is the Lord's recovery, the roots and the hidden flow of life are still here; hence, we are again seeing fruit being produced. (CWWL, 1981, vol. 2, "The History and Revelation of the Lord's Recovery," pp. 328, 331, 335)

Further Reading: Messages Given during the Resumption of Watchman Nee's Ministry, 1st ed., vol. 2, chs. 46-47, 53, 55, 61

WEEK 2 — DAY 3

Morning Nourishment

Matt. 3:16-17 And having been baptized, Jesus went up immediately from the water, and behold, the heavens were opened to Him.... And behold, a voice out of the heavens, saying, This is My Son, the Beloved, in whom I have found My delight.

Gal. 1:15-16 ...It pleased God, who set me apart..., to reveal His Son in me...

God's good pleasure was expressed first in the creation of the earth [cf. Job 38:4, 7].

God's kingdom will be set up on earth, not on any other planet (Matt. 6:10; Rev. 11:15). The eternal universe will be called the new heaven and the new earth (21:1). God's eternal kingdom will not be on the moon or on Mars. The earth is where His pleasure lies, even unto eternity. (CWWL, 1978, vol. 2, "Life Messages, Volume 1," pp. 418-419)

Today's Reading

As God saw man in the midst of the rest of His creation, His love toward man prompted Him to say "very good" [Gen. 1:31]. Man is the delight of God's heart. God loves the earth because it was prepared for this man in whom He delights.

As happened when the foundations of the earth were laid, the heavenly hosts rejoiced also at the incarnation. The angel of the Lord brought "good news of great joy" to the shepherds [Luke 2:9-14]. What made God so pleased with the advent of the "Savior..., who is Christ the Lord" (v. 11)? Before the incarnation the earth was the earth, man was man, and God was God. But at this point God made Himself one with man. Jesus is the mingling of God and man. "'They shall call His name Emmanuel' (which is translated, God with us)" (Matt. 1:23). When Jesus was living on this earth, He was a wonder. He was the great God mingled with His creature.

Christ began His public ministry by being baptized....The word delight [in Matthew 3:17] is from the same root in Greek as good pleasure in Ephesians 1:5 and 9. The Father took pleasure in this One who turned Himself over to John the Baptist to be baptized. By receiving baptism He was symbolically receiving the cross. This is apparent from His questions to the sons of Zebedee much later: "Are you able to drink the cup which I drink, or to be baptized with the baptism with which I am baptized?" (Mark 10:38). By baptism He meant His crucifixion. In the eyes of God, then, the death of Christ was pleasant. God delights in the crucified Christ. From week to week as we have the Lord's table, we display this pleasant death to the universe (1 Cor. 11:26).

God's good pleasure is wrapped up with us [cf. Gal. 1:15-16]. There was joy in heaven the day we were saved because the Son of God was then revealed in us. This pleasure of God relates to all the other things that made God happy. If there had been no earth, how could Jesus have lived in Nazareth? Without the creation of man, how could there be Emmanuel, God with us? Without the earth and man, there could not have been the incarnation, crucifixion, and resurrection of the Son of God. It was by His mingling with man that He became the Son of Man, instead of remaining as only the Son of God.

When He came into us, the meaning of the earth, of man, of the incarnation, of the crucifixion, and of the resurrection all became our portion. Where is Christ today? He is universal. He is both God and man. He is in the heavens and on the earth. We are one with Him. At one time we were ordinary people, insignificant sinners. But now there is something wonderful about us. It is hard for us to explain to others what we are, who we are, and even where we are! The Son revealed in us has brought us into the meaning of the earth, of man, and of the incarnated, crucified, and resurrected Lord. (CWWL, 1978, vol. 2, "Life Messages, Volume 1," pp. 419-421)

Further Reading: CWWL, 1978, vol. 2, "Life Messages, Volume 1," chs. 33-38; CWWN, vol. 50, "Messages for Building Up New Believers (3)," ch. 49

WEEK 2 — DAY 4

Morning Nourishment

Phil. 2:13 For it is God who operates in you both the willing and the working for His good pleasure.

John 5:30 ...I do not seek My own will but the will of Him who sent Me.

Our life, the Christian life and the church life, is according to God's good pleasure. The Christian life is a happy life. Many times the New Testament exhorts us to be happy. "Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, rejoice" (Phil. 4:4). We should be rejoicing day after day, not in ourselves but in the Lord. We are a people "singing and psalming with [our] heart to the Lord, giving thanks at all times for all things in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to our God and Father" (Eph. 5:19-20).

[We are happy] because we have the very God working within us both the willing and the working for His good pleasure [Phil. 2:13]...When we are happy, we are registering God's happiness within us. Our inward joy is an indication that we are living and walking according to His good pleasure.

God has predestinated us human beings to be His sons (Eph. 1:5). This is according to His good pleasure.

The most pleasant thing to God is to have some people on this earth who are living Him. This is His heart's desire. Even if you are young, God wants you to live Him before your family.... Living Him means being one with Him. This is what makes you a man of God. It is not merely that you represent Him. God wants to be lived out of you. In your speaking, He would speak. He would like the work that you do to be what He is doing. You are only a human being, but you can have a divine living. (CWWL, 1978, vol. 2, "Life Messages, Volume 1," pp. 422, 425-426)

Today's Reading

Paul wrote [the Epistles to Timothy] when the church was in a state of degradation. In such a time "the man of God may be complete, fully

equipped for every good work” (2 Tim. 3:17). Would you like to be a man of God? The preceding verse tells us the way: “All Scripture is God-breathed” (v. 16). By breathing in God’s Word, spontaneously you will live God. Take ten minutes every morning to pray-read the Word. By breathing in His Word and eating of Him, you will become a man of God.

[Jesus of Nazareth is] the standard pattern of a man of God.... However, He did not live out Himself. He explained His relation to the Father in this way: “As the living Father has sent Me and I live because of the Father...” (John 6:57). He also told the Jews, “Truly, truly, I say to you, The Son can do nothing from Himself except what He sees the Father doing, for whatever that One does, these things the Son also does in like manner” (5:19). He could say, “I can do nothing from Myself” (v. 30). In 10:30 He went on to say, “I and the Father are one.” Here was a man who lived out God. This is why the Father delighted in Him. However much you try to do for God, He will not be impressed. Simply live Him, and you will touch His heart.

Since we have within us our own life as well as the divine life, how are we to live out the divine life? We can see from the life of Jesus that there must be a setting aside of our own life. He said, “I have come down from heaven not to do My own will but the will of Him who sent Me” (6:38). This verse clearly indicates that the Lord Jesus had a will of His own but that He laid it aside. Problems arise when we seek our own will and glory. These two terms comprise the essence of our human life. Because we feel insignificant, whenever we get a little job,...we get annoyed if anyone interferes with the way we do it. But there will be peace in the family and peace in the church if we have the grace to put aside our will and our glory. “Lord, make me willing to lay aside my will, as You did when You were on this earth. Grant me the grace to live on earth not seeking my own glory. Lord, be the grace within me that I may put aside my will and my glory.” (CWWL, 1978, vol. 2, “Life Messages, Volume 1,” pp. 426-428)

Further Reading: CWWL, 1989, vol. 3, “The Experience and Growth in Life,” ch. 3; Life-study of Matthew, msg. 65-66

WEEK 2 — DAY 5

Morning Nourishment

Phil. 3:10 To know Him and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death.

John 15:4 Abide in Me and I in you...

Rom. 8:6 For the mind set on the flesh is death, but the mind set on the spirit is life and peace.

It is beyond our ability to lay aside our will and our glory, however willing we may think we are. Such a life can be lived only in resurrection. The Lord Himself is the resurrection (John 11:25). Only in Him can we have a life under the cross.

The Father's pleasure is that we fall into the earth and die, that is, that we live a crucified life. When we die, the inner power of life will be energized. Death ushers in the resurrection power. "Lord, open my eyes to see that my will and my glory have to be put aside. Then show me that You are the resurrection power within me. I praise You that I am not a lifeless stone. I am a grain of wheat. Within me You are the resurrection power. Lord, give me the vision that if I die, You live. I am here before You." The Lord will work in us the willingness. It does not come from ourselves. (CWWL, 1978, vol. 2, "Life Messages, Volume 1," pp. 429-430)

Today's Reading

Our soul is the natural man. Our spirit, regenerated and indwelt by the Holy Spirit, is the inner man. It is this second person, the inner man, that is the object of God's good pleasure. In actuality, this person is Jesus Christ, mingled with you....The person in your soul is offensive and displeasing to God, but the One in your spirit is a sweet fragrance to Him.

God wants us to be persons in the spirit. The soul's use is as an organ; it is not to be our person. Many, many times in the course of the day, however, we travel back and forth from spirit to soul and from soul to spirit.

Ask the Lord to help you practice. “Lord, thank You that I have a new person. I am not that old man. My regenerated spirit, indwelt by You, is my new person. Help me to walk, live, act, and speak in the spirit, no longer in the soul. I want to live by the inner man.”

[The Father’s] good pleasure is that we be strengthened into the inner man according to the riches of His glory. Morality and ethical virtue cannot compare with the expression of the divine life through us. It is not a matter of staying away from department stores or from places of worldly entertainment because we do not love the world anymore. That attitude is too shallow. What we do is the outcome of our being strengthened with power through His Spirit into the inner man.

The Lord’s recovery is not for doctrines or for outward practices. It is for the experience of being strengthened into our inner man, that Christ may occupy our whole being until eventually we are filled with God unto His full expression.... Pray, “Father, thank You for my regenerated spirit where Christ dwells. Do strengthen me according to the riches of Your glory, through Your powerful Spirit, into my inner man. Spread out from my spirit and settle also in my heart. Make Your home in my whole inward being, that I may be filled with You, unto Your full expression.”

May the Father strengthen us all into the inner man, that Christ may make His home in our hearts, and that we may be built together into a dwelling place of God in spirit. This is His good pleasure. Whatever confronts us—things great or small, good or bad, right or wrong—we need to be in our spirit....This wonderful “Me” is right in our spirit. We must abide in Him [cf. John 15:4]. Stay there. If you have moved out, move back in. God is happy when He sees that we remain in our spirit. Our spirit is our hope. It is our home. It is our country. There is no place else that we should be. (CWWL, 1978, vol. 2, “Life Messages, Volume 1,” pp. 450-451, 453-455, 446-447)

Further Reading: CWWL, 1984, vol. 3, “The Divine Economy,” ch. 1; CWWN, vol. 62, chs. 23, 30

WEEK 2 — DAY 6

Morning Nourishment

John 4:24 God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truthfulness.

Rom. 1:9 For God is my witness, whom I serve in my spirit in the gospel of His Son, how unceasingly I make mention of you always in my prayers.

God's New Testament economy is focused on our human spirit and is carried out by the divine Spirit and the human spirit being mingled together [cf. 1 Cor. 6:17]. Paul says, "To me, to live is Christ" (Phil. 1:21). Who is Christ? Is He not God? Who is "me"? It is Saul of Tarsus, a mere man. How could a man live God? We do not understand very well, but we can enjoy what the Word says by eating it. When the Word says that we are joined to Him in one spirit, we reply, "Hallelujah! I am a man, but I have a spirit! I am one spirit with the Lord!" (CWWL, 1978, vol. 2, "Life Messages, Volume 1," p. 458)

Today's Reading

In John 4:23 and 24 we are told that God is to be worshipped in spirit. The word in may be considered as an instrumental preposition and can therefore be translated "with." We worship with our spirit. This indicates that our spirit serves as an organ. We see with our eyes, hear with our ears, and worship with our spirit. When we say we worship in spirit, we mean that we worship in the realm of the spirit. When we say we worship with our spirit, we mean that the spirit is the part of our being by which we worship. The spirit then has become not only the new person, the inner man, but also the new organ with which we worship God.

The word worship in Greek implies also the thought of service....The word serve [in Romans 1:9] is translated "worship" in some other versions. Whether we say worship or serve, the meaning is the same. Our worship is our service to God; our service to Him is also our worship. When we

worship Him, we serve Him; when we serve Him, we worship Him.

The most pleasant thing in the eyes of God today is that we remain in our spirit. May we not want to say anything apart from our spirit. May we not want to go anywhere or do anything without being in our spirit. All day long “in spirit” should govern us and direct all our activities. If we speak, think, move, and act in spirit, we are victorious, holy, and spiritual. We will be pleasant not only to ourselves but to God and others as well. Such a daily life is a good pleasure to God. A Christian life and a church life that are in spirit are what please Him.

The day will come when we will all be glorified. We will be with Christ on the Mount of Transfiguration. In that day God will be beside Himself with excitement and will call Satan’s attention to us: “Satan, look at My children! My children are glorified!” Surely this thought is hinted at in Romans 8: “The sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the coming glory to be revealed upon us. For the anxious watching of the creation eagerly awaits the revelation of the sons of God...The creation itself will also be freed from the slavery of corruption into the freedom of the glory of the children of God. For we know that the whole creation groans together and travails in pain together until now. And not only so, but we ourselves also, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan in ourselves, eagerly awaiting sonship, the redemption of our body” (vv. 18-19, 21-23).

The recovery is for God to regain His good pleasure. Surely today’s Christianity is no source of joy to Him. We must be a people among whom God may have His good pleasure. We are now living and walking according to the pleasure of God. That pleasure will reach its climax on the day that we are glorified. (CWWL, 1978, vol. 2, “Life Messages, Volume 1,” pp. 457, 463, 422-423)

Further Reading: CWWL, 1994-1997, vol. 3, “The God-man Living,” chs. 8, 10, 14; CWWL, 1987, vol. 3, “The Scriptural Way to Meet and to Serve for the Building Up of the Body of Christ,” ch. 26

<< **WEEK 2 — HYMN** >>

Hymns, #538 It is God's intent and pleasure

Experience of Christ — As the Indwelling One

- 1 It is God's intent and pleasure
To have Christ revealed in me,
Nothing outward as religion,
But His Christ within to be.
(Chorus) It is God's intent and pleasure
That His Christ be wrought in me;
Nothing outwardly performing,
But His Christ my all to be.
- 2 It is God's intent and pleasure
That His Christ may live in me;
Nothing as an outward practise,
But Christ working inwardly.
- 3 It is God's intent and pleasure
That His Christ be formed in me;
Not the outward forms to follow,
But Christ growing inwardly.
- 4 It is God's intent and pleasure
That His Christ make home in me;
Not just outwardly to serve Him,
But Christ dwelling inwardly.
- 5 It is God's intent and pleasure
That His Christ my hope may be;
It is not objective glory,
But 'tis Christ subjectively.
- 6 It is God's intent and pleasure
That His Christ be all in me;
Nothing outwardly possessing,
But His Christ eternally.

