

## **Week One**

# **Living in the Reality of God's Eternal Economy for Its Fulfillment by Building Up a Habit of Exercising Our Spirit, Fanning Our God-given Spirit into Flame**

Hymns: 866

Scripture Reading: 1 Tim. 4:7-8; 2 Tim. 1:6-7; 4:22

### **§ Day 1**

- I. God's eternal economy is His household administration to dispense Himself in Christ into His chosen people that He may have a house to express Himself, which house is the church, the Body of Christ; God's eternal economy is His eternal plan, and His divine dispensing is the means by which He accomplishes His plan—1 Tim. 1:3-4; 3:15; Rom. 12:5; Eph. 1:10; 3:8-9; 2:10:**
  - A. Christ is the center, circumference, element, sphere, means, goal, and aim of God's economy; in fact, all the contents of God's eternal economy are simply Christ— Matt. 17:5; Eph. 3:6; Luke 24:44.
  - B. Unless we know God's economy, we will not understand the Bible; the central subject of the Bible is the economy of God, and the entire Bible is concerned with the economy of God—v. 45; Job 10:13; cf. Eph. 3:9.

- C. God's economy is to dispense Himself into our being so that our being may be constituted with His being; this can be accomplished only by God's dispensing Himself into us as the divine life—John 10:10; 14:6a; 1 Cor. 15:45b; Rom. 8:2, 6, 10-11.
- D. The leadership in the New Testament ministry is the leadership of the controlling, God-given revelation of God's eternal economy—Acts 26:19; Prov. 29:18.
- E. Different teachings other than God's economy separate us from the genuine appreciation, love, and enjoyment of the precious person of the Lord Jesus Christ as our life and our everything (2 Cor. 11:2-3); the different teachings of the dissenting ones (1 Tim. 1:3) caused envy and discord among the believers, which are contrary to love, the end (the objective and purpose) of the apostle's charge to remain in the teaching of God's economy (v. 5; John 13:34; Gal. 5:13-14).
- F. God's divine dispensing deifies the believers, making them God in life and nature but not in the Godhead for the building up of the church as the Body of Christ and for the preparation of the bride of Christ to usher in the kingdom of Christ; for this purpose God became a man to "man-ize" Himself; then He dispenses Himself as life into us to "God-ize" us in His life and nature but not in His Godhead.
- G. God's intention in His economy is to dispense Himself in His Divine Trinity— the Father, the Son, and the Spirit—into His chosen people; God's only goal in time is to dispense Himself into us day by day.

## § Day 2

**II. In the "blueprint" of God's original intention, man is the center of the entire universe, and the center of man is his spirit—Zech. 12:1; Gen. 2:7; Prov. 20:27:**

- A. The heavens are for the earth, the earth is for man, and man was created by God with a spirit that he may contact God, receive God, contain God, worship God, live God, fulfill God's purpose for God, express God, and be one with God—John 4:24; 1 Cor. 6:17.
- B. Without God being the Spirit and without us having a spirit to contact God, to be one with God, the whole universe is empty, and we are nothing—Eccl. 1:2; 3:11; Job 32:8; 12:10; 2 Cor. 4:13, 16-18.
- C. Due to the fall, men have not only overlooked and neglected the human spirit but also have even refused to admit that man has a spirit—1 Thes. 5:23; Heb. 4:12; cf. Jude 19.
- D. Man as a vessel, through the exercise of his spirit, was to receive God in Christ as the tree of life so that life as a river would flow in and out of his innermost being for his transformation into precious materials for God's building, God's eternal expression—Gen. 1:26; 2:7-12, 22; 1 Tim. 4:7-8:
1. The breath of God has become our human spirit, and our spirit is God's lamp to contain God as the oil and to give us light—Gen. 2:7; Prov. 20:27.
  2. Man's spirit became a broken lamp through his fall, but through God's recovery in His salvation, man's spirit is regenerated, rebuilt, and reinforced with the vivifying, sevenfold intensified Spirit—Gen. 2:7; Prov. 20:27; John 3:6; Rev. 4:5; 1 Cor. 15:45b.

### **§ Day 3**

3. The central government and most prominent part of man's being should be his spirit; a man who is ruled and controlled by his spirit is a spiritual man—2:14-15; 3:1; 14:32; 2 Cor. 2:12-15; Eph. 3:16; 1 Pet. 3:4; Dan. 6:3, 10.
- E. The strategic and central point of God's economy is the divine Spirit dwelling in our human spirit and the two mingled together as one spirit,

the mingled spirit— John 3:6; 4:24; Rom. 8:16; 2 Cor. 3:17; 2 Tim. 4:22; 1 Cor. 6:17; 1 Tim. 1:4; 2 Cor. 4:13:

1. The great way to fulfill God's economy is for us to live and do everything according to the Spirit by exercising our spirit—Job 10:13; Eph. 3:9; Rom. 8:4; Gal. 5:25.
2. Whenever we turn to our spirit and exercise our spirit, we touch the Body, because the Body is in our spirit—Eph. 1:17; 2:22; 3:5, 16; 4:23; 5:18; 6:18.
3. When we are in our spirit, we overcome the world, we cannot sin, the evil one cannot touch us, and we are guarded from idols—1 John 5:4, 18-19, 21; John 14:30.

## § Day 4

**III. The key to receiving the divine dispensing of the Divine Trinity and being a channel of this dispensing for the saints' growth in life and their enjoyment of Christ is to exercise our spirit, which is to fan our God-given spirit into flame—Phil. 1:25; 1 Tim. 4:7-8; 2 Tim. 1:6-7; 4:22; Acts 6:10; 1 Cor. 14:32:**

- A. Godliness, a living that is the expression of God, is the issue of the divine dispensing for the divine economy, and this dispensing depends on the exercise of our spirit to live Christ in our daily life for the corporate manifestation of God in the church life—1 Tim. 1:3-4; 3:15-16; 4:7-8; 2 Tim. 1:6-7.
- B. The word exercise implies forcing; if we Christians want to be strong and want to grow in the Lord, we must force ourselves to use our spirit until we build up a strong habit of exercising our spirit—1 Tim. 4:7.
- C. To exercise our spirit is to fan our spirit into flame—2 Tim. 1:6-7:

1. Second Timothy 1:6 refers to “the gift of God,” and verse 7 indicates that what God has given us is our regenerated spirit, our mingled spirit, of power, of love, and of sobermindedness; thus, the gift of God is our God-given spirit.
2. We saved ones have the capital to live the Christian life and the church life, and this capital is our God-given spirit.
3. Fire is in our regenerated spirit, which is indwelt by the Holy Spirit; actually, our spirit is the fire—Luke 12:49-50; Rom. 12:11; Rev. 4:5; Prov. 20:27.

## § Day 5

D. To exercise our spirit, we must deal with the parts of our soul surrounding our spirit—our mind, emotion, and will—cf. 1 Pet. 3:4:

1. A spirit of power is a spirit with a subdued and resurrected will, a spirit of love is a spirit with an emotion filled with God as love, and a spirit of sobermindedness is a spirit with a renewed mind—2 Tim. 1:7.
2. Our dear Lord Jesus is the Shepherd and Overseer of our souls; our soul is our inner being, our real person; our Lord shepherds us by caring for the welfare of our inner being and by exercising His oversight over the condition of our real person—1 Pet. 2:25; Psa. 23:1-6; cf. Heb. 13:17.
3. Because the exercise of the spirit is linked to the parts of our soul and is so vital to living in the reality of God’s economy, we need to cooperate with our Lord in His heavenly ministry by “establishing the souls of the disciples”—Acts 14:22.
4. To establish the souls of the disciples is to establish them (1) in their mind, that they may know and understand the Lord and the things concerning Him

(1 Cor. 2:16; Phil. 3:10); (2) in their emotion, that they may love the Lord and have a heart for the Lord's interest (Mark 12:30; Rom. 16:4); and (3) in their will, that they may be strong to remain with the Lord and do the things that please the Lord (Acts 11:23; Col. 1:10; 1 Thes. 4:1).

E. To exercise our spirit, to fan our God-given spirit into flame, is to rejoice always, pray unceasingly, and give thanks in everything in order to enjoy the indwelling Spirit as the secret of doing all things in Christ—2 Cor. 12:2a; Phil. 4:11-13; Psa. 91:1; 1 Thes. 5:16-18.

F. To exercise our spirit, to fan our God-given spirit into flame, is to set our mind on the spirit—Rom. 8:6; Mal. 2:15-16:

1. When we set our mind on the spirit, we have the inner sense of life and peace, the sense of strength, satisfaction, rest, release, liveliness, watering, brightness, and comfort.
2. When we set our mind on the flesh, we have the inner sense of death, the sense of weakness, emptiness, uneasiness, restlessness, depression, dryness, darkness, and pain.
3. Our Christian life is not according to the standard of right and wrong but according to the inner sense of life and peace in our spirit—Rom. 8:6; 2 Cor. 2:13-14.

## § Day 6

G. To exercise our spirit, to fan our God-given spirit into flame, is to discern our spirit from our soul—Heb. 4:12:

1. We should always be on the alert to discern and deny anything that is not of the spirit but of the soul, the self—Matt. 16:25; cf. Luke 9:25.
2. Whatever we are, whatever we have, and whatever we do must be in spirit; everything that God is to us is in our spirit—Rom. 2:28-29; 1:9; 8:4; 12:11.

- H. To exercise our spirit, to fan our God-given spirit into flame, is to live the normal church life and overcome the church's degradation by pursuing Christ with those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart—2 Tim. 2:22.
- I. To exercise our spirit, to fan our God-given spirit into flame, is to pray, to approach God in a personal and confiding manner, for the interests of God—Christ, the kingdom of God, and the house of God—as the goal in God's eternal economy—1:6-8; 1 Tim. 1:3-4; 2:1-3, 8; 1 Kings 8:48; Jude 19-21.





# WEEK 1 — DAY 1

## Morning Nourishment

1 Tim. 1:3-4 Even as I exhorted you, when I was going into Macedonia, to remain in Ephesus in order that you might charge certain ones not to teach different things nor to give heed to myths and unending genealogies, which produce questionings rather than God's economy, which is in faith.

First Timothy is dealing with God's economy. At Paul's time some were teaching different things other than God's economy. Paul told us that we have to put all these different teachings aside and come back to the economy of God. God's economy is His household administration, His plan, to dispense Himself into us. His dispensing produces a life of godliness.

Such a godly life issuing from God's dispensing depends upon the exercise of our spirit...A godly life comes out of God's dispensing, but God is not dispensing Himself into lifeless vessels...[but] into us, the living vessels, who already have our own taste, choice, preference, feeling, thinking, mentality, will, etc. If we do not exercise our spirit strongly to cooperate with the Lord, God cannot dispense Himself into us. Our spirit is not only the receiving organ, the retaining organ, but also the opening for God's dispensing. When our spirit opens wide, our whole being opens. Then God has a way to impart Himself into us. God's dispensing depends upon our coordination, and our coordination is the exercise of our spirit. (CWWL, 1979, vol. 1, "Basic Lessons on Life," p. 599)

## Today's Reading

The Bible, which consists of sixty-six books, begins with God and His creation in Genesis and consummates with the New Jerusalem in Revelation. Between these two ends of the Bible, there are history, teachings, prophecies, and types. But if we understand the Bible only according to these things, we still do not know the Bible. We need to see the eternal economy of God, which

is God's eternal intention with His heart's desire to dispense Himself in His Divine Trinity as the Father in the Son by the Spirit into His chosen people to be their life and nature that they may be the same as He is for His fullness, His expression.

An economy is an arrangement to carry out a plan for dispensing. God's economy is God's plan, God's arrangement, for God to dispense Himself in His element, life, nature, and attributes, and all that He has achieved and attained into His chosen people that they may be rebuilt by being constituted with the divine essence in the divine element of the divine source to be something divine...After God's rebuilding with the divine constitution we, like the Lord Jesus, become divinely human and humanly divine. Before incarnation Christ was only divine, but after His incarnation He became a God-man, a man with the divine nature. Now He is divinely human, and He is also humanly divine. Having been regenerated by Christ, we have become a part of Him, and now we are the same as He is—divinely human and humanly divine.

The regenerated ones, who are divinely human and humanly divine, spontaneously become an organism, the Body of Christ, which is the church of God as the new man in God's new creation to carry out God's new "career," that is, to build up the Body of Christ for the fullness, the expression, of the Triune God. This fullness as the organism of the Triune God will consummate in the New Jerusalem. The Bible begins with God in His creation as the initiation and ends with the New Jerusalem, which is the mingling of the Triune God and all His chosen, redeemed, regenerated, transformed, conformed, and glorified tripartite people. The New Jerusalem is thus a constitution of God with man to express God for eternity. To see this is to have an overview of the entire Bible. In our reading of the Bible, we need to focus our attention on God's eternal economy for the divine dispensing. Unless we know God's economy, we will not understand the Bible. (Life-study of Job, pp. 57-58)

Further Reading: CWWL, 1979, vol. 1, "Basic Lessons on Life," lsns. 17-20; Life-study of Job, msgs. 9, 16, 19, 21, 24, 27-28

# **WEEK 1 — DAY 2**

## **Morning Nourishment**

Gen. 2:7 Jehovah God formed man from the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living soul.

Zech. 12:1 ...Thus declares Jehovah, who stretches forth the heavens and lays the foundations of the earth and forms the spirit of man within him.

The heavens are for the earth, the earth is for man, and man was created by God with a spirit that he may contact God, receive God, worship God, live God, fulfill God's purpose for God, and be one with God. In His economy God planned to have Christ as the centrality and universality of His move on earth. For His chosen people, who would care for Him as the Creator and as the Redeemer, there was the need for Him to create a receiving organ so that they would have the capacity to receive all that God had planned for Christ to be. Hence, [the book of Zechariah] charges us to pay full attention to our human spirit, that we may receive the Christ revealed in this book and may understand all that is revealed therein concerning Him (Eph. 1:17-18a; 3:5). (Zech. 12:1, footnote 2)

## **Today's Reading**

Man was created by God with a spirit, and this spirit is a particular organ within man that functions to contact God and contain God. Man was created by God to be a living creature, but he is different from all the other living creatures. Only man has a human spirit.

In God's creation, He did something particular to produce our spirit (Gen. 2:7). God created the universe by speaking. God spoke, and it was (Psa. 33:9). But when God came to the creation of man, He breathed His breath of life into man...God's breath of life is not God Himself, not the divine Spirit, and not the divine life, but it is very close to God, close to the divine Spirit, and close to the divine life.

If we did not have a spirit, we would be like the beasts. We would become meaningless. Also, if there were no God in the universe, the whole universe would become empty. So the key to our meaning and the meaning of the universe is in God's existence and also in our having a spirit. God is Spirit, and we must contact Him, worship Him, in our spirit (John 4:24). These two spirits should contact each other and should become one (1 Cor. 6:17). Then the whole universe becomes meaningful. Then our life has meaning...By this we can see the importance of our spirit.

Regretfully, due to the fall, men have not only overlooked and neglected the human spirit but also have even refused to admit that man has a spirit...Most people take care of the law, not their conscience. Today's society needs the law so much because most people neglect one part of their spirit—their conscience. The conscience functions to judge us and condemn us when we do something wrong...Some who are governed merely by the law like to find loopholes in the law so that they can carry out things that are unrighteous and unjust. Those who live by the conscience, however, live in a higher way. Our inward conscience controls us much more than the outward law does.

As Christians, our spirit has been regenerated. To be regenerated is to be reinforced...God's life...has been added into our spirit...When we believe in the Lord Jesus, God first gives us the divine life. Second, God gives us the Holy Spirit. Also, He gives us many heavenly things, such as His forgiveness, righteousness, peace, and joy. God has given us justification, reconciliation, and His full salvation. All these were given in addition to God's life and God's Spirit. Actually, all these heavenly things are included in God's life and God's Spirit, which have been added into our spirit. We have a regenerated and reinforced spirit, a very strong spirit, with a companion. This companion is the Triune God. The Triune God becomes our companion in our spirit. What an enriched spirit we have! (CWWL, 1993, vol. 2, "The Spirit with Our Spirit," pp. 180-181)

Further Reading: CWWL, 1975-1976, vol. 1, "Living in the Spirit," ch. 5; Life-study of Song of Songs, msg. 5

# WEEK 1 — DAY 3

## Morning Nourishment

Rom. 8:16 The Spirit Himself witnesses with our spirit that we are children of God.

1 Cor. 2:15 But the spiritual man discerns all things, but he himself is discerned by no one.

If we do not watch and pray, we will miss the mark of God's economy—Christ as the Spirit dwelling in our spirit...It is only by turning to our spirit that we can walk and have our being according to Christ. In our personal walk we need to watch and pray, and when we are with others, we need to live in our spirit by caring for the sense of life in our spirit (cf. Rom. 8:6)...Only continual prayer keeps us in our spirit [cf. 1 Thes. 5:17].

The Spirit of God today, the all-inclusive Spirit of the Triune God, dwells in our regenerated human spirit and works in our spirit. These two spirits are one; they live, work, and exist together as one mingled spirit...To walk according to our spirit may be considered the consummate charge in the Scriptures to the believers. (CWWL, 1979, vol. 1, p. 130)

## Today's Reading

Care for your spirit. All the inner chambers of your soul must be controlled by the spirit...What is the central government in you? Sorry, I do not believe it is your spirit. When the brothers come together, the central government is in control because they begin by praying. The first few minutes of talk continue the atmosphere of prayer. But before too many minutes have gone by, the central government collapses. One brother expresses his opinions. Another says that the first is unfamiliar with the situation and therefore does not know how to handle it properly...Is it right to heed your spirit when you pray, but disregard it when you talk to your brothers?



If you are older, your opinions may not be so manifested...Outwardly, you are smooth and agreeable. Inwardly, however, you are unwilling and dissatisfied. Dissatisfaction may be your central government. In the central government of the sisters, emotion holds the posts of president, prime minister, and chief of staff. The spirit is useful when they pray, but when they are angry, they feel they must give vent to their emotions. Later, they will repent, but at the time they give way to their temper. The central government of some saints is quick action. Without regard for the spirit, they make decisions, take action, and get things done, the quicker the better.

It seems that only when we pray is our spirit given its normal place. As soon as we finish praying, we in effect say, "Goodbye, spirit. Now that my praying is over, I do not need you any longer. I want to take care of things myself in my way." This kind of attitude makes us like the unbelievers. Even the Lord has no way to control you...God controls you in your spirit. If you do not contact Him, He cannot control you. The Lord is like electricity. If the current cannot get through to the outlet, you may have the lamp plugged in, but the light will not go on when you turn the switch.

What is it like to let the spirit be our central government? We will find our thoughts restricted. We will not dare to utter our opinion. Words will not come out of our mouth so lightly. Our pride will be smitten. We will sense a restraint or a constraint in even the smallest things we do. When you were out of the spirit, you felt free to live as you wanted. You may have hated others, told lies, or stolen. Your actions may have been wild. The Bible says of those who utterly disregarded their spirit, the part of their being closest to God, that "God gave them up" (Rom. 1:28)...After you are saved, however, God would have you turn to your spirit. That is the place where He is, the place where He may be contacted. God wants to bring you under His strict control, in big things and in small, even in your words. (CWWL, 1979, vol. 1, "Life Messages, Volume 2," pp. 392-393)

Further Reading: CWWL, 1978, vol. 1, "The Experience of Christ," chs. 10, 23; CWWL, 1994-1997, vol. 5, "The Vital Groups," ch. 1

# WEEK 1 — DAY 4

## Morning Nourishment

1 Tim. 4:7-8 ...Exercise yourself unto godliness. For bodily exercise is profitable for a little, but godliness is profitable for all things, having promise of the present life and of that which is to come.

2 Tim. 1:6-7 ...Fan into flame the gift of God, which is in you through the laying on of my hands. For God has not given us a spirit of cowardice, but of power and of love and of sobermindedness.

Now that we have seen the importance of our spirit, we want to see the exercise of our spirit. We must build up a habit of exercising our spirit...In the morning, the first thing I spontaneously say is “O Lord.” To call on the Lord by saying, “O Lord” is a habit of exercising our spirit...[It] makes a big difference. If you rise up in the morning without saying anything, you may pray in a routine way without really touching the Lord. This is because there is no exercise of your spirit. We have to build up a habit of saying, “O Lord.” When we say, “O Lord,” we touch the Lord. This is the habit of exercising our spirit. (CWWL, 1993, vol. 2, “The Spirit with Our Spirit,” p. 181)

## Today's Reading

We should force ourselves to say, “O Lord Jesus!” The word exercise implies forcing. To exercise is always a forced matter. When the Olympic athletes are exercising to practice or compete, they must have a strong will. They force themselves to exercise. If we Christians want to be strong and want to grow in the Lord, we must force ourselves to use our spirit.

Let us suppose that a problem comes into your family life. It may be a problem between you and your spouse, between you and your children, or between you and your parents. If you do not exercise your spirit at that time, your entire soul with your mind, will, and emotion will become prevailing.

Then the soul will overcome and subdue you, conquering your spirit. This can even cause you to lose your temper in a bad way. Therefore, whenever you are in a hard situation, you have to force yourself to exercise your spirit. To force yourself to exercise, or to use, your spirit makes you a different person.

In [1 Timothy 4:7-8] Paul speaks of two kinds of exercise. The exercise besides that of the body, which is the exercise unto godliness, must be the exercise of the spirit. To exercise ourselves unto godliness is to exercise our spirit to live Christ in our daily life.

Second Timothy 1:6-7 indicates that we need to fan our spirit into flame... Some might think that these verses do not say that we should fan our spirit but that we should fan our gift. But if you get into these verses, you will see that the fanning of our gift into flame is the fanning of our spirit into flame. Paul tells us in verse 6 to “fan into flame the gift of God.” Then in verse 7 he says, “For God has not given us a spirit...” Our God-given spirit is what we must fan into flame. We have to fan our spirit.

We may say that the gift of God that we must fan into flame is a spiritual gift. But without our spirit, how could we have the gift? The spiritual gift is in our spirit. There is fire in our regenerated spirit, which is indwelt by the Holy Spirit. Actually, we may say that our spirit is the fire.

If you want to fan your spirit into flame, you need to open up your mouth, open up your heart, and open up your spirit. You need to open these three layers of your being. You have to use your mouth to say, “O Lord Jesus.” But then you have to go deeper by using your mouth with your heart to say, “O Lord Jesus.” Then you need to go even deeper by using your mouth with your heart and with your spirit to say, “O Lord Jesus.” This is to open up your spirit from deep within. Then the fire burns. If you are down, you should call “O Lord Jesus” again and again from deep within with the exercise of your spirit. Then you will be up. (CWWL, 1993, vol. 2, “The Spirit with Our Spirit,” pp. 181-183)

Further Reading: Life-study of 1 Timothy, msgs. 3-4; Life-study of 2 Timothy, msg. 1



# WEEK 1 — DAY 5

## Morning Nourishment

Acts 14:22 Establishing the souls of the disciples, exhorting them to continue in the faith and saying that through many tribulations we must enter into the kingdom of God.

2 Tim. 1:7 For God has not given us a spirit of cowardice, but of power and of love and of sobermindedness.

Man's soul is composed of his mind, emotion, and will. To establish the souls of the disciples is to establish them (1) in their mind, that they may know and understand the Lord and the things concerning Him...; (2) in their emotion, that they may love the Lord and have a heart for the Lord's interest...; and (3) in their will, that they may be strong to remain with the Lord and do the things that please the Lord. (Acts 14:22, footnote 1)

## Today's Reading

[Second Timothy 1:7] is very interesting. Three items are mentioned: power, love, and sobermindedness...This is because the soul completely surrounds our spirit. Since the soul is composed of three parts—the mind, emotion, and will—the spirit is not mentioned with one, two, or four items, but with three. The spirit is surrounded by three parts of the soul. Therefore, each of these three parts must be related to the spirit in a proper way.

First, our will has to be subdued by the spirit in order to become submissive...A spirit of power means that the will must be first subdued and then submissive to the spirit. Sometimes we describe a certain person by his strong will. Actually, we are using the wrong expression to describe that person. His is not a strong will, but a hard, stubborn one...Our will can become strong and powerful only under the control of the spirit. Whenever a believer becomes a martyr, he is strong; he has a strong will because at that time his will is completely submissive to the spirit. When our will is subdued and becomes

submissive to the spirit, it becomes strong and powerful. Then we will truly have a spirit of power!

However, many times when the spirit subdues our will and makes it submissive to the Lord, we then become very cold. Therefore, we need love as a balance. We not only need a spirit of power, but also a spirit of love. Even though our will is submissive, if we do not have a spirit of love, it is very easy for us to be cold toward others. We will even be critical of them, condemning them because they are so rebellious...We must balance our spirit of power with a spirit of love. Our spirit has to be both of power and of love.

When the Lord Jesus was on earth, His will was submissive to the spirit, and He was obedient to the Father. Therefore, His spirit was very strong—but it was also continually full of love. He had not only a strong spirit, but one of love. He was very balanced. His spirit toward Satan, the evil one, was very strong and powerful! But toward the sinners and publicans, His spirit was full of love and sympathy. Here is real balance.

Love is a matter of the emotion...After we become emotional, we need to be balanced again! Now we must have a spirit of sobermindedness...Love alone causes us to be foolish and blind and will even bring us into darkness. Therefore, we must be so balanced that we will not love foolishly, but clearly, properly and soberly with a sound mind.

Therefore, to deal with the spirit is not a matter of dealing with the spirit itself, but with all of the parts of the soul which surround it...[A spring itself is pure, but the water may flow through sulphur or salt.] The passage through which the water flows is the problem...If our mind is wrong, our spirit could never be right. When our will or emotion are wrong, our spirit could never be right. So, we must deal with all these parts of the soul. The will has to be subdued, the emotion has to be balanced, and the mind has to be sober or sound. Then the spirit will be powerful, loving and sober. Thus, we see how these three parts of the soul are related to the exercise of the spirit. (The Stream Magazine, Book One, pp. 302-306)

Further Reading: The Stream Magazine, Book One, pp. 298-331; CWWL, 1978, vol. 2, "Life Messages, Volume 1," ch. 26

# WEEK 1 — DAY 6

## Morning Nourishment

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

Heb. 4:12 For the word of God is living and operative and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing even to the dividing of soul and spirit and of joints and marrow, and able to discern the thoughts and intentions of the heart.

Do not let your mind be a “wild horse.” The mind is the great part of the soul, and the soul is in between our outward flesh and our inward spirit...After fanning our spirit into flame, we must learn to set our mind on the spirit. Our mind is very “talkative.”...If we do not control our mind, we can wander in our imagination all over the globe within a short time...This is why we must direct our mind to the spirit. When we do this, we will sing to the Lord, praise the Lord, or speak forth the Lord.

Before other people, [a husband and a wife] will be restricted in what they say. But when they are together, they may feel free to gossip about others or speak negatively about the church. At that time they are in death because they are setting their mind on the flesh. But we have to learn to fan our spirit into flame and to control our mind. Do not let the mind be set on the flesh, but direct it to be set on the spirit. This habit has to be built up in us. To set our mind on the flesh is death. To set our mind on the spirit is life and peace. (CWWL, 1993, vol. 2, “The Spirit with Our Spirit,” pp. 185-186)

## Today's Reading

In Hebrews 4:12 the word discern is used...Quite often our thoughts are deceiving. But if we exercise our spirit, there is a discernment that our thoughts are evil, because behind our thoughts there is an evil intention. To discern

the thoughts and intents of the heart equals the dividing of the soul from the spirit...The enemy's strategy is always to mix our spirit up with our soul. In today's world nearly everyone is in a mixed situation...Whenever such mixing is there, the spirit loses and the soul wins.

Before a brother begins to talk to his wife about another brother, he has to consider, "Is this of my spirit or of my soul?" If it is of his soul, what he says will be either gossip or criticism. If it is of his spirit, what he says will be something led by the Lord. This shows that we have to discern our spirit from our soul.

Actually, our person, our being, is quite complicated. We are not so simple, because we have three parts. We have the flesh, which is bad; the spirit, which is good; and the soul, which is in between. We should always follow our spirit and walk in all things according to our spirit. This is according to Romans 8:4. We should always be on the alert to discern anything that is not of the spirit but of the soul. Our God-given spirit is our capital and our capacity. We have to use our spirit, to employ our spirit, and to exercise our spirit by fanning it into flame, by setting our mind on it, and by discerning it from our soul. Of course, it is easy to know what is of the flesh and what is of the spirit; but quite often it is a very mixed-up situation between what is of the soul and what is of the spirit. This is why we have to discern.

Our Christian walk is a very fine walk. If we are going to walk according to our spirit, we must learn not to do things too fast or to say things too quickly. It is safe to wait awhile. I have had this experience in writing answers to letters. Sometimes I will write a letter and then keep it for another day before I mail it. The next day a new thought might come to me to include in that letter, or I may realize that I said something wrong. To wait in this way helps us to walk according to our spirit. Within us there is a battle between the spirit and the flesh and even more between the spirit and the soul...If something is not of the spirit, we do not want to say it or do it. This is to use, to exercise, our spirit. (CWWL, 1993, vol. 2, "The Spirit with Our Spirit," pp. 186-187)

Further Reading: CWWL, 1993, vol. 2, "The Spirit with Our Spirit," chs. 6-8

# WEEK 1 — HYMN

## Exercise the spirit (Meetings)

### Meetings — Exercising the Spirit

866

Musical score for the hymn "Exercise the spirit". The score is written in G major (one sharp) and common time (C). It consists of two staves. The first staff is the melody, and the second staff is the bass line. The lyrics are: "1. Ex - er - cise the spir - it! Hu - man thought re - ject; Meet with one an - oth - er, Bo - dy life res - pect." The chords are: D, A, D, Bm, E7, A, A7, D/F#, D, G, Em, D/A, A7, D, G/D, D.

2. Exercise the spirit!  
All the forms forsake;  
Share with one another,  
Each of Christ partake.
3. Exercise the spirit!  
Natural sense renounce;  
Serve with one another,  
Christ the Lord announce.
4. Exercise the spirit!  
Soulish life deny;  
Helping one another,  
On the Lord rely.
5. Freed within the spirit  
From self-righteousness,  
From self-condemnation  
And self-consciousness.
6. Freed within the spirit  
From self-will and pride,  
From self-love and glory,  
All to override.
7. Exercise the spirit,  
Victory to claim  
By the blood which cleanses  
And the mighty Name.
8. Exercise the spirit  
Thus to touch the Lord;  
Ever by the spirit  
Take Him thru His Word.
9. It is by the spirit  
Christ is testified;  
It is by the spirit  
Man is satisfied.
10. Exercise the spirit!  
This is what we need!  
Exercise the spirit!  
May the Lord so lead!

