

# Week Eight

## “Fully Accomplish Your Ministry”

Hymns: 914

Scripture Reading: Acts 1:17, 25; 2 Tim. 4:5d; 1 Tim. 1:12; 2 Cor. 4:1; Eph. 4:11-12; Col. 4:17

### § Day 1

#### I. In the eyes of the Lord there is just one ministry—2 Cor. 4:1; Eph. 4:12:

A. Speaking of the need of a replacement for Judas, Peter said that Judas “was numbered among us and was allotted his portion of this ministry”—Acts 1:17:

1. The apostles prayed for the Lord to show them clearly the one whom He had chosen “to take the place of this ministry and apostleship”—vv. 24-25.
2. As used in verses 17 and 25, the word ministry refers to the ministry that bears the testimony of Jesus—v. 8:
  - a. Though the apostles were twelve in number, their ministry was uniquely one—this ministry, a corporate ministry in the principle of the Body of Christ.
  - b. All the apostles carried out the same ministry to bear the unique testimony of the incarnated, resurrected, and ascended Jesus Christ, who is the Lord of all.

### § Day 2

B. In 2 Corinthians 4:1 Paul says, “Having this ministry as we have been shown mercy, we do not lose heart”:

1. The ministry in 2 Corinthians is the corporate ministry of the New Testament ministers:
  - a. All the ministers have their own portion of the ministry.
  - b. In this corporate ministry Paul had his portion, Peter had his portion, and Timothy had his portion—2 Tim. 4:5d.
  - c. When we add all the portions together, we have “this ministry,” which is the New Testament ministry.
2. The many ministers have one ministry—the ministry of the new covenant for the accomplishment of God’s New Testament economy.
3. All the apostles’ works are to carry out this unique ministry, the ministering of Christ to people for the building up of His Body.

### § Day 3

C. Second Corinthians 3:6 tells us that God has made us “sufficient as ministers of a new covenant”:

1. The Spirit, the ultimate expression of the processed Triune God, imparts the divine life, even God Himself, into the believers and the apostles, making them ministers of a new covenant.
2. Hence, their ministry is constituted with the Triune God of life by His life-giving Spirit—1 Cor. 15:45b.

D. “I give thanks to Him who empowers me, Christ Jesus our Lord, that He has counted me faithful, appointing me to the ministry”—1 Tim. 1:12:

1. In this verse Paul does not say, “He appointed me to my ministry.”
2. Paul says that the Lord appointed him to the one unique, corporate New Testament ministry.

3. We all should praise the Lord that by His mercy and grace He has appointed us to the corporate ministry that builds up the Body of Christ—Eph. 4:12, 16.

## § Day 4

### **II. Although the foregoing verses reveal that the ministry in the New Testament is corporate, certain other verses indicate that the ministry is also personal:**

A. Acts 20:24 refers to Paul's personal ministry because Paul speaks of the ministry which he had received from the Lord; the ministry in this verse is the personal ministry:

1. Paul's ministry was his being; he and Christ had become one—Eph. 3:17a; 1 Cor. 6:17; 2 Cor. 3:8-9; 4:1.

2. What he preached was what he was; he ministered his very being to others.

3. Paul was one with Christ and had been constituted of Christ; thus, his ministry was a ministry of the Christ who had been constituted into his being.

B. Acts 21:19 definitely and clearly refers to Paul's personal ministry: "He related one by one the things which God did among the Gentiles through his ministry."

C. Colossians 4:17 says, "Take heed to the ministry which you have received in the Lord, that you fulfill it"; Archippus had a ministry, and in the same principle, we all have a ministry.

D. In 2 Timothy 4:5 Paul charges Timothy to fully accomplish his ministry:

1. For Timothy to fully accomplish his ministry was for him to fill up the full measure of his ministry.

2. This ministry denotes the ministry of the word, which is to minister Christ in all His riches (Eph. 3:8) to both sinners and believers for the building up of

the Body of Christ (4:11-12).

3. Such a ministry is desperately needed to counter the trend of decline, as prophesied in 2 Timothy 4:3 and 4.

## § Day 5

E. Because the New Testament ministry is the service of the Body of Christ and because the Body has many members, every member has his own ministry—Eph. 4:11-12:

1. According to the members, there are many ministries; however, according to the Body as a whole, there is just one ministry—1 Tim. 1:12.
2. Our personal ministry should not be separate from the corporate ministry.
3. The Body has a corporate ministry, and all the members of the Body have their individual ministries.
4. As we have seen, all the ministries of the members of the Body added together equal the corporate ministry—Eph. 4:12.

F. There should be the same speaking from different angles—1 Cor. 1:10:

1. There is a need for many to be raised up to speak the same thing from different angles.
2. We believe that the Lord will raise up many more to carry out the unique ministry—2 Cor. 4:1.
3. We all have a part in this ministry, which is the one ministry with different functions, different angles, and different aspects—Eph. 4:11-12.
4. We are not following a man or imitating anyone; however, we are ministering the same thing.

## § Day 6

**III. “For the perfecting of the saints unto the work of the**

## **ministry, unto the building up of the Body of Christ”—v. 12:**

- A. The apostles, prophets, evangelists, and shepherd-teachers (v. 11) are for the perfecting of the saints unto the work of the ministry mentioned in verse 12.
- B. The many gifted persons in verse 11 have only one ministry, that is, to minister Christ for the building up of the Body of Christ; this is the unique ministry in the New Testament economy—2 Cor. 4:1; 1 Tim. 1:12.
- C. The perfecting of the saints is unto the work of the ministry, and the work of the ministry is unto the building up of the Body of Christ—Eph. 4:12, 16.
- D. “This is the Lord’s recovery, this is our commission, this is our burden, and this is our ministry. How blessed we are to have a part in this ministry!”—The Collected Works of Witness Lee, 1978, vol. 3, “Truth Messages,” p. 323.



# **WEEK 8 — DAY 1**

## **Morning Nourishment**

**Acts 1:17** For he was numbered among us and was allotted his portion of this ministry.

**25** To take the place of this ministry and apostleship, from which Judas turned aside to go to his own place.

In the eyes of the Lord there is just one ministry in the New Testament age... The twelve apostles were all in “this ministry” [Acts 1:17, 25]. This indicates that there is one unique ministry in the New Testament. Years ago, I did not see this. But because of the controversy regarding receiving the ministry of others, I have spent time to study the pure Word regarding this matter. My eyes have been opened to see that the twelve apostles were all in “this ministry.” Therefore, when the apostles prayed about a replacement for Judas, they asked the Lord to show them whom He had chosen to “take the place of this ministry” (v. 25). (CWWL, 1978, vol. 3, “Truth Messages,” p. 317)

## **Today's Reading**

Some may argue that “this ministry” is limited to the twelve apostles. But Ephesians 4:11 and 12 say, “He Himself gave some as apostles and some as prophets and some as evangelists and some as shepherds and teachers, for the perfecting of the saints unto the work of the ministry, unto the building up of the Body of Christ.” Verse 11 is related to the whole period of time from the apostles until the Lord’s second coming. In God’s New Testament economy there are many apostles, prophets, evangelists, and shepherds and teachers... Notice that verse 12 does not say “the work of the ministries” but “the work of the ministry.” Although there are thousands of gifted persons, all are for the work of the one ministry.

During the New Testament age God’s unique intention is to build up the Body. God created the universe, formed man, and accomplished redemption

all for this. For this one purpose, God has one ministry. God does not have two operations in this New Testament age; He has one operation with one ministry. (CWWL, 1978, vol. 3, "Truth Messages," pp. 317-318)

The unique ministry of the New Testament comprises all the works (ministries) of all the apostles, the ministers of the new covenant. In 2 Corinthians 3 the plural ministers is used clearly in verse 6, and the singular ministry is used in verses 8 and 9. Then, in 4:1 Paul says, "Therefore having this ministry as we have been shown mercy, we do not lose heart." Here Paul uses the plural pronoun we. He does not say that he (singular) had this ministry; rather, he says that we (plural) have this ministry (singular). We here includes not only Paul but all the New Testament ministers. All of this indicates that there is one new covenant ministry of many new covenant ministers.

The first of the new covenant ministers were the twelve apostles. In Acts 1:17 and 25 Peter used the term this ministry. That ministry was the ministry of the twelve apostles, who were the first twelve New Testament ministers. The ministry is the service, the work, and the ministers are the persons who serve. The persons who serve are many. After the twelve apostles, many ministers, including Paul, Barnabas, and many others, entered into the ministry. Although the ministers were many, all these many ministers had only one ministry.

When we consider all these verses together..., we can see a picture showing us clearly that the New Testament ministry is the service, the work, in totality of all the New Testament ministers. In this ministry Timothy had a part called Timothy's ministry. You also have a part called "your ministry," and I also have a part called "my ministry." However, this does not mean that in the New Testament there is one ministry, and then in addition to this one ministry there are many other ministries. The ministry of the New Testament is uniquely one, but there are many ministers who have a part in this one ministry. (CWWL, 1993, vol. 1, "The Ministry of the New Testament and the Teaching and Fellowship of the Apostles," pp. 5-7)

Further Reading: Life-study of 2 Timothy, msgs. 6-7; Life-study of 2 Corinthians, msg. 48



# WEEK 8 — DAY 2

## Morning Nourishment

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

2 Tim. 4:5 But you, be sober in all things, suffer evil, do the work of an evangelist, fully accomplish your ministry.

All the members of the Body of Christ who do the work of the ministry participate in the unique ministry of God's New Testament economy (2 Cor. 4:1; 3:8-9). This unique ministry is the ministry of the Spirit, who gives life (v. 8)...This ministry is the ministry of righteousness, which brings in justification unto life (v. 9; Rom. 5:18b). The ministry of the law was the ministry of condemnation unto death, but the ministry of the faith, the New Testament, is the ministry of justification unto life, so it is altogether organic. The work of the ministry to build up the Body of Christ is directly by the perfected saints in the growth in life (Eph. 4:15-16). (CWWL, 1988, vol. 3, pp. 558-559)

## Today's Reading

In 2 Corinthians 4:1 Paul uses the pronoun we, referring to many ministers. Then in 2 Timothy 4:5 Paul charges Timothy to fully accomplish his ministry... This was Timothy's personal ministry, but this personal ministry was a part of the corporate ministry, "this ministry" [2 Cor. 4:1], the unique ministry of the New Testament. The ministry in 2 Corinthians 4:1 is the corporate ministry of all the New Testament ministers. In this corporate ministry Paul had his portion, Peter had his portion, and Timothy had his portion. All the ministers have their own portion of the ministry. When we add all the portions together, we have "this ministry," which is the New Testament ministry.

The work of the New Testament ministry is to accomplish God's New Testament economy concerning the church (Eph. 3:9-10) in the building up of the Body of Christ. Ephesians 4:12 says that all the saints need to be perfected "unto

the work of the ministry.” This means that hundreds and even thousands of saints can be perfected unto the work of the ministry. In this verse the term the ministry is used. No doubt this refers to the unique ministry of the New Testament to carry out God’s eternal purpose, which is contained in the new covenant. God’s new covenant contains God’s economy. To carry out this economy requires much work, and that work is the ministry...[Ephesians 4:12] indicates clearly that to do the work of the ministry is to build up the Body of Christ.

In recent years some of the dissenting ones have said that they accept all ministries, [meaning] many ministries. However, this is wrong. Since there is only one new covenant, how could there be many new covenant ministries? Many workers may have a part in constructing a building, but they do not carry out many different works. Rather, they carry out only one work. That one work is not done according to anyone’s opinion but is carried out under one superintendent, one master builder (1 Cor. 3:10), and according to the unique copy of the blueprint. The one blueprint eliminates all opinions. Every part of the work must be done according to the one blueprint and under the leadership of the one master builder. In this way all the workers carry out only one building work.

We may speak of Peter’s ministry, of Paul’s ministry, or of Timothy’s ministry, but we must do so with the realization that these individual ministries are only small parts of “this ministry,” the unique ministry of the New Testament. “This ministry” implies and includes all the ministers’ pieces of the ministry. A jigsaw puzzle does not portray two pictures; each puzzle shows only one picture. This picture is composed of many pieces. If we have the ability to put the pieces together properly, eventually we will see just one picture. Likewise, when we put all the individual ministries of the New Testament ministers together, we have just one ministry, the unique ministry of the New Testament. (CWWL, 1993, vol. 1, “The Ministry of the New Testament and the Teaching and Fellowship of the Apostles,” pp. 6-8)

Further Reading: CWWL, 1988, vol. 3, “The Building Up of the Body of Christ,” ch. 2; CWWL, 1988, vol. 3, pp. 249-255

# WEEK 8 — DAY 3

## Morning Nourishment

2 Cor. 3:6 Who has also made us sufficient as ministers of a new covenant, ministers not of the letter but of the Spirit; for the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life.

1 Tim. 1:12 I give thanks to Him who empowers me, Christ Jesus our Lord, that He has counted me faithful, appointing me to the ministry.

The ministry in the New Testament economy is a corporate ministry, a ministry that includes thousands of gifted people...In 2 Corinthians 4:1 Paul... does not say, "I have this ministry" or "We have these ministries"; he says, "Having this ministry." Paul, his co-workers, and the other apostles all had this ministry, the one ministry in the New Testament.

The ministry is the service; all the ministers are the serving ones carrying out this service [2 Cor. 3:6]. The many ministers do not have many services but one service, one ministry. In 1 Timothy 1:12...Paul does not say, "He appointed me to my ministry"; he says that the Lord appointed him to the one unique, corporate New Testament ministry. We all need to praise the Lord that by His mercy and grace He has appointed us to the corporate ministry that builds up the Body of Christ. (CWWL, 1978, vol. 3, "Truth Messages," p. 318)

## Today's Reading

The ministry denotes the unique new covenant ministry for the building up of one building, the Body of Christ, and this ministry is the unique service of thousands of New Testament ministers. Every member of the Body of Christ has a part of this ministry. Although every believer has a part of the ministry, their parts are not separate ministries but are only parts of the one ministry. The carrying out of God's new covenant requires only one ministry. If there is more than one ministry, trouble will result. (CWWL, 1993, vol. 1, "The Ministry of the New Testament and the Teaching and Fellowship of the Apostles," p. 8)

By letter [in 2 Corinthians 3:6] Paul means the written code of the law. The Spirit is the Spirit of the living God, with whom the apostle ministers Christ into the believers. The apostolic ministry for the New Testament is not of dead letters like the Mosaic ministry for the Old Testament but of the living Spirit, who gives life.

The letter that kills is the letter of the law [Rom. 7:9-11], which only requires of man but is unable to supply man with life (Gal. 3:21)...The Spirit, who is the ultimate expression of the processed Triune God, imparts the divine life, even God Himself, into the apostles and all other believers, making them ministers of a new covenant, the covenant of life. Hence, their ministry is one constituted of the Triune God of life by His life-giving Spirit.

The Spirit who works in the believers is the Spirit of the new covenant ministry that gives life. Within life there are many elements. The Spirit not only transforms us but also constitutes the New Testament ministry. Hence, the New Testament ministry is one with the transforming Spirit, and this ministry is a transforming ministry. Paul's ministry was constituted of and with the transforming Spirit. When Paul was ministering, the transforming Spirit was working in the saints. Today, when we listen to a person whose speaking is the New Testament ministry, the Spirit works in us to transform us as the divine element is being dispensed into our being by the Spirit. This is the Spirit as the element that makes us sufficient ministers of the new covenant.

We should not think that only the apostles are sufficient as ministers of the new covenant. We all are ministering ones, and God has made us competent to minister. God has made us competent ministers not of a covenant of letters but of a covenant of the Spirit. Therefore, whatever we preach or teach should be a word constituted of the Spirit. (The Conclusion of the New Testament, pp. 1037-1038)

Further Reading: CWWL, 1967, vol. 2, "An Autobiography of a Person in the Spirit," ch. 1; Watchman Nee—a Seer of the Divine Revelation in the Present Age, ch. 22

# WEEK 8 — DAY 4

## Morning Nourishment

Acts 20:24 But I consider my life of no account as if precious to myself, in order that I may finish my course and the ministry which I have received from the Lord Jesus to solemnly testify of the gospel of the grace of God.

21:19 And having greeted them, he related one by one the things which God did among the Gentiles through his ministry.

Although these verses [Acts 1:17, 25; 2 Cor. 4:1; 1 Tim. 1:12] reveal that the ministry in the New Testament is corporate, certain other verses seem to indicate that the ministry is personal...Acts 20:24 refers to Paul's personal ministry because Paul speaks of the ministry which he had received from the Lord. Hence, the ministry in this verse is the personal ministry. Acts 21:19 definitely and clearly [also] refers to Paul's personal ministry... Other verses that seem to refer to personal ministry are 2 Timothy 4:5 and Colossians 4:17. In 2 Timothy 4:5 Paul charged Timothy, "Fully accomplish your ministry," apparently encouraging him to fulfill his personal ministry. Colossians 4:17 says, "Say to Archippus, Take heed to the ministry which you have received in the Lord, that you fulfill it." This evidently points to Archippus's personal ministry. (CWWL, 1978, vol. 3, "Truth Messages," pp. 318-319)

## Today's Reading

In considering the verses that speak of personal ministry, we need to realize that all the believers are members of the one Body. As a whole, the Body has one corporate ministry, not many ministries. Although there are many functions in the Body, the ministry in the Body is one. For example,...my speaking is my body's ministry. This ministry is corporate. However, each part of my body also has its own ministry. The mouth speaks, the hands make gestures, and the feet render support. But when the ministries of all the members are added together,



they total the unique ministry of the body. This example indicates that the many ministries of the members of the Body are not separate ministries but part of one corporate ministry.

Regarding this matter of the ministry, we need to be clear both about the truth in the Bible and about the situation of today's Christianity. Originally, during the time of the apostles, there was one Body with one ministry. But due to the degradation of the church, the divisions and denominations came into existence. Now every division has its own so-called ministry...The ministers, pastors, and preachers in the various denominations are working to build up the denominations, not the Body. Because each is building up his own denomination, he cannot work together with others.

We can have nothing to do with the denominations. In the Lord's recovery we are for the recovery of Christ as life and everything to us for the building up of the church. For the fulfillment of God's purpose in His recovery, we need to go back to the beginning, back to the pure Word. In the New Testament there is one unique ministry. From the time of the apostles until now, this ministry has not been terminated. I believe that we are the continuation of this ministry. I am happy to say that I am in this ministry, that I am part of this ministry. We are in the unique ministry according to the New Testament economy.

At the time of the apostles there were no denominations. Because of the degradation of the church and the existence of many divisions, there apparently are now many ministries. Can we in the Lord's recovery, who share in the unique ministry, the continuation of the ministry of the apostles, accept the ministries of the denominations and divisions? No, we cannot. If we accept them, the recovery will be damaged. The proper ministry, the ministry according to God's New Testament economy, is for the building up of the Body of Christ, but the other ministries are for the building up of the denominations. Because this is the case, we cannot receive the ministries that build up the denominations. (CWWL, 1978, vol. 3, "Truth Messages," pp. 319-320)

Further Reading: CWWL, 1978, vol. 3, "Truth Messages," ch. 4

# WEEK 8 — DAY 5

## Morning Nourishment

1 Cor. 1:10 Now I beseech you, brothers, through the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you all speak the same thing and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be attuned in the same mind and in the same opinion.

Eph. 4:12 For the perfecting of the saints unto the work of the ministry, unto the building up of the Body of Christ.

The New Testament ministry is uniquely one and corporate. But because this ministry is the service of the Body of Christ and because the Body has many members, every member has its own ministry. Thus, according to the members, there are many ministries; however, according to the Body as a whole, there is just one ministry. Your ministry should not be separate from the corporate ministry. The Body has a corporate ministry, and all the members of the Body have their individual ministries. As we have seen, all the ministries of the members added together equal the corporate ministry. (CWWL, 1978, vol. 3, "Truth Messages," p. 319)

## Today's Reading

When I say that we all should minister the same thing, I mean that we should speak the same thing according to the way of the New Testament. The four Gospels speak the same thing, but they speak the same thing from different angles... Matthew wrote from the angle of the kingship; Mark, from the angle of service; Luke, from the angle of redemption through the proper humanity; and John, from the angle of Christ's deity. In the Gospels we have four biographies of one person; one person is viewed from different angles. I hope that many will be raised up to speak the same thing from different angles. This one thing is the recovery of Christ as life and everything to us for the building up of the local churches.

I hope that in the coming years many of the young people will speak of Christ for the building up of the Body. I have no intention of being the only one to minister. On the contrary, I expect the Lord to raise up many more to carry on the unique ministry. We all have a part in this ministry, which is one ministry with different functions, different angles, and different aspects. You have your part, and I have mine. When we have all the functions and aspects, we have the ministry of the Body.

Some who have left the recovery accuse us of not accepting their ministry. But their ministry is a ministry of undermining and damaging the Lord's recovery. How can we possibly accept the ministries of those whose intention has been to undermine the Lord's recovery and to overthrow the basic matters of life, including the cross? I say this not out of any personal feeling but out of a concern for the truth. I have no personal enmity whatever toward these ones; however, I cannot accept their "ministry," which tears down rather than builds up.

Our practice is according to the truth in the New Testament. We are glad to see different brothers share various aspects or angles concerning Christ as life for the building up of the church in His riches...By the Lord's mercy, I am doing what I should do. Now I expect that others will minister the same thing from different angles...Many brothers need to stand up to minister concerning Christ for the building up of the Body. How wonderful it would be if many did this!

We need to be clear that we are not following a man or imitating anyone. However, we are ministering the same thing from different angles and in different aspects. By doing this the riches are manifest; yet we have a glorious oneness. This is the one ministry, which encompasses many ministries. We all are ministering Christ as life and as everything for the building up of the local churches. This is the Lord's recovery, this is our commission, this is our burden, and this is our ministry. How blessed we are to have a part in this ministry! (CWWL, 1978, vol. 3, "Truth Messages," pp. 321-323)

Further Reading: CWWL, 1978, vol. 3, "Crucial Principles for the Proper Church Life," ch. 4



# WEEK 8 — DAY 6

## Morning Nourishment

Eph. 4:11-12 And He Himself gave some as apostles and some as prophets and some as evangelists and some as shepherds and teachers, for the perfecting of the saints unto the work of the ministry, unto the building up of the Body of Christ.

The many gifted persons in [Ephesians 4:11] have only one ministry, that is, to minister Christ for the building up of the Body of Christ, the church. This is the unique ministry in the New Testament economy (2 Cor. 4:1; 1 Tim. 1:12).

According to the grammatical construction [of Ephesians 4:12], the phrase unto the building up of the Body of Christ is in apposition to the phrase unto the work of the ministry. This indicates that both phrases refer to the same thing; hence, the work of the ministry is the building up of the Body. The apostles, prophets, evangelists, and shepherds and teachers perfect the saints unto the work of the ministry. The word unto in verse 12 means “resulting in,” “for the purpose of,” or “with a view to.” This means that the perfecting of the saints is for the purpose of building up the Body of Christ. Whatever the gifted persons in verse 11 do as the work of the ministry must be for the building up of the Body of Christ. However, this building up is not accomplished directly by the gifted ones but by the saints who have been perfected by the gifted ones. (The Conclusion of the New Testament, pp. 3420-3421)

## Today's Reading

The work of the ministry is both of the perfecting ones and the perfected ones; the building up of the Body is the work not only of the apostles and the other gifted ones but also of all the perfected saints. The unique work of building up the Body of Christ is the responsibility not mainly of the gifted ones but of all the saints. Both the gifted ones, including the leading apostles, and all the believers, including even the smallest member, work together to build up the Body.

The gifted persons are for the perfecting of the saints. The gifted persons perfect the saints in the divine dispensing in order that all the saints may be able to do the work of the New Testament ministry, that is, to build up the Body of Christ. The gifted persons perfect the saints by nourishing them according to the tree of life with the life supply for their growth in life (Gen. 2:9; 1 Cor. 3:2, 6). The gifted persons perfect the saints to do what they do for the direct building up of the Body of Christ. The apostles perfect the saints by visiting the churches (Acts 15:36, 40-41; 20:20, 31), by writing epistles to the churches (Col. 4:16; 1 Cor. 1:2), and by assigning their co-workers to stay in certain places to perfect the saints (1 Tim. 1:3-4; 3:15; Titus 1:5). The prophets perfect the saints by teaching them to speak the Lord into people, by speaking in the meetings to set up a model, and by helping the saints to live a prophesying life by being revived every morning and overcoming every day (Acts 13:1; 1 Cor. 14:31; Prov. 4:18). The evangelists perfect the saints by stirring them up to be burning in the gospel-preaching spirit, by teaching them with gospel truths, by training them to preach the gospel, by helping the saints to be equipped with the power of the economical Spirit, and by setting an example of loving the sinners and praying for them (2 Tim. 4:5). The shepherd-teachers perfect the saints by shepherding—feeding and nourishing the young saints and teaching the growing saints (Acts 11:25-26; 13:1). The result of this perfecting is that we will all arrive at the oneness of the faith and of the full knowledge of the Son of God, at a full-grown man, and at the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ (Eph. 4:13; cf. John 17:23).

In order to be perfected, we must pay attention to life and to function. The way to be perfected is to grow in life and to become skillful in function. The Greek word rendered “perfecting” in Ephesians 4:12 also means “completing,” “equipping,” and “furnishing.” To perfect a saint is to complete him, to equip him, and to furnish him. Only by growing in life can we be completed. (The Conclusion of the New Testament, pp. 3421-3422)

Further Reading: CWWL, 1989, vol. 4, “The Advance of the Lord’s Recovery Today,” ch. 5

# WEEK 8 — HYMN

## For the Church should be our service

### Service — For the Church

914

1. For the Church should be our serv - ice, 'Tis the per - fect will of  
God; 'Tis the on - ly way of work - ing Which the Lord's a - pos - tles  
**Chorus**  
trod. (C) For the Church should be our serv - ice, Not our aims to sat - is -  
fy; This, the per - fect will of God is, And with it we must com - ply.

2. For 'tis God's eternal purpose  
That the Church His vessel be;  
He intends that all our service  
Build His Church continually.

3. All the gifted persons given  
To the Body by the Head  
Are to aid the Church's building,  
That to fulness she be led.

4. All the gifts and all the functions,  
All the spirit's power shown,  
All the ministries are given  
For the Church and that alone.

5. All the preaching of the Gospel,  
All the teaching ministry,  
Every other kind of service  
For the church alone should be.

6. Ministry is for the Churches,  
Not the Church for ministry;  
All the lampstands are the Churches,  
Not a form of ministry.

7. This will keep the Church's oneness,  
Saving us from every sect;  
This will ever test our motives,  
And our aim will thus correct.

8. Lord, deliver us from our work,  
From the work of any sect;  
For Thy Church alone we'd labor  
And its building up effect.

