

Message Four

Abiding in Christ as the True Vine

Hymns: E1162

Scripture Reading: John 15:1, 4-5, 7; 1 John 2:6, 27-28; 3:24; 4:13, 15; Rom. 8:4

§ Day 1

I. The Lord Jesus said, “I am the true vine”—John 15:1a; cf. Rev. 14:18:

A. This true vine (the Son) with its branches (the believers in the Son) is the organism of the Triune God in God's economy.

B. This organism grows with His riches and expresses His divine life.

II. As branches in the vine, we need to abide in the vine—John 15:4-5:

A. To be in the Lord is a matter of union; to abide in the Lord is a matter of fellowship—1 Cor. 1:9, 30.

B. Our abiding in Christ as the vine depends on our seeing a clear vision that we are branches in the vine; once we see that we are branches in the vine, we need to maintain the fellowship between us and the Lord—John 15:2.

C. The Christian life is a life of abiding in the Lord—1 John 2:6, 27-28; 3:24; 4:13, 15.

D. Our abiding in Christ is the condition of His abiding in us—John 15:5a.

E. Apart from the vine, we are nothing, we have nothing, and we can do nothing—v. 5b.

F. Only when the branches abide in the vine can the vine be everything to them.

§ Day 2

III. We abide in Christ so that He may abide in us by caring for the inward teaching of the all-inclusive anointing—1 John 2:27:

A. We abide in the divine fellowship with Christ by experiencing the cleansing of the Lord's blood and the application of the anointing Spirit to our inner being—John 15:4-5; 1 John 1:5, 7; 2:20, 27.

B. Christ as the Head is the anointed One and the anointing One, and we are His members enjoying Him as the inner anointing for the fulfillment of His purpose—Heb. 1:9; 3:14; 2 Cor. 1:21-22.

C. The anointing, as the moving and working of the compound Spirit within us, anoints God into us so that we may be saturated with God, possess God, and understand the mind of God; the anointing communicates the mind of Christ as the Head of the Body to His members by the inner sense, the inner consciousness, of life—Psa. 133; 1 Cor. 2:16; Rom. 8:6, 27.

§ Day 3 & § Day 4

IV. To abide in the Lord is to be one spirit with Him, that is, to live in the mingled spirit—1 Cor. 6:17:

A. The essence of the New Testament is the two spirits—the divine Spirit

and the human spirit—mingled together as one—v. 17; Rom. 8:4.

B. The union of these two spirits is the deepest mystery in the Bible.

C. The expression one spirit indicates the mingling of the Lord as the Spirit with our spirit—1 Cor. 6:17:

1. The spirit, which is the mingling of our spirit and the Lord's Spirit into one spirit, is both the Spirit of the Lord and our spirit—Rom. 8:4; 2 Cor. 3:17; 1 Cor. 15:45.
2. All our spiritual experiences, such as our fellowship with the Lord, our prayer to Him, and our living with Him, are in this mingled spirit.

D. The focus of God's economy is the mingled spirit, the divine Spirit mingled with the human spirit; whatever God intends to do or accomplish is related to this focus—Eph. 3:5, 9; 1:17; 2:22; 5:18; 6:18:

1. By being one spirit with the Lord, we can experience Him as the all-inclusive One—1 Cor. 1:2, 24, 30; 2:7-8, 10; 3:11; 5:7-8; 10:3-4; 11:3; 12:12; 15:20, 23, 45, 47.
2. We can experience Christ and take Christ as everything because we have become one spirit with Him.
3. For anyone who is one spirit with the Lord, the supply is inexhaustible.

E. The mingled spirit is a spirit that is one spirit with God and that is the same as God in His life and nature but not in His Godhead—1 John 5:11; 2 Pet. 1:4:

1. The divine Spirit and the human spirit are mingled as one within us so that we can live the life of a God-man, a life that is God yet man and man yet God—Gal. 2:20; Phil. 1:19-21a.
2. The God-man living is the living of the two spirits joined and mingled together as one.

F. To be one spirit with the Lord implies that we are in Him and He is in us and that we and He are one in life—John 3:16; 1 John 5:12.

G. To be proper Christians, we must know that the Lord Jesus today as the embodiment of the Triune God is the Spirit indwelling our spirit and mingled with our spirit—2 Cor. 3:17; 1 Cor. 15:45; 6:17.

H. The Bible requires that we walk according to the mingled spirit—Rom. 8:4:

1. The key to everything is found in the wonderful Spirit who is in our regenerated spirit and who has become one spirit with our spirit.
2. To live in the spirit is to let Christ fill and saturate us until He permeates our whole being and is thereby expressed through us—Eph. 3:17.
3. The mutual abiding in John 15:4-5 is the practice of being one spirit with the Lord.

§ Day 5

V. Effective prayers are the issue of our abiding in the Lord and of His words abiding in us—v. 7:

A. Prayer is man cooperating and co-working with God, allowing God to express Himself through man and thus accomplish His purpose; a praying one will cooperate with God, work together with God, and allow God to express Himself and His desire from within him and through him—Rom. 8:26-27; James 5:17:

1. Prayer is the flowing between man and God and the mutual contact between man and God.
2. The real significance of prayer is to contact God in our spirit and to absorb God Himself—Eph. 6:18.

3. The way to experience the indwelling Christ and to live Christ is to pray in a genuine way—Col. 1:27; 3:4; Phil. 1:20-21a.
4. We need the kind of prayer that brings us into contact with the Lord, prayer that causes us to be one with Him in our spirit—2 Tim. 4:22; 1 Cor. 6:17.

§ Day 6

B. When we abide in the Lord, and His words abide in us, there will be a desire in us that comes out of His words—John 15:7; 1 John 5:14-15:

1. We will touch the Lord's feeling and understand His intention; then spontaneously, we will have His desire in us.
2. His desire will become our desire, what He wants will be what we want, and we will pray according to this desire.
3. The Lord will answer this kind of prayer because it issues from our abiding in the Lord and from His words abiding in us.

VI. When we abide in Christ and Christ abides in us, we can have the church life—John 15:4-5; 1 Cor. 1:2, 9, 30; 12:27:

A. We can have the genuine church life only by living in the mingled spirit; we should remain in this mingled spirit for the church life—1:2; 12:27.

B. The church life is a life of loving one another—John 15:12, 17.

C. When we abide in Christ as the vine, we participate in the wonderful fellowship among the co-branches—vv. 4-5; 1 John 1:3-7.

WEEK 4—DAY 1

Morning Nourishment

John 15:4-5 Abide in Me and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself unless it abides in the vine, so neither can you unless you abide in Me. I am the vine; you are the branches. He who abides in Me and I in him, he bears much fruit; for apart from Me you can do nothing.

If we are to abide in the vine, we must see the fact that we are the branches in the vine (John 15:5). Our abiding in Christ depends upon a clear vision that we are branches in the vine. If we see that we are already in Him, then we will be able to abide in Him. We will not want to stay away from Him.

Once we see the fact that we are branches in the vine, we need to maintain the fellowship between us and the vine. Any insulation will separate us from the rich supply of the vine tree. A little disobedience, a sin, or even a sinful thought can be the insulation that separates us from the riches of the vine. If we do not condemn such things but hold on to them, they will insulate us from the rich supply of the vine tree. First, we must see that we are branches. Then we need to maintain the fellowship between us and the Lord. Nothing should be between Him and us...From experience we know that even a small thing can insulate us from the rich supply of the vine tree. We need to pray to the Lord, "Lord, let there be nothing between You and me separating me from Your rich supply." (Life-study of John, 2nd ed., pp. 391-392)

Today's Reading

We need to let the Son abide in us (John 15:4-5)...We abide in Him, and He abides in us. But many times we do not give Him the ground, the space, to abide in us. The Lord desires to spread His abiding within us. However, we like to narrow down His abiding. We restrict Him. There is constantly a gentle

struggle between the abiding Christ and us. While Christ's abiding is gradually spreading within us, there is something within that restricts this abiding Christ. The abiding Christ wants to gain more ground gradually, even inch by inch. But sometimes there is a struggle over His gaining even one inch. Christ wants to gain another inch, but we restrict Him from doing so...Oh, how we need to keep our fellowship with Him and be willing to allow Him to take more ground and to expand within us! May we allow the Lord to spread Himself within us, taking as much ground as He wants. If we do this, we will have the real growth of life. We will see the growth of life within.

Why do so many of the saints scarcely grow in life? Simply because they do not allow the Lord to spread within them. There may be no insulation, but there is too much limitation. This matter of abiding is very delicate and tender. Please keep in mind that we must take care of two things—not to have any insulation and not to have any limitation. It is easier to eliminate the insulation than it is to remove the limitation. I am afraid that even as you read this message, you may not be ready to take away every limitation. Praise the Lord that He is patient and kind. He will never leave you. He is waiting. At the most, He will turn His face aside. That is all that He will do. But He will stay here. May we look to Him for mercy and grace that we may always give Him the ground to expand within us, allowing Him to spread into every corner and avenue of our inner being. This is the way to have the growth in life.

A branch of a vine cannot live by itself, for it will wither and die apart from the vine. The relationship between the branches and the vine pictures the relationship between us and the Lord. We are nothing, we have nothing, and we can do nothing apart from Him. What we are, what we have, and what we do must be only in the Lord and by the Lord in us. It is very important for us to abide in the Lord and for the Lord to abide in us. Otherwise, we will be finished and be nothing. Apart from Him we are nothing, we have nothing, and we can do nothing. Since we are the branches to the Lord and the Lord is the vine to us, we must abide in Him and let Him abide in us. (Life-study of John, 2nd ed., pp. 392-393)

Further Reading: Life-study of John, msg. 34

WEEK 4—DAY 2

Morning Nourishment

1 John 2:27 ...The anointing which you have received from Him abides in you, and you have no need that anyone teach you; but as His anointing teaches you concerning all things and is true and is not a lie, and even as it has taught you, abide in Him.

2 Cor. 1:21 But the One who firmly attaches us with you unto Christ and has anointed us is God.

[The] all-inclusive life-giving Spirit from the Holy One entered into us at the time of our regeneration and abides in us forever (1 John 2:27); by Him the young children know the Father (v. 13) and know the truth (v. 21). As we abide in Christ, we enjoy the divine anointing, which is a wonderful person, the Spirit, moving and working in us. As this anointing abides in us and teaches us, we abide in Him.

The anointing is the moving and working of the indwelling compound Spirit to apply all the ingredients of the processed Triune God and His activities into our inner being so that we may be fully mingled with Him for His corporate expression (vv. 20, 27; cf. Eph. 4:4-6). Moreover, the anointing, as the moving and working of the compound Spirit within us, anoints God into us so that we may be saturated with God, possess God, and understand the mind of God. (The Conclusion of the New Testament, p. 3991)

Today's Reading

The Greek word for Christ is Christos, which means the “anointed One,” and the Greek word for anointing is chrisma. Both words are derived from the same root...Christ as the anointed One becomes the anointing. Because He is the anointed One, He has an abundance of ointment with which to anoint

us. Eventually, the anointed One becomes the anointing One. In fact, He even becomes the anointing.

Christ has been anointed with the divine ointment, and the ointment that is upon Him now flows to us. This is pictured in Psalm 133, which says that the anointing oil runs down, or flows, from the head of Aaron to his beard and even to the hem of his priestly garments...Christ has received the ointment, and eventually He, the anointed One, became the anointing One...Actually, the anointing that dwells in us is the anointed One becoming the anointing One and also the anointing.

God's intention is to work Himself into us as our life and our everything to make us His counterpart for the expression of Himself. In order to accomplish this, it was necessary for God in Christ to pass through the process of incarnation, human living, crucifixion, and resurrection...As soon as we believed in Him, He as the Spirit entered our spirit. Now He is within our spirit to anoint us with the element of the Triune God. The more we are anointed with the Triune God, the more the element of the Triune God is transfused into our being. Through this anointing, the fibers of our being will be saturated with all that the processed Triune God is.

The teaching of the anointing is not an outward teaching by words but an inward teaching by the anointing through our inner spiritual consciousness. This teaching by the anointing adds the divine elements of the Trinity, which are the elements of the anointing compound Spirit, into our inner being...It is in this way that the Triune God is transfused, infused, and added into all the inward parts of our being that our inner man may grow in the divine life with the divine elements.

This anointing is constantly moving and working within us. The purpose of this moving is to add the element of God into us. We understand God's will and God's leading not by an explicit word in letters but through the inward anointing. Today the inward moving and anointing of the Holy Spirit causes us to have more of the element of God. When God's element increases, we understand more of what God wants, and we are clearer about God's leading. (The Conclusion of the New Testament, pp. 3991-3993)

Further Reading: The Conclusion of the New Testament, msg. 394

WEEK 4—DAY 3

Morning Nourishment

2 Cor. 3:17 And the Lord is the Spirit; and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom.

1 Cor. 6:17 But he who is joined to the Lord is one spirit.

Rom. 8:4 That the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us, who do not walk according to the flesh but according to the spirit.

About fifty years ago my young mind could not understand how I, a branch, could abide in Christ, the vine, and He in me. But after I saw that Christ as the life-giving Spirit had entered into my spirit to be one spirit with me (1 Cor. 6:17), I realized that the mutual abiding of the branches and the vine takes place not in our mind, emotion, or will but in our regenerated human spirit, which is indwelt by the divine Spirit (Rom. 8:16; cf. Eph. 2:22). For this reason 2 Timothy 4:22 says, “The Lord be with your spirit.” (CWWL, 1979, vol. 2, p. 170)

Today's Reading

Regarding His ascension and exaltation, He is the Lord in the heavens, but concerning His indwelling, He is the life-giving Spirit, the holy breath. Since He is in our spirit, we are one spirit with Him, and this mingled spirit—the divine Spirit mingled with the human spirit—is the vine tree, with the divine Spirit as the vine and the regenerated human spirit as the branch. These two spirits are one in the divine life and in the divine nature. Now that we have received the Lord, all we need to do is abide in Him...According to our experience, it is difficult to know when we are abiding in Christ, but it is easy to know when we are not abiding in Him.

Anything related to the physical life that is functioning normally produces no feeling or sensation. For instance, when we have a feeling in our stomach,

it means either that we are hungry or that we have eaten wrongly. We know that our stomach is well when we do not feel anything. Similarly, when we are abiding in the Lord, we may have no sensation. But once we are outside of Him, we know immediately that something is wrong. Whenever we sense that something is wrong, we need to stop whatever we are doing. This is a secret on the negative side to abiding in Christ. For instance, when our spouse gives us a difficult time and we begin to respond, we may immediately sense a spiritual “stomachache.” At such a time we need to stop our response. At other times, when we love someone but our love is not from our abiding in the Lord, we have a sense that something is wrong. We need to respond to this sense by ceasing such a love. If we practice this secret, we will abide in the Lord.

We believers who have been born of God have experienced a divine birth. This divine birth mingles the divine Spirit and our human spirit into one. This spirit becomes the factor of our genuine worship of God, who is Spirit. This factor within us loves and enjoys the instant, practical, and present word spoken by the Lord, and it causes us to love the Lord. As a result, God the Father and God the Son have come to make an abode with us, and They are abiding in us and we in Them. Today we must become sensitive to the Lord’s abiding so that when we utter a word, express an attitude, or have an intention that is not of the Lord, which causes the abiding to stop, we can immediately pray, “Lord, forgive me and cleanse me; I do not wish to stop abiding in You. I want to remain in the vine.” This is the way for us to abide, and it is related to praying unceasingly (1 Thes. 5:17)...Our prayer is our spontaneous trust in the Lord. If we practice abiding in the Lord by praying unceasingly, the Lord will gain a group of people who are one with Him practically in the mingled spirit.

When we enjoy Christ in the way of abiding in Him, we are able to testify to everyone that our Christ is not a doctrinal Christ but a present and practical Christ whom we can experience all the time. (CWWL, 1979, vol. 2, pp. 170-174)

Further Reading: CWWL, 1982, vol. 2, “The Fulfillment of the Tabernacle and the Offerings in the Writings of John,” ch. 19

WEEK 4—DAY 4

Morning Nourishment

1 John 3:24 And he who keeps His commandments abides in Him, and He in him. And in this we know that He abides in us, by the Spirit whom He gave to us.

4:13 In this we know that we abide in Him and He in us, that He has given to us of His Spirit.

The regenerated spirit of the believers and the consummated Spirit of God are mingled as one spirit (1 Cor. 6:17)...Today the Spirit of God and the human spirit are mingled as one within us so that we can live a God-man life, a life that is God yet man and man yet God. Hence, the God-man life is a living of the two spirits, the Spirit of God and the spirit of man joined and mingled together as one. (CWWL, 1994-1997, vol. 2, "The Issue of the Union of the Consummated Spirit of the Triune God and the Regenerated Spirit of the Believers," p. 193)

The essence of the New Testament is the two spirits, the divine Spirit and the human spirit, mingled together as one spirit. If we see this, we will be different persons, rejoicing continually. (CWWL, 1989, vol. 3, "The Experience and Growth in Life," p. 128)

Today's Reading

Abiding in the Lord is a matter in, of, through, and with life; thus, it is an organic matter. Through our study of the Gospel of John, we discovered that the matter of abiding is related to the two spirits. John 3:6 says, "...That which is born of the Spirit is spirit." In this verse the first occurrence of the word spirit... refers to the divine Spirit, and the second occurrence...refers to the human spirit. Thus, John 3:6 reveals that the divine birth involves two spirits—the divine Spirit and the human spirit. In the divine birth our human spirit is born of the Spirit of God. Thus, regeneration is accomplished in the human spirit by the Holy Spirit of God with God's life, the uncreated eternal life.

John 4:24 says, “God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit.” According to this verse, we need to worship God, who is Spirit, in our human spirit. Just as the divine birth involves two spirits, so also genuine worship involves two spirits. The divine birth is carried out by the divine Spirit in our human spirit, and the genuine worship of God, who is Spirit, is in our human spirit.

Our abiding in Christ, the vine, by being one with the Lord in our mingled spirit is not only a divine fact but also a spiritual factor that affects our entire spiritual life. It is in and by abiding that we have the genuine holiness, spirituality, and victory over sin, the world, Satan, our flesh, and the self; it is in and by abiding that we become practical members of the Body of Christ; and it is in and by abiding that we live the normal Christian life and church life. When we are abiding in the vine, we have no problems, because we are one with the Son of God, who has conquered every enemy and dealt with every negative thing. When we abide in the Lord, we lack nothing, and we need to do nothing other than enjoy what He has accomplished, because all that He has accomplished becomes our experience when we are one with Him.

To abide in the Lord by unceasing prayer means that we have a constant and unceasing trust in the living One, who is one spirit with us. We need to see this. More than fifty years ago I spent much time seeking holiness, a victorious life, and spirituality. I bought all kinds of books and spent time reading them and practicing what they outlined. However, nothing that I practiced was effective. Through the years the Lord in His mercy allowed us to discover the secret for all the “how-tos.” This secret is to abide in the mingled spirit.

If the church is in a poor and low condition, our abiding will help the church be uplifted and enriched. The real remedy to the church’s poor condition comes from our abiding in the Lord. Today the reason there is much spiritual death among the saints is that we do not abide in the Lord by remaining in our mingled spirit to worship God, receive His instant word, and dwell with Him. (CWWL, 1979, vol. 2, pp. 165-168, 172-173)

Further Reading: Life-study of Romans, msg. 56

WEEK 4—DAY 5

Morning Nourishment

Rom. 8:26-27 ...In like manner the Spirit also joins in to help us in our weakness, for we do not know for what we should pray as is fitting, but the Spirit Himself intercedes for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. But He who searches the hearts knows what the mind of the Spirit is, because He intercedes for the saints according to God.

Prayer is not just man contacting God but also God contacting man...Every prayer that is up to the standard is one which is a mutual flow and contact between God and man. God and man are just like electric currents flowing into one another. It is hard to say that prayer is solely God in man or solely man in God. According to the fact and experience, prayer is the flowing between God and man. Every prayer that is truly up to the standard surely will have a condition of mutual flowing between God and man so that man may actually touch God and God may actually touch man; thus, man is united with God, and God with man. Therefore, the highest and most accurate meaning of prayer is that it is the mutual contact between God and man. (CWWL, 1959, vol. 4, "Lessons on Prayer," pp. 19-20)

Today's Reading

If a brother or sister has really learned the secret of prayer,...spontaneously there will be the following result: such a praying one will certainly cooperate with God, work together with God, and allow God to express Himself and His desire from within him and through him, ultimately accomplishing God's purpose. This is according to Romans 8:26 and 27, which tell us that we do not know for what we should pray as is fitting, but the Holy Spirit intercedes for us according to God's purpose. Actually, we do not know how to pray. We know what people ordinarily call supplication, but we know little about the prayer that is spoken of in the Scriptures. The first time I read these two verses in Romans 8, I questioned their meaning. When I was sick, I thought, did I not pray to God

asking Him to heal me? When I was in want, did I not pray to God asking Him to send me provision? How could the Scriptures say that we do not know for what we should pray as is fitting? Gradually, the Lord showed me that we really do not know anything about the kind of prayer that God desires...We do not know those prayers that touch God's desire and are up to the standard. This is our weakness. Thank God, in this matter of our weakness, the Spirit Himself joins in to help us and intercede for us with groanings which cannot be uttered.

Real prayers are the Holy Spirit within man expressing God's desire through man. In other words, real prayers are prayers involving two parties. They are not simply man alone praying to God, but they are the Spirit mingling with man, putting on man, and joining with man in prayer. Outwardly it is man praying, but inwardly it is the Spirit praying. This means that two parties express the same prayer at the same time.

We often speak of Elijah's prayer. James 5:17 says, "Elijah was a man of like feeling with us, and he earnestly prayed that it would not rain; and it did not rain on the earth for three years and six months." Earnestly prayed in Greek means "prayed with prayer," or "prayed in prayer." This is a very peculiar expression in the Bible. Please remember, this is what we mean by prayer of two parties. When Elijah was praying, he was praying with, or in, a prayer. In other words, he prayed with the prayer of the Spirit within him. Thus, we can say that Elijah's prayer was God praying to Himself in Elijah. Andrew Murray once said that a real prayer is the Christ who indwells us praying to the Christ who is sitting on the throne. That Christ would be praying to Christ Himself sounds strange, but in our experience this is really the case.

Romans 8:27 [says], "The Spirit...intercedes...according to God." This means that the Holy Spirit prays in us according to God; that is, God prays in us through His Spirit. Thus, such a prayer certainly expresses God's intention as well as God Himself. (CWWL, 1959, vol. 4, "Lessons on Prayer," pp. 22-23)

Further Reading: CWWL, 1982, vol. 1, pp. 353-357

WEEK 4—DAY 6

Morning Nourishment

John 15:7 If you abide in Me and My words abide in you, ask whatever you will, and it shall be done for you.

1 John 5:14-15 And this is the boldness which we have toward Him, that if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us. And if we know that He hears us in whatever we ask, we know that we have the requests which we have asked from Him.

John 15:7...can be divided into four points. The first point is, “you abide in Me.” The second is, “and My words abide in you.” Verses 4 and 5 speak of us abiding in the Lord and Him abiding in us. But in verse 7 I is changed to My words—“you abide in Me and My words abide in you.” I being changed to My words means that I have something to explain to you...When it says here, “My words abide in you,” this is a step forward. Third, it says, “Whatever you will.” Because of the Lord’s speaking in us, we begin to desire something, and this desire is something issuing out of the Lord’s words. Fourth, it says, “Ask...and it shall be done for you.” When we thus abide in the Lord, His words abide in us, and there is the desiring in us that comes out of His words; finally, “will” becomes “ask.”...This asking will be answered by God. (CWWL, 1959, vol. 4, “Lessons on Prayer,” p. 123)

Today’s Reading

All prevailing prayers, prayers that can be counted effective before the Lord, must surely be the result of our abiding in the Lord and allowing His words to abide in us.

Once man abides in the Lord, spontaneously he touches God’s feeling and understands God’s desire. In the Old Testament Abraham was an example of this. Because he continually remained before God, God could not refrain from

telling Abraham of His intention. Psalm 32:8 says that God guides us with His eyes...If you live in the fellowship, you will understand what the Bible means when it says that God guides us with His eyes...We need only to live in the fellowship, remain in His presence, and draw near to Him. Then spontaneously, we will be able to understand His temperament, His disposition, and the principles of His doings. It is as if in our spirit we catch a glimpse of the Lord's eyes and thus spontaneously touch His feeling and understand His desire.

After we have touched God's feeling and understood His intention, spontaneously we will have His desire in us. At that moment His desire becomes our desire, and what He wants is exactly what we want.

After we have touched God's feeling, understood His intention, and are also able to desire what He desires, then we pray. This is the very thing that is spoken of in John 15:7...This wish does not come out of the one who prays. Rather, it comes out from that which God has anointed into him. Since this desire is God's desire, when he prays, God answers.

Some, shortly after they have been saved, read this verse in John 15 and then say, "This promise of the Lord is truly wonderful. I can ask whatever I will, and it will be done for me." So they begin to ask according to whatever they want. Eventually, they find that what they ask for is not granted. This is not because the Lord's promise fails to materialize. It is because they take the Lord's promise out of context. They pray without first fulfilling the necessary requirements. They misunderstand the meaning of the verse...We understand that the desire in our prayer does not originate from man, but it is what God desires. First, man continuously abides in the Lord. Then God becomes the words in man so that man is able to understand God's intention. This produces in man a desire that is God's desire. When man prays according to this desire, God has no choice but to answer it. This then is to "ask and you shall receive" [16:24]. This prayer is a prayer resulting from abiding in the Lord. (CWWL, 1959, vol. 4, "Lessons on Prayer," pp. 123, 132-133)

Further Reading: CWWL, 1983, vol. 3, "A Living of Mutual Abiding with the Lord in Spirit," ch. 3

WEEK 4 — HYMN

We've found the secret of living

Experience of Christ — Abiding in Him

1162

1. We've found the se-cret of liv-ing, We've seen the vi-sion di-vine:
We are of God in Christ Je-sus, We're a-bid-ing, a-bid-ing in the
vine. (C) A-bid-ing in the vine, A-bid-ing in the vine, All the rich-es of God's life are mine!
Praise God, He put us here, Nev-er to leave; oh, we're—A-biding, a-biding in the vine.

2. No more in vain need we struggle,
Trying the way in to find.
Praise God—we're in Him already,
Hallelujah, abiding in the vine.

3. In us, the ointment is moving,
'Tis the anointing divine;
God's precious essence bestowing,
While abiding, abiding in the vine.

4. Now in the life-flow we're living,
O how the light in us shines!
Both God and man are at home now
By the mutual abiding in the vine.

