

**BEING A VESSEL UNTO HONOR,  
A FULLY EQUIPPED MAN OF GOD,  
BY BEING EMPOWERED IN THE GRACE  
WHICH IS IN CHRIST JESUS  
TO FULLY ACCOMPLISH OUR MINISTRY  
IN THE UNIQUE MINISTRY OF GOD'S ECONOMY**



INTERNATIONAL BLENDING CONFERENCE  
WARSAW  
3-5 MAY 2024

## CONFERENCE SCHEDULE

### FRIDAY May 3<sup>RD</sup>

- 3:00–5:00 pm Message One  
5:00–7:00 pm Break & Dinner  
7:00–9:00 pm Message Two

### SATURDAY MAY 4<sup>TH</sup>

- 10:00–12:00 am Message Three  
12:00–3:00 pm Break & Lunch  
3:00–5:00 pm Message Four

### THE LORD'S DAY MAY 5<sup>TH</sup>

- 10:00–12:30 pm The Lord's Table Meeting &  
Message Five  
12:30 pm Lunch

## Message One

### Hymn # 866

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| 1 Exercise the spirit!<br>Human thought reject;<br>Meet with one another,<br>Body life respect.            | 6 Freed within the spirit<br>From self-will and pride,<br>From self-love and glory,<br>All to override. |
| 2 Exercise the spirit!<br>All the forms forsake;<br>Share with one another,<br>Each of Christ partake.     | 7 Exercise the spirit,<br>Victory to claim<br>By the blood which cleanses<br>And the mighty Name.       |
| 3 Exercise the spirit!<br>Natural sense renounce;<br>Serve with one another,<br>Christ the Lord announce.  | 8 Exercise the spirit<br>Thus to touch the Lord;<br>Ever by the spirit<br>Take Him thru His Word.       |
| 4 Exercise the spirit!<br>Soulish life deny;<br>Helping one another,<br>On the Lord rely.                  | 9 It is by the spirit<br>Christ is testified;<br>It is by the spirit<br>Man is satisfied.               |
| 5 Freed within the spirit<br>From self-righteousness,<br>From self-condemnation<br>And self-consciousness. | 10 Exercise the spirit!<br>This is what we need!<br>Exercise the spirit!<br>May the Lord so lead!       |

## Message One

### Hymn # 612

- 1 God intends that all His being  
Be my full supply;  
With Him I must be united,  
In spirit nigh.  
  
All God's being, all His riches  
In the Spirit flow;  
I must exercise my spirit  
Him to know.
- 2 All the riches of His nature  
He has given me;  
I must touch Him in the spirit,  
These to see.
- 3 With the mind we understand Him,  
With the spirit touch;  
Those who never use the spirit  
Lack very much.
- 4 When to messages I listen,  
I must pray them in;  
Thus the word will be digested  
From within.
- 5 When the Word of God I study,  
I must touch the Lord;  
If in mind and not in spirit,  
Dead is the Word.
- 6 O what riches, O what glory  
In the Spirit shine!  
When I exercise my spirit,  
All are mine.

## Message 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**

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

**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.

**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.
  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.

**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.
- 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 sober-



- mindedness 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, and darkness.

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.
- 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.

## Message Two

### Hymn # 602

- 1 O how glorious! O how holy!  
God is the eternal life!  
Full, unlimited, and pow'rful,  
Pure, and merciful, and bright!  
In this life are all His riches,  
All His nature, love and light.
- 2 O how loving! O how gracious!  
God Himself is life to man!  
He in man hath made a spirit  
That He might fulfill His plan.  
'Tis His heart's delight and  
longing  
E'er to be received by man.
- 3 O what love and grace  
unbounded!  
God as life to man doth flow!  
He no more is hid in secret  
But Himself to man doth show,  
First in flesh and then as Spirit  
That His life all men may know.
- 4 How approachable! How near us!  
God in Christ our life to be!  
Christ is God in flesh incarnate,  
Manifest for man to see.  
Died and risen, now He enters  
Into man, his life to be.
- 5 O what wonder! As the Spirit  
God as life to man is shown!  
'Tis His other transformation,  
He as Spirit thus is known;  
Men convicting and inspiring,  
He within them makes His home.
- 6 O how glorious! O how precious!  
Thus the triune God to know!  
First the Father in the Son came,  
Now the Son as Spirit flows.  
When in man the Spirit enters  
God as life He doth bestow.
- 7 How mysterious, yet how real!  
God Himself now flows in me!  
In my heart, with me in oneness,  
He has come my life to be.  
Hallelujah! Hallelujah!  
I will praise unceasingly!

## Message Two

### **God Calling Us according to His Own Purpose**

Scripture Reading: 2 Tim. 1:9; Rom. 8:28-29;  
Eph. 3:9-11; Col. 1:9; Rev. 4:11; Matt. 7:21

- I. In 2 Timothy 1:9 Paul says that God “has saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works but according to His own purpose”:**
- A. God has not only saved us to enjoy His blessing but also called us with a holy calling, a calling for a particular cause, to fulfill His purpose—v. 9; Rom. 8:28.
  - B. To be called by God is to be separated unto His purpose—Eph. 1:11; 3:11; 2 Tim. 1:9; 3:10.
  - C. The purpose in 2 Timothy 1:9 is God’s plan according to His will to place us into Christ, making us one with Him to share His life and position so that we may be His testimony.
  - D. God saved us and called us according to His own purpose, and now His purpose should become our purpose—Rom. 8:28; 2 Tim. 1:9; 3:10.
  - E. We need to view salvation from God’s perspective; the purpose of God’s salvation is for His created and redeemed ones to have the sonship, that is, to have the life of the Son and be conformed to the image of His Son so that the Son would be the Firstborn among many brothers—1 John 5:11-12; Rom. 8:29.
  - F. Salvation involves our being saved from a human life that is meaningless:
    - 1. The gospel saves us out of the human life that is without meaning into the meaning of the universe—Rev. 4:11.
    - 2. God created a man who had great meaning and purpose (Gen. 1:26-28), but man fell, and the meaning of human life was lost.

3. With His salvation, God rescues us and brings us back to our original purpose, which is the meaning of the universe—Rom. 8:28; 2 Tim. 1:9.

**II. God's eternal purpose is to dispense Himself into His chosen and redeemed people to make them the same as He is in life and nature but not in the Godhead for His enlarged and expanded expression—Eph. 1:5, 9, 22-23; 3:9-11:**

- A. The book of Job leaves us with a twofold question concerning the purpose of God in creating man and in dealing with His chosen people—1:1; 10:13; 13:3-4:
  1. The answer to this question is the 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 so that they may become the same as He is for His fullness, His expression—Gen. 1:26; 1 Tim. 1:3-4; Eph. 1:22-23; 3:9, 19.
  2. God's purpose in dealing with His lovers, even in the way of loss, is that they may gain Him to the fullest extent, in order that He might be expressed through them for the fullness of His eternal purpose in His creation of man—Rom. 8:28-29; 2 Cor. 4:16; cf. Jer. 48:11.
- B. God's intention in the creation of all things, including man, was that man would be mingled with God to produce the church as the Body of Christ to consummate the New Jerusalem for His glorious expression—Zech. 12:1; Rev. 4:11; 19:7; 21:2.
- C. God's eternal purpose, according to the desire of His heart, is to have the church to be the organic Body of Christ for the manifestation of His multifarious wisdom—Eph. 1:9-11, 22-23; 3:9-11.

D. The church as the Body of Christ is the unique means used by God to fulfill His purpose and settle all His problems—cf. Gen. 1:26:

1. The church is for the expression, the glory, of God the Father in the divine sonship with the Father's life and nature—Eph. 1:4-5; John 17:22-24.
2. The church is God's greatest boast in making known to the angelic rulers and authorities His multifarious wisdom for the shame and defeat of the enemy to bring in His kingdom—Eph. 3:10; Rom. 16:20.
3. The church is for the heading up of all things in Christ through the working of Himself into us as life and light—Eph. 1:10, 22-23.

### **III. In order to live a life for the fulfillment of God's eternal purpose, we must know and do the will of God—Col. 1:9; Matt. 7:21:**

A. God is a God of purpose, having a will of His own pleasure, and He created all things for His will so that He might accomplish and fulfill His purpose—Rev. 4:11; Eph. 3:9-11; Col. 1:9:

1. God's will is His heart's desire, His mingling with man, and the fulfillment of His eternal purpose—Eph. 1:5, 9, 22; 5:17.
2. The will of God is to obtain a Body for Christ to be His fullness, His expression—Rom. 12:2, 5; Eph. 1:5, 9, 11, 22-23.

B. We need to be filled with the full knowledge of God's will—Col. 1:9:

1. God's will in Colossians is His will regarding His eternal purpose, regarding His economy concerning Christ—Eph. 1:5, 9, 11.
2. To have the full knowledge of God's will is to have the revelation of God's plan so that we may know what God plans to do in the universe—Rev. 4:11:

- a. God’s plan is to make Christ everything in the divine economy—Matt. 17:5; Col. 1:15-18; 3:10-11.
  - b. The revelation of God’s plan opens the way for us to have more experience of Christ—2:16-17; 3:4, 15-16.
3. The will of God for us is that we know the all-inclusive Christ, experience Him, and live Him as our life—1:9, 15-18; 3:4.
  4. Walking worthily of the Lord issues from having the full knowledge of God’s will; such a walk is a walk in which we live Christ—1:10; Phil. 1:19-21a.
- C. If we would enter into the manifestation of the kingdom of the heavens in the coming age, we must do the will of our Father in this age—Matt. 7:21-22; 6:10; 12:50; Rev. 4:11; Rom. 12:2; Eph. 1:5, 9, 11; 5:17; Col. 1:9; 4:12.
- D. “Not everyone who says to Me, Lord, Lord, will enter into the kingdom of the heavens, but he who does the will of My Father who is in the heavens”—Matt. 7:21:
1. To call on the Lord suffices for us to be saved, but to enter into the kingdom of the heavens, we also need to do the will of the heavenly Father—Rom. 10:13; 12:2; Matt. 12:50; Eph. 5:17; Col. 1:9.
  2. Since entering into the kingdom of the heavens requires doing the will of the heavenly Father, it is clearly different from entering the kingdom of God through regeneration—John 3:3, 5:
    - a. The entrance into the kingdom of God is through being born of the divine life—1:12-13; 3:5-6.
    - b. The entrance into the kingdom of the heavens is through the living of the divine life—Matt. 7:21; 12:50.
  3. The Lord Jesus rebuked those who prophesied, cast out demons, and did works of power in His name because, as “workers of lawlessness,” they did these

things out of themselves, not out of the obedience to God's will—7:23.

4. In order to do the will of the Father, we need to enter in through the narrow gate and walk on the constricted way—vv. 13-14:
  - a. The narrow gate excludes the old man, the self, the flesh, the human concept, and the world with all its glory; only that which corresponds with God's will can enter in.
  - b. As we walk on the constricted way, we are restricted by a mysterious, invisible, inward control, and we live under this control.
5. Whoever does the will of the Father is a relative of the Lord Jesus—12:50:
  - a. Christ, the heavenly King, always submitted to the Father's will, taking the Father's will as His portion and not resisting anything—11:28-30; 26:39.
  - b. Whoever does the will of the Father is a brother who helps the Lord Jesus, a sister who sympathizes with Him, and a mother who tenderly loves Him.
6. The kingdom people need to pray for the Father's will to be done on earth as in the heavens; this is to bring the kingdom of the heavens to the earth—6:10.



## Message Three

### Hymn # 887

- 1 The name of Jesus is our stand,  
It is our victory;  
Not on ourselves do we rely,  
But, mighty Lord, on Thee.  
Our weapons are not arms of flesh,  
But ours the Spirit's sword,  
And God's whole armor putting on,  
We battle in the Lord.
- 2 Behold, the foe doth meet and plot,  
Stand firm in one accord!  
Though war be fierce and darkness thick,  
Resist him in the Lord!  
If one thru fear should backward turn,  
He undermines the rest.  
Oh, do not let your brothers down,  
Nor by you be distressed.
- 3 The devil knows his time is short,  
He is the more enraged,  
And by his wiles would weaken us  
Before the battle's waged.  
The trials now more numerous are,  
The suff'ring e'en more sore,  
The force of hell opposing us  
More dreadful than before.
- 4 What should our posture be today  
In such a desperate hour?  
Should we our ease and pleasure seek  
And let the foe devour?  
Or with increasing conflict strong,  
Courageous to endure?  
'Tis here that life or death is won!  
Who will God's praise secure?

*continued*

- 5 For Christ the Lord we then would stand,  
He is the Conqueror!  
For Him we would endure the pain  
Until the fight is o'er.  
The hour of triumph soon we'll see—  
The Lord will come again;  
If now we suffer for His sake,  
Then we with Him shall reign.

### Hymn # 1206

- 1 There's a race for us to run—Hallelujah,  
And a way for us the race to win.  
To all those who have begun—Hallelujah,  
God has spoken, "Look away to Him!"  
  
Look away! O look away!  
Look to Jesus now today!  
Look away from everything unto Jesus,  
Look away from everything to Him!
- 2 Look away from all around—Hallelujah,  
Look away from all the strife and din;  
Look away where peace is found—Hallelujah,  
Look away from everything to Him.
- 3 Look away from fickle soul—Hallelujah,  
Look away from failing self within;  
Look away toward the goal—Hallelujah,  
Look away from everything to Him.
- 4 Look away from all the past—Hallelujah,  
Look away from both the good and sin;  
To the living One hold fast—Hallelujah,  
Look away from everything to Him.
- 5 Look away into His face—Hallelujah,  
He who'll finish what He did begin.  
O what grace to run the race—Hallelujah—  
We obtain by looking off to Him!

## Message Three

### **Being Empowered in the Grace Which Is in Christ Jesus to Be Teachers, Soldiers, Contenders, Farmers, and Workmen**

Scripture Reading: 2 Tim. 2:1-7, 15

**I. Even during a period of decline, a downward trend when most of God's people are carried away, we need to be among the remnant of God's people, who receive mercy from the Lord to remain faithful to Him—1 Cor. 7:25b; 1 Kings 19:14, 18; Rom. 11:5; Ezra 9:8; Neh. 1:3; Hag. 1:14:**

- A. Onesiphorus was an overcomer who resisted the general trend and stood against the downward current to refresh the Lord's ambassador in spirit, soul, and body, not being ashamed of the apostle's imprisonment on behalf of the Lord's commission—2 Tim. 1:16-18.
- B. Timothy was one who was fully perfected and equipped to minister the word of God, not only in caring for a local church but also in confronting the worsening decline of the church; he was like-souled with the apostle Paul to genuinely care for the church with all the saints and remind them of Paul's ways which were in Christ—3:13-17; Phil. 2:19-22; 1 Cor. 4:17; 1 Tim. 1:16; 4:12.
- C. Luke was the beloved physician, a faithful companion of Paul until his martyrdom—Col. 4:14; Philem. 24; 2 Tim. 4:11.
- D. Titus walked in the same spirit and in the same steps as Paul to care for the churches—2 Cor. 7:6-7; 12:18; Titus 1:4-5; 3:12; cf. 2 Tim. 4:10.
- E. Mark was useful to Paul for the ministry—v. 11; cf. Acts 15:37.

**II. Second Timothy reveals that in these last days before the Lord's coming, we need to be empowered in the grace which is in Christ Jesus to be faithful men, those who are teachers, soldiers, contenders, farmers, and workmen who cut straight the word of the truth—2:1-7, 15; Neh. 8:10; 2 Cor. 12:9:**

A. If someone in a local church has a deposit of the Lord's healthy words, he should train the faithful ones that they too may have a good deposit from the Lord and be competent to teach others so that they may be good stewards, dispensers, of the varied grace of God—2 Tim. 2:2; 1:12-14; 1 Tim. 6:20; Eph. 3:2; 4:29; 1 Pet. 4:10:

1. We must shepherd the saints with the teaching of God's economy—Eph. 4:11; Col. 1:27-29; cf. 1 Tim. 3:2; 4:11-16:

a. We should shepherd people by dispensing the divine life in the humanity of Jesus to cherish them and by teaching them the divine truths in the divinity of Christ to nourish them—Eph. 5:29.

b. Shepherding the flock of God by declaring to them all the counsel of God, the economy of God, protects the church from the destroyers of God's building, mingles them with the Triune God as grace, and binds them together in His oneness—Acts 20:26-30; Eph. 4:14; 1 Tim. 1:3-4; Rom. 16:17; cf. Ezek. 33:1-11; 34:25; Zech. 11:7.

2. The teacher, as a good minister of Christ Jesus, is nourished with the words of the faith and exercises his spirit to live Christ in his daily life for the church life—1 Tim. 4:6-7.

B. Their serving the Lord as soldiers indicates that the apostle considered their ministry a warfare for Christ, just as the priestly service was considered a military

service, a warfare—2 Tim. 2:3-4; Num. 4:23, 30, 35; 2 Tim. 4:7:

1. The Lord's ministry is the sounding of the trumpet for the army to go to war; to war the good warfare is to war against the different teachings of the dissenters and to carry out God's economy according to the apostles' ministry—1 Cor. 14:8; 1 Tim. 1:18; Num. 10:9; Judg. 7:18.
  2. To fight a good fight for the Lord's interests on this earth, we must clear away all earthly entanglements and lay hold on the eternal life, not trusting in our human life—2 Tim. 4:7; 1 Tim. 6:12; cf. 2 Cor. 5:4.
  3. We must be vigilant to fight the battle against death, the last enemy of God, by being filled with life to reign in life—Num. 6:6-7, 9; 2 Cor. 5:4; Rom. 5:17; 8:6, 11.
  4. Our will must be subdued and resurrected by Christ to be like the tower of David, the armory for spiritual warfare—S. S. 4:4; cf. 1 Chron. 11:22.
- C. We must run the Christian race as contenders, athletes, until we finish our course, fully accomplishing our ministry in the unique ministry of God's economy so that we may receive Christ as our prize—2 Tim. 2:5; 1 Cor. 9:25-27:
1. We must subdue our body and make it a conquered captive to serve us as a slave for fulfilling our holy purpose, not by our own effort but by the Spirit—Rom. 8:13.
  2. We must look to the Lord to be graced with His grace in Christ as the Beloved (Eph. 1:6) in order to finish our course so that we can be awarded in the next age with Christ as our incorruptible crown in the following aspects (1 Cor. 9:24-27):

- a. He will be our crown of life—Rev. 2:10; James 1:12.
  - b. He will be our crown of righteousness—2 Tim. 4:6-8.
  - c. He will be our crown of holiness—Exo. 28:36-38; 29:6; cf. 1 Pet. 1:15-16; Eph. 5:26.
  - d. He will be our crown of glory—1 Pet. 5:4.
  - e. The very attributes of God that guarded the tree of life from fallen man are now being dispensed into us as we eat Christ as the tree of life for Him to become our righteousness, holiness, and glory in order for us to display Him as the multifarious wisdom of God to the whole universe—Rev. 2:7; Gen. 3:24; 1 Cor. 1:30; Eph. 2:10; 3:10.
- D. The church is God's farm, God's cultivated land, and we are God's fellow workers, working as farmers together with Him by an all-fitting life to sow the seed of life into people and water them with the Spirit of life by His healthy words—2 Tim. 2:6; 1 Cor. 3:6, 9; 2 Cor. 6:1a; Luke 8:11; John 7:38; 6:63:
- 1. The word of God, as a grain of wheat, dispenses God as life into us to nourish us; it is also fire and a hammer to purify us and break down our self, our natural life, our flesh, our lusts, and our concepts—Jer. 23:28-29.
  - 2. God has sent forth His word as rain and snow to water His people in order to sanctify them, transform them, and conform them to His image that the Body may be built up—Isa. 55:8-11; John 17:17; Eph. 5:26.
  - 3. In our contact with the saints, we should have only one motive—to minister Christ to them that they may grow in the Lord—1 Tim. 5:1-2.
- E. To cut straight the word of the truth as God's workmen means to unfold the word of God in its various parts

rightly and straightly without distortion (as in carpentry); there is the need of the word of the truth, rightly unfolded, to enlighten the darkened people, inoculate against the poison, swallow up the death, and bring the distracted back to the proper track—2 Tim. 2:15; cf. Acts 26:18; Psa. 119:130.

## Message Four

### Hymn # 540

- 1 What release the Savior gave me!  
Christ indeed has set me free!  
All the pow'r of sin is broken,  
All death's sting is passed from me!  
  
Christ has made me more than conqu'ror,  
By His mighty victory,  
Now His resurrection power  
From my spirit strengthens me!
- 2 From the law Christ has delivered,  
To its claims I'm ever dead;  
Nevermore the law shall bind me,  
But by grace I'll live instead.
- 3 Christ has sin condemned at Calv'ry  
And its power done away;  
Now it has no ground within me,  
I am freed from all its sway.
- 4 Death by Him has been abolished,  
Incorrupted life is shown;  
Death's enthralling bonds are broken,  
Resurrection life is known.
- 5 Christ through death has crushed the devil,  
World and demons by His might,  
From the pow'r of darkness brought me  
To the realm of life and light.
- 6 All-sufficient grace He giveth,  
With His pow'r He covers me,  
Makes me glory in my weakness  
And in weakness strengthens me.



## Message Four

### Hymn # 132

- 1 Lo! in heaven Jesus sitting,  
Christ the Lord is there enthroned;  
As the man by God exalted,  
With God's glory He is crowned.
- 2 He hath put on human nature,  
Died according to God's plan,  
Resurrected with a body,  
And ascended as a man.
- 3 God in Him on earth was humbled,  
God with man was domiciled;  
Man in Him in heav'n exalted,  
Man with God is reconciled.
- 4 He as God with man is mingled,  
God in man is testified;  
He as man with God is blended,  
Man in God is glorified.
- 5 From the Glorified in heaven  
The inclusive Spirit came;  
All of Jesus' work and Person  
Doth this Spirit here proclaim.
- 6 With the Glorified in heaven  
Is the Church identified;  
By the Spirit of this Jesus  
Are His members edified.
- 7 Lo! a man is now in heaven  
As the Lord of all enthroned;  
This is Jesus Christ our Savior,  
With God's glory ever crowned!

## Message Four

### **Christ Nullifying Death and Bringing Life and Incorruption to Light, and Our Remembering Jesus Christ, the Seed of David, Raised from the Dead**

Scripture Reading: 2 Tim. 1:10; 2:8; Acts 2:24; Heb. 2:9, 14; 7:16

#### **I. “Our Savior Christ Jesus, who nullified death and brought life and incorruption to light through the gospel”—2 Tim. 1:10:**

A. In 2 Timothy 1:10 Paul tells us that Christ nullified death:

1. This means that Christ made death of none effect through His devil-destroying death (Heb. 2:14) and death-swallowing resurrection (1 Cor. 15:52-54).
2. Christ not only defeated death—He nullified it—2 Tim. 1:10.
3. Christ was manifested to nullify death and to bring in eternal, indestructible life—Heb. 7:16.
4. Through His resurrection, death has become of none effect; death has lost its power, even its taste—2:9; Acts 2:24.
5. Christ could nullify death because He destroyed the devil, the one who has the might of death—Heb. 2:14:
  - a. By overcoming Satan and nullifying death, the Lord Jesus also defeated Hades and the grave—Rev. 1:18.
  - b. Therefore, Christ’s resurrection was not only God’s vindication and the Lord’s success but also His victory over death, Satan, Hades, and the grave—20:14.

B. Having nullified death through His death, the Lord Jesus brought life and incorruption to light through the gospel in His resurrection—2 Tim. 1:10:

1. The last part of 2 Timothy 1:10 speaks of Christ Jesus who brought life and incorruption to light through the gospel.
2. In the gospel the revelation is brought to us that Christ has nullified death and has brought us eternal, indestructible life—v. 10.
3. Life in 2 Timothy 1:10 refers to the eternal life of God, which is given to all believers in Christ (1 Tim. 1:16) and which is the main element of the divine grace given to us (Rom. 5:17, 21):
  - a. This life has conquered death (Acts 2:24) and will swallow up death (2 Cor. 5:4).
  - b. Life is the divine element, even God Himself, imparted into our spirit; incorruption is the consequence of life's saturating our body, giving life to our mortal bodies through His Spirit who indwells us.
  - c. This life and incorruption are able to counter death and corruption—2 Tim. 1:10.

## **II. “Remember Jesus Christ, raised from the dead, of the seed of David, according to my gospel”—2:8:**

- A. The Lord Jesus Christ was raised from the dead—v. 8:
  1. In 2 Timothy 2:8 the word raised indicates Christ's victory over death by His divine life with its resurrection power.
  2. Regarding the Lord Jesus as a man, the New Testament tells us that God raised Him from the dead—Rom. 8:11.
  3. Regarding the Lord Jesus as God, the New Testament tells us that He Himself rose from the dead—Acts 10:41; 1 Thes. 4:14.
  4. Christ's being raised from the dead and His raising Himself from the dead indicate His dual status—human and divine:

- a. The Lord Jesus is God and also resurrection (John 1:1; 11:25), possessing the indestructible life (Heb. 7:16).
  - b. Because Christ is the ever-living One, death was not able to hold Him.
  - c. He delivered Himself to death, but death could not detain Him.
  - d. Rather, death was defeated by Him, and He rose up from it—Acts 2:24.
5. On the day of His resurrection, early in the morning, the Lord Jesus ascended to satisfy the Father; the freshness of His resurrection was first for the Father's enjoyment, as the firstfruits of the harvest were, in type, brought first to God—John 20:17; cf. Lev. 23:10-11; Exo. 23:19a.
6. Another aspect of Christ's work in His resurrection is His rising on the first day of the week to germinate the new creation—2 Cor. 5:17:
- a. The fact that Christ arose on the first day of the week indicates that the entire universe has a new beginning in Christ's resurrection—John 20:1-9.
  - b. Christ's resurrection ushered in a new period, a new age.
  - c. In the sight of God, the entire old creation was crucified with Christ and buried with Him; then on the first day of the week there was a new beginning.
  - d. Whereas the Lord's death was the termination of the old creation, His resurrection was the germination of the new creation—2 Cor. 5:17.
- B. The expression seed of David indicates Christ's dignified human nature, which was exalted and glorified along with His divine nature—Rom. 1:3-4:

1. The prophecy in 2 Samuel 7:12-14a says that the seed of David would be the Son of God, and God would be His Father.
2. In other words, a human seed would become the divine Son—v. 14a.
3. The word concerning your seed in verse 12 and My son in verse 14 implies that the seed of David would become a divine Son:
  - a. This word corresponds to Paul's word in Romans 1:3-4 concerning Christ as the seed of David being designated the Son of God in His humanity in resurrection.
  - b. It also relates to the Lord's question in Matthew 22:41-45 concerning how the Christ could be both the son of David and the Son of God as David's Lord—a wonderful person, a God-man with two natures, divinity and humanity.
  - c. These verses clearly unveil that a seed of man—that is, a son of man—can become the Son of God.
  - d. God Himself, the divine One, became a human seed, the seed of a man, David.
  - e. This seed was Jesus, the God-man, Jehovah the Savior (1:18-21; 2 Tim. 2:8), who was the Son of God by virtue of His divinity (Luke 1:35).
  - f. Through His resurrection He as the human seed became the Son of God in His humanity—Rom. 1:3-4.
  - g. In Christ God was constituted into man, man was constituted into God, and God and man were mingled together to be one entity, the God-man.
  - h. This implies that God's intention in His economy is to make Himself man in order to make man God in life and in nature but not in the Godhead—John 3:6, 16; Rom. 1:3-4; 2 Pet. 1:4.

## Message Five

### Hymn # 548

- 1 Earthen vessel I was made,  
Christ in me the treasure laid;  
His container I must be,  
As the content He in me.
- 2 In His image I was made,  
Fit that Christ should all pervade;  
Thus the vessel God did form  
With the content uniform.
- 3 In my spirit He remains,  
With His power He sustains;  
As the Spirit one with me,  
He is my reality.
- 4 Moving in me day by day,  
Mingling with me all the way,  
All my steps He regulates,  
Every part He saturates.
- 5 Him expressing from within,  
Making Him to others seen,  
I transparent have to be  
That He may be shown thru me.
- 6 Transformation is my need,  
To be broken more indeed,  
That the clay may change in form,  
To the treasure to conform.

## Message Five

### Hymn # 66

- 1 How sweet the Name of Jesus  
sounds  
In a believer's ear!  
It soothes his sorrow, heals his  
wounds,  
And drives away his fear,  
And drives away his fear,  
And drives away his fear,  
And drives away his fear,  
It soothes his sorrow, heals his  
wounds,  
And drives away his fear.
- 2 It makes the wounded spirit  
whole,  
And calms the troubled breast;  
'Tis manna to the hungry soul,  
And to the weary rest,  
And to the weary rest,  
And to the weary rest,  
'Tis manna to the hungry soul,  
And to the weary rest.
- 3 Dear Name! the Rock on which  
we build;  
Our shield and hiding-place;  
Our never-failing treasury, filled  
With boundless stores of grace,  
With boundless stores of grace,  
With boundless stores of grace,  
Our never-failing treasury, filled  
With boundless stores of grace.
- 4 Jesus, our Savior, Shepherd, Friend,  
Our Prophet, Priest, and King;  
Our Lord, our Life, our Way, our  
End,  
Accept the praise we bring,  
Accept the praise we bring,  
Accept the praise we bring,  
Our Lord, our Life, our Way, our  
End,  
Accept the praise we bring.
- 5 Weak is the effort of our heart,  
And cold our warmest thought;  
But when we see Thee as Thou art,  
We'll praise Thee as we ought,  
We'll praise Thee as we ought,  
We'll praise Thee as we ought,  
But when we see Thee as Thou art,  
We'll praise Thee as we ought.
- 6 Till then we would Thy love  
proclaim  
With every fleeting breath;  
And triumph in that blessed Name  
Which quells the pow'r of death,  
Which quells the pow'r of death,  
Which quells the pow'r of death,  
And triumph in that blessed Name  
Which quells the pow'r of death.

## Message Five

### **Being a Vessel unto Honor, and Pursuing Righteousness, Faith, Love, Peace with Those Who Call on the Lord out of a Pure Heart**

Scripture Reading: 2 Tim. 2:20-22; Rom. 9:21, 23; 2 Cor. 4:7

#### **I. In 2 Timothy 2:20-21 Paul speaks of honorable and dishonorable vessels:**

- A. Honorable vessels are constituted of both the divine nature and the redeemed and regenerated human nature; dishonorable vessels are constituted of the fallen human nature—Eph. 2:2-3; 2 Pet. 1:4.
- B. In Romans 9:21 Paul speaks of vessels unto honor, and in Romans 9:23, of vessels of mercy prepared unto glory.
- C. The fact that we are vessels of honor prepared unto glory means that we have been designed to contain God as our honor and glory.
- D. God chose us so that we may be vessels of honor filled with the processed and consummated Triune God—vv. 21-23; 2 Cor. 13:14.
- E. God wants an open vessel—Rom. 9:23; 2 Cor. 4:7:
  - 1. God's intention was to create a vessel to contain Him and to express Him, so God only wants an opening of the vessel—2 Tim. 2:21; Rom. 11:24.
  - 2. If the vessel is open, God can fulfill His purpose, but if the vessel is closed, God's purpose is frustrated—Col. 4:3.
  - 3. God does not want us to do anything; He wants us only to be a living vessel, a clean, empty, and open vessel.
  - 4. The summary of Paul's fourteen Epistles may be expressed in two words—open vessel.
- F. If we cleanse ourselves from vessels unto dishonor, we will be vessels unto honor—2 Tim. 2:21:



1. To cleanse ourselves is to depart from unrighteousness (v. 19), as an outward evidence of the inward divine nature.
2. We should cleanse ourselves not only from anything unrighteous but also from the dishonorable vessels; this means that we must stay away from them.
3. If we cleanse ourselves from these negative things and negative persons, we will be vessels unto honor.
4. In 2 Timothy 2:21 unto honor is a matter of nature, sanctified is a matter of position, useful is a matter of practice, and prepared is a matter of training.

## **II. We need to pursue righteousness, faith, love, and peace—v. 22:**

- A. A governing principle of our Christian life should be pursuing the experience of Christ and the enjoyment of Christ—Phil. 3:12.
- B. Our experience of Christ rests on the foundation of God’s righteousness, the unshakable foundation of God’s throne—Psa. 89:14:
  1. Whereas holiness is related to God’s inward nature, righteousness is related to God’s outward acts, ways, actions, and activities—Eph. 4:24.
  2. Everything that God does is right—Psa. 89:14.
  3. The righteousness of God is what God is in His actions with respect to justice and righteousness.
- C. In the New Testament faith bears two denotations—objective and subjective:
  1. In the objective denotation, faith refers to the entire revelation of the New Testament concerning the person of Christ and His redemptive work—Acts 6:7; 14:22; Rom. 16:26; 1 Cor. 15:14; 1 Tim. 1:19b; Jude 3, 20.
  2. In the subjective denotation, faith refers to the act of believing—Luke 18:8; Mark 11:22.

3. By faith we are born of God to be His sons, partaking of His life and nature to express Him—Gal. 3:26; John 1:12-13; 2 Pet. 1:4.
  4. By faith in Christ, we are put into Christ to become the members of His Body, sharing all that He is for His expression—John 3:15; Rom. 12:4-5.
  5. Genuine faith is Christ Himself infused into us to become our ability to believe in Him; after the Lord Jesus has been infused into us, He spontaneously becomes our faith—Heb. 11:1, 3; 12:2.
  6. The faith in 1 Timothy 1:19 is objective, referring to the things in which we believe, whereas faith at the beginning of this verse is subjective, referring to the act of our believing.
- D. Love is the nature of God's essence—1 John 4:19:
1. The divine love as God's essential attribute is mainly expressed in sending His Son to redeem us and impart God's life into us so that we may become His children—John 3:16; 1 John 4:9-10.
  2. God is love; we love because He first loved us—vv. 8, 19.
  3. To abide in love is to live a life in which we love others habitually with the love that is God Himself—v. 8.
- E. The New Testament speaks about both the peace of God and the God of peace—John 20:19; Eph. 2:14; 2 Pet. 1:2:
1. Concerning the God of peace, we need Romans 16:20 and Philippians 4:7.
  2. The God of peace guards over our hearts, and He patrols before our hearts and thoughts in Christ Jesus—Rom. 15:33; Phil. 4:9.
  3. The peace of God and the God of peace are one—1 Thes. 5:23.
  4. In our experience peace is a condition that results

from grace; grace is a substance, and peace is a condition—1 Cor. 1:3.

### **III. We all should be those who call on the name of the Lord out of a pure heart—2 Tim. 2:22:**

- A. Calling on the name of the Lord is not a new practice in the New Testament; it began with Enosh, the third generation of mankind, in Genesis 4:26:
1. Calling on the name of the Lord was continued by Job (Job 12:4; 27:10), Abraham (Gen. 12:8; 13:4; 21:33), Isaac (26:25), and Moses and the children of Israel (Deut. 4:7); all of these and many others practiced calling upon the Lord in the Old Testament age.
  2. In the New Testament, calling on the name of the Lord was mentioned first by Peter: “It shall be that everyone who calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved”—Acts 2:21.
  3. According to Acts 7:59, when Stephen was being stoned, he was calling upon the Lord and saying, “Lord Jesus, receive my spirit!”
  4. When we preach the gospel and help others to be saved, we need to encourage them to call on the name of the Lord and say, “O Lord Jesus”—cf. Rom. 10:9-13.
  5. Calling on the name of the Lord is the secret not only to our salvation but also to our enjoyment of the Lord’s riches—Eph. 1:18; 3:16.
- B. Second Timothy 2:22 says that we need to “call on the Lord out of a pure heart”:
1. In the Bible to be pure means to be only for God.
  2. A pure heart is a heart fixed on God—Matt. 5:8.
  3. In serving the Lord, we should be purely for Him and not for anything else; we should be wholly for God—1 Thes. 5:23.
  4. Our focus should be on calling on the Lord and having a pure heart—2 Tim. 2:22.

## *Excerpts from the Ministry for Message 1*

### **THE EXERCISE OF OUR SPIRIT**

It is very good that we have this study concerning our spirit. I can testify that whenever we teach and speak about our human spirit, we have joy. This is because 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.

Genesis tells us clearly that in God's creation, He did something particular to produce our spirit (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. Our breath is not ourselves, but nothing is as close to us as our breath. In like manner, 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. 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. 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. Some men who live a higher life take care of their conscience, but they are in the minority. 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. Actually, the best people in human society are not

the lawful ones but the ones who take care of their conscience. 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. Something stronger and richer has been added into our being. This is God's life, which has been added into our spirit. This addition is a real gift. Hebrews 6:4 says that we believers have tasted of the heavenly gift. 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!

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. When I rise up 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. To say "O Lord" as soon as you rise up in the morning 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.

At times we may be in a hard situation. We may be sick, or we may have lost our job. At that time we should exercise our spirit. 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 Paul says, "Exercise yourself unto godliness." Then in verse 8 he speaks of bodily exercise. In these two verses 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.

### **TO FAN OUR SPIRIT**

Second Timothy 1:6-7 indicates that we need to fan our spirit into flame. In these verses Paul says, "For which cause I remind you to 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." 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 have to know the background of 2 Timothy to appreciate Paul's word here. Paul wrote this book during a difficult time for his spiritual son Timothy. Paul was in prison in Rome. Furthermore, all those in Asia had forsaken Paul's ministry (v. 15). The churches in Asia were the main churches raised up through Paul's ministry, but they forsook him. Timothy was there among them. If you were Timothy, how would you face the situation? People could have said to Timothy, "Why are you still following Paul? All the saints in Asia have forsaken him. Also, if God were really with him, He would rescue him from

the prison in Rome.” No doubt, Timothy was discouraged. Otherwise, Paul would not have said, “For which cause I remind you...” Timothy was discouraged and had to be reminded. Paul knew that Timothy was down, and he sympathized with him. He reminded Timothy that there was still a small fire within him, which he needed to fan into flame. At times you may suffer to such an extent that you may begin to doubt God and doubt your salvation. But regardless of how much you doubt, one thing is within you that you cannot deny—your spirit. You are not like a beast. You have a spirit. This spirit is a trouble to Satan. Regardless of how much work Satan has done and is still doing, there is one thing within us that he cannot touch—our spirit. We need to fan our spirit into flame.

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.

A small fire that is fanned into flame can turn into a great fire. A forest fire is an example of this. The wind fans the small fire into a great fire. If something were burning within a house, and you wanted to fan that fire, you would open the window or the door. The wind would cause the fire to burn into a flame. The easiest way for you to fan your spirit is to open up your mouth.

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.

Paul wrote 2 Timothy 1:6-7 according to his experience. He reminded Timothy to fan into flame the gift of God within him. Then he said that God has not given us a spirit of cowardice. Instead, God has given us a spirit in the center of our being surrounded by the three

parts of the soul—the will, the emotion, and the mind. The spirit given to us by God is of power, of love, and of sobermindedness. Power belongs to our will. Love belongs to our emotion. Sobermindedness belongs to our mind. God has given us a spirit of these three things. Our will should be strong, full of power; our emotion should be loving, full of love; and our mind should be sober, full of sobermindedness.

According to the divine revelation, God does not give us a spirit of cowardice but a spirit of power. That means our spirit is connected to our will, which is powerful. So whenever we exercise our spirit, we have to realize that our will is involved. Our spirit is surrounded not only by the powerful will but also by the loving emotion and by the sober mind. That means that our mind should not be cloudy or foggy but very clear, very sober.

Paul had the revelation of this and also the experience. Verses 6 and 7 of 2 Timothy 1 are marvelous. These verses show us that we saved ones have the capital to live the Christian life and the church life. This capital is the God-given spirit. This God-given spirit, according to God's ordination, is surrounded by the power of our will, by the love of our emotion, and by the sobermindedness of our mind. These three helpers are surrounding our spirit, not to depress us but rather to uplift us and help us.

We have to exercise such a God-given spirit. The capital for a person to run in a race is his God-created legs. Without God creating two legs for you, how could you run? You would have no capital with which to run. In like manner, if God did not give us a spirit, we would not have the capital to run the Christian race. But today we have a great account, a great deposit in the bank. We have a God-given spirit. As long as we have the God-given spirit, we have power, love, and sobermindedness with a clear sky.

To say that we have the capital means that we have the capacity. We can do things because we have the capacity of power. We should not say that we do not love people, because we have the capacity of love. We should not say that we are in darkness, because we have the capacity of sobermindedness with a clear sky. We should declare, "My sky is not cloudy; my sky is clear," because this is our capacity.

Quite often we are cheated and deceived by the enemy. We say that we are weak and cloudy. But when we say that we are weak, we are



weak. When we say that we are cloudy, we are cloudy. On the other hand, when we say that we are strong, we are strong. When we say that we are clear, we are clear. When we say what we are, that is what we are. Do not say that you are weak. If you say that you are weak, weakness is with you. But if you say that you are strong, strength is with you. We can say that we are strong because we have the capacity. We have the capital. God gave us not a spirit of cowardice but a spirit of power, of love, and of sobermindedness. We should declare this and claim this. Then we will have it. This is our portion. This is our legal, God-appointed lot, which has been allotted to us by God.

Sometimes in the past, I felt down as I was preparing to speak for the Lord. It seemed that I had nothing to speak. But at that juncture I prayed. In my prayer I realized that this was a cheating. Actually, I was not weak and I did have something. There were times when I stepped up to the podium to speak without knowing what I was going to speak. When I was asking the saints to open their Bibles to read some verses, I did not know what we would read until that very moment. After we read these verses, the message came to me. Quite often such a message is more living, more powerful, and full of more impact and supply than other messages.

I am sharing this to point out that you should not listen to what you feel or what you think. What you feel and what you think are altogether a lie, a falsehood. Christians should not believe that. We should always believe and declare and claim that we are strong. We are full of love. We can love our enemies. We are well able to love everyone. We are very clear. Our sky is crystal clear. We have to believe because we have this capital. This is our capacity. We should claim and declare, "I am strong! I am loving! I am clear!" We are blessed if we say this. This is the way to exercise our spirit. This is to fan our spirit into flame. Then we will pray. The more we pray, the more we are fanning, and the more burning there will be within us.

Whenever there is the fanning, there is always a battle with Satan. While the fanning of a fire is going on, the fire department is fighting to quench the fire. This is an illustration of Satan trying to quench the fire being fanned within us. Today there are many things that are like cold water, trying to quench our inner flame. Sometimes a telephone call comes with bad news. Then someone comes to you

with more bad news. Things will happen in our environment that can quench us. At that time we have to fight. We have to declare the facts. We have to fan our spirit into flame. Then we will be the highest persons, the super persons.

### **TO SET OUR MIND ON THE SPIRIT**

After you fan your spirit into flame, learn to practice another thing. Always manage your mind. 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. Romans 8:6 says, “The mind set on the flesh is death, but the mind set on the spirit is life and peace.” After fanning our spirit into flame, we must learn to set our mind on the spirit. Our mind is very “talkative.” Our mind speaks to us everywhere at all times. If we do not control our mind, we can wander in our imagination all over the globe within a short time. We can dream in our mind even during the day. 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.

It is easy for a husband and a wife to commit sins because when they are with each other, they do not set their mind on the spirit. Before other people, they 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.

### **TO DISCERN OUR SPIRIT FROM OUR SOUL**

In Hebrews 4:12 the word discern is used. It says that the word of God can divide our soul from our spirit and is able to discern the thoughts and intentions of the heart. 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. All the time you have to keep your

spirit separate from your soul. 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. They mix up their spirit with their soul. 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. We, the ones who are seeking after Christ, must learn to fan our spirit into flame, to set our mind on the spirit, and also 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. Then we will remain in the spirit all the time. This is to exercise, to use, to employ, our spirit.

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.

When we get into these points, we can realize that 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.

The battle in the Christian life is always there. Even within us there is a battle between the spirit and the flesh and even more between the spirit and the soul. So we have to exercise our spirit, to use

our spirit, that is, to fan our spirit into flame. Then we should learn how to control our mind by setting our mind on our spirit. We should also always discern what is of the spirit and what is of 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. I hope that we will practice using our spirit until we build up a strong habit of exercising our spirit. (*The Collected Works of Witness Lee, 1993*, vol. 2, “The Spirit with Our Spirit,” pp. 180-187)

## *Excerpts from the Ministry for Message 2*

### **The Condition of Entering into the Kingdom of the Heavens**

#### ***Not Merely Calling on the Lord but Doing the Will of the Heavenly Father***

Verse 21 says, “Not everyone who says to Me, Lord, Lord, will enter into the kingdom of the heavens, but he who does the will of My Father who is in the heavens.” This does not refer to the reality of the kingdom of the heavens today but to the coming manifestation of the kingdom in the future. To enter into the kingdom of the heavens we need to do two things: call on the Lord and do the will of the heavenly Father. To call on the Lord suffices for us to be saved (Rom. 10:13), but to enter into the kingdom of the heavens we also need to do the will of the heavenly Father. Hence, not everyone who says, “Lord, Lord,” will enter into the kingdom of the heavens; but those who call on the Lord and do the will of the heavenly Father will enter in.

Since entering into the kingdom of the heavens also requires doing the will of the heavenly Father, it is clearly different from entering into the kingdom of God through regeneration (John 3:3, 5). This latter entrance is gained through being born of the divine life; the former, through the living of that life.

In Matthew 7:21 the Lord did not say “your Father” but “My Father.” Here the Lord seemed to be saying, “I, the Son of Man and the Son of God, have been doing the will of My Father. You also are sons of God and My brothers. Therefore, you must be My companions and take the same way that I take. Now you are not to do the will of your Father but the will of My Father. You are My brothers, My companions, and My partners. You and I are walking the same way and doing the same will. You are living with Me according to the will of My Father.” In this last section of the constitution, it is no longer a negative matter of dealing with our temper, lust, self, flesh, and anxiety. It is absolutely a positive matter of doing the will of the Father who is in the heavens. The kingdom people are not for anything other than doing the will of the Father. We are not here merely to overcome our temper, our lusts, our self, and our flesh, and to be kind and sympa-

thetic to others. We are here for the accomplishment of the will of the heavenly Father. In order to do the will of the Father, we need to walk on the constricted way. In the teachings of the worldly philosophers, there is neither the divine life and divine nature nor the divine way. But here the ultimate issue of the constitution of the kingdom of the heavens is the will of the heavenly Father. This means that we have a heavenly Father and that we are the Father's sons. However, in the last section of the constitution it is not only a matter of life but also a matter of the will of the Father. Our Father has a will to accomplish, but we can accomplish it only by His life. We need to live in the life of the heavenly Father and also by that life. This kind of living is for the doing of the Father's will.

In the constitution of the kingdom of the heavens we cannot see what the will of the Father actually is. However, it is clearly revealed in chapter 16. The Father's will is to build the church upon the Son as the rock. This is fully developed in Acts, the Epistles, and the book of Revelation. The New Testament reveals that God's divine, eternal will is to build up the church.

***Many Prophesying, Casting Out Demons,  
and Doing Many Works of Power in the Lord's Name  
but Not according to the Heavenly Father's Will***

Matthew 7:22 says, "Many will say to Me in that day, Lord, Lord, was it not in Your name that we prophesied, and in Your name cast out demons, and in Your name did many works of power?" The words that day refer to the day of the judgment seat of Christ (1 Cor. 3:13; 4:5; 2 Cor. 5:10). On the day of judgment, when all the believers will stand before the judgment seat of Christ, many will say to the Lord that they prophesied, cast out demons, and did works of power in His name, but they will be rejected by the Lord.

***The Lord Not Approving Them but  
Considering Them as Workers of Lawlessness***

Matthew 7:23 says, "Then I will declare to them: I never knew you. Depart from Me, you workers of lawlessness." Here the word knew means "approved." The same Greek word in Romans 7:15 is translated "acknowledge." In this verse Paul says, "What I work out, I do

not acknowledge.” The Lord never approved those who, in His name, prophesied, cast out demons, and did many works of power, but did those things not according to the will of the heavenly Father (Matt. 7:21). The Lord did not deny that they did those things, but He considered those things lawlessness because they were not done in line with the will of the heavenly Father. They were not done in the line of the divine will. The Lord seemed to be saying, “You prophesied in My name, you cast out demons in My name, and you did many works of power in My name, but I never allowed you to do them. I never approved you, because you did all those things in a lawless way. You did them in yourself, in your own desire, and according to your own intention, not according to the will of My Father.” Thus, those who do such things, even in the Lord’s name, will not enter into the kingdom of the heavens but will depart from the Lord, that is, be excluded from the manifestation of the kingdom in the coming age.

We see from the Lord’s word here that certain works may be done in the Lord’s name and yet not be done according to the will of God. Are you doing this kind of work, or are you doing God’s will? We have talked a great deal about going to the campuses, but are we going there to do a certain work or to do the will of our heavenly Father? Young brothers and sisters, how would you answer this question? Are you going to the campuses to do the will of the heavenly Father? We must have the assurance in whatever we do that we are doing the will of the heavenly Father. Otherwise, the Lord Jesus will say to us, “Workers of lawlessness.” Even prophesying in the Lord’s name, but not according to the will of the Father, is a type of lawlessness. Moreover, casting out demons in the Lord’s name and doing works of power in the name of the Lord, but not according to the will of God, are also considered in the eyes of the heavenly King as lawlessness.

The runners in any race must run in the proper lanes. Although you may run faster than others, your running will not be recognized if you run outside the lines of your lane. Rather, that type of running will be considered lawlessness. You must run the race between the lines; that is, you must run in a constricted way. Today the work of many Christian workers is not restricted by the heavenly lines. In their own eyes they have done a great deal in the Lord’s name and for the Lord. In the eyes of the Lord, however, their work is a kind of

transgression, a violation of the heavenly lines. Hence, their work is lawlessness. The Lord's word in 7:21-23 is a strong word of warning to us all that we should not care only for prophesying, for casting out demons, or for works of power. We must take care of the heavenly lines. If you transgress the lines as a runner in the heavenly race, you will be disqualified. There are constricting lines in the Lord's recovery, and we must be constricted in our running. If we run between the lines, not outside of them, we will be approved by the Lord.

Again I say that the consummation of the constitution of the kingdom of the heavens is to usher us in through the narrow gate and onto the constricted way. Now we are running on this constricted way. We should not care for prophesying, for casting out demons, or for works of power. Instead, we should care only for doing the will of our heavenly Father. You may wonder how we can know the Father's will. We can know it by the Father's life and nature within us. The Father's nature will always tell us yes or no. If you are running according to the divine nature and within the constricted lines, the divine nature will indicate, "Yes, you are right; go on." But if you are not running according to the divine nature or if you step outside the lines, the divine nature will say, "Don't go this way." There is no need for anyone to tell you what to do, for the regulating, constricting, divine nature is within you. This nature tells you where you are. Because a runner in a race can see the lines, he needs no one to tell him whether or not he is inside the boundaries. Likewise, we have the constricting lines within us, the lines of the divine life and the divine nature, and we can tell where we are. According to the divine nature within us, we cannot use rock music in our meetings. Although you may try various worldly methods, the divine nature would disagree with them all and indicate that you are transgressing the lines. All those who are the kingdom people, all those who have been regenerated by the Father, have His life and nature within them. The Father's life and nature indicate whether or not we are on the constricted way. Let us all run the race according to the Father's nature. (*Life-study of Matthew*, 2nd ed., pp. 284-288)





