

Enjoying Christ as the New Wine and Living in the Church Life as the Fresh Wineskin

Fayetteville Outing

August 12-14, 2016

Neither do they put new wine into old wineskins; otherwise, the wineskins burst, and the wine pours out, and the wineskins are ruined; but they put new wine into fresh wineskins, and both are preserved.

(Matthew 9:17)

Judah, your brothers will praise you; Your hand will be on the neck of your enemies; Your father's sons will bow down before you. Judah is a young lion; From the prey, my son, you have gone up. He couches, he stretches out like a lion, And like a lioness; who will rouse him up? The scepter will not depart from Judah, Nor the ruler's staff from between his feet, Until Shiloh comes, And to Him shall be the obedience of the peoples. Binding his foal to the vine, And his donkey's colt to the choice vine, He washes his garment in wine, And his robe in the blood of grapes. Dark are his eyes with wine, And white are his teeth with milk. Zebulun will dwell at the shore of the sea, And he will be a shore for ships, And his flank will be toward Sidon. Issachar is a strong donkey, Couching between the sheepfolds. And he saw a resting place that was good And the land that was pleasant, And he bowed his shoulder to bear, And became a task worker to bring tribute.

(Genesis 49:8-15)

Name: _____

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Expanded Schedule

Friday

P.M.

5:00	Arrival and Registration
6:00	Dinner at Mount Sequoyah
7:00	Singing
7:20	Message One and Overflow
8:30	Testimony
8:45	Group Prayer
9:30	Board Games
10:30	Return to Rooms
11:00	Everybody in Rooms; Lights Out

Saturday

A.M.

7:00	Rise and Get Ready
7:30	Gather Together for Singing in Main Hall
7:45	Morning Revival Fellowship
7:55	Personal Morning Revival
8:10	Group Morning Revival
8:30	Breakfast
9:15	Singing
9:30	Review Message 1 and Gospel Fellowship
9:45	Increase and Building Up Workshop A
10:45	Break
11:00	Increase and Building Up Workshop B

P.M.

12:00	Lunch
12:45	Group Call Bank
1:30	Announcements; Go to Bowling Alley
2:00	Bowling & Bakery (2-4pm), Rest, Coffee Shops, Misc. Activities
6:00	Dinner at Mount Sequoyah (Served Promptly)
7:00	Singing
7:20	Message Two and Overflow
8:30	Testimony
8:45	Group Prayer
9:15	Board Games
10:30	Return to Rooms
11:00	Everybody in Rooms; Lights Out

Lord's Day

A.M.

7:00	Rise and Get Ready
7:55	Gather Together for Singing in Main Hall
8:00	Morning Revival Fellowship
8:10	Personal Morning Revival
8:25	Group Morning Revival
8:45	Breakfast
10:00	Meeting with Fayetteville Saints

P.M.

12:00	Love Feast with Saints
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1:30

Clean and Depart for Oklahoma

6:00

Arrive Home Jubilant, Rested, Revived, and Burning in spirit!

Message 1 – Christ as the New Wine

I. Christ as the new life, full of vigor, stirring people to excitement

Matthew 9:14 - Then the disciples of John came to Him, saying, Why do we and the Pharisees fast much, but Your disciples do not fast?

15 - And Jesus said to them, The sons of the bridechamber cannot mourn as long as the **bridegroom** is with them, can they? But days will come when the bridegroom will be taken away from them, and then they will fast.

16 - No one puts a patch of **unfulled cloth** on an old garment, for that which fills it up pulls away from the garment, and a worse tear is made.

17 - Neither do they put **new wine** into old wineskins; otherwise, the wineskins burst, and the wine pours out, and the wineskins are ruined; but they put **new wine** into **fresh wineskins**, and both are preserved.

II. New in time and fresh in nature and quality

Nehemiah 10:39 For the children of Israel and the sons of Levi shall bring the heave offering of the grain, of the **new wine**, and of the **fresh oil** to the chambers, where the vessels of the sanctuary, the priests who minister, and the gatekeepers and the singers are; and we will not forsake the house of our God. (cf Deut. 7:13; 11:14; 12:17; 14:23; 18:4; 28:51, 2 Chron. 31:5; 32:28; Neh. 5:11; 10:37, 39; 13:5, 12; Hosea 2:8, 22; Joel 1:10; 2:19, 24; Hag 1:11)

III. Enjoying the new wine to become a drink offering poured out upon the house of God

Genesis 35:14 And Jacob set up a pillar in the place where He had spoken with him, a pillar of stone; and he poured out a **drink offering** on it and poured **oil** on it.

15 And Jacob called the name of the place where God had spoken with him Bethel.

Philippians 2:17 But even if I am being poured out as a **drink offering** upon the sacrifice and service of your faith, I rejoice, and I rejoice together with you all.

IV. Christ as our enjoyment, rest, and satisfaction for our daily living, behavior, and walk

Gen 49:8 - Judah, your brothers will praise you; / Your hand will be on the neck of your enemies; / Your father's sons will bow down before you. (cf. Rev. 5:5)

9 - Judah is a young lion; / From the prey, my son, you have gone up. / He couches, he stretches out like a lion, / And like a lioness; who will rouse him up? (cf. Heb. 2:14; Eph. Eph. 4:8; Heb. 10:12; Rom. 8:29; 1 Pet. 1:3)

10 - The scepter will not depart from Judah, / Nor the ruler's staff from between his feet,

Until Shiloh comes, / And to Him shall be the obedience of the peoples. (cf. Matt. 28:18; Rev. 19:15; Eph. 2:14)

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11 - Binding his foal to the vine, / And his donkey's colt to the choice vine, / He washes his garment in wine, / And his robe in the blood of grapes. (cf. John 15:5; John 6:57; Rev. 19:8)

12 - Dark are his eyes with wine, / And white are his teeth with milk. (cf. 2 Cor. 3:18)

Judges 9:13a - But the vine said to them, Shall I leave my new wine, which cheers God and men?

V. Practicing to maintain the joy of our salvation

Ephesians 3:8 - To me, less than the least of all saints, was this grace given to announce to the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ as the gospel.

John 10:10 - The thief does not come except to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life and may have it abundantly.

Philippians 4:4 - Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, rejoice.

Isaiah 59:1 - No, Jehovah's hand is not so short that it cannot save; / Nor is His ear so heavy that it cannot hear.

2 - But your iniquities have become a separation / Between you and your God, / And your sins have hidden His face / From you so that He does not hear.

Ephesians 4:30a - And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God.

1 John 1:7 - But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus His Son cleanses us from every sin.

9 - If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

Psalms 51:12a - Restore to me the gladness of Your salvation.

Jeremiah 15:16a - Your words were found and I ate them, / And Your word became to me / The gladness and joy of my heart.

Isaiah 56:7 - Even these will I cause to come to My holy mountain / And to rejoice in My house of prayer.

1 John 1:3 - That which we have seen and heard we report also to you that you also may have fellowship with us, and indeed our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ.

4 - And these things we write that our joy may be made full.

Increase and Building Up Workshop A

I. A twofold problem

- A. Video clip by Andrew Yu (aging and barrenness)
- B. Barrenness is the biggest enemy that annuls the proper church life.

Matthew 21:19a

And seeing a ¹fig tree on the way, He came to it and found nothing on it except leaves only.

Footnote 19¹: ...This tree was full of leaves but fruitless, signifying that at that time the nation of Israel was full of outward show but had nothing that could satisfy God.

C. If the church or the work fails to gain young people, it would be like a family that has only some childless old people.

1. Anyone who works for the Lord with insight needs to pay attention to this matter.
2. When you visit a church, if you see throngs of young people there, then you should praise the Lord that the church has a future.

How to lead the Young People, pp. 13-15

II. A solution

A. We must mobilize all the brothers and sisters. The whole Body has to serve. This is the testimony that the Lord is after.

1. If the work of the church is carried out by all the members, the church will find itself going on in a proper way.
2. If we are the only ones who are busy, and if all the works are in our hand, we are wrong.
3. If we would gradually mobilize the saints, by the Lord's grace there will be an effect.

B. Mobilizing our students in small groups or mini-teams on the campus (video clip by Andrew Yu)

C. The number of college students in the USA

D. *“One student may do more in leading other students to Jesus during his college course than he could ever do in a like time afterward; for he duplicates himself every time a student is converted through his instrumentality.”*

Robert Weidensall (1877)

III. Key principles for mobilizing our students

A. Helping our students to have a renewed vision of fruit-bearing

Genesis 1:28a

And God blessed them; and God said to them, Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth and subdue it,

John 15:5, 11

5 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.

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11 These things I have spoken to you that My joy may be in you and that your joy may be made full.

1. It is not right to be a Christian for many years, and yet be without fruit. We should not take any excuse for not bearing fruit.

2. It is a joy to have some dear ones under our care who are younger or weaker than we are.

a. If we have two or three spiritual children under our care, they will be our comfort, strengthening, encouragement, and daily joy year-round, and we will feel that we know the meaning of our Christian life better.

b. If we do not have anyone under our spiritual care, we may wonder what the purpose of being a Christian is, and the enjoyment of Christ will eventually lose its taste.

c. We all have to pray, saying, *“Lord, I hate barrenness, and I love to bear fruit. If I cannot have two or three of Your children to be my children, I will not be happy. Year after year I always want two or three younger Christians under my care.”*

3. Abiding is for fruit-bearing

a. To abide in Christ is the main charge in John 15 (v. 4a), but this charge is for another charge—to bear fruit (vv. 4b-8).

b. It is impossible for a branch to abide in the vine and enjoy all the riches and life juice from the root of the vine without bearing fruit.

c. The thought that we can abide in Christ without bearing fruit is a self-deceit.

d. The enjoyment of Christ must have an issue—not merely the growth of the branch but fruit bearing

The Practice of the Group Meetings, Chap. 5, pp. 31-33

B. Paying attention to life

Isa. 37:31

And the remnant of those who have escaped of the house of Judah will again take root downward and bear fruit upward.

Isaiah 57:20

But the wicked are like the tossed sea, for it cannot be calm, and its waters toss up mire and mud.

Revelation 2:7a

He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes, to him I will give to eat of the tree of life,

1. Fruit comes out of our health. Therefore, if we want to bear fruit then we need to be healthy and normal.

2. Fruit is the overflow of life and all work must be rooted in life.

3. We should always be filled with life as a prerequisite for fruit-bearing.

4. We need to follow the pattern of the apostles to pay more attention to life than to work—John 12:24; 2 Cor. 4:12.

He [Watchman Nee] carried out the revelation he received from the Lord, not in the way of work, but in the way of life....To him work did not mean that much; life meant everything.

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In my whole life, he is the only person I have known who paid more attention to life than to work.

Watchman Nee: A Seer of the Divine Revelation in the Present Age, Chap. 11, pp. 86-87

C. Being built-up with companions

Ecclesiastes 4:9-12; John 15:12

- Video clip by Brother Lee: on the relation between barrenness and our unwillingness to fellowship with others (individualism).
- 1. In order to bear fruit, we need to get some companions with whom we can labor.
- 2. We need to realize that each of us is very limited in his capacity and ability, and thus we need help.
- 3. We should never work by ourselves. Instead, we should work by fellowshipping with our companions.

The Training and the Practice of the Vital Groups, Message 2

D. Becoming fruit-bearing branches

1. The principle of focusing on a few

- Healing a man possessed by an unclean spirit (Mark 4:36-5:20)
 - “And leaving the crowd, they took Him along, just as He was, in the boat;”
 - “And when He came out of the boat, immediately, from out of the tombs, a man with an unclean spirit met Him,”
- Cleansing a leper (Matthew 8:1-4)
 - “He came down from the mountain... Great crowds followed Him”
 - “A leper coming near... He touched Him”
- The healing of the two blind men (Matthew 20:29-34)
 - “A great crowd followed Him”
 - “Two blind men...cried out (the crowd rebuked them)... Jesus standing still”
- Healing the woman with the flow of blood (Mark 5:21-34)
 - “And a great crowd followed him and pressed upon Him”
 - “And a woman...touched His garment... Jesus...turned around...and said”
- Saving Zaccheus (Luke 19:1-10)
 - “And he was seeking to see Jesus... and could not because of the crowd”
 - “And he ran on ahead and climbed up in a tree... Jesus looked up and said to him”
 - a. When we have two or three new ones under our care, there will be no need for us to go out to baptize more because we will not be able to care for them all.
 - b. We should not bring forth too many children. According to God’s natural law, it takes nine months to bear a child. God regulates childbearing according to His natural law.
Mankind is reproduced one child at a time... After we gain one person, we teach him to contact his close friends... Instead of seeking to gain many people in a short time, we

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should work on one person at a time. This way of laboring seems to be slow, but it is actually rather fast and effective.

Crucial Words of Leading in the Lord's Recovery, Book 5, Chapter 2, p. 24

It is not necessary to try to save many students at one time. It is best to gain one student at a time. Look to the Lord and ask Him which student He wants to gain. Then follow the Lord's leading.

The Meaning of Human Life and a Proper Consecration, Chapter 10, p. 93

2. Paying attention to personal contact

- a. All those who care for the work among the young people must pay attention to doing a personal work.
- b. Big meetings do not have much effect on young people; individual contact is most effective.

If you ask me, "Brother Lee, how would you do the young people's work?" I would answer you by saying, "I can do it without holding any big meetings from the beginning to the end of the year but just absolutely working with them individually by personal contact."

How to lead the Young People, p. 31

- c. If we neglect individual contact and pay attention only to young people's meetings, the young people's work will end up with something that is only on the surface.
 - d. Paying attention to personal contact has the effect that each new person gained will go to help others in the same way.
 - e. In this way, one by one will be affected, just like the unending multiplication of offspring, and after some time you will see a number of people gained.
3. The four essential elements that make our shepherding others prevailing—love, interest, burden, and prayer

1 Thessalonians 2:8

Yearning in this way over you, we were well pleased to impart to you not only the gospel of God but also our own souls, because you became beloved to us.

Acts 15:36

Now after some days Paul said to Barnabas, Let us return now and visit the brothers in every city in which we announced the word of the Lord, and see how they are doing.

2 Corinthians 8:16

But thanks be to God, which put the same earnest care into the heart of Titus for you. (KJV)

Colossians 4:12

Epaphras, who is one of you, a slave of Christ Jesus, greets you, always struggling on your behalf in his prayers that you may stand mature and fully assured in all the will of God.

- a. Love, interest, burden, and prayer are the essential, basic elements of proper shepherding.

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- b. No shepherding can be prevailing if we do not have a love for people, an interest in them, a burden for them, and adequate prayer.
- c. Most of us were born with no interest in people. We do not like people, and we do not wish to be bothered by them, invited by them, or visited by them. However, if we keep this kind of disposition, we will be finished with the building.
- d. We need to love the new ones as the Lord loves them, be interested in them, and take care of them. Then we must have a burden for them and adequate prayer.

*The Normal Way of Fruit-bearing and Shepherding for the Building Up of the Church,
Chap. 9, pp. 119-120*

4. Perfecting the new ones gained each year to care for and gain the next group of new ones

Ephesians 4:12

For the perfecting of the saints unto the work of the ministry, unto the building up of the Body of Christ,

2 Timothy 2:2

And the things which you have heard from me through many witnesses, these commit to faithful men, who will be competent to teach others also.

- a. As soon as the Lord starts something on our campus, and the church continues to gain some new ones, we will realize the urgent need to train these ones.
 - b. Perhaps a person has joined us this month. In three or four months he needs to turn around and take care of the next group of new ones.
 - c. In this way the church will care for new ones in an orderly way wave after wave.
 - d. The Lord will bless the church; the church will grow, and it will also be able to absorb the result of its growth.
5. The crucial need for our students to become patterns to the new ones

1 Timothy 4:12

Let no one despise your youth, but be a pattern to the believers in word, in conduct, in love, in faith, in purity.

- a. The nature which we have received in regeneration is very prone to imitate.
- b. If you put it in front of holiness, it will spontaneously incline toward holiness. If you put it in front of obedience, it will spontaneously learn to obey.

1 Thessalonians 1:5-7

5 For our gospel did not come to you in word only, but also in power and in the Holy Spirit and in much assurance, even as you know [*oida: inward, subjective knowledge*] what kind of men we were among you for your sake.

6 And you became imitators of us and of the Lord, having received the word in much affliction with joy of the Holy Spirit,

7 So that you became a pattern to all those who believe in Macedonia and in Achaia.

2 Thessalonians 3:9b

...that we might give ourselves to you as a pattern that you might imitate us.

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- c. We should be a group of people who take the lead to grow before God so that we may become a pattern to younger or new believers under our care

The Collected Works of Watchman Nee, Vol. 11, p. 770

- d. In perfecting others we have to pay attention to sanctifying ourselves. In three months' time we will see that all the ones we are perfecting will be just like us.

The Collected Works of Watchman Nee, Vol. 61, p. 18

John 17:19

And for their sake I ¹ sanctify Myself, that they themselves also may be sanctified in truth.

Footnote 19¹: The Son is absolutely holy in Himself. Yet, to set an example of sanctification for His disciples, He still sanctified Himself in His way of living while He was on earth.

Increase and Building Up Workshop B

Coordinating with the Church as the Container for the Increase

I. Being perfected under the shining of the ministry to serve together in one accord– Students, full-timers, and community saints

Proverbs 29:18a Where there is no vision, the people cast off restraint...

Acts 2:42a, 46a And they continued steadfastly in the teaching and the fellowship of the apostles...And day by day, continuing steadfastly with one accord

2 Tim 3:10 But you have closely followed my teaching, conduct, purpose, faith, long-suffering, love, endurance,

II. Community saints going to campus

A. Going for the gospel, appointments, ministry meetings, etc.

B. Working on the campus

C. Moving near the campus

I hope every local church will have a good coordination. Pray, fellowship, and see if there are any homes near the campus in your locality that are available. Try to get a home close to the campus. Even if you have to pay more rent for a house close to the campus, it is worthwhile.

Preaching the Gospel on the College Campuses, Chapter 2, Section 3

III. In the homes

Acts 2:46-47

46 And day by day, continuing steadfastly with one accord in the temple and breaking bread from house to house, they partook of *their* food with exultation and simplicity of heart,

47 Praising God and having grace with all the people. And the Lord added together day by day those who were being saved.

A. Getting started in the homes

Zech. 4:10a For who has despised the day of small things?...

B. Developing nests in the homes

Psalms 84:3 At Your two altars even the sparrow has found a home; And the swallow, a nest for herself, Where she may lay her young, O Jehovah of hosts, my King and my God.

1. The core meeting at a separate time from the home meeting

2. Prayer, fellowship, care

1 Cor. 12:25 That there would be no division in the body, but *that* the members would have the same care for one another..

3. Prayer, fellowship, coordination

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C. Community outing (Homes stirring up homes)

If we stir up the homes with the homes, and if we perfect the homes with the homes, soon twenty homes will be stirred up in a community. Perhaps in two years many home meetings will be established in that community.

Crucial Words of Leading in the Lord's Recovery,
Book 1: The Vision and Definite Steps for the Practice of the New Way, Ch. 10, Section 3

D. The Interns coming into the homes during the internship

A basic price we need to learn to pay in our daily pursuit is that the younger ones must receive help from the older ones, and the older ones must try their best to help the younger ones. In order to become manifested before the Lord as those who are truly pursuing spiritual growth, we must take care of these two matters. On the one hand, we should do all we can to receive help from whoever can render us help, and on the other hand, we should do all we can to help whoever needs our help.

How to be Useful to the Lord, Chapter 2, Section 1

E. Campus outing in the homes

If the saints in every locality are well coordinated, the new ones will be inspired with what they see. They will see the real social life, communal life, and family life. Our service in coordination will touch, soften, and warm up their heart to receive the living, piercing word (Heb. 4:12). Once a freshman is brought into your living room, most of the work is already done.

Preaching the Gospel on the College Campuses, Ch. 2, pp. 27-28

Having a home to bring the students to makes it easy to bring people into the church life.

Collected Works of Witness Lee, 1967 Vol.2, p.105

IV. In the church meetings

A. Preparing the container

B. Providing a “porch” to help the freshmen enter into the church meetings

Ezekiel 40:48a Then He brought me to the porch of the house

An additional point concerning the porch is that it is used as a lobby. This makes the temple easy to approach. In the church life we also should have a lobby, making it easy for others to come in. This means that we need to have an atmosphere that is stretching out and making it easy for others to contact us and touch us. Such a lobby makes the church accessible and enables us to take others in and hold them. In addition to making the temple approachable, the porch, or lobby, is a place where we can slow down, draw near, and prepare ourselves to enter the temple.

Life-Study of Ezekiel, Chapter 22, Section 1

1. Before starting a porch meeting, be in fellowship with the leading brothers
2. Beginning with a casual time with snacks
3. Introducing simple teachings concerning our practices (Saying “Amen”, calling on the Lord, pray-reading the Word, prophesying)
4. Explaining our terminology

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5. Adjusting the proportions of time allotment for the introduction and prophesying while considering appropriate content
6. Realizing this meeting should gradually bring the students into our practice and that this meeting is transitory and not permanent

C. Gradually bringing the freshmen into the practice of prophesying

1 Cor. 14:31 For you can all prophesy one by one that all may learn and all may be encouraged.

1. Being in the same ministry as the church in the campus ministry meeting
2. Practicing to speak the truth in the campus Bible studies

Message 2 – The Church as the Fresh Wineskin

“Religion is something for God without Christ. But the church is Christ enlarged.”

- I. **The Pharisees** (representing **the best of the old religion**) didn't understand Christ's association with “**bad people**” so their response was to be **critical**. (**Matt. 9:10-11**)
 - A. Jesus came as the **Savior and the Physician to save and heal** those who **know** they are in need. (**Matt. 9:12**)

- II. **John's disciples** (representing **the new religion**) didn't understand **Christ's lack of religious practice and discipline** so they asked Jesus questions. Both old and new religions **exposed their religion's need** without realizing it by **bringing up the matter of sinners and fasting while the Bridegroom was in front of them** (**Matt. 9:14**).
 - A. **Why do either of these groups still exist?** If **God, Himself** has come to earth in the flesh and is **right now, living and expressing God on the earth (John 1:1, 4, 5-14)**, and you truly love God and are **sincerely seeking Him** and His **current move** on the earth, why wouldn't you be **moving on to the person of the shadows Jesus Christ?**

- III. **Christ lovingly** speaks to the exposed need. **His incredible response proves He is truly born of the Father**.
 - A. The **Bridegroom** is here now! (**Matt. 9:15**) You already know this. (**John 3:29**) **Now is not** the time for either the old or new religions. **Now is the time for Christ to increase and everything else to decrease.** (**John 3:30**)
 - B. Instead of **leaving the old economy, and taking up the new yoke with** where you are and **keep practicing your old forms Christ (Matt. 11:29)**, you would choose to stay **and rituals** and you would **even have Me join you in your practices** to try to **improve** your old religion?

- IV. **The Unprocessed Christ** (pre-resurrection) **cannot patch** either the old religion or the new religion. Both are an old garment and **He is not yet fully processed cloth**.
 - A. **Religion has a sense of need**, but it cannot move into the new economy with the fresh living Christ because it is old, inflexible and rigid in it's forms, rituals, and practices; it is unable to change. (**Matt 9:16**) **No one** puts a patch of unfulled cloth on an old garment... No one even tries.
 - B. **Religion is envious** of the attraction of the new and living Christ but its long tradition keeps it from embracing the Christ - which further imprisons it in it's weaknesses and lack of divine excellence. (**Phil 1:15, 1 Tim. 6: 3-4**)
 - C. **Religion is jealous** of the new and living Christ and will always persecute Him because of His excellence and superiority to religion. (**John 11:48**)
 - D. **Religion has experienced the pulling nature of the cloth** once it is “processed” into the life-giving Spirit (**1 Cor. 15:45**) and knows the result will be destructive to their religious forms, practices and policies (**John 11:48**).

- V. **The Pneumatic (processed) Christ becomes a complete garment change (Matt. 9:16, Rom. 13:14, Luke 24:49, Luke 5:36, 2 Cor. 5:2-4, Rev. 3:18)**. He cannot patch either your old or new religion. Christ is a **complete** new garment and is Himself the fresh living wineskin, **the element, reality and constitution** of called out assembly of the saints. (**Matt. 3:30**)

VI. The Corporate Christ, the church, is the new wineskin – the only suitable container for keeping and drinking the new wine (Matt. 9:17).

- A. **Wineskins are an environment**, have certain **characteristics**, live by certain **standards**, and have a **focus or goal**.
- B. **Old Wineskins – Characteristics** –old, not flexible, natural love missing divine love (**Matt. 9**). **Standard** – Law in letters (**Gal 3:3**), unity, **Focus/Goal** –gifts, spirituality, ability, knowledge, faith to do big things, giving, martyrdom (**1Cor. 13:1-3**) **Cons** – Self exalting, jealousy, envy, competition, boasting, public displays of good works – fasting, giving, praying,
- C. **New Wineskin – Characteristics** – Life, Light, Divine Love, ever new, changeable, **Standard** - Law of the Spirit of life, Oneness, suffers long. is kind; is not jealous. does not brag, is not puffed up, does not behave unbecomingly, does not seek its own things, is not provoked, does not take account of evil, does not rejoice because of unrighteousness, but rejoices with the truth, covers all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. esteeming others more important than yourself (**1Cor. 13:4-8**), **Focus/Goal** – Christ – **Phil 3:13**

VII. The proper church life – Issachar

Gen. 49:14 Issachar is a strong donkey, Couching between the sheepfolds. **15** And he saw a resting place that was good and the land that was pleasant, and he bowed his shoulder to bear, and became a task worker to bring tribute.

a. Resting in the Church vs. 14

Gen. 49:11 Binding his foal to the vine, and his donkey's colt to the choice vine, he washes his garment in wine, and his robe in the blood of grapes

John 10:9 I am the door; if anyone enters through Me, he shall be saved and shall go in and go out and shall find pasture. **16** And I have other sheep, which are not of this fold; I must lead them also, and they shall hear My voice, and there shall be one flock, one Shepherd.

Matt. 11:28 Come to Me all who toil and are burdened, and I will give you rest.

b. Enjoying the Pleasant Christ vs. 15

Deut. 8:7 For Jehovah your God is bringing you to a good land...

Psa. 16:6 The land you have given me is a pleasant land. What a wonderful inheritance! (NLT)

Hymn #1237

Splendid church life! His green garden!

He has brought us, praise the Lord,

To experience the Christ Who's growing here!

He is full of rich enjoyment

To His saints in one accord;

He is new and fresh, available and dear.

I'm so happy in this lovely place,

In the garden growing in His grace!

There is no finer pleasure

Than to eat the living tree

And to get the living water into me.

c. Issuing in Taskwork as a Tribute to the Master vs. 15

1 Cor. 15:10 But by the grace of God, I am what I am; and His grace unto me did not turn out to be in vain, but, on the contrary, I labored more abundantly than all of them, yet not I but the grace of God which is with me.

Principle of the Sabbath

d. Rejoicing in the Church Life

Deut. 33:18 "Rejoice, Zebulun, in thy going out; and, Issachar, in thy tents."

Psa. 16:3 As for the saints who are on the earth, they are the excellent; all my delight is in them.

VIII. Four kinds of Christians

- A. The modernists
- B. The fundamentalists
- C. The inner life Christians
- D. The church people

Morning Nourishment

Psalm 27:4 - One thing I have asked from Jehovah; / That do I seek: / To dwell in the house of Jehovah / All the days of my life, / To behold the beauty of Jehovah, / And to inquire in His temple.

2 Corinthians 3:18 - But we all with unveiled face, beholding and reflecting like a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, even as from the Lord Spirit.

Ministry Reading

THE INTENTION IN PRAYER BEING TO SEEK THE LIFE SUPPLY

The Lord's word in [Luke] 11:11-13 indicates that our intention in prayer should be to seek the life supply, to seek loaves, fish, and eggs. Loaves represent the riches of the land; fish, the riches of the sea; and eggs the riches of something both in the air and on the earth. Therefore, loaves, fish, and eggs represent the riches of the land, the water, and the air; that is, these represent different kinds of riches. In verse 13 we see that the Holy Spirit is the totality of these riches. The Holy Spirit is the totality of the loaves, the fish, and the egg.

STAYING IN GOD TO RECEIVE THE HOLY SPIRIT

In this message we have seen that to pray is to pray ourselves into God. After we have prayed ourselves into God, then, as those in God, we receive the life supply as indicated by the loaves, the fish, and the egg. The totality of these riches—the riches of the earth, the water, and the air—is the Holy Spirit. This means that the Holy Spirit is the life supply. When we pray ourselves into God, we should remain in God to receive the Holy Spirit as our life supply.

Have you ever heard before that to pray is to pray ourselves into God so that we may remain in Him continually to receive the Holy Spirit as our life supply? This life supply, signified by the loaves, the fish, and the egg, nourishes not only ourselves but also those under our care. Some may think that in this message I have been allegorizing the Scriptures too much. Actually, I am not allegorizing; instead, I am seeking to open the Word and interpret it properly so that we may see what, according to 11:1-13, it means to pray.

We have strongly emphasized the fact that to pray is to pray ourselves into God. Whenever our prayer does not bring us into God, it is wrong. We should not continue to pray in that way. The governing principle of our prayer should be that prayer always brings us into God.

Do not pray if your prayer does not bring you into God. This does not mean that you should not ask the Lord to heal you if you are sick. The point is that when you pray for healing you should observe the governing principle of prayer and pray yourself into God. If your way of praying distracts you from the Lord and does not bring you into Him, you should change your way of praying. Seek to pray in such a way that you are brought into God. The prayer that brings us into God is the right kind of prayer.

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We know from our experience with the Lord that often we have prayed properly and have prayed ourselves into God. As we remain in Him, we receive His riches, the riches that are embodied in His Spirit. When we receive the Holy Spirit as our life supply signified by the loaves, the fish, and the egg, we can feed ourselves, and we can also feed all those under our care. (*Life-study of Luke*, ch. 27, Living Stream Ministry)

PRAYER BEING TO ABSORB GOD

First, prayer is to absorb God; prayer causes man to obtain God. God is reality; hence, He is contactable and obtainable. The God whom we worship is not doctrine, theory, philosophy, or ideology, nor is He an empty character or a vain idol. The God whom we worship is Spirit; He is a real spiritual entity. He is as real as air, water, and sound. Just as air, water, and sound are in the universe, so also God, who is Spirit, is in the universe. We can worship Him, and we can also contact, absorb, and obtain Him.

We can obtain God through prayer. In order to obtain water, we must drink; in order to obtain air, we must breathe; and in order to obtain sound, we must listen. If we want to obtain God, we must pray. Hence, the first meaning of prayer is to obtain God. Regrettably, many believers pray often and for long periods of time, but they do not seem to obtain much of the element of God, because they do not understand the meaning of prayer. They have not seen that prayer is to contact God and obtain Him. (*The Meaning and Purpose of Prayer*, Ch. 1, Living Stream Ministry)

Exercising Our Spirit to Pray-read the Word

John 6:63	It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh profits nothing; the words which I have spoken to you are spirit and are life.
Matt. 4:4	But He answered and said, It is written, "Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that proceeds out through the mouth of God."

Ministry Reading

John 6:63 says, "The words which I have spoken to you are spirit and are life." The word has to be spirit in order to be life to us. Therefore, we must know how to transfer the word that we have understood into the Spirit. If we come to the Bible only by exercising our eyes and mind to understand it, the word is still only the word. The way to transfer the word into the Spirit is by exercising our spirit to pray.

The right way to receive the word is to take it as the breath of life from God (2 Tim. 3:16). This is the life food by which man lives, not by bread alone but by every word that proceeds out through the mouth of God (Matt. 4:4). This is food for the spirit, so we have to exercise our spirit to take it. To receive food for our physical body, we have to exercise our mouth, but to receive spiritual food for our spirit, we have to exercise our spirit. Whenever we come to the word, we need to realize that it is spiritual food. We must exercise our spirit to eat it, not merely to know it. We should forget about knowing and simply eat Christ. This word is the written word of the living Word. It is the expression, the revelation, of the living Word, who is Christ. He is our food, our bread of life, so whenever we come to the Bible, we come to food, not for the body but for the spirit, so we must use our spirit to take it. This is clear to us, but we have to practice to receive the word in this way, not merely to read the Bible for knowledge but to read it for feeding on it.

Genesis 1:1 says, "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth." Most people who read this verse are tempted to know who was there in the beginning and whether the beginning was thousands, millions, or billions of years ago. This is the way to read the Bible to seek knowledge, to know by exercising the mentality. This is the wrong way. The right way to read the Bible is to exercise our spirit. If we do this, right away we will pray, "O Lord, You are the One who created all things. Everything was created by You, so everything has been initiated by You. Lord, I want You to come into my life to initiate everything." To take the word in this way is not mere knowledge. Rather, it is nourishment.

Matthew 8:1 through 3 says, "When He came down from the mountain, great crowds followed Him. And behold, a leper, coming near, worshipped Him, saying, Lord, if You are willing, You can cleanse me. And stretching out His hand, He touched him, saying, I am willing; be cleansed! And immediately his leprosy was cleansed." Someone may take this word as knowledge and even criticize, saying that this does not sound like a proper teaching in the Bible. Rather, we should take this word by praising and praying: "Lord, come down again today to the place where I am. I am in the place of failure, in the place of leprosy, and I cannot deliver myself. Lord, if You come to the place where I am, I will be delivered. O Lord, I have been cleansed by You, but I still need You more and more. Come down, Lord, to the place where I am." (*Enjoying Christ as the Word and the Spirit through Prayer*, pp. 31-33)