

Day 1: Prayer for the working saints to build up a personal, affectionate, private, and spiritual relationship with the Lord through contacting Him every day.

SS 1:2—Let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth! / For your love is better than wine.

SS 1:3—Your anointing oils have a pleasant fragrance; / Your name is like ointment poured forth; / Therefore the virgins love you.

SS 1:4—Draw me; we will run after you — The king has brought me into his chambers —/ We will be glad and rejoice in you; / We will extol your love more than wine. / Rightly do they love you.

Ministry Portion

In these days I feel very much that there is a warm, intimate, close affection between me and my God. The seeker said, “Draw me.” She did not say, “Draw us.” Draw me is personal. We want a drawing from the Lord that is His personal and affectionate doing. We want Him to be with us in a personal and affectionate way. All the religions, including Christianity, present a portrait of God that is inaccurate. They portray God merely as great, almighty, sovereign, majestic, and even unapproachable; no one can or even dares to touch God. To say that God is majestic is not wrong, but that is only one attribute of the Divine Being. Regardless of how great, sovereign, almighty, and majestic God is, when He wanted to build up His relationship with man, He took the personal, affectionate way. He took the way of becoming a man. If the Lord Jesus had come to Peter in a majestic way, Peter would have felt threatened. But He did not come to Peter as the majestic, untouchable God. Instead, He came to Peter as his countryman. Peter was a Galilean, and Jesus was also a Galilean. This is personal and affectionate.

Dear saints, my burden in this chapter is to share that you have to start seeking the Lord in a personal and affectionate way. I want to stress these two words: personal and affectionate. The very God whom we pursue is personal and affectionate. (The Collected Works of Witness Lee, 1994–1997, vol. 3, “Crystallization-study of Song of Songs,” pp. 255-260)

In this chapter we want to stress the words private and spiritual. Christianity preaches the physical Jesus, but we preach the pneumatic Christ, the Christ who is the Spirit (2 Cor. 3:17). This One is private and spiritual. We have seen that the king’s chambers signify our spirit. He visits us in our spirit privately, and He comes to us in a spiritual way, not a physical way. He visits us privately as the all-inclusive consummated Spirit. (The Collected Works of Witness Lee, 1994–1997, vol. 3, “Crystallization-study of Song of Songs,” p. 265)

Day 2: Prayer for the working saints to quiet their being before the Lord and pray groaning prayers along with the Holy Spirit regarding deep burdens for which they have no words

Rom. 8:23—And not only so, but we ourselves also, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan in ourselves, eagerly awaiting sonship, the redemption of our body.

Rom. 8:26—Moreover, in like manner the Spirit also joins in to help us in our weakness, for we do not know for what we should pray as is fitting, but the Spirit Himself intercedes for us with groanings which cannot be uttered.

Ministry Portion

While we are groaning, the Holy Spirit also is groaning. While we are expecting, He is expecting. While we are hoping and enduring, He is hoping and enduring. Whatever we are, He is also the same. “In like manner” the Spirit joins in to help us. What a comfort this is! While we are groaning, watching, and expecting, He is also groaning, watching, and expecting...Do not think that the Holy Spirit is so different from us that when we receive the Holy Spirit we will be extraordinary people. This is not the thought contained in Romans 8. Romans 8 reveals that the Holy Spirit is in our manner. Sisters, are you disappointed? Some sisters say, “We cannot shout. We cannot pray loudly as the brothers do. Because of this, it seems that we have been neglected.” Be comforted, sisters. The Spirit prays in your manner. In whatever manner you are, He also is. Praise the Lord!

Paul continues to say, “For we do not know for what we should pray as is fitting, but the Spirit Himself intercedes for us with groanings which cannot be uttered.” The Spirit intercedes for us with groanings in our manner. This groaning apparently is our groaning, but in our groaning is the groaning of the Spirit. This is why His groaning is in the same manner as our groaning. He is in us and His groaning is in our groaning. He groans with us “in like manner.” This is the best prayer we can have for the growth in life. Most of our prayers are very utterable with clear words, but they may not be out of our spirit. But when we have a real burden to pray yet we do not know how to utter it, then spontaneously we just groan with that burden without any utterable word. This will be the best prayer within which the Spirit intercedes for us by groaning together with us. (*Life-Study of Romans, Chapter 19*)

Day 3: Prayer that the working saints would awaken, rise from the dead and ascend a mountain to be with the Lord

Eph. 5:13—But all things which are reprov'd are made manifest by the light for everything that makes manifest is light.

Eph. 5:14—Therefore He says, Awake, sleeper, and arise from the dead, and Christ will shine on you.

Exo. 19:20—And Jehovah came down upon Mount Sinai at the top of the mountain, and Jehovah called Moses to the top of the mountain; and Moses went up.

Ministry Portion

We also need to realize a second principle. This second principle is that there are many imperatives in the New Testament that tell us what to do. All the words spoken concerning the overcomers are imperative. When Paul says, “Awake, sleeper, and arise from the dead,” this is an imperative. You have to do it....I say again that you must have a time to go to the Lord. You must go to the Lord again and again until you get the enlightenment and are exposed in His light. If you come to Him, He will expose you, and you will repent and confess. Then you will be brought into His intimate fellowship. This will make you vital. To be vital is not a matter of shouting some slogans or of carrying out some movement. To hear the fellowship concerning the vital groups and then to go to do it in ourselves is a movement. It means nothing. Only one thing counts—for you to contact the Lord by yourself. To do it with anyone else will be a frustration to you. You must go to Him directly by yourself. A thorough confession can be made to the Lord only by yourself. I hope that we would take this fellowship and receive the imperatives from the Lord in His Word. I can tell you that you need to repent, but I cannot repent for you. I can prepare the food for you, but I cannot eat the food for you. No one can eat for you. You can be charged to eat, but you still need to eat for yourself. My duty, my responsibility, and my ministry are to tell you that you need to eat. If you do not take this word, then whatever you hear means nothing. Today we are in a stage in which we need to be vital. We need to be living, burning, and fruitful. Who can do this for us? Only the Lord Himself. What we need in this stage is to go to the Lord directly. We have to look to the Lord for a time that we can go to Him.

I would like to give you a short testimony of my experience in this matter. I was with the Brethren for more than six years—from 1925 to 1931—when the Lord shined on me in a particular way. In August of 1931 while I was walking on the street, something deep within me said, “You have been with the Brethren for all these years. You have gone to meeting after meeting and have heard message after message. But look at how dead you are. In these years you didn’t bring one person to the Lord.” I was really bothered by this realization. The next morning, I went to the top of a hill to spend some time alone with the Lord. I wept and prayed, “Lord, have mercy upon me. What shall I do?” That was something vital. I did that every day for quite some time. (*The Training and the Practice of the Vital Groups, Chapter 9, Section 3*)

Day 4: Prayer that the working saints would come into the presence of God in their personal times, to be under His shining.

Eph. 5:13—But all things which are reprov'd are made manifest by the light for everything that makes manifest is light.

Eph. 5:14—Therefore He says, Awake, sleeper, and arise from the dead, and Christ will shine on you.

Hymn 426

Stanza 1 Remove my covering, Lord,
That I may see Thy light,
And be deceived no more,
But all things see aright.

Chorus

Oh, may Thy living light, Lord,
Scatter all my night, Lord,
And everything make bright, Lord,
For this I pray to Thee.

Ministry Portion

I want to see that each of you is fully enlightened by God. You need to go to Him. Even if you have not been enlightened by Him, you still have to go to Him. He is the real source for you to start. If you go to Him again and again, He will shine upon you. He will enlighten you. He will bring you into the light. He will expose you to the uttermost. Then you will repent to the uttermost and even weep before the Lord. You will tell the Lord, “Lord, I am so dirty and sinful. I am rotten and corrupted.” Spontaneously, you will make a thorough confession to the Lord. You may confess to such an extent that you would forget to eat. While you are driving to your office, you may still be repenting to the Lord with tears. I wonder how many of us have passed through this stage. If you have not passed through this stage, the vital group has not started yet. (*The Training and the Practice of the Vital Groups, Chapter 9, Section 2*)

Verse 14 of Ephesians 5 is an imperative—“Awake, sleeper, and arise from the dead.” We should take heed to this word. There is not any doctrine here. We must wake up. If we do not, we are through. We say that we hate the deadness of Sardis, but we have to arise from the dead. Awake and arise! This verse is very practical to us. If we awake and arise, Christ will shine on us. His shining will work out many things and show us where we are. He will shine on us to expose us. If we do not arise, Christ's shining is not with us. His shining is waiting for our arising. We need to be vitalized because we are sleeping. We need to be saved from our deadness.

Do not trust in others to help you in this matter. You have to pray. You have to put your trust in the Lord. Only the Lord is the source. Only He can shine on you. Only He can bring you into the light to cause you to be fully exposed. Only He can render a real repentance and confession to you. The vital groups should be started by your going to the Lord. This is the sowing of the seed, and something will grow out of this. (*The Training and the Practice of the Vital Groups, Chapter 9, Section 3*)

Day 5: Prayer for the working saints to go to the Lord to receive His enlightening, exposing and convicting.

Job. 42:5—I had heard of You by the hearing of the ear, / But now my eye has seen You

Job. 42:6—Therefore I abhor myself, and I repent / In dust and ashes.

Isa. 6:5—Then I said, Woe is me, for I am finished! / For I am a man of unclean lips, / And in the midst of a people of unclean lips I dwell; / Yet my eyes have seen the King, Jehovah of hosts.

Luke 5:8—And when Simon Peter saw this, he fell down at Jesus' knees, saying, Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, Lord.

Ministry Portion

Before a person meets God, he thinks that he is good, but once he touches God, immediately he realizes that he is wrong. Why is this? This is because God is light, and God is like a mirror. Everyone who sees light finds himself sinful before God.

Luke 5 records Peter's story. Originally, Peter did not realize that he was sinful, but when the Lord shined on him, he immediately said, "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, Lord" (v. 8). In the Old Testament Job was one who also did not realize his sins until God shined on him. His three friends told him that he must have sinned before God, but Job did not agree and wanted to argue with God to see where his sins were (Job 5—6). This shows that Job was in darkness; he had never touched God or seen the light. However, at the end of the book of Job, he met God and said to Him, "I had heard of You by the hearing of the ear, / But now my eye has seen You; / Therefore I abhor myself, and I repent / In dust and ashes" (42:5-6). Why did he repent? He repented because he saw his uncleanness. All of us are filthy and unclean before God. A person who has touched God sees his filthiness, and one who is enlightened by God senses his uncleanness. But one who has never touched God or seen the light, even though he is filthy and unclean, does not have any feeling of filthiness. Every time a person touches God, he will see that he is full of sins and that he is a constitution of sin. (*The Pure in Heart, Chapter 4*)

Day 6: Prayer that the working saints would respond to God as light through repentance and confession to enter into intimate fellowship with Him.

Psalm 51:2—Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity, / And from my sin cleanse me.

Psalm 51:3—For I do know my transgressions, / And my sin is before me continually.

Proverbs 20:27—The spirit of man is the lamp of Jehovah, / Searching all the innermost parts of the inner being.

Ministry Portion

When we are in the light, we shall be exposed, and we shall see our sins. Then we need to confess our sins. As we confess our sins, spontaneously and continuously the blood of Jesus the Son of God will cleanse us from all sin. When we are in darkness, we are in sin. Moreover, when we are in sin, our fellowship with God is broken. But if we are exposed by the light and confess our sins, our sins will be washed away, and our broken fellowship with God will be restored. (*Life-Study of 1, 2, & 3 John, Jude, Chapter 8*)

When you make a thorough confession, you will realize that you are a constitution of the flesh, the old man, the world, and Satan. You will find out that the more you confess, the more you have to confess. It will seem that the dirt can never be cleared away. A thorough confession may take two weeks... Dear saints, have you ever made a thorough confession before God? Just to go to the Lord for five minutes to tell Him, "Lord, I am sinful; I repent," might be a kind of repentance, but that is not a thorough repentance.

Psalm 51 is a psalm of David's repentance and confession of his indulging sin. He was rebuked by Nathan the prophet for what he had done, and he made his confession. By reading that psalm you can see that his repentance and confession actually have no end. You should not believe that Psalm 51 has finished, or completed, David's repentance and confession. The real confession, the real repentance, according to my experience, has no ending. We are a heap of sin. Our constitution is sin. How then could we finish our confession?

Repenting prayer is a particular kind of prayer that we must keep continuously. If there is any prayer without repenting, that prayer is nearly in vain. Medical doctors tell us that we should always wash our hands before eating. In the same way, we should not pray without repenting. Praying without repenting is like eating without washing our hands. Even if we do not lose our temper or speak evil words, we are still sinful. So when we come to pray, to take the spiritual food, we have to wash our hands, and to wash our hands is to repent. We should say, "Lord, I still need Your forgiveness, and I still need Your cleansing with Your precious blood." Then we can pray. After our hands are washed, we can eat... We all need some particular time to repent so that we can pray. The degree to which we can pray depends upon the degree to which we have repented. (*The Training and the Practice of the Vital Groups, Chapter 4*)