

Appreciating the Ministry Publications in the Lord's Recovery

Scripture Reading: Phil. 1:10; Psa. 119:130, 105; Rom. 8:34, 10; Col. 3:1; 1:27; Prov. 6:23;
2 Pet. 1:19

I. The truth that the Lord has given to His recovery is the most comprehensive; the materials in the Lord's recovery are rich and plentiful; the whole Bible is open to us in the Lord's recovery—Psa. 119:130; cf. Acts 26:18.

II. "The opening of Your words gives light, Imparting understanding to the simple"—Psa. 119:130:

- A. We have to know the truth; the truth is in the Bible, yet the Bible is a book that needs expounding; Luke 24:13-35 is a good illustration of this:
 - 1. There the Lord Jesus met the two disciples going to Emmaus and "interpreted to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself"; they did not know how to understand these things until the Lord Jesus opened their understanding to know all the verses concerning Himself in the Old Testament.
 - 2. Likewise, in Acts 8:26-39 the eunuch from Ethiopia was reading Isaiah 53 but did not know what it meant until Philip explained to him what was there.
- B. There is the need of the untying; the ministry does not invent doctrinal teaching but discloses, or unties, what is in the Word—Luke 24:27.

III. The truths in the Bible have both an objective aspect and a subjective aspect—Rom. 8:34, 10; Col. 3:1; 1:27:

- A. "Do not give that which is holy to the dogs, neither cast your pearls before the hogs"—Matt. 7:6:
 - 1. That which is holy must refer to the objective truth, which belongs to God.
 - 2. Your pearls must refer to the subjective experiences, which are ours—v. 6.
- B. In the Lord's recovery we want both the objective doctrines and the subjective experiences—Rom. 8:34, 10.

IV. Today we have the Recovery Version of the New Testament with footnotes, plus the Life-study messages for the twenty-seven books of the New Testament; this can be called the treasury of the Lord's recovery—Gen. 41:56-57; 2 Tim. 2:15; 1 Tim. 2:4:

- A. In these footnotes and the corresponding Life-study messages, there are many precious "diamonds" that cannot be found anywhere else—John 12:24; Rom. 8:29.
- B. We need to pick up the diamonds in the ministry; the language in the ministry publications is simple, but the revelation is priceless—Dan. 2:19.

V. "So that you may approve by testing the things which differ and are more excellent, that you may be pure and without offense unto the day of Christ"—Phil. 1:10:

- A. We appreciate things according to our maturity and our capacity to discern what is of real value—v. 10.
- B. So our appreciation of the Bible differs according to our degree of spiritual experience, understanding, and maturity—Eph. 3:9-10; Psa. 65:11-13:

1. Instead of caring for the "diamonds" found in the messages, many paid more attention to the "wrappings" and the "box"; they spoke about the box and the wrappings, but neglected the diamonds.
2. Those who have grown in life are not preoccupied by wrappings or by the box, but concentrate on the diamonds; in their testimonies they appreciate the diamonds and speak of them—Heb. 6:1.

VI. We need to appreciate the messages released by the ministry in the Lord's recovery—Phil. 1:10; Psa. 119:130:

- A. Our natural, religious concepts versus the divine revelation—Eph. 1:17-23.
- B. The superficial, shallow versus the intrinsic and the essential—Rom. 1:4.
- C. The gilded versus the constituted—v. 4.
 1. The Lord's recovery does not treasure any gilded thing.
 2. we treasure the basic things, the intrinsic things, the essential things—Rev. 17:4.
- D. The complete rather than the partial, the deficient—John 7:39; 1 Cor. 15:45:
 1. Not one of today's theologies, including the Nicene Creed, stresses adequately the five critical points concerning the Spirit of God in the move of God's eternal economy—John 7:39; 1 Cor. 15:45; Rev. 1:4.
 2. The Lord's recovery today is just the recovery of these critical points concerning the Spirit of God in the move of God's eternal economy.
- E. The advanced, the highest rather than the elementary—John 1:1, 14; 1 Cor. 15:45:
 1. In today's Christian theology Christ became something only once; He was God, and then He became a man.
 2. The New Testament clearly unveils that Christ became something three times; first, as God, He became a man through incarnation; second, as a man, He became the life-giving Spirit in His resurrection through His death ; and third, as the pneumatic Christ, the life-giving Spirit, He became the sevenfold intensified Spirit—John 1:1, 14; 1 Cor. 15:45; Rev. 1:4; 3:1.
- F. The central line of the divine revelation rather than the leaves and branches:
 1. Four crucial elements: Christ, the Spirit, life, and the church.
 2. The central line: the Word of God, the Triune God, the economy of God, Christ, the life-giving Spirit, the Body of Christ, the New Jerusalem.
- G. The divine and mystical realm rather than the earthly, physical realm—2 Cor. 3:17:
 1. We must pass through the physical realm of Christ's earthly ministry; to be sure, what is physical is also earthly; we should not linger in this realm but should pass through it quickly, like those who are taking an express train.
 2. We all need to enter into the divine and mystical realm, not of the Triune God, but of the consummated Spirit and the pneumatic Christ—Phil. 1:19; Rom. 8:9.

VII. We should not skate on the surface of the ice in our study of the holy Word; we must break the ice and dive into the depths of the Word to see the divine revelation; this is the way that the Lord has been leading us to study His Word over the past seventy-four years—Psa. 119:105; Prov. 6:23; 2 Pet. 1:19.

Ministry Excerpts:

THE TRUTH THAT THE LORD HAS GIVEN TO HIS RECOVERY BEING THE MOST COMPREHENSIVE

The truth in the Lord's recovery is concerning God's New Testament economy, the gospel of the kingdom. When the Lord Jesus was on the earth, He preached this truth. When the apostles went out to labor, they preached this truth. We also should preach this truth. We thank the Lord that among Christians today, the Lord's recovery has the greatest, deepest, and clearest utterance on the gospel of the kingdom...our problem is not a lack of riches; rather, our problem is that we would not avail ourselves of what we have. The truth that the Lord has given to His recovery is the most comprehensive...The materials in the Lord's recovery are rich and plentiful. We have not only hundreds but thousands of messages. We should learn how to use them properly and choose a message or half a message to supply the home meetings. (CWWL, 1986, vol. 2, "Crucial Words of Leading in the Lord's Recovery, Book 1: The Vision and Definite Steps for the Practice of the New Way", ch. 6)

THE WHOLE BIBLE BEING OPEN TO US

There are many things in the Lord's recovery for which we can be full of joy. We have justification by faith, sanctification, the holy life by faith, and the indwelling Spirit as the power for the inner life. We have the living by faith, the gospel, and the church life. Moreover, the whole Bible is open to us. The Lord has recovered not only the public Bible but also the open Bible. Today we cannot be satisfied, however, because the Lord has not finished His recovery. The Lord is still going on to recover something further. We must be willing to take in all the good things that the Lord has given His Body throughout all the generations. Regardless of what kind of channel the Lord used or what kind of saint it came through, as long as something is from the Lord, we must receive it. Moreover, we must always humbly seek the Lord that He may go on to recover something further until He has fully accomplished His recovery. Then we will know where we are. We are simply in the stream of the Lord's recovery, and we are nothing but a group of simple believers in that stream. (CWWL, 1963, vol. 2, "Lord's Day Morning Messages", ch. 2)

"THE ENTRANCE OF THY WORDS GIVETH LIGHT"

Luke 24:45 says, "Then He opened their mind to understand the Scriptures." This indicates that in order to understand the Bible, we need the opening of our mind through the enlightening of the Lord's Spirit. Otherwise, we will not have any way to understand it. Hebrews 5:13-14 also tells us that in order to partake of God's word, our faculties, that is, our senses or our understanding, need to be exercised through practice. In reading the Lord's word, the mental capacity and the spiritual understanding need to be continually exercised.

Psalms 119:130 says, "The entrance of thy words giveth light." Many passages in the Bible cannot be understood without explanation. We can see this from the case of the Ethiopian eunuch in Acts 8. When Philip saw him, he was reading the book of the prophet Isaiah. Philip asked, "Do you really know what you are reading?" The eunuch said, "How can I unless someone guides me?" (vv. 30-31). Verse 32 then says, "Now the passage of Scripture which he was reading was this: He was led as a sheep to slaughter; and as a lamb before its shearer is dumb, so He does not open His mouth." While he was reading, the eunuch did not understand who the "He" referred to. Hence, there was the need for Philip to explain to him so that he could preach to him Jesus as the gospel and lead him to believe and be baptized.

In the same way, there are many passages in the Bible which require explanation before one can understand them. The following list contains some examples of such passages: 1) the seventy weeks (Dan. 9:24), 2) the epistle of Christ written on the hearts of the believers with the Spirit of the living God (2 Cor. 3:3), 3) Christ making His home in our hearts (Eph. 3:17),

4) being filled unto all the fullness of God (Eph. 3:19), 5) unto the dispensation of the fullness of the times, to head up all things (Eph. 1:10), 6) becoming the God-chosen inheritance in Christ (Eph. 1:11), 7) the mystery of God being completed at the time of the blowing of the seventh trumpet (Rev. 10:7). If you merely read passages like these by yourself without any guidance from others, you will not understand them, even if you read them many times. Therefore, your training here is first a training on the truths. (CWWL, 1990, vol. 3, "The Vision of the Divine Dispensing and Guidelines for the Practice of the New Way", ch. 7)

The Bible Being a Book That Needs Expounding

We have to know the truth. The truth is in the Bible, yet the Bible is a book that needs expounding...The holy Word needs to be expounded. In 1936 I wrote a booklet on Christ's genealogy after I spent about eleven years to study it. The consummation of my labor on the genealogy is in the notes on the first seventeen verses of Matthew 1. Many Bible students would rather skip over this portion of the Word, but these notes bring us into its real significance. We all need to study the Word. Thank the Lord that through the notes to the Recovery Version and through the Life-study Messages the New Testament has been expounded. The notes and the Life-studies open up the Bible to us. The "mine has been opened," but there is the need of more digging to gain the truth. (CWWL, 1986, vol. 3, "The New Way to Carry Out the Increase and Spread of the Church", ch. 2)

The Ministry Not Inventing Doctrinal Teaching but Disclosing, or Untying, What Is in the Word

Second Peter 1:20 says, "No prophecy of Scripture is of one's own interpretation." Interpretation in this verse literally means "loosening, untying"; hence, disclosure, explanation, or exposition. The ministry messages untie the Word. They do not replace the Bible but help the saints to enter into the Bible. Without this, it is difficult to enter into a book of the Bible. There is the need of the untying. This is demonstrated by Paul's writing. Paul wrote Hebrews to untie the Old Testament types, and he indicates in that book that there is more to untie from the Old Testament. Peter writes that Paul's letters, "as also the rest of the Scriptures," are hard to understand and should not be twisted (2 Pet. 3:16). The ministry does not invent doctrinal teaching but discloses, or unties, what is in the Word. (CWWL, 1982, vol. 1, "Various Meetings in Anaheim", ch. 4)

THE TRUTHS IN THE HOLY SCRIPTURES BEING ALWAYS OF TWO ASPECTS: THE OBJECTIVE ASPECT AND THE SUBJECTIVE ASPECT

The truths in the holy Scriptures are always of two aspects: the objective aspect and the subjective aspect. We have to be clear that all the objective doctrines are for the subjective experience. If we pay attention only to the objective doctrines and neglect the subjective aspect, we will not be able to fulfill God's eternal purpose, which is the church. The objective doctrines are for the subjective truths, and the subjective truths are for the producing of the church. Because today's Christianity has neglected the subjective truths, they do not have the practical church life. The practical church life is an issue of our experience of the subjective truths. When we have the experience of the subjective truths, the church is spontaneously produced.

Furthermore, all the subjective truths are linked to the Spirit and life. The Spirit and life are the substance of the subjective truths. If you take away the Spirit and life, there will be no subjective truths. Objective doctrines are composed of letters, whereas subjective truths are constituted with the Spirit and life, not with letters. Without the Spirit and life you do not have subjective truths. Therefore, it is by the Spirit and life that the church is produced.

Because we live by the Spirit and in life, we have the experience of the subjective truths and therefore have the church life.

We want both the objective doctrines and the subjective experience. We want the electricity in the power plant, and we also want that electricity to be transmitted into our homes. We want electricity at both ends, not just at one end. May the Lord be merciful to us! (CWWL, 1977, vol. 3, "The Subjective Truths in the Holy Scriptures", ch. 2)

THE TREASURY OF THE LORD'S RECOVERY

Today we have the Recovery Version of the New Testament with footnotes, plus the Life-study messages for the twenty-seven books of the New Testament. This can be called the treasury of the Lord's recovery. Recently, we interviewed two authoritative scholars of Greek, one in Great Britain and the other in Boston in the United States, and both scholars confirmed that our translation is quite accurate and that the words and sentences flow well. This is truly the Lord's blessing. (CWWL, 1985, vol. 1, "Crucial Words of Leading in the Lord's Recovery, Book 6: The Increase and Spread of the Church", ch. 2)

NEEDING TO PICK UP THE DIAMONDS IN THE MINISTRY

The Lord has granted us much revelation in His Word. I wrote the footnotes for the Recovery Version of the New Testament by looking to the Lord and studying the best reference materials. As a result, these footnotes are the cream of two thousand years of Bible study. We are standing on the shoulders of many saints who have come before us. I picked up many things that others saw, and then I incorporated them into the Lord's up-to-date speaking. In these footnotes and the corresponding Life-study messages, there are many precious "diamonds" that cannot be found anywhere else. There is more exposition in other writings, but it is not spiritually beneficial to the saints. If we read and digest the footnotes and Life-study messages, we will not be short of anything. We need to pick up the diamonds in the ministry and enjoy the best portion of all the Bible exposition of the past. The language in the ministry publications is simple, but the revelation is priceless. (CWWL, 1980, vol. 2, "Fellowship with Serving Ones", ch. 16)

APPRECIATING THINGS ACCORDING TO OUR MATURITY AND OUR CAPACITY TO DISCERN WHAT IS OF REAL VALUE

Our appreciation of the Bible, in particular of the Psalms, depends upon the kind of discernment we have. Just as the discernment and appreciation of a mature person differs from that of a child, so our appreciation of the Bible differs according to our degree of spiritual experience, understanding, and maturity. There is a vast difference between what an aged grandfather would value and appreciate and what a two-year-old child would value and appreciate. Let us suppose that a number of items are placed before them. Among these items the child may appreciate a small, beautiful, empty, round box, but to the grandfather this box and all the items he sees before him are worthless. What he appreciates and desires is a great diamond. This shows that we appreciate things according to our maturity and our capacity to discern what is of real value. Whereas some will appreciate Ephesians 3, a chapter on God's eternal economy and the preaching of the unsearchable riches of Christ to the Gentiles according to God's plan to produce the church, others may appreciate a portion such as Psalm 65:11-13, which speaks of God's crowning the year with His goodness, His paths overflowing with fatness, the hills girding themselves with exultation, and the valleys shouting for joy and singing. (*Life-study of Psalms*, ch. 26)

NEEDING TO APPRECIATE THE MESSAGES RELEASED BY THE MINISTRY IN THE LORD'S RECOVERY

We need to appreciate the messages released by the ministry in the Lord's recovery. We need to thoroughly assimilate these messages by praying them back to the Lord...In the nineteenth century the Lord raised up the British Brethren to recover many truths in the Word of God. Although we learned much from the Brethren concerning biblical typology and prophecy, we need to realize that the recovery of the truths has continued to progress among us through the past sixty years. If we compare what the Lord showed His people prior to the twentieth century with what the Lord has shown us in the past six decades, we will realize that among us the recovery of the truths has advanced greatly. We stand upon the great Bible teachers who have gone before us. Hence, we should thank the Lord that we were born in this century. (CWWL, 1984, vol. 1, "Bringing the Saints into the Lord's Up-to-Date Vision and Move in His Recovery", ch. 3)

The Lord's Recovery Standing One with the Bible, but Standing Apart from Religion and Tradition

Religion is any system, means, or way for people to behave and worship God without Christ. This is the essence of what religion is. According to human culture and from the natural perspective, nothing is better than religion. Religion is the best human invention; nothing in human culture can compare to it. Religion instructs people to worship God and teaches them to behave as worshippers of God so that they can glorify God and someday stay with Him in a heavenly paradise. Humanly speaking, this is not a bad thing; it is good, yet it teaches people to worship God and to behave without Christ. (CWWL, 1972, vol. 3, "The Christian Life and the Church Life in Galatians and Ephesians", ch. 2)

Many of today's Christians neglect the crucial matter of receiving the Spirit. Instead, they concentrate on helping people to be religious and ethical. For this reason, there is the urgent need for the Lord to have a recovery. The Lord's recovery is utterly different from religion. Concerning Christ, life, the Spirit, and the church, the Lord's recovery stands one with the Bible, but it stands apart from religion and tradition. Surely both we and the Lord Himself need the recovery. (*Life-study of Galatians*, msg. 34)

The Lord's Recovery Diving into the Intrinsic Significance of the Bible

There is a struggle today between the atmosphere of traditional Christianity and that of the Lord's recovery. I believe that the divine truths of the Lord's recovery will eventually conquer the shallow teachings in organized Christianity. Although many of the teachings in Christianity are fundamental, scriptural, and spiritual, they are shallow because they do not touch the deep truths revealed in the Word of God.

Many believers cling to their religious background. Hence, it is difficult to present the deeper truths in the Bible to them. In Matthew 7:6 the Lord Jesus said, "Do not give that which is holy to the dogs, neither cast your pearls before the hogs, lest they trample them with their feet, and turn and tear you," Here that which is holy refers to the objective truth belonging to God, and your pearls refers to the subjective experiences belonging to us. Dogs do not have hoofs, nor do they chew the cud; hogs have divided hoofs but do not chew the cud. Thus, both are unclean (Lev. 11:27, 7). According to the revelation in 2 Peter 2:12, 19-22; and Philippians 3:2, dogs and hogs in Matthew 7:6 refer to people who are religious but not clean.

We have seen the fulfillment of the Lord's word in Matthew 7:6 among the saints in the local churches. When some of the saints presented certain truths concerning God's economy and testified of their subjective experiences of Christ to religious people, these people "trampled" upon the saints' experiences and turned upon them to "tear" them. Although religious ones may remain in traditional Christianity with its superficial teachings, we need to come out of that old atmosphere of traditional religion and enter into the new atmosphere of the Lord's recovery.

When I speak the truths revealed in the holy Word, I intentionally use simple expressions so that I will not obscure the divine truths with complicated scholarly language. Although the expressions that I use to convey the truths are simple, these truths are profound. Instead of remaining under the influence of traditional Christianity, we should progress in our understanding of the divine truths by spending adequate time to study the details of the central vision of God's economy. (CWWL, 1982, vol. 1, "Miscellaneous Messages in Anaheim", ch. 9)

I share this to show again that the teaching of today's Christianity is like that of James—right to a certain degree but devoid of the highest peak of God's revelation. The Lord's recovery is absolutely different. For over seventy years, we have dived into the intrinsic significance of the Bible. We have read the different interpretations of the Bible throughout the church's history, and the Lord has given us the discernment to see what is according to His eternal economy. We need to see the difference between the Lord's recovery and today's Christianity. The Lord's recovery is up to the standard of the divine revelation, but Christianity is devoid of it. (CWWL, 1994-1997, vol. 2, "Crystallization-study of the Epistle of James", ch.4)

The Lord's Recovery Treasuring the Basic Things, the Intrinsic Things, the Essential Things

Something that is gilded with gold cannot pass the test of "scratching." A little scratch exposes the real nature of the thing. If we are really gold, "scratching" will expose that we are gold. Even if someone were to "break us up" and "grind us into powder," it would show that we are not only golden but gold. If our intrinsic nature is golden, this can stand any kind of test. The Lord's recovery does not treasure any gilded thing. We treasure the basic things, the intrinsic things, the essential things. (CWWL, 1984, vol. 2, "Elders' Training, Book 3: The Way to Carry Out the Vision", ch. 5)

The Lord's Recovery Today Being Just the Recovery of the Critical Points Concerning the Spirit of God in the Move of God's Eternal Economy

The Catholic Church, the Protestant denominations, the Brethren assemblies, the Pentecostal churches, and all the free groups are held back by their imperfect and unscriptural theology from the central revelation of God and come short of the completion of God's eternal economy because of their missing, negligence of, and opposition to the above five critical points concerning the Spirit of God.

We all need to have a clear view of the central revelation of God. The central revelation of God is God becoming flesh, the flesh becoming the life-giving Spirit, and the life-giving Spirit becoming intensified sevenfold to build up the church to issue in the Body of Christ and to consummate the New Jerusalem. We need to see that the Triune God became flesh, that the flesh became the life-giving Spirit, and that the life-giving Spirit became the sevenfold intensified Spirit. This Spirit is to build up the church, which becomes the Body of Christ consummating the New Jerusalem as the final goal of God's economy. This central revelation has been altogether neglected in today's theologies. The Catholic Church, the Protestant denominations, the Brethren assemblies, the Pentecostal churches, and all the free groups come short of the completion of God's eternal economy because of their missing, negligence of, and opposition to the five critical points concerning the Spirit of God which we have covered in this message. The Lord's recovery today is just the recovery of these critical points concerning the Spirit of God in the move of God's eternal economy.

I am quite concerned for all the co-workers and elders. It may be that a good number of them do not have a complete understanding of what the Lord's recovery is. If we are asked to explain what the recovery is today, we should be able to answer in one simple sentence: The Lord's recovery is God becoming the flesh, the flesh becoming the life-giving Spirit, and the

life-giving Spirit becoming the sevenfold intensified Spirit to build up the church that becomes the Body of Christ and that consummates the New Jerusalem. Regarding the Lord's present recovery, I hope that none of you would be held back by your old theology or by your old understanding of the recovery. (CWWL, 1994-1997, vol. 4, "The Divine and Mystical Realm", ch. 1)

Needing to Stress the Three "Becomings" of Christ

The New Testament clearly unveils that Christ became something three times. First, as God, He became a man through incarnation (John 1:1, 14); second, as a man, He became the life-giving Spirit in His resurrection through His death (1 Cor. 15:45); and third, as the pneumatic Christ, the life-giving Spirit, He became the sevenfold intensified Spirit (Rev. 1:4; 3:1; 4:5; 5:6). Hence, concerning Christ, there are three "becomings," In today's Christian theology Christ became something only once. He was God, and then He became a man. We were influenced by this theology, and before we came into the recovery, we held the concept that Christ had only one "becoming," that is, that He became a man, and beyond this there was nothing further.

In the Lord's recovery the ministry has stressed again and again that Christ as the last Adam became the life-giving Spirit. The leading brothers in the churches accepted this, but it may not have impressed them as much as the thought of Christ as God becoming a man. In our subconscious thinking, we may still hold the concept of one "becoming." As a result, our teaching concerning the ministry of Christ as the life-giving Spirit, the pneumatic Christ, in the second stage of His full ministry is not strong. Our teaching concerning Christ in the first stage, concerning His becoming a man and accomplishing redemption, is very strong, but our teaching concerning His carrying out His organic salvation is not as strong. What we have seen regarding the three stages of Christ's full ministry is not a small thing. We need to stress the three "becomings" of Christ. The New Testament reveals that Christ our Lord has become something three times. Based on this vision, I believe that the Lord will do some revolutionizing work among us. (CWWL, 1994-1997, vol. 5, "Pre-meeting Fellowship on How to be a Co-worker and an Elder and How to Fulfill Their Obligations", ch. 2)

The Central Line Standing Out

Our goal in teaching the classes of the full-time training should be that after two years the trainees' knowledge of God's up-to-date revelation will be complete. We should not only try to help them to stay in the Lord's recovery but should also educate them in a complete way so that they know the up-to-date, high-peak revelation of the Lord. Moreover, our teaching should be new, and our utterance should be up to date. We need to set aside many old, traditional terms.

In order to classify, systemize, or arrange all the points of the up-to-date revelation for the sake of preparing to teach the classes of the training, it will be helpful to see that the Bible has three lines of truth: the central line, the line of supplemental points, and "the leaves and branches." The points that are supplemental to the central line are often mistakenly considered as part of the central line, but we must be careful not to confuse these two lines. Otherwise, the central line will not be clear. The central line should stand out. In order to know the Bible, we should differentiate these three lines.

After the central line and the line of supplemental points, there is a line of points that are like the leaves and branches of a fruit tree. The leaves and branches give the tree a beautiful appearance but are not as necessary to us as the fruit of the tree. We do not serve others leaves and branches to eat. The food that we need is in the first, central line and the second, supplemental line. (CWWL, 1994-1997, vol. 3, "Co-workers' Meetings in Anaheim", ch. 1)

The Church, Christ, the Spirit, and Life ***Being the Contents of the True Substance of the Bible***

A nut consists of a shell, the meat, and the kernel, which is the center. Man is also of three parts: the outer part—the physical organs; the inner part—the soul; and the innermost part—the spirit (1 Thes. 5:23). Of these three parts—spirit, soul, and body—the most important part is the innermost part, the spirit, which is the breath of life in man (Gen. 2:7). Without such a breath of life, it is not possible for man to exist, and man thus ceases to be man. Likewise, the Bible has its kernel, its life, its center, which is constituted with the church, Christ, the Spirit, and life. These four items are the contents of the true substance of the Bible.

We all must clearly see these four crucial elements—the church, Christ, the Spirit, and life. The church is a group of people with the Triune God, having His life. Christ is our Savior and Redeemer, who has come into us to be our life and to be united and mingled with us. The Spirit as the consummation of the processed Triune God comes into us to be our reality. When we have Him, we have Christ's divine nature and human nature, and we also have Christ's incarnation, human living, crucifixion, resurrection, and ascension. Such a One is now in us as our life.

Therefore, concerning our living today, we should be able to say as Paul said, "I am crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but it is Christ who lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live in faith, the faith of the Son of God" (Gal. 2:20). The life we live today is not a life we live by our natural old man. Instead, it is a life we live by faith, a life we live by believing that the invisible Triune God is in us as our person and our life so that we may become members of the church as the Body of Christ, coordinating with all the saints on the ground of oneness as the testimony of the oneness of the Body of Christ. (CWWL, 1984, vol. 1, "The Four Crucial Elements of the Bible—Christ, the Spirit, Life, and the Church", ch. 1)

The Central Line in the Bible

The central line in the Bible progresses sequentially from God to His economy, to Christ, to the life-giving Spirit, to the Body of Christ, and to the New Jerusalem as the eternal goal and ultimate consummation. The New Jerusalem is the aggregate of all the visions and revelations of the Bible. It is the organism of the Triune God—an organic constitution of the processed and consummated Triune God with His regenerated, transformed, conformed, and glorified elect. We need to teach concerning the New Jerusalem in an up-to-date way using these up-to-date expressions. (CWWL, 1994-1997, vol. 3, "Co-workers' Meetings in Anaheim", ch. 1)

Needing to Pass through the Physical Realm of Christ's Earthly Ministry and Enter into the Mystical Realm of Christ's Heavenly Ministry

First, we must pass through the physical realm of Christ's earthly ministry. To be sure, what is physical is also earthly. We should not linger in this realm but should pass through it quickly, like those who are taking an express train.

In His flesh (Col. 1:22) Christ carried out His earthly ministry by accomplishing God's judicial redemption. This redemption resulted objectively in God's forgiveness of the believers' sins (Eph. 1:7), washing away the believers' sins (Heb. 1:3), justifying the believers (Rom. 3:24), reconciling the believers as His enemies to Himself (Rom. 5:10a), and sanctifying the believers in their position unto Himself as His holy people (Heb. 13:12; 10:29). All these matters are very good, but they are physical, earthly, judicial, and objective.

What Christ carried out in His earthly ministry was a procedure of the complete salvation of God for the believers to participate in God's organic salvation as the purpose of the complete

salvation of God. This procedure can be compared to an escalator which brings us from one level to another. An escalator is useful, but one should not stay on an escalator for a long time. However, most of today's Christians are lingering on the "escalator" of the procedure of the complete salvation of God. Some are not even on the escalator but are still on the "ground floor"; they have not yet begun to experience the procedure.

It is extremely important that we differentiate between the procedure of God's complete salvation and the purpose of His complete salvation. The procedure is judicial, and the purpose is organic. Furthermore, the procedure is in the physical realm, and the purpose is in the mystical realm.

One who has experienced God's judicial redemption may be considered saved by being redeemed only, but he still needs to be saved more by God's organic salvation in the accomplishing of God's economy.

We need to pass through the physical realm of Christ's earthly ministry and enter into something higher—the mystical realm of Christ's heavenly ministry. (*CWWL*, 1994-1997, vol. 4, "The Divine and Mystical Realm", ch. 2)

BREAKING THE ICE AND DIVING INTO THE DEPTHS OF THE WORD

Isaiah 9:6 says that a child is born to us and a Son is given to us whose name is Mighty God and Eternal Father (Luke 2:11-12). This human child is the mighty God. The wise men who came from the east to see that child worshipped Him as God (Matt. 2:11). As the Son given to us, His name is Eternal Father. Is He a son or a father? We have to declare that He is both. We should spend time to get into verses like Isaiah 9:6. We should not skate on the surface of the ice in our study of the holy Word. We must break the ice and dive into the depths of the Word to see the divine revelation. This is the way that the Lord has been leading us to study His Word over the past seventy-four years. (*CWWL*, 1994-1997, vol. 5, "Crystallization-study of the Humanity of Christ", ch. 1)