

VOLUME ONE

BASIC
ELEMENTS
of the
CHRISTIAN
LIFE

WITNESS LEE & WATCHMAN NEE

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PREFACE

This book is composed of five chapters, which present some of the initial and most basic elements of the Christian life. The first chapter examines the mystery of human life and reveals how to become a believer in Christ. The subsequent four chapters present: 1) the assurance, security, and joy of our salvation in Christ; 2) our initial and on-going experience of the precious blood of Christ, which can cleanse us from every sin; 3) our daily enjoyment of Christ by calling on the name of the Lord; and 4) the key to experiencing Christ—our human spirit.

The content of these chapters is taken from the writings of Witness Lee and has previously been published in individual booklet form as *The Mystery of Human Life*; *The Assurance, Security, and Joy of Salvation*; *The Precious Blood of Christ*; *Calling on the Name of the Lord*; and *The Key to Experiencing Christ—the Human Spirit*.

CHAPTER ONE

THE MYSTERY OF HUMAN LIFE

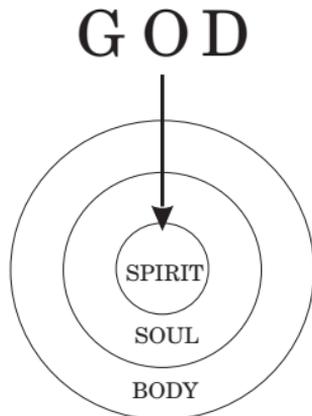
Have you ever wondered why you are living in this world and what the purpose of your life is? There are six keys that unlock this mystery.

1. God's Plan

God desires to express Himself through man (Rom. 8:29). For this purpose, He created man in His own image (Gen. 1:26). Just as a glove is made in the image of a hand to contain a hand, so also man is made in the image of God to contain God. By receiving God as his content, man can express God (2 Cor. 4:7).

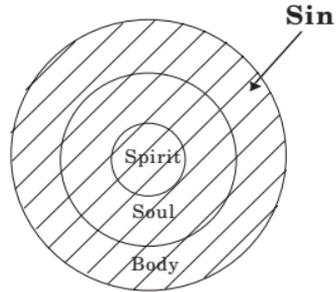
2. Man

To fulfill His plan, God made man as a vessel (Rom. 9:21-24). This vessel has three parts: body, soul, and spirit (1 Thes. 5:23). The body contacts and receives the things of the physical realm. The soul, the mental faculty, contacts and receives the things of the psychological realm. And the human spirit, the innermost part of man, was made to contact and receive God Himself (John 4:24). Man was created not merely to contain food in his stomach, or to contain knowledge in his mind, but to contain God in his spirit (Eph. 5:18).

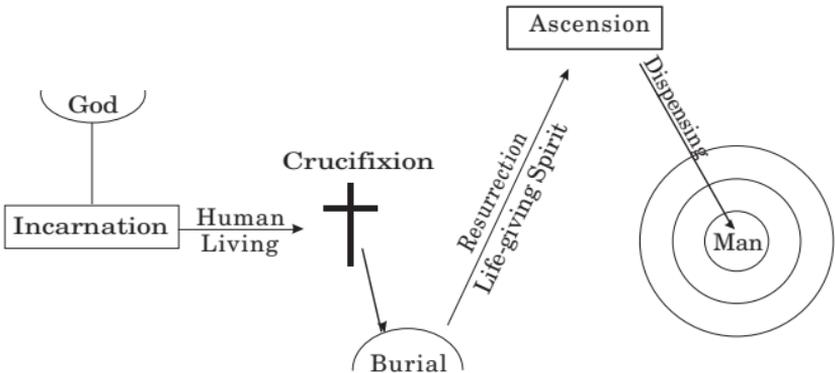


3. Man's Fall

But before man could receive God as life into his spirit, sin entered into him (Rom. 5:12). Sin deadened his spirit (Eph. 2:1), made him an enemy of God in his mind (Col. 1:21), and transmuted his body into sinful flesh (Gen. 6:3; Rom. 6:12). Thus, sin damaged all three parts of man, alienating him from God. In this condition, man could not receive God.



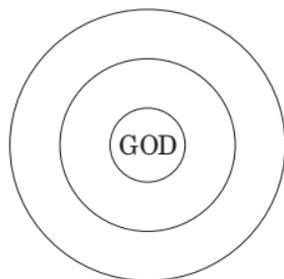
4. Christ's Redemption for God's Dispensing



Nevertheless, man's fall did not deter God from fulfilling His original plan. In order to accomplish His plan, God first became a man called Jesus Christ (John 1:1, 14). Then Christ died on the cross to redeem man (Eph. 1:7), thus taking away his sin (John 1:29) and bringing him back to God (Eph. 2:13). Finally, in resurrection, He became the life-giving Spirit (1 Cor. 15:45b) so that He could dispense His unsearchably rich life into man's spirit (John 20:22; 3:6).

5. Man's Regeneration

Since Christ has become the life-giving Spirit, man can now receive God's life into his spirit. The Bible calls this regeneration (1 Pet. 1:3; John 3:3). To receive this life, man needs to repent to God and believe in the Lord Jesus Christ (Acts 20:21; 16:31).

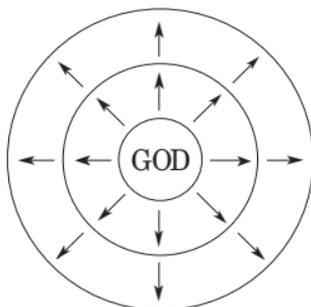


To be regenerated, simply come to the Lord with an open and honest heart and say to Him:

Lord Jesus, I am a sinner. I need You. Thank You for dying for me. Lord Jesus, forgive me. Cleanse me from all my sins. I believe You rose from the dead. I receive You right now as my Savior and life. Come into me! Fill me with Your life! Lord Jesus, I give myself to You for Your purpose.

6. God's Full Salvation

After regeneration, a believer needs to be baptized (Mark 16:16). Then God begins the lifelong process of gradually spreading Himself as life from the believer's spirit into his soul (Eph. 3:17). This process, called transformation (Rom. 12:2), requires human cooperation (Phil. 2:12). The believer cooperates by allowing the Lord to spread into his soul until all his desires, thoughts, and decisions become one with those of Christ. Finally, at Christ's return, God will fully saturate the believer's body with His life. This is called glorification (Phil. 3:21). Thus, instead of being empty and damaged in each part, this man is filled and saturated with the life of God. This is God's full salvation! Such a man now expresses God, fulfilling God's plan!



After receiving this life a believer needs to attend Christian meetings in order to be nourished and supplied by the life of God that he may grow and mature in this life. In fellowship with other believers in the Body of Christ a believer can enjoy the riches of the presence of Christ.

CHAPTER TWO

THE ASSURANCE, SECURITY, AND JOY OF SALVATION

THE ASSURANCE OF SALVATION

If you recently have had the experience of receiving Christ, you may have had times when you doubted the reality of that experience; that is, you may have questioned whether you were really saved. Without the real assurance of salvation as a solid foundation, it is difficult for a new Christian to grow and experience the deeper things of the Christian life. Nevertheless, the Bible says it is possible to know absolutely, unreservedly, that you are a saved person. How can this be? Let us read 1 John 5:13:

I have written these things to you that you may know that you have eternal life, to you who believe into the name of the Son of God.

It is not, “that you may *think*,” not, “that you may *hope*,” but “that you may *know*.” We do not need to wait until we die to find out; this assurance is for us to enjoy today.

How can we have the assurance of salvation? There are three means:

God Says So

Our first means of assurance of salvation is God’s Word. While man’s word may be untrustworthy, God’s Word remains sure and steadfast. It is impossible for God to lie (Heb. 6:18; Num. 23:19). Whatever God says stands firm forever (Psa. 119:89).

What God has said is not a matter of conjecture. His Word is neither vague nor intangible. It comes to us today in written form, the Bible.

The Bible is God's very Word, inspired by Him (2 Tim. 3:16). We can take this Word, believe this Word, and trust this Word.

What then does God say about salvation? He says that the way of salvation is a person, Jesus Christ (John 3:16; 14:6; Acts 10:43; 16:31). He says that whoever believes that Jesus Christ has risen from the dead and confesses with his mouth that Jesus is Lord is saved. He says that whoever calls upon the name of the Lord shall be saved (Rom. 10:9-13).

Have you done this? Have you believed in Christ and confessed openly that He is your Lord? Have you called on His name? If so, you are really saved. God says so. That settles it.

The Holy Spirit Bears Witness

Not only do we have God's Word *outside* us telling us we are saved, we also have a witness *inside* us, telling us the very same thing. What the Bible speaks to us from without, the Spirit confirms within. First John 5:10 says, "He who believes into the Son of God has the testimony in himself."

Sometimes, after we have received Christ, we may not *feel* saved. Nevertheless, if we check within the deepest part of our being, with our spirit, we will find a kind of inner witness, an assurance, that we are children of God. "The Spirit Himself witnesses with our spirit that we are children of God" (Rom. 8:16). If you doubt that you have this inner witness of the Spirit, try this simple experiment: try declaring boldly, "I am *not* a child of God!" You will find it very difficult to even whisper such a falsehood. Why? Because the Holy Spirit within you bears witness, "You *are* a child of God!"

Our Love for the Brothers Is Proof

The third means of assurance is our love for other brothers and sisters in Christ. First John 3:14 says, "We know that we have passed out of death into life because we love the brothers." A saved person undoubtedly senses a kind of love for others who are also saved. You sense a desire to fellowship, to enjoy Christ with others. This is the spontaneous result of being saved, one of the clearest signs of a saved person. This love transcends the cheap, selfish "love" of

today's age. It is a love that is impartial—it loves those who are alike and those who are different. This is the real oneness and harmony the world longs for. Yet it is ours when we receive Christ. "How good and how pleasant it is for brothers to dwell in unity!" (Psa. 133:1). This is the testimony of a saved person.

By these three witnesses—God's Word, the Spirit's inner witness, and our love for the brothers—we may know and be sure that we are really saved.

THE SECURITY OF SALVATION

After a Christian has received the assurance that he is really saved, he may consider, "I know that I am saved today, but how do I know that I will be saved tomorrow? Is it possible for me to lose my salvation?" For such a one, it is no longer a question of *assurance*, but one of *security*.

A man with millions in the bank has the *assurance* that the riches are his. But if the bank insists on leaving their vault unlocked, our rich friend will have a real problem with the *security* of his riches. He knows he is rich today, but he does not know about tomorrow.

Is our salvation like that? Is it something which we have today but may lose at any moment? The answer is, unequivocally, no. We can boldly say, "I know that whatever God does, it will be forever" (Eccl. 3:14).

One wonderful fact regarding our salvation in Christ is that it is irreversible, that is, it cannot be undone. Once we are saved, we are saved forever because our salvation has as its basis the very nature and person of God Himself.

Salvation Was Initiated by God

Jesus told His disciples, "You did not choose Me, but I chose you" (John 15:16). In other words, salvation was God's idea, not ours. In eternity past we were chosen and even predestinated (marked out) by Him (Eph. 1:4-5). Furthermore, it was He who called us (Rom. 8:29-30). Since it was God's plan to save us in the first place, it is also His plan to keep us in that salvation. Could God choose us, mark us out, call us

into salvation and then abandon us? No, God's salvation is eternal.

God's Love and Grace Are Eternal

Furthermore, God's love and grace toward us are not conditional or temporary. It was not love from our side that saved us, but love from His (1 John 4:10). He loved us with an eternal love (Jer. 31:3). His grace was toward us in eternity past, before the world began (2 Tim. 1:9). When Christ loves us, He loves us to the uttermost (John 13:1). No sin, failure, or weakness on our part can separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus (Rom. 8:35-39).

God Is Righteous

But our salvation is based not only upon God's love and grace, but even more upon God's righteousness. Our God is a righteous God. Righteousness and justice are the foundation of His throne (Psa. 89:14). If God were to be unrighteous, His throne would lose its foundation. Therefore, if our salvation in any way involves God's righteousness, it is very strong indeed.

Suppose you run a red light and are given a \$25 ticket. That \$25 fine is a righteous penalty, and the law of the land demands that you pay it. If a civil judge simply overlooks your offense and releases you without paying, he is an unrighteous judge. It is not a matter of whether or not the judge loves you; he is bound by the law to collect the fine.

In the same way, our problem before God before we were saved was a legal one. We had broken God's law by our sin and had thus incurred the law's righteous judgment. According to the law of God, where transgression of the law is, death must take place (Rom. 6:23; Ezek. 18:4). It is not a matter of God loving us, overlooking our sins, and forgetting about the law's judgment. If God were to do this, His very throne would topple. God is bound by His own law to judge sin. What can He do?

Since God desired to save us and since we could not pay the debt of sin ourselves, He in His mercy decided to do so Himself. Two thousand years ago, Jesus Christ, the incarnate

God, came to die on the cross to pay the debt for our sin. Having no sin Himself, He alone was qualified to die this substitutionary death. His death, being reckoned by God as ours, was acceptable to God, and He raised Him from the dead. Now when we believe in Christ, His death is counted in God's sight as our own. Thus, our debt of sin is righteously paid, and we are saved.

Now, can God take back this salvation which Christ has purchased? Absolutely not! Since the debt was paid, for God to demand it again from us would be unrighteous. The same righteousness which formerly called for our condemnation now calls for our justification. What powerful security this gives to our salvation! Even a worldly judge would not demand the same fine to be paid twice. Certainly God, the source of all justice and righteousness, cannot do so. As Watchman Nee wrote in a hymn:

For me forgiveness He has gained,
 And full acquittal was obtained,
 All debts of sin are paid;
 God would not have His claim on two,
 First on His Son, my Surety true,
 And then upon me laid.

Thus, the Bible declares that when God saves us, He shows forth His righteousness (Rom. 1:16-17; 3:25-26).

We Have Become God's Children

When we were saved, we not only *received* something; we also became something. We became children of God, born of His eternal life (John 1:12-13). A human father may be able to take back a gift he has given to his child, but he can never take back the human life which he has imparted. Although the child may misbehave, the child is still the father's. In the same way, we are God's children. Although we may have many weaknesses and may require His discipline, our sins and weaknesses cannot change the fact that we are His children. The life we received by our second birth is the eternal life, the indestructible life, the life of God, the life that can never die. Once we are born again, we can never be "un-born."

God Is Strong

Another reason for the security of our salvation is God's strength. God is unwilling to allow anything or anyone to snatch us from Him. Jesus said, "I give to them eternal life, and they shall by no means perish forever, and no one shall snatch them out of My hand. My Father...is greater than all, and no one can snatch them out of My Father's hand" (John 10:28-29). The hand of the Father and the hand of the Lord Jesus are two strong hands holding us fast. Even if we try to run away from our Father, it would be impossible. Not only is God stronger than Satan, He is also stronger than we are.

God Never Changes

If it were possible to lose our salvation, many of us would have lost it long ago. As human beings, we go through many changes. One day we are hot; the next, cold. But our salvation is not based upon our erratic feelings. It is rooted and grounded in a God who is unchanging in His love and faithfulness toward us (Mal. 3:6). James 1:17 says, "The Father of lights, with whom is no variation or shadow cast by turning." Lamentations 3:22-23 says, "His compassions do not fail; they are new every morning. Great is Your faithfulness." If He loved us enough to save us, He surely loves us enough to keep us in that same salvation. Great is His faithfulness!

Christ Has Promised

Finally, Christ Himself has promised to keep us, uphold us, and never leave us. Although men often are unrighteous in keeping their promises, Christ will never fail to accomplish what He pledges. Listen to His promise: "Him who comes to Me I shall by no means cast out" (John 6:37); "I shall by no means give you up, neither by any means shall I abandon you" (Heb. 13:5). The Lord's promises here are unconditional. "By no means," that is, under no circumstances whatever, will He ever cast us out or cease to uphold us. This is His faithful promise.

What powerful security our salvation has! We have God's selection, His predestination, His calling, His love, His grace,

His righteousness, His life, His strength, His unchanging faithfulness, and His promises as the foundation, guaranty, and security of our salvation. We can all declare with Paul: "I know whom I have believed, and I am persuaded that He is able to guard my deposit unto that day" (2 Tim. 1:12).

THE JOY OF SALVATION

We have seen the assurance of our salvation, that is, how we know that we are saved. We have also seen the security of our salvation, that is, how we can never lose our salvation. But is that sufficient? Unfortunately, many Christians are content to go only this far—*having* salvation, but having little joy or *enjoyment* of that salvation.

Our friend with millions in the bank may have the *assurance* that he is rich, and he may have the *security* of knowing that his deposit is safe. But if he never spends a dime and is content to live a pauper's life, we can hardly say he has the *enjoyment* of those riches. Objectively speaking he is rich, but in his practical experience he has nothing.

This is the condition of many Christians today. They are saved, but in their daily life they have little experience of the unsearchable riches of Christ (Eph. 3:8). However, God's intention is that we not only have Christ, but that we enjoy Him, even to the uttermost (John 10:10; Phil. 4:4). The normal condition of a Christian is to "exult with joy that is unspeakable and full of glory" (1 Pet. 1:8).

But nearly all of us will admit that there are times, even many times, when we do not have this overflowing joy. Does this mean that we have lost our salvation? Absolutely not! Our salvation is based upon God, not upon us. But although we cannot lose our salvation, we can lose the joy of that salvation.

The Loss of Joy

What are the things, then, that cause us to sometimes lose our joy? The first item is sin. Joy depends on our having unbroken fellowship with God, but sin separates us from Him and causes Him to hide His face (Isa. 59:1-2).

The second item is grieving the Holy Spirit (Eph. 4:30).

When we are saved, we become God's temple and have His Spirit indwelling us (1 Cor. 6:17, 19; Rom. 8:9, 11, 16). This Spirit within is not a "force" or a "thing," but a living person, Jesus Christ Himself (1 Cor. 15:45; 2 Cor. 3:17; 13:5). Like every living person, He has feelings and attitudes. Thus, when we speak or do things contrary to Him, He is grieved within us. When the Holy Spirit is grieved, our spirit, which is joined to Him (1 Cor. 6:17), is grieved, and we lose our joy.

The Maintenance of Joy

Our salvation is like a rock, immovable, but the joy of our salvation is like a delicate flower, easily upset by a little breeze. Therefore, it is something we must cultivate and nourish. What, then, can we do to maintain this joy?

First, we can confess our sins (1 John 1:7, 9). When we confess our offenses to the Lord, His blood cleanses us, and our fellowship with Him is restored. After David sinned, he prayed, "Restore to me the gladness of Your salvation" (Psa. 51:12). There is no need to wait. The precious blood of Christ cleanses us from every sin.

Second, we can take God's Word as our food. Jeremiah said, "Your words were found and I ate them, and Your word became to me the joy and rejoicing of my heart" (Jer. 15:16). Often we discover that after reading and praying over God's Word, our heart is bubbling over with enjoyment. No famished man is happy. Likewise, we should not remain famished Christians. We should continually feed and feast on God's Word (Matt. 4:4).

Third, we can pray. Often after opening our heart and speaking out to the Lord, we sense a deep joy and refreshment. Isaiah 56:7 says He will cause us to rejoice in His house of prayer. Real prayer is not the recitation of familiar words and phrases—it is a pouring out of our heart and spirit to the Lord. Jesus said, "Ask and you shall receive, that your joy may be made full" (John 16:24). Real prayer is releasing and enjoyable.

Finally, we can fellowship. The greatest enjoyment for a Christian is to be together with others who love and enjoy Christ. No human words can utter the sweetness we

experience when we praise Him and speak about Him together. First John 1:3-4 says, "That you also may have fellowship with us, and indeed our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ. And these things we write that our joy may be made full." Real fellowship is not a duty, but an enjoyment—the greatest joy on earth.

Thus, we have the assurance, the security, and the joy of our salvation. Praise Him for such a full salvation!

CHAPTER THREE

THE PRECIOUS BLOOD OF CHRIST

To sustain your physical life, you need certain basic items such as water, oxygen, food, clothing, and shelter. In addition, your body requires a certain amount of protein, vitamins, and minerals. Without all these, your physical life would die, or at least suffer greatly.

It is the same with your spiritual life. Your spiritual life, just like your physical life, requires certain basic elements. These are essential. Without them, you will find it difficult to survive as a Christian in a world that does not know Christ. One of these basic elements is the blood of Christ.

Why do you need the blood of Christ? Because, essentially, fallen man has three basic problems. Even as a Christian, you still carry around the fallen human life. So day after day, you may still be plagued with these three problems.

These three problems involve three parties: God, yourself, and Satan. Toward God, you often sense separation. Within yourself, you often sense guilt. And from Satan, you often sense accusation. These three—separation from God, feelings of guilt, and accusation from Satan—can be three big problems in your Christian life. How can these be overcome? Only by the blood of Christ.

SEPARATION FROM GOD

When Adam sinned in the garden of Eden, he immediately hid from God. Before Adam sinned, he enjoyed God and was in His presence all the time. Yet after he sinned, he hid. Sin always results in separation from God.

Even as a Christian you may experience this. After committing some little sin, you sense a great gulf between you

and God. Because God is righteous, He cannot tolerate sins. This is what the prophet Isaiah said: “No, Jehovah’s hand is not so short that it cannot save; / Nor is His ear so heavy that it cannot hear. / 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” (Isa. 59:1-2).

After Adam sinned, God did not say, “Adam, what have you done?” Rather, God said, “Adam, where are you?” In other words, God is not as much concerned with what sins you may commit, as He is with the fact that your sins separate you from Him. God loves you, but He abhors your sins. As long as your sins remain, God must stay away. In this condition, you feel far from God. For God to come, sins must go.

There is only one thing in the entire universe that can take away sins—the precious blood of Christ. No amount of prayer, no amount of weeping, no ritual, no penance, no promise to do better, no guilty feeling, no period of waiting—no, nothing but the precious blood of Christ—can remove sins. Hebrews 9:22 says that “without shedding of blood is no forgiveness.”

This is illustrated in Exodus. Some of the children of Israel may have been as sinful as the Egyptians. Yet when God sent His angel to slay all the firstborn children in the land of Egypt, He did not say, “When I see your good behavior, I will pass over you.” God did not require that the children of Israel pray, do penance, or promise to behave. No, God commanded them to slay the Passover lamb and to sprinkle its blood on their doorposts. He said, “When I see the blood, I will pass over you” (Exo. 12:13). God never looked to see what kind of people were in the house; when He saw the blood, He simply passed over.

That Passover lamb was a picture of Christ. When John the Baptist first saw the Lord he proclaimed, “Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!” (John 1:29). Jesus is the Lamb of God. By His precious blood all your sins have been taken away.

What then should you do when you have sinned and feel far from God? You should simply confess that sin to God and believe that the blood of Jesus has taken that sin away. First

John 1:9 says, "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness." When you confess your sins, immediately all distance between you and God is gone.

Don't worry about any feeling or lack of feeling at this point. The blood of Christ is primarily for God's satisfaction, not for yours. Remember, God said, "When I (not you) see the blood...." On the night of the Passover, the children of Israel were within the house while the blood of the lamb was without. Within the house, they could not see the blood; nevertheless, they had peace through knowing that God was satisfied with that blood.

Once a year, on the day of atonement, the high priest went alone into the Holy of Holies to sprinkle the blood on the expiation cover of the ark (Lev. 16:11-17). No one was allowed to watch. This is a shadow of Christ who, after His resurrection, went into the heavenly tabernacle and sprinkled His own blood before God as the propitiation for your sins (Heb. 9:12). No one today can look into heaven and see that blood. Yet it is there. It is there speaking for you (Heb. 12:24) and satisfying God on your behalf. Even though you cannot see the blood, you can believe in its effectiveness. This blood solves your problem toward God.

If God esteems the blood of Christ sufficient to remove your sins, can you do the same? Or do you require some good feeling besides? Can your requirement be higher than God's? No, you must simply confess, "O God, thank You that the blood of Christ has taken away all my sins. If You are happy with the blood, then I am happy also."

GUILT IN YOUR CONSCIENCE

Man's second crucial problem is with himself. Within him, in his conscience, there is a heavy load of guilt. How many young people today are burdened by guilt! Guilt is a big problem to man.

Sins offend God on the one hand and defile us on the other. What is guilt? Guilt is the stain of sins on your conscience. When you are young, your conscience is only stained a little. But as you grow older, these stains accumulate. Like a

window which is never washed, the conscience grows darker and darker until eventually little light can penetrate.

No detergent, no chemical, no acid can wash the stain of guilt from your conscience. Not even a nuclear bomb can dislodge this stain; no, your conscience demands something more powerful than that. Your conscience needs the precious blood of Christ.

Hebrews 9:14 says, "How much more will the blood of Christ...purify our conscience from dead works to serve the living God?" The blood of Christ is powerful enough to purge, or cleanse, your conscience from every guilty stain.

How does the blood of Christ purge guilt from your conscience? Suppose you receive a traffic ticket for parking on the sidewalk. You have three problems: first, you broke the law; second, you owe the government a fine; and third, you have a copy of the traffic ticket to remind you of the fine. Now suppose you are penniless and find it impossible to pay the fine. You cannot just throw away the ticket, because the police hold a copy, and they will prosecute you if you do not pay. You have a real problem.

This is a picture of what happens whenever you sin. First, you have broken God's law; that is, you have done something that offends God. Second, you owe God's law something. Romans 6:23 says that the wages of sin is death. This is a rather stiff fine, impossible for you to pay. And third, you have guilt in your conscience, like the traffic ticket in your pocket, as a nagging reminder of your offense.

Now here is the good news. When Jesus Christ died on the cross, His death fully met all the requirements of God's law for you. In other words, your debt of sin has been paid. Praise the Lord! Jesus Christ, through His death on the cross, paid it all!

So now, the first two problems have been solved: God is no longer offended, and the debt of sin has been fully paid. But what about your conscience? The stain of guilt, like the traffic ticket, remains as a record of your sin.

This is where the blood of Christ cleanses your conscience. Because Christ's death has paid the debt of sin, His blood may now wipe out the record of that debt. Just as when the

fine is paid, the traffic ticket may be torn up and thrown away, so also any guilt on your conscience may be wiped out.

This is so easy to experience. Whenever you sin and sense guilt within, you may simply open to God and pray something like this: "O God, forgive me for what I did today. Thank You, Lord, on the cross You died for me and paid for this sin that I have committed. Lord, I believe that this sin has been forgiven by You. Right now I claim Your precious blood to cleanse my conscience from any stain of guilt." Remember 1 John 1:9: "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness." And as Psalm 103:12 says, "As far as the east is from the west, / So far has He removed our transgressions from us." Who can say how far east is from west? In the same way, when you confess your sins, God removes them infinitely far away from you. They are not associated with you anymore. Because of this, you may have rest in your conscience.

When God forgives, He forgets. Do not think that after God has forgiven your sins, He may one day come back and remind you of them again. No, when it comes to your forgiven sins, God has a very short memory. Sometimes you may have a better memory than God. Can God really forget? This is what Jeremiah 31:34 says: "I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin I will remember no more." If God forgets your sins, you may forget them also. Don't remind God of something He has already forgotten.

Christ died nearly two thousand years ago. His blood has already been shed and is available twenty-four hours a day to cleanse your conscience. Whenever you sin, there is no need to wait. Waiting does not improve the power of the blood. The blood is all-powerful. Wherever you are, any time of day, if you sense guilt in your conscience, just claim the precious blood. "Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven;... / Blessed is the man to whom / Jehovah does not impute iniquity" (Psa. 32:1-2). Through the precious blood of Christ, the problem of guilt is solved.

ACCUSATION FROM SATAN

However, sometimes after you confess and apply the blood

you may continue to have some bad feeling within. Does this indicate that your sin is not forgiven? Or that the blood of Christ does not work? Or that something further is needed? You must answer, "Absolutely not!"

Where, then, do these bad feelings come from after you have confessed and applied the blood? Their source is God's enemy, Satan. To understand this we must see who Satan is and what he does.

Satan is the "devil," which in the original language of the Bible means "accuser." So Revelation 12:10 refers to him as "the accuser of our brothers,...who accuses them before our God day and night." Satan, God's enemy, spends most of his time day and night accusing God's people. This is his job. Of course, God did not ask him to do this. Rather, he has taken it upon himself to accuse God's people incessantly.

This is revealed in the story of Job. Job was a righteous man, and feared God (Job 1:1). Yet it is recorded that Satan appeared before God to accuse Job before Him. He said, "Does Job fear God without cause?...You have blessed the work of his hands, and his possessions are spread throughout the land. But stretch forth Your hand and touch all that he has, and he will surely curse You to Your face" (Job 1:9-11). In other words, Satan accused Job of only fearing God because God had blessed him. Satan claimed that God bribed Job and that if God took away all Job's riches, Job would curse God. This illustrates Satan's accusing in the spiritual realm.

In the book of Zechariah, the high priest, Joshua, stood before God and Satan stood at his right hand "to be his adversary" (3:1). Joshua was "clothed with filthy garments" (v. 3). This speaks of his poor, sinful condition. How often your poor condition gives Satan the opportunity to accuse you. This implies that Satan is not only God's enemy, but he is your enemy as well. Whenever you come to God, Satan resists your coming by accusing you.

Nothing cripples a Christian spiritually more than accusation. Whenever you listen to Satan's accusation, you are powerless. It is as if all the strength is drained from your spirit. A Christian under accusation finds it hard to fellowship

with others and even harder to pray. He feels as though he cannot approach God.

This is the enemy's subtlety. He never appears in a red suit with a pitchfork crying, "I am the devil! Now I am going to condemn you!" He is more clever than that. He accuses you inwardly and even tricks you into thinking that his accusations are God's speaking.

How can you distinguish between God's true enlightening in your conscience and Satan's accusation? Sometimes it is difficult, but there are three ways:

First, God's light supplies you, whereas Satan's accusation drains you. When God speaks concerning your sins, you may feel very exposed and wounded. Nevertheless, you are also supplied and encouraged to draw close to God and apply the precious blood of Christ. Satan's accusations, on the other hand, are totally negative. The more you listen, the harder it is to pray. You feel empty and discouraged.

Second, God's speaking is always specific, whereas Satan's condemnation is quite often (though not always) general. Sometimes you may be tricked into thinking that you are just tired, or that you have had a rough day. Other times, you may just have a general impression that you are not right with God. But when you search your conscience, you find no specific sin that would cause you to be separated from God. Or you may wake up with a general feeling of depression or a feeling of uneasiness toward God. All these general feelings of condemnation that have no apparent source in sin are of Satan and should be rejected. When God speaks, He is specific and positive. But when Satan speaks, he is often general and negative.

Third, any uneasy feeling which remains after you confess and claim the blood is of Satan. There is never a need to confess and claim the blood again. God's demand is at once satisfied by the blood. But Satan is never satisfied. He would like to see you confess again and again. Proverbs 27:15 says, "A continual dripping on a very rainy day / And a contentious woman are alike." Satan's accusations are like that—like a dripping faucet, or like a nagging wife—they will not let you go to sleep. But God's speaking is different. When you confess

and claim the cleansing of the blood, God is instantly satisfied. Any further voice is Satan's.

If you confess your sin and claim the precious blood, yet some uneasiness continues to tug at you within, you should stop praying immediately. Do not confess anymore. Rather, turn to the source of the accusation and say something like this: "Satan, I have confessed my sin to God. He has forgiven my sin, and the blood of Jesus Christ has cleansed me from it. This uneasiness that I sense right now is not from God; it is from you, and I reject it! Satan, now you must look at the blood of Christ. That blood answers every one of your accusations." Try speaking to Satan in this way. When you use the blood in this way, Satan is defeated and he knows it. Revelation 12:10-11 says, "The accuser of our brothers has been cast down....And they overcame him because of the blood of the Lamb and because of the word of their testimony." The word of your testimony is just your declaration that the blood of Jesus Christ has cleansed you from every sin and that this blood has defeated Satan. When you speak boldly in this way, Satan's accusations are overcome.

The Christian life is a kind of warfare. Satan, "your adversary...as a roaring lion, walks about, seeking someone to devour" (1 Pet. 5:8). For this warfare, you need the proper weapons. One important weapon which you must utilize is the blood of Christ.

A DAILY LIFE FULL OF GOD'S PRESENCE

By the power of the precious blood of Christ, it is possible for a Christian to live moment by moment in God's presence. Whenever any little sin would come to frustrate your fellowship with God, you may instantly confess and claim the Lord's prevailing blood. Immediately the fellowship is restored. Why should you waste time? The blood of Christ is available moment by moment, day after day. You can never exhaust the cleansing power of the blood of Christ. His blood is not only able to cleanse every past sin, but also every sin that you could ever commit.

By the power of the precious blood of Christ, you may

enjoy a conscience free from the stain of guilt. Because of this, you can come boldly to God. "Let us come forward...with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience" (Heb. 10:22). By the blood of Christ, your conscience can be free from guilt. Like a freshly washed window, it can be clear, bright, and full of light.

Finally, by the power of the precious blood of Christ, you can overcome every accusation of Satan. Though his accusations may be strong, the blood of Christ is stronger. It answers them, every one. This blood is your weapon. With this weapon you could never be defeated by Satan; rather, he will be defeated by you.

How dear and how precious is the blood of Christ! By this blood you can live in God's presence day after day.

"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."

(1 John 1:7)

CHAPTER FOUR

CALLING ON THE NAME OF THE LORD

What is the meaning of calling on the name of the Lord? Some Christians think that calling on the Lord is the same as praying to Him. Yes, calling is a kind of prayer, but it is not merely praying. The Hebrew word for *call* means to call out to, to cry unto, to cry out. The Greek word for *call* means to invoke a person, to call a person by name. In other words, it is to call a person by naming him audibly. Although prayer may be silent, calling must be audible.

Two Old Testament prophets help us to see what is meant by calling on the Lord. Jeremiah tells us that to call on the Lord means to cry to Him and to experience spiritual breathing. "I called upon Your name, O Jehovah, from the lowest pit. You have heard my voice; do not hide Your ear at my breathing, at my cry" (Lam. 3:55-56). Isaiah also tells us that our calling on the Lord is our crying to Him. "God is now my salvation; I will trust and not dread; for Jah Jehovah is my strength and song, and He has become my salvation. Therefore you will draw water with rejoicing from the springs of salvation, and you will say in that day, Praise Jehovah; call upon His name!...Sing to Jehovah.... Cry out and give a ringing shout, O inhabitant of Zion, for great in your midst is the Holy One of Israel" (Isa. 12:2-6). How may God become our salvation, our strength, and our song? How can we draw water with rejoicing from the springs of salvation? The way is to call on His name, to praise the Lord, to sing a hymn, and to cry out and shout. All of these match the calling mentioned in verse 4!

CALLING ON THE NAME OF THE LORD IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

Calling on the Lord began in the third generation of the human race with Enosh, the son of Seth (Gen. 4:26). The history of calling on the Lord's name continued throughout the Bible with Abraham (Gen. 12:8), Isaac (Gen. 26:25), Moses (Deut. 4:7), Job (Job 12:4), Jabez (1 Chron. 4:10), Samson (Judg. 16:28), Samuel (1 Sam. 12:18), David (2 Sam. 22:4), Jonah (Jonah 1:6), Elijah (1 Kings 18:24), and Jeremiah (Lam. 3:55). Not only did the Old Testament saints call on the Lord, they even prophesied that others would call on His name (Joel 2:32; Zeph. 3:9; Zech. 13:9). Although many are familiar with Joel's prophecy regarding the Holy Spirit, not many have paid attention to the fact that receiving the outpoured Holy Spirit requires our calling on the name of the Lord. On the one hand, Joel prophesied that God would pour out His Spirit; on the other hand, he prophesied that people would call on the name of the Lord. This prophecy was fulfilled on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2:17a, 21). God's outpouring needs the cooperation of our calling on Him.

PRACTICED BY NEW TESTAMENT BELIEVERS

Calling on the name of the Lord was practiced by the New Testament believers beginning on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2:21). While Stephen was being stoned to death, he was calling on the name of the Lord (Acts 7:59). The New Testament believers practiced calling on the Lord (Acts 9:14; 22:16; 1 Cor. 1:2; 2 Tim. 2:22). Saul of Tarsus received authority from the chief priests to bind all that called on the name of the Lord (Acts 9:14). This indicates that all the early saints were Jesus-callers. Their calling on the name of the Lord was a sign, a mark, that they were Christians. If we become those who call on the name of the Lord, our calling will mark us out as Christians.

Paul the apostle stressed the matter of calling when he wrote the book of Romans. He said, "For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek, for the same Lord is Lord of all and rich to all who call upon Him; for whoever calls upon the

name of the Lord shall be saved” (Rom. 10:12-13). Paul also spoke of calling on the Lord in 1 Corinthians when he wrote the words, “With all those who call upon the name of our Lord Jesus Christ in every place, who is theirs and ours” (1 Cor. 1:2). Furthermore, in 2 Timothy he told Timothy to pursue spiritual things with those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart (2:22). By all of these verses we can see that in the first century the Christians practiced calling on the name of the Lord very much. Therefore, throughout the Old Testament as well as in the early days of the Christian age, the saints called on the Lord’s name. How regrettable that it has been neglected by most Christians for so long a time. We believe that today the Lord wants to recover calling on His name and to have us practice it so that we may enjoy the riches of His life.

THE PURPOSE OF CALLING

Why do we need to call on the name of the Lord? Men need to call on the name of the Lord in order to be saved (Rom. 10:13). The way of praying quietly does help people to be saved, but not so richly. The way of calling loudly helps people to be saved in a richer and more thorough way. Thus, we need to encourage people to open themselves and to call on the name of the Lord Jesus. Psalm 116 tells us that we may partake of the Lord’s salvation by calling on Him: “I will take the cup of salvation, and call upon the name of the Lord” (v. 13). In this one Psalm, calling on the Lord is mentioned four times (vv. 2, 4, 13, 17). As we have seen earlier, the way to draw water from the springs of salvation is to call upon the name of the Lord (Isa. 12:2-4). Many Christians have never called upon the Lord. If you have never called, even shouted before the Lord, it is doubtful that you have enjoyed the Lord in a rich way. “Call upon His name!...Cry out and give a ringing shout” (Isa. 12:4, 6). Try shouting before Him. If you have never shouted about what the Lord is to you, try it. The more you shout, “O Lord Jesus, You are so good to me!” the more you will be released from your self and filled with the Lord. Thousands of saints have been released and enriched through calling on the name of the Lord.

Another reason for calling on the Lord is to be rescued from distress (Psa. 18:6; 118:5), from trouble (Psa. 50:15; 86:7; 81:7), and from sorrow and pain (Psa. 116:3-4). People who have argued against calling on the Lord have found themselves calling on Him when they were subject to a certain trouble or illness. When our lives are free from trouble, we may argue against calling on the Lord. However, when trouble comes, no one will need to tell us to call on Him; we will call spontaneously.

Also, the way for us to participate in the Lord's plenteous mercy is to call upon Him. The more we call upon Him, the more we enjoy His mercy (Psa. 86:5). Another reason for calling on the Lord is to receive the Spirit (Acts 2:17a, 21). The best and easiest way to be filled with the Holy Spirit is to call on the name of the Lord Jesus. The Spirit has already been poured out. We simply need to receive Him by calling on the Lord.

Isaiah 55:1 says, "Ho! Everyone who thirsts, come to the waters, and you who have no money; come, buy and eat; yes, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price." What is the way to eat and drink the Lord? Isaiah gives us the way in verse 6 of the same chapter: "Seek Jehovah while He may be found; call upon Him while He is near." Thus, the way to eat the spiritual food for our satisfaction is to seek the Lord and to call upon His name.

Romans 10:12 says that the Lord of all is rich to all who call upon Him. The way to enjoy the riches of the Lord is to call upon Him. The Lord is not only rich, but also near and available, because He is the life-giving Spirit (1 Cor. 15:45b). As the Spirit, He is omnipresent. We may call on His name at any time and in any place. When we call on Him, He comes to us as the Spirit, and we enjoy His riches.

First Corinthians is a book on the enjoyment of Christ. In chapter twelve, Paul tells us how to enjoy Him. The way to enjoy the Lord is to call on His name (12:3; 1:2). Whenever we call "Lord Jesus," He comes as the Spirit, and we drink of Him (12:13), the life-giving Spirit. If I call a person's name, and if he is real, living, and present, that person will come to me. The Lord Jesus is real, living, and present! He is always

available. Whenever we call on Him, He comes. Do you want to enjoy the Lord's presence with all His riches? The best way to experience His presence with all His riches is to call on His name. Call on Him while you are driving on the freeway or while you are at work. Anywhere and anytime you may call. The Lord is near and rich to you.

Also, by calling on the name of the Lord, we can stir ourselves up. Isaiah 64:7 says, "And there is no one who calls upon Your name, who stirs himself up to lay hold of You." When we feel that we are down or low, we can lift and stir ourselves up by calling on the name of the Lord Jesus.

THE WAY TO CALL

How should we call on the Lord? We must call on Him out of a pure heart (2 Tim. 2:22). Our heart, which is the source of our calling, must be pure, seeking nothing except the Lord Himself. Also, we must call with a pure lip (Zeph. 3:9). We need to watch our speech, for nothing contaminates our lips more than loose talk. If our lips are impure due to loose talk, it will be difficult for us to call on the Lord. Along with a pure heart and pure lips, we need to have an open mouth (Psa. 81:10). We need to open our mouth wide to call on the Lord. Furthermore, we need to call on the Lord corporately. Second Timothy 2:22 says, "But flee youthful lusts, and pursue righteousness, faith, love, peace with those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart." We need to come together for the purpose of calling on the name of the Lord. Psalm 88:9 says, "Lord, I have called daily upon thee." Hence, we should call daily upon His name. Furthermore, Psalm 116:2 says, "Therefore will I call upon him as long as I live." As long as we live, we should call on the name of the Lord.

THE NEED OF PRACTICE

Calling on the name of the Lord is not merely a doctrine. It is very practical. We need to practice it daily and hourly. We should never stop our spiritual breathing. We hope that many more of the Lord's people, especially new believers, will begin the practice of calling on the Lord. Today, many Christians have found that they can know Him, that they can be brought

into the power of His resurrection, that they can experience His spontaneous salvation, and that they can walk in oneness with Him by calling on His name. In any situation, at any time, call: Lord Jesus, O Lord Jesus!” If you practice calling on His name, you will see that it is a wonderful way to enjoy the Lord’s riches.

CHAPTER FIVE

THE KEY TO EXPERIENCING CHRIST— THE HUMAN SPIRIT

“As therefore you have received the Christ, Jesus the Lord, walk in Him” (Col. 2:6). Receiving Christ is a very wonderful experience, yet it is only a beginning, only a foretaste of the riches of our Christ. Many Christians desire to experience all that Christ is and live by Him in all things. We trust that this booklet will help to bring them into the experience of a daily walk with “Christ our life” (Col. 3:4).

Let us begin with an illustration. Before entering a locked room, we must know the key and how to use it. Likewise, before we can enter into the reality of experiencing all the fullness of Christ, we must know the key and how to use it. The purpose then of this booklet is to point out the key. If we know what the key is and how to use it, we possess the secret with which we can unlock the door to the experience of all the fullness of this rich Christ who is our life. Therefore, the key is of utmost importance.

A very important verse in the New Testament is 1 Thessalonians 5:23: “And the God of peace Himself sanctify you wholly, and may your *spirit* and *soul* and *body* be preserved complete, without blame, at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.” Man is of three parts: the spirit, the soul, and the body. These are *three* distinct and separate parts of *one* human being.

It is easy to make a distinction between the body and the soul—everyone knows these parts are different. But it is not easy for Christians to distinguish the soul from the spirit. In fact, most have thought that the spirit and the soul are identical. But in the above verse the Spirit of God states clearly in

His Word that there are three parts of man. These parts are joined by two conjunctions: "spirit *and* soul *and* body."

Another verse which shows a distinction between the spirit and the soul is Hebrews 4:12: "For the word of God is living and operative and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing even to the dividing of soul and spirit." The soul and the spirit are not one, for this verse indicates they can be divided asunder. The soul is the soul and the spirit is the spirit, and these two must be separated.

In the universe there are three different worlds: the physical, the psychological, and the spiritual; and because man is of three different parts, he is able to contact these three different realms. First of all, there is the physical world, with so many material things. We contact the physical world through the five senses of our physical body: hearing, seeing, smelling, tasting, and feeling. Then there is the spiritual world. Is it possible for us to contact the spiritual world by the five senses of our body? Of course not. The *spiritual world* can only be contacted by *our spirit*. In our spirit we have the spiritual sense by which we can sense God.

There is also a psychological world, a world which is neither physical nor spiritual. Suppose someone gives you a large sum of money and you are very happy. Does this happiness belong to the physical or to the spiritual world? Happiness, joy, and even sorrow belong to the psychological world. The English word *psychology* comes from the Greek word *psyche* translated as *soul* in the New Testament. *Psychology* simply means "the study of the soul." So there is the psychological or soulish world, in which there is sorrow and joy. Man has been created in three parts—the spirit (Zech. 12:1), the soul (Jer. 38:16), and the body (Gen 2:7)—in order that he might contact three different worlds—the spiritual, the psychological, and the physical.

The soul is also in three parts. One of these parts is the emotion (Deut. 14:26; S. S. 1:7; Matt. 26:38); it is in the emotion that we love, desire, hate, and have joy or sorrow. Another part of the soul is the mind (Josh. 23:14; Psa. 139:14; Prov. 19:2). In the mind we have thoughts, considerations, ideas, and concepts. The third part of the soul is the will (Job 7:15;

6:7; 1 Chron. 22:19), through which we make decisions. Our joy or sorrow is something of the emotion. When we consider or reason, we are using the mind. And when we make a decision to do a certain thing, the will is in operation. The mind, the will, and the emotions, then, are the three parts of the soul. By the mind we think, by the will we choose, and by the emotions we like or dislike, love or hate.

When we contact the psychological world, we use the soul, the psychological part of our being. The principle is the same in the spiritual world. If we would contact something spiritual, we must use *our spirit*. Let me illustrate in this way. Suppose someone is speaking with his voice. The sound is real, but if you shut your ears and attempt to exercise your eyes to see his voice, you cannot do it. You are using the wrong organ. If we want to hear the sound of his voice, we must exercise our hearing organ. The same principle applies to distinguishing colors. You may have blue, green, purple, red, and many other beautiful colors. But if you exercise your ears to listen to the colors, you will never enjoy their beauty. The substances are there, but you cannot see them because you are using the wrong organ.

How then can we contact God? What organ do we use? First, we must see what kind of substance God is. First Corinthians 15:45, 2 Corinthians 3:17, John 14:16-20, and John 4:24 tell us that God is Spirit. Can we contact God by our physical body? No! This is the wrong organ. Can we contact God by the psychological organ, the soul? No! This also is the wrong organ. We can contact God only *by our spirit, because God is Spirit*. John 4:24 says, "God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit." This is a very important verse. The first *Spirit* is capitalized, referring to the divine Spirit, God Himself. The second *spirit* is not capitalized because it refers to our human spirit. God is Spirit, and we must worship Him in our spirit. We cannot worship or contact Him with the body or with the soul. Since God is Spirit, we must contact Him, worship Him, and fellowship with Him in our spirit and by our spirit.

Let us now look at another verse in which these two spirits are mentioned. John 3:6 says, "That which is born of the

Spirit is spirit.” We all know that we have been born again or regenerated, but what does this mean? It simply means that our spirit has been regenerated by the Spirit of God. That which is born of Spirit (the Spirit of God) is spirit (the human spirit). This verse tells us *where* we are born again. We are not born again in the body or in the soul, but in the spirit. When we believed in the Lord Jesus as our Savior, the Spirit of God came into our spirit. The Holy Spirit quickened and imparted life to regenerate our spirit. At the moment we believed in the Lord Jesus, the Holy Spirit came with Christ as life to quicken and regenerate our spirit, and from that time He dwells within our spirit (John 4:24; Rom. 8:16; 2 Tim. 4:22; 1 Cor. 6:17).

Jesus Christ came to this earth and lived as a man for thirty-three and a half years. Then He was crucified for our sins; He died, was resurrected, and was made a life-giving Spirit (1 Cor. 15:45). Second Corinthians 3:17 says that “the Lord [Christ] is the Spirit.” We must offer much praise that Christ, the life-giving Spirit, has come into us. We were created as vessels or containers, composed of body, soul, and spirit. It is into our human spirit that Christ as the life-giving Spirit has come. The preceding verses have made it clear that God now dwells in our spirit. However, remember that the God within us is not only God, but Jesus Christ. Whatever Christ is, whatever He did, and whatever He obtained and attained have all been included in this life-giving Spirit. Now this life-giving Spirit has come into us and is mingled with our spirit, thereby joining us to Him as one spirit (1 Cor. 6:17). Praise Him, we are one with the Lord in our spirit. If we know how to *turn to our spirit*, we can contact Christ. *This is the secret! This is the key!*

Unbelievers have only physical life in the body and human or psychological life in the soul. They do not have the eternal life of God in their spirit because they have not received Christ as the eternal life into their spirit. Therefore, unbelievers can only live by the soul or the body. Before we were saved, all of us lived, walked, and had our being in the soul. But now, after being saved, we have another life within us which is Christ Himself, and by this life we must learn to live. Our

need today is that we must turn to live in another direction—that is, from the soul to the spirit. Before we were saved, we were living by the human life in the soul. Since we have been saved, we must live by the divine life in the spirit.

Now do you see the need of always turning to our spirit? Christ is in our spirit, and if we would meet Christ, we must turn to our spirit. Before we do anything, go anywhere, or say anything, we must turn to our spirit. If we would learn to do this, what a change we would see in our lives.

This is indeed wonderful! Christ is the Spirit, we have a spirit, and these two spirits are joined as one. Now by turning to our spirit and exercising or using our spirit, we have the way to experience the reality of all that Christ is to us. In 1 Timothy 4:7-8 the apostle Paul told us to exercise ourselves unto godliness. Perhaps some brothers have daily exercises or gymnastics for their body. This is good; even Paul said that bodily exercise has some profit. It is good, but only to a certain degree. However, Paul describes another kind of gymnastics which is good forever—both for today and for eternity! Therefore, we should pay more attention to this other kind of gymnastics, the exercise of our spirit.

How do we know that to exercise ourselves unto godliness means to exercise our spirit? Let us consider it first from a logical standpoint. Paul speaks of two kinds of gymnastics: one is the exercise of the body, but what is the other exercise? Is it the exercise of the mind, the psychological or soulish gymnastics? It is apparent that we have had enough of this kind of exercise in elementary school, junior high school, senior high school, and college. From early childhood we have learned to exercise our mind. We have learned too well to exercise this part of our being. Besides the exercise of the body and of the mind, what other kind of exercise do we really need? Spontaneously we must answer, the exercise of our spirit.

We must realize that as Christians, it is not a matter of *what* we are going to do, but *how* we are going to do it. Are we acting by the body, by the soul, or by the spirit? Many brothers and sisters simply fail to use their spirit. They are constantly using their mind, emotion, will, or their physical

body, but not their spirit. We pray, talk, argue, read the Bible, reason, debate, and discuss—mostly by the exercise of our soul. We can even quote the Scriptures from our soul! Now it is time for us to return to our spirit. We must come back!

For example, when we approach the Lord in prayer or come to the Word of God to contact Him, we must reject our soulish life (our thoughts, our feelings, our desires) and turn to our spirit in order to contact and fellowship with Him. We can never meet Christ by exercising the faculties of our soul. Christ is in our spirit, not our soul. Only by using our spirit can we meet Him. Of course, we should not think that the Lord demands that we give up the faculties of the mind, emotion, and will. No. The mind, emotion, and will were created by God to be used for His glory. But the Lord's demand is that we give up the corrupted, Adamic mind, emotion, and will as the center of our life and let the life of Christ in our spirit gain control of our being. Our mind, emotion, and will were damaged to such an extent that the natural man could never contact God or fellowship with Him: "But a soulish man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God" (1 Cor. 2:14). This is why we needed the new birth in our spirit (John 3:6-7).

Before salvation we were one hundred percent fallen. We lived in and by this fallen, soulish life, which was absolutely opposed to God. We must learn never to do anything out from this fallen life again, but live entirely by the divine life which is in our spirit. From henceforth we must never take our fallen life in the soul as our source of living, but the divine life in our spirit. We must realize, therefore, that it is not the mind, emotion, and will that must be rejected and destroyed; rather, it is the *life* of the soul that we must give up. We need to realize that this *natural, soulish life* has already been put to the cross (Gal. 2:20; Rom. 6:6) and that we must now take Christ as our life. But the faculties of our soul still remain as instruments to be used by the Spirit to express the Lord Himself.

We must also be very clear that the exercise of the spirit is not only in prayer and touching the Word of God, but in everything. If you do not have any confirmation or sense in the spirit, then stop what you are about to do and stop what you

are about to say, regardless of whether it is good or bad. We must not consider, "Is it good, or is it bad?" Christians should not live this way! Our only consideration should be, "Am I in the spirit or in the soul? Am I doing this by myself or by the Lord?" When we use the expression *by the Lord*, we are not speaking of the Lord objectively but very subjectively. We are referring to Him as the life-giving Spirit mingled with our spirit. We must exercise our spirit at all times and in all places.

To know the difference between the body and the soul is easy, but to discern the spirit from the soul is rather difficult. The following illustration is most helpful. Suppose we find something that we would like to purchase. The more we consider it, the more we feel that we would like to have it. Eventually, we make the decision to buy it. The emotion is exercised since we like it, the mind is exercised because we have considered it, and the will is exercised because we have made the decision to buy it. Therefore, the whole soul is exercised. But when we go to purchase it, something deeper within us protests and forbids. This is the spirit. The spirit is the deepest part within us, the very innermost part of our whole being. In all our living we must follow this innermost sense within us.

Is it not evident to all that most Christians have really missed this mark? We are always considering what is right or what is wrong. We think that if something is wrong, we should not do it, but if something is right, we must do it. This is not the way. Right and wrong is the teaching of religion. If we are acting according to religion, then Christ is of no value. The matter of experiencing Christ and God's salvation is absolutely different from religion. It is not a matter of right or wrong, but of living and doing things in the soul or in the spirit. This mark has been missed and even lost by Christianity. The Lord is going to recover this mark today, for it is the "key" to all things.

We must only discern whether we are in the spirit or in the soul in everything we do or say. It is not a matter of right or wrong and good or evil, but a question of Christ or self,

spirit or soul. We must discern whether our whole life and daily walk is in our spirit.

In all four Gospels—Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John—the Lord Jesus repeatedly tells us to deny the self and lose the soul with its soulish life (Matt. 16:24-26; Mark 8:35; Luke 9:23-25; John 12:25). Then in the Epistles, we are told again and again to walk, live, pray, and do everything in the spirit (Acts 17:16; Rom. 1:9; 12:11; 1 Cor. 16:18; 1 Pet. 3:4; Eph. 6:18; Rev. 1:10). Therefore, we must constantly remain in the spirit.

When anyone exercises his spirit, the Holy Spirit is free to move and flow. But this is a real battle, for Satan knows that if we all release our spirits, he will be defeated. He subtly hits the strategic point of choking the spirit of the saints. As long as he can choke our spirit, we are finished and he is successful. Therefore, we must fight the battle. We must learn to practice releasing our spirit all the time in every place. Whether we are in private or in public, we must constantly exercise our spirit.

In conclusion, we must first realize that Christ is the Spirit in our spirit. Then we must know the difference between the spirit and the soul by denying the soulish self and going along with the Lord in our spirit. When we cooperate with our spirit in this way, Christ will have first place in everything. Then we will experience Christ in our spirit, and we will learn how to apply Him and experience Him in all things.

ABOUT TWO SERVANTS OF THE LORD

We thank the Lord that the ministry of Watchman Nee and his co-worker Witness Lee to the Body of Christ has been a blessing to the Lord's children on all of the continents on the earth for more than 80 years. Their writings have been translated into many languages. Our readers have asked us many questions about Watchman Nee and Witness Lee. In answer to their questions we present this brief sketch of the life and work of these two brothers.

Watchman Nee

Watchman Nee received Christ at the age of seventeen. His ministry is well known among seeking believers all over the world. Many have received help from his writings concerning the spiritual life and the relationship between Christ and His believers. However, not many people know about another equally crucial aspect of his ministry, which stressed the practice of the church life and the building up of the Body of Christ. Brother Nee wrote many books concerning both the Christian life and the church life. Until the end of his life Watchman Nee was a gift given by the Lord for the unveiling of the revelation in God's Word. After suffering twenty years in prison for the Lord in mainland China, he died in 1972 as a faithful witness of Jesus Christ.

Witness Lee

Witness Lee was the closest and most trusted co-worker of Watchman Nee. In 1925, at the age of nineteen, he experienced a dynamic spiritual regeneration and consecrated himself to the living God in order to serve Him. From that

time he began to study the Bible intensively. During the first seven years of his Christian life he was greatly influenced by the Plymouth Brethren. Then he met Watchman Nee, and for the next 17 years, until 1949, he was a co-worker of Brother Nee in China. During the Second World War, when China was occupied by Japan, he was imprisoned by the Japanese and suffered for his faithful service to the Lord. The ministry and work of these two servants of God brought in a great revival among the Christians in China, which resulted in the spreading of the gospel throughout the country and in the building up of hundreds of churches.

In 1949 Watchman Nee called together all his co-workers who were serving the Lord in China and commissioned Witness Lee to continue the ministry outside the mainland, on the island of Taiwan. During the following years, due to the blessing of God in Taiwan and in Southeast Asia, more than one hundred churches were established.

In the early 1960s Witness Lee was led by the Lord to move to the U.S.A., where he ministered and worked for the benefit of the Lord's children for more than 35 years. He lived in the city of Anaheim, California, from 1974 until he went to be with the Lord in June 1997. Through the years of his work in the U.S.A. he published more than 300 books.

The ministry of Witness Lee is especially helpful to seeking Christians who desire a deeper knowledge and experience of the unsearchable riches of Christ. By opening the divine revelation in the entire Scriptures, Brother Lee's ministry reveals to us how to know Christ for the building up of the church, which is His Body, the fullness of the One who fills all in all. All the believers should participate in this ministry of building up the Body of Christ so that the Body can build itself up in love. Only the accomplishing of this building can fulfill the Lord's purpose and satisfy His heart.

The main characteristic of the ministry of these two brothers is that they taught the truth according to the pure word of the Bible.

The following is a brief description of the major beliefs of Watchman Nee and Witness Lee:

1. The Holy Bible is the complete divine revelation, infallible and God-breathed, verbally inspired by the Holy Spirit.

2. God is the only one Triune God—the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit—equally co-existing and mutually coinhering from eternity to eternity.

3. The Son of God, even God Himself, was incarnated to be a man by the name of Jesus, born of the virgin Mary, that He might be our Redeemer and Savior.

4. Jesus, a genuine Man, lived on the earth for thirty-three and a half years to make God the Father known to men.

5. Jesus, the Christ anointed by God with His Holy Spirit, died on the cross for our sins and shed His blood for the accomplishing of our redemption.

6. Jesus Christ, after being buried for three days, was raised from the dead, and forty days later He ascended into heaven, where God made Him the Lord of all.

7. After His ascension Christ poured out the Spirit of God to baptize His chosen members into one Body. Today this Spirit moves on the earth to convict sinners, to regenerate God's chosen people by imparting into them the divine life, to dwell in the believers of Christ for their growth in life, and to build up the Body of Christ for His full expression.

8. At the end of this age Christ will come back to take up His believers, to judge the world, to take possession of the earth, and to establish His eternal Kingdom.

9. The overcoming saints will reign with Christ in the millennium, and all the believers in Christ will participate in the divine blessings in the New Jerusalem in the new heaven and the new earth for eternity.

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