

**Week 9:
Serving the Lord and Preaching the Gospel**

Weekly Reading Materials

(All reading materials are available at: <http://www.ministrybooks.org/alphabetical.cfm>)

**For temporary study and Lord's Day prophesying use only
Not for widespread electronic distribution
All material copyrighted by Living Stream Ministry**

Week 9 Day 1

- Rom. 12:1 I exhort you therefore, brothers, through the compassions of God to present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, well pleasing to God, which is your reasonable service.
- 1 Cor. 7:22 For the slave who has been called in the Lord is the Lord's freedman; likewise the free man who has been called is Christ's slave.

The Motive for Serving the Lord

Love for the Lord

Reading: *Crucial Truths in the Holy Scriptures*, vol. 3, lesson 29, sec. 1, par. 2

THE MOTIVE FOR SERVING THE LORD

1. "I love my master;...I will not go out free" (Exo. 21:5).

Believers do not serve the Lord because of outward encouragement or pressure from man. We serve the Lord out of the inward motivation of our love for the Lord. Our love for the Lord inwardly compels us to serve the Lord. It urges us to serve Him. Our love for the Lord makes us unable not to serve the Lord. We love the Lord, so we must serve the Lord. This is typified in the Old Testament by the slave who loved his master. Although the slave could have been free and did not need to continue to serve as a slave, he did not want to go out free because of his love for his master. He willingly remained as a slave to serve the master whom he loved. This is our motive in serving the Lord. We become His servants and serve Him willingly because of our love for Him. Our service to the Lord comes out of our love for Him.

The Compassions of God

Ibid., par. 3

2. "I exhort you therefore, brothers, through the compassions of God to present your bodies a living sacrifice...which is your reasonable service" (Rom. 12:1).

We love the Lord because He loves us. The Lord's love moves us and encourages us to love Him. The Lord's love for us produces our love for Him, making it impossible for us not to love Him. Therefore, the Lord's love causes us to love Him and serve Him. For this reason Paul exhorted the believers through the compassions of God to present their bodies a living sacrifice in service to Him. The compassions of God, the love of God, encourage us to love Him and serve Him. We serve Him because His love

encourages us and stirs up a love within us for Him. This deep love is our motivation to serve Him, and it makes it impossible for us not to serve Him.

The Meaning of Serving the Lord

Ibid., par. 6;

2. “Live to the Lord” (Rom. 14:8).

Since serving the Lord is a matter of being a slave, it is also a matter of living to the Lord. The entire being of one who truly serves the Lord is to the Lord. His whole living, his entire life, is to the Lord. Therefore, service is a matter of one’s entire living. The call to serve the Lord is not limited to full-time workers and preachers. With the Lord’s leading, it is possible to serve the Lord by maintaining respectable works in any career (Titus 3:8, 14). Colossians 3:22-24 shows that actual slaves were serving the Lord when they served according to the Lord’s will. No matter what our career or job may be, we can serve the Lord as long as it is according to the Lord’s will. It is not the Lord’s intention that every Christian would leave his job or career to be a full-time preacher. The Lord’s will is for every one of us to serve Him, but serving Him does not necessarily mean we must become a preacher. It only means that we live to Him in everything. There are many preachers today who do not necessarily live to the Lord. Similarly, there are many believers who love the Lord and truly live to Him, even though they have a career or job. They may not be preachers, but they are truly serving the Lord by living to the Lord.

According to the Bible, we are not called to make a profession out of preaching; rather, we are called to serve the Lord. This is our career. Any career or job that we have is a secondary matter. Our principal occupation is to serve the Lord; serving the Lord comes first. Our goal for living on the earth is to serve the Lord. We should make serving the Lord the center and goal of our lives. The only reason that we have a career or a job is to make a living and to supply the needs of the Lord’s work. We also can contact people through our careers and jobs to preach the gospel to them. No career or job is more important than serving the Lord and preaching the gospel. We should consider our occupation only as something that we do on the side. Our focus should be on serving the Lord and preaching the gospel. Regardless of whether we are doctors, teachers, businessmen, or laborers, our career or job should be for serving the Lord and preaching the gospel. Doctors should serve the Lord and preach the gospel while practicing medicine. Teachers should serve the Lord and preach the gospel while teaching. Whatever our profession, we should serve the Lord and preach the gospel. Each of us should consider serving the Lord and preaching the

gospel as our primary occupation and our careers and jobs as secondary occupations. This is the living of a normal Christian. This is the only way to live to the Lord and to serve Him.

Life Lessons, vol. 2, lesson 23, sec. 1, par. 4-7

II. THE SIGNIFICANCE OF SERVING THE LORD

1) Being a slave of the Lord—“He who was called when free is Christ’s slave” (1 Cor. 7:22). To serve the Lord is to be a slave of the Lord Christ. In this verse, a slave refers to one who is sold and who has lost his freedom. Such a status reveals the significance of serving the Lord. Our serving the Lord is not to do any great work, but to be a slave of Christ to serve the Lord. Thus, in Romans 12:11, the verb used to describe one who serves the Lord is simply the verb form of the word slave and should be translated “serving as a slave.”

2) Being priests of God—“And as they were ministering to the Lord and fasting...” (Acts 13:2). In the original language, ministering here refers to service as a priest; it is the same word as in Hebrews 10:11 for the “ministering” (serving) of a priest. To serve God as a priest is to handle before God all things related to the worship of God. This requires us to constantly draw near to God and stand before Him.

3) Being the members of Christ’s Body—“But now God has placed the members, each one of them, in the body [of Christ], even as He willed” (1 Cor. 12:18). We believers are all members placed by God in the Body of Christ, and each member has its function. When we fulfill our office to minister in the Body of Christ according to our function, we are also serving the Lord.

4) Preaching the gospel—“God...whom I serve...in the gospel of His Son” (Rom. 1:9). To preach the gospel is also to serve God. This means that we bring sinners to God just as the priests brought sacrifices to offer to God. Thus, Romans 15:16 says that to preach the gospel in this way is to minister “as a priest the gospel of God.” This kind of service is valuable, and it fulfills God’s eternal economy.

5) Caring for the saints—“Console the fainthearted, uphold the weak” (1 Thes. 5:14); “Communicating to the needs of the saints, pursuing hospitality” (Rom. 12:13). These words show us that we ought to care for those saints who are immature, weak, sick, needy, or in hardship. This is also a service to the Lord.

Week 9 Day 2

Exo. 3:18 And they will listen to your voice, and you shall come, you and the elders of Israel, to the king of Egypt, and you shall say to him, Jehovah, the God of the Hebrews, has met with us; and now let us go a three days' journey into the wilderness that we may sacrifice to Jehovah our God.

Luke 12:37 Blessed are those slaves whom the master, when he comes, will find watching. Truly I tell you that he will gird himself and will have them recline at table, and he will come to them and serve them.

All Redeemed Ones Needing to Serve God

Reading: *The Collected Works of Watchman Nee*, set 3, vol. 57, ch. 18, sec. 1, par. 1

MAKING MONEY BEING UNBECOMING OF A CHRISTIAN'S STANDING

Today there are only two ways to serve. Either one serves God, or he serves mammon. Of all the Christians in the whole world, perhaps eighty percent serve mammon. Of the remaining twenty percent, perhaps eighteen percent serve both mammon and God. It is difficult to find a few persons who will serve God only. In the past we never mentioned the matter of mammon. On the one hand, it was because we were not faithful. On the other hand, it was because mammon is a difficult subject to talk about. Mammon itself is unrighteous. A Christian should not only consider it wrong to make money by unrighteous means, but should realize that making money itself is improper. It is not a matter of much money or little money. God's Word says that we cannot serve God even by making money by righteous means. If a person has not settled this matter, he has not settled the most basic issue. God made all things from one, and money unifies all things into one. God created all things, and money can procure all things. Any thought of making money is a sign of serving mammon. Rice costs three million dollars a basket. If we try to make three million dollars to buy the rice, we are serving mammon. Where are we going to make our money? Will we not feel ashamed to make money from our brothers? Can we make money from the unbelievers?

A Person Needing to Forsake Everything to Serve God As Soon As He Is Saved

Ibid., sec. 2, par. 3

THE WAY TO DEAL WITH MONEY

Returning Money

that Comes by Unrighteous Means

When the Israelites left Egypt, they were supposed to take as much gold as possible with them (Exo. 12:35-36). If the money that we have comes from righteous means, we can give as much as we want. But if it is gained through unrighteous means, we have to return it. Some people will never let go of the money in their hands. From now on we have to maintain our Christian standing. We should have the sense that we can rise above others' heads in the matter of money. Others consider money as their life, but we do not. Money that we gain through righteous means can be kept, but money that we gain through unrighteous means should be returned.

The Whole Body Consecrating, Ushering in a Thorough Service

Ibid., ch, 20 sec. 3, par. 2

The Whole Body Consecrating, Ushering in a Thorough Service

Last year I asked a student at Chiao-Tung University how he would feel if someone were to slap him on his right cheek. If someone slapped your right cheek, you would be angry when you went home. However, those who are joyful before the Lord are the ones who turn their left cheek to the enemy after being slapped on the right cheek. After a person has been slapped twice, he will be joyful, and he will be able to utter praise. The Lord's way is the way of absoluteness. Those who are not absolute cannot sing. I am not begging people to come to serve. I am showing you that you are a servant of God. God wants you to serve.

This conference is a co-workers' conference, but this does not mean that the responsibility is only on the co-workers. Today the responsibility is on the whole Body. When we read 1 Corinthians 12 and Romans 12, we see that service belongs to the whole Body; it is not a service of three or five special people. Therefore, we asked all the brothers and sisters to hand themselves over. The Lord wants absolute service. We hope that every brother and sister can get through in this matter. The Lord wants such an absolute service. It is not just the co-workers who need coordination in their work; rather, every brother and sister needs to be coordinated.

The Reward for Serving the Lord

Ibid., par. 6;

V. THE REWARD FOR SERVING THE LORD

1) Being honored by God the Father—“If anyone serves Me [the Lord Jesus]...the Father [God] will honor him” (John 12:26).

For our service to the Lord, we shall be honored by the Father. What a reward this is!

2) Being blessed to sit at the feast and enjoying the Lord’s serving—“Blessed are those slaves whom the lord when he comes shall find watching...he will gird himself and will have them recline at the table, and he will come and serve them” (Luke 12:37). This verse says that when the Lord comes back, the slaves who have been watchful to serve the Lord will be blessed to sit at the feast and will enjoy the Lord’s serving. This is also a great reward from the Lord to those who serve Him.

3) Ruling with the Lord and enjoying the joy of the Lord—“Well done, good and faithful slave...I will set you over many things; enter into the joy of your Lord” (Matt. 25:21, 23). This verse says that the good and faithful slave who serves the Lord will be set over many things and enter into the manifestation of the coming kingdom and into the joy of the Lord. Surely this is a great reward, which we should appreciate and long for.

Week 9 Day 3

Eph. 4:11 And He Himself gave some as apostles and some as prophets and some as evangelists and some as shepherds and teachers,
12 For the perfecting of the saints unto the work of the ministry, unto the building up of the Body of Christ,
Rom. 15:16 That I might be a minister of Christ Jesus to the Gentiles, a laboring priest of the gospel of God, in order that the offering of the Gentiles might be acceptable, having been sanctified in the Holy Spirit.

All Being Priests to Serve God and Four Main Steps in Practicing the New Way

Reading: *Up-to-Date Presentation of the God-Ordained Way*, ch. 4, sec. 2, par. 2-3

THE PRIESTS OF THE GOSPEL OF GOD

Almost everywhere in the entire New Testament, God speaks concerning how to be priests of the gospel of God, how to serve God. Paul called the New Testament priests the priests of the gospel (Rom. 15:16). They are priests, yet they are gospel preachers, priests who specialize in the gospel. In the Old Testament the priests specialized in taking care of the sacrifices. By this we can see that the priests of the gospel, mentioned in Romans 15:16, are those who specialize in taking care of the gospel. In Greek, the phrase *a priest of the gospel* has a further meaning; it denotes not only a priest of the gospel but a laboring priest of the gospel. In other words, the New Testament priests of the gospel should be laboring priests of the gospel—not priests who are content or at leisure but priests diligently striving and laboring. They are priests who diligently labor in the gospel of God. Paul was such a priest of the gospel of God, and we too should be such.

Being Built Up into God's Holy Priesthood

According to the New Testament, there are at least seven aspects related to being priests of the gospel of God. First, these priests are built up into God's holy priesthood. The priests of the gospel of God do not serve alone or individually; they are built up into a priesthood. We know that today any kind of successful work in human society must be a work that is carried out

by an organized group. It is difficult for individuals to have a great success; the achieving of a great success depends on the effort of an organized group. The priests in the Old Testament did not serve individually; they carried out their duty group by group. They all belonged to the house of Aaron; they were sons of Aaron formed into a body of priests. Luke 1 tells us that when Zachariah the priest went to serve God, he served in the priestly body according to the order of his course. When we preach the gospel in the church today, we also should realize that the whole church constitutes a priesthood of the gospel.

We Need to Fulfill the Work of the Ministry through Begetting, Nourishing, Teaching, and Building

Begetting—Preaching the Gospel to Save Sinners

Reading: *New Testament Priests of the Gospel*, ch. 2, sec. 1, par. 4

FOUR MAJOR STEPS IN PRACTICING THE NEW WAY

Preaching the Gospel

The first matter in the Christian service is the preaching of the gospel. This is like marriage and childbirth. After a young couple become married, the first thing that occurs is childbearing. After a child is born, the center of the family is shifted to the child. If a couple has no child, there is a big lack. Children are the focus of the family. This is true in the West as well as in the East. It is a natural law that God put into man. Praise the Lord that we are all saved today. In other words, we are all married. What ought to follow is childbearing. The spiritual childbearing is the preaching of the gospel. Paul says, “Though you have ten thousand guides in Christ, yet you do not have many fathers; for in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the gospel” (1 Cor. 4:15). Paul preached the gospel and led many to salvation. These Corinthian believers then became the spiritual children begotten by Paul.

Nourishing—Feeding the Lord’s Lamb

Ibid., sec. 2, par. 1

Nourishing

After the fruit-bearing comes the nourishing. Every mother knows that the first thing a newborn child does is drink milk. Hence, the first thing a mother has to learn is how to nurse her child. In the past our way has been to invite people to come to the meeting in the meeting hall on the Lord’s Day

morning immediately after we baptize them. We realize now that this method is not so correct. After a child is born, we do not ask him to come to us to be fed. Rather, we have to go to him and feed him with milk. If we cannot go to the homes of the new ones daily, we should go at least once every three days. The best way is to go every day. When we go to the homes of the new brothers and sisters and feed them with spiritual food, this is what we call the home meetings.

Teaching—Perfecting the Saints to Build Up the Body of Christ
Ibid., ch. 1, sec. 2, par. 9

Teaching

Concerning the new way, the two words that I like the best are *go* and *home*. To go is to beget children, and the home is where the nourishing is done. Both the begetting and the nourishing are important matters. But after the begetting and the nourishing, there is still the need of teaching. Ephesians 4:8 and 10-11 say clearly that the ascended Head in His ascension has given many gifts to men. Some are apostles, some are prophets, some are evangelists, and some are shepherds and teachers. According to man's natural concept, we think that all these gifts are workers sent out to work. For example, the evangelist is naturally one who goes out to travel and to preach. We consider that this work is something that we cannot do. Actually, the gifts that Paul mentions here are for the perfecting of the saints unto the work of the ministry, and the work of the ministry is for the building up of the Body of Christ. In other words, these gifts are for the perfecting of the saints.

Building—Speaking for the Lord through Prophesying to Build Up the Church
Ibid.

First Corinthians 14:26 says, "Whenever you come together, each one has a psalm, has a teaching, has a revelation, has a tongue, has an interpretation. Let all things be done for building up." Here God shows us the model for the church meeting. According to Ephesians 5, the psalms are not mainly for singing in the meeting but for speaking. Verse 19 says to speak to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and psalming with our heart to the Lord. One can see that the hymns are not just for singing or for psalming but are for speaking one to another. Hence, in the church meeting before we sing a hymn, it is not bad to first spend some time to

Speak the hymns to one another. There is one kind of taste in singing the hymns, but there is a better kind of taste in speaking the hymns. The speaking of the hymns is a kind of prophesying.

Everyone has a desire to prophesy in the meetings, but many do not know what to speak. The simplest way is to choose a hymn and speak to one another. Every one of our hymns is a revelation and a message. When we exercise our spirit to speak the hymns, we express the content, atmosphere, and spirit of that message. The goal of prophesying is to build up the church, which is to build up the Body of Christ. When you speak a little and I speak a little, and when everyone speaks a little, the riches of Christ will be manifested. No matter how well a person may preach, he expresses only his own thoughts. But for everyone to prophesy is to have a love feast in the Chinese style, where everyone brings a dish and puts it on a long table. The riches will be exhibited fully before everyone's eyes. In the church meeting everyone must bring forth the riches of Christ, everyone should speak, everyone should listen, and everyone should function.

Prophesying for the Lord—Everyone Being Able

The preaching of the gospel is for everyone. The home and group meetings are also for everyone. Likewise, prophesying is also for everyone. When everyone comes together, all speak. Whatever task we set about to do, it is always difficult before we do it. But after we make up our mind to do it, we will joyfully bear the responsibility. Our daily responsibility as a Christian is to practice these four major steps of the new way. Knock on doors to preach the gospel and beget spiritual children; everyone has to do this. After a child is born, everyone has to bear the responsibility of nourishing. There must be not only the nourishing but also the teaching. After teaching there is still the perfecting, and after the perfecting there is still the prophesying. It seems as if all of these four steps put a demand on people. But if you do not do them, it would be hard for you to be a member of the Body of Christ in the Lord's recovery. The question is: what kind of Christian do you want to be today? Do you want to be an overcomer, or do you want to be a loser?

Everyone Prophesying for the Lord

Today we have to see that we are all New Testament priests. Everyone needs to preach the gospel. Everyone has to attend the home meetings and group meetings. Everyone must prophesy. When we prophesy, we have to

exercise our spirit. There must be not only the revelation and the light; there must be the inspiration also. In this way Christ will be spoken into others. Only when all these things are put into practice can the universal priesthood be realized.

***Prophesying Being Mainly
for the Building Up of the Church***

Not only do we bring the new ones to the small group meeting, but also, on the Lord's Day, we bring them to the church meeting. After the breaking of the bread, they may see that so many brothers and sisters are prophesying, that is, speaking for the Lord and speaking forth the Lord. Some may prophesy for three minutes, some for two. After watching this for a few weeks, the new ones will feel attracted to it and may desire to prophesy also. We will then help them along, first to prophesy in the small group meeting and then to prophesy in the Lord's Day morning meeting. In the end everyone in the whole church will be able to prophesy. Both young and old will be able to speak for the Lord, and the riches of the Lord will be manifested. All will be supplied, edified, and nourished, and the church as the Body of Christ will be built up through the prophesying by the saints. This is what the Lord is after today.

Week 9 Day 4

Rom. 10:15 And how shall they proclaim Him unless they are sent? As it is written, "How beautiful are the feet of those who announce the news of good things!"

Matt. 28:19 Go therefore and disciple all the nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,

Definition of the Gospel

Reading: *Being Desperate and Living Uniquely for the Gospel*, ch. 3, sec. 1, par. 1

THE DEFINITION OF THE GOSPEL

The gospel is Christ, who is the very embodiment of the processed Triune God, reaching us as the consummated Spirit, who is the consummation of the Triune God for our enjoyment. According to the truth, the gospel is the entire New Testament. Christians are used to saying that there are four Gospels, but Paul tells us that the entire book of Romans is the gospel of God (1:1, 15). It includes the preaching of God, the condemnation of God upon fallen man, and the Body life, including the local churches in chapter 16. Have you ever received such a broad view of the definition of the gospel? Personally, the gospel is a wonderful person, and according to the truth, the gospel is the entire divine revelation of the twenty-seven books of the New Testament. God's New Testament economy is the gospel. We have to believe in such a gospel, preach such a gospel, and live uniquely for such a gospel. The consummated Spirit, who is God Himself reaching us, eventually has become the seven Spirits in Revelation (1:4; 4:5; 5:6). The seven Spirits are also a part of the gospel.

Living Uniquely for the Gospel

Ibid., sec. 2, par. 1-2

LIVING UNIQUELY FOR THE GOSPEL

My intention is to impress you that in the universe and today on the earth there is something called the gospel, which we are reminded and commanded to live for. The Lord commanded us to live for this gospel uniquely. What are we living on this earth for? Do we live for our profession or for our job to make a lot of money? What is man living for? Poor human society has so much activity but no goal. Do we have a goal? Our goal is

the gospel, and our gospel is the Triune God processed to be the very Spirit within us as our salvation, as our life, as our life supply, and as our all-inclusive enjoyment.

What a wonder and what a glory to live uniquely for such a gospel! I have been living uniquely for this gospel for over fifty years. Hallelujah for this! It is worth it. When I was called by the Lord, my thinking was that God had called me to go to preach and teach in all the villages of my county, not even to my entire province. If I had done that all my life, I would have been more than happy. I never thought that I would be speaking in the United States and in other parts of the world to an international audience. By the Lord's mercy, I am living uniquely for the gospel.

Going with the Authority of Christ

Ibid., par. 3

GOING WITH THE AUTHORITY OF CHRIST

At the end of the Gospel of Matthew, the Lord came as the very embodiment of the processed Triune God in resurrection and told us that all authority had been given to Him in heaven and on earth (28:18). The president of the United States sends ambassadors to many countries representing him with full authority, but why do we need this kind of authority, all authority in heaven and on earth? We need this authority to disciple the nations. All of us have to ask ourselves how many we have disciplined. Have you believed in Him? Have you received Him? Do you have Him living in you? Are you one spirit with Him? Are you abiding in Him? Is He now abiding in you? Are you and He one? If you say yes to these questions, you have the authority in heaven and on earth to go. The worth and importance of the word *go* cannot be measured. Go, go, go! Go to Jerusalem first, then Judea, then Samaria, then to the uttermost part of the earth (Acts 1:8). Go to all the homes in all the countries. Go to your cousins' homes, go to your in-laws' homes. Go to the homes to disciple the nations.

Week 9 Day 5

John 15:16 You did not choose Me, but I chose you, and I set you that you should go forth and bear fruit and that your fruit should remain, that whatever you ask the Father in My name, He may give you.

Acts 1:8 But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you, and you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria and unto the uttermost part of the earth.

The Seriousness of Not Bearing Fruit

Reading: *Being Desperate and Living Uniquely for the Gospel*, ch. 3, sec. 4, par. 1

THE SERIOUSNESS OF NOT BEARING FRUIT

Are you happy to remain in a barren situation for years? Second Peter indicates that it is possible for us to be idle and unfruitful, barren (1:8). Suppose tomorrow morning the Lord comes back. Then according to His word in Matthew 25, you will have to give Him an account of what you have been doing. What will you tell Him? Will you tell Him that you have had a good church life in your locality, that whatever He has given you is still here? Will you tell Him that He is a hard man, reaping where He did not sow and gathering where He did not winnow? What would the Lord say? Would the Lord say, “Well done, good and faithful slave...Enter into the joy of your master” (vv. 21, 23)? Or would He call you an evil and slothful slave (v. 26)? According to Matthew 25, where will He put you? Do not forget that the one who is cast out into the outer darkness is the one who has received the real gift, one talent. This one is not only saved but also gifted. The Lord is real, He will really come back, and His word spoken in Matthew 25 will be fulfilled. This is a serious and solemn matter.

The Lord Appointing Us to Go Forth and Bear Fruit and that Our Fruit Should Remain

Ibid., sec. 10, par. 1, 3

THE LORD SETTING US TO GO FORTH AND BEAR FRUIT AND THAT OUR FRUIT SHOULD REMAIN

John 15:16 says, “You did not choose Me, but I chose you, and I set you that you should go forth and bear fruit and that your fruit should remain.” In this verse there are some words that are quite crucial. The first word is *set*. We did not choose ourselves, but He chose us. We have no choice in the matter of being a branch of Christ, the vine, because He caught us. He chose us and set us, appointed us, to bear fruit. To bear fruit is the Lord’s setting, His assignment. He did not assign us to do anything else. He set us to bear fruit. The Lord charged us to go forth and bear fruit. Can a branch go? The branches of a physical tree do not go. But we are not only living branches but also movable branches. We have to go. This indicates that we have to reach people.

The Lord says that we should go forth and bear fruit and that our fruit should remain. In the past we took the wrong way. Occasionally, people came to us, and they believed and were baptized, but they did not remain because no one took care of them. This is like a mother delivering a child and then leaving her newborn baby without any care. How could she expect this baby to remain? The Lord has shown us the way for our fruit to remain. We do not just go out to reach people by knocking on their doors and bringing them into the Triune God through their believing and baptism. After this, we immediately set up a home meeting in their home. To set up a home meeting is to set up a shelter to protect this new babe. The farmers protect the fruit in their orchard. Peaches that are ripe and have just been picked need to be covered. Otherwise, the birds may eat them. This covering helps the fruit to remain. Likewise, to set up a meeting in a baptized one’s home is to set up a shelter. Then under the shelter you go back to them regularly to feed them. Surely they will be protected, they will be fed, and they will remain. This is the secret of having remaining fruit.

Week 9 Day 6

- John 15:5 I am the vine; you are the branches. He who abides in Me and I in him, he bears much fruit; for apart from Me you can do nothing.
- 2 Tim. 4:2 Proclaim the word; be ready in season and out of season; convict, rebuke, exhort with all long-suffering and teaching.

The Law of Effective Door-Knocking

Praying, Confessing Our Sins, Dealing with Our Sins, and Being Filled with the Holy Spirit

Reading: *Rising Up to Preach the Gospel*, ch. 5, sec. 2, par. 8

To pray, to confess our sins, to deal with our sins, and subsequently to be filled with the Holy Spirit will result in boldness and confidence. If you go out door-knocking but have not prayed, your legs will be shaking, and you will not have power in your speaking. However, through prayer, confessing of sins, and being filled with the Holy Spirit, not only will you have the boldness when door-knocking, but you will also have the confidence that the person you are visiting will be saved. If you have not been filled with the Holy Spirit, you might not be able to speak even a word out of your mouth. Once you are filled with the Holy Spirit though, not only will you have the power for speaking, but you also can determine whether or not he will be saved. If you say he will be saved, he will be saved; if you say he will not be saved and that he needs to wait awhile, then he will not be saved. This is the effectiveness of prayer, confessing of sins, and being filled with the Holy Spirit.

Exercise to Speak Wisely

Ibid., sec. 3, par. 1, 3

Exercising to Speak Wisely

When you go door-knocking, you have to pay attention to your attitude. You should never be reckless or hasty. Rather, you should be modest, courteous, gentle, respectful, dignified, and weighty. Moreover, when you speak, you should learn to be concise instead of being wordy and to be affectionate instead of being cold. If you are too wordy and mechanical, people may close their door immediately or find an excuse to reject you. Thus, you have to exercise to speak straightforwardly, directly,

affectionately, and politely. If they answer, “I do not have time,” you should not give up. Instead, you should say, “It will take you just one minute.” Eventually, the person may be saved and baptized because of this one-minute gospel preaching. It is because we have had this kind of experience that we practice the “one-minute gospel.”

Even if you have learned all the truths, a person whom you visit by knocking on his door will not be able to discern that. However, if you take out a book and open it to read with him, his attitude will instantly become more respectful. This also was one of the results of our experiment in Taipei. Anything that is printed in a volume or published as a book is something that is not common. Words that are trivial will not be printed in a book. It does not matter who the person is or how high his speaking skill is, no one can speak as neatly and concisely as a book. The words used in our books have been considered over and over again during the course of writing. Therefore, the wording and the phrasing are clearer and more concise. One co-worker told me, “I found out that while door-knocking, especially on the college campuses, it is useless to speak our own words. The more efficient way is to read our publications. Sometimes I simply open up the Recovery Version and ask the person to read a paragraph of a footnote, and he gets saved.” He also uses the life-studies from time to time. He simply opens them for the person to read a section, and the person gets saved. The words of the footnotes in our Recovery Version are refined and pure, and they are also the crucial truths. Some of the sections in our life-studies are also very important. We need to learn to use these.

The booklet *The Mystery of Human Life* has also been greatly used by the Lord in this year. I believe that the total print quantity of this booklet in all the localities is about one million copies. Hence, we also have to learn to use this booklet. While using it, do not be wordy; furthermore, the shorter the time you take the better. First, you should memorize the four main sections. The first section is on God’s creation, the second section is on man’s fall, the third section is on Christ’s redemption, and the fourth section is on God’s dispensing. While you are reading with someone, do not read from the beginning to the end in a dead and rigid way. You need to learn to follow the Spirit’s leading within you. When you sense you need to read a certain section, then turn to that section and read it. Do not read too much; if you read too much, you will lose the Lord in the reading. A sales person once told me that the technique to making sales is not to speak too much. Just speak a few sentences that are clear and concise, and then draw the

person to say, “Very good.” Once you hear this word, you should immediately say, “Very good; please buy one!” and take out your order book. Because he has already said it is good, he will be reluctant to refuse.

Learning to Grasp the Opportunity

Ibid., par. 4-5

Learning to Grasp the Opportunity

A brother once testified that the person he visited said that his speaking was very good. I instructed those present that this was the right moment to “tie the knot” and lead that person to pray. If that person would pray, he would believe and receive the Lord, and then the brother should baptize him. However, if he would not grasp the opportunity but would continue to talk, the opportunity may slip away, and he would not be able to “close the deal.” However, some brothers present said, “We are afraid that this is too fast; we are still strangers to one another.” Such a consideration means that it is not the new one who is not willing to pray, but it is you who are not willing to pray. It is not that he is not willing to lose his face, but it is you who are not willing to lose your face in leading the prayer. I am speaking these things from my experience. It was the same with me in the past. When I went to lead someone to the Lord, often at the critical juncture I did not have the boldness to lead him to pray. Instead, I kept thinking that it might be too early and that I should not take the opportunity. Once I lost the opportunity, though, I may have lost it for my whole life; I may never have had the opportunity to see him again.

Brother Nee once told us that gospel preachers have to be thick-skinned. Those who are thin-skinned cannot lead people to salvation. Perhaps some brothers and sisters would say, “If this is the case, then since I am such a thin-skinned person, I may as well forget about going out to knock on doors.” You may do so as long as you have the peace, but everyone else will still continue to knock on doors. In the past, when I saw strangers, I would start sweating, and my face would turn red. Every time my mother wanted to invite people to our home, I would be the first one to object because I did not like to meet strangers, and I disliked even more going to other people’s homes. Therefore, when I had to preach the gospel to others and lead them to pray at the end, I could not relax my face or open my mouth. Later the Lord arranged the environment and forced me into a situation in which I had to stand and speak from the platform. It does not matter if you are thin-skinned; as long as you are willing to practice, willing to go visit by door-knocking, slowly you will have the boldness. On the other hand, while you

are door-knocking, you must learn the technique of grasping the opportunity to lead a person to believe and pray. Immediately after he prays, you should show him Romans 10:13, which says, “For ‘whoever calls upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.’” Then say to him, “My friend, congratulations! You are saved!” The next thing is to lead him to be baptized.

Exercising to Continue Steadfastly
Ibid., par. 7

Exercising to Continue Steadfastly

Beginning from this August, the saints who are coming to join the Full-time Training in Taipei will include almost five hundred from Taiwan, close to one hundred fifty from America, twenty or more from Europe, and a few from South America and Africa. Thus, the number of trainees will be well over six hundred fifty. Including twenty to thirty language class teachers, the total will be over seven hundred. This time the training has one regulation, that is, that the trainees have to go out and visit people two mornings a week and also visit the community and college campuses every afternoon and on the evenings when there are no scheduled meetings. Each of the seven hundred trainees should baptize at least one person per week. In this way, two thousand eight hundred people will be baptized in just a few weeks. I hope that from now on not only the full-time trainees but also each elder and co-worker will practice door-knocking and visiting people. This is the first item we should practice. Maybe we cannot go out to knock on doors every day, but one thing we can do is spend two to three hours each week for door-knocking. We should visit not only those whom we know but also those we do not know. We should knock on all the doors in the district in which we live. Do not worry or be anxious. As long as we are willing to do it, we will be successful.