

## A TIMELY WORD CONCERNING THE WORLD SITUATION AND THE LORD'S RECOVERY, Week 8

### The World Situation as the Indicator of God's Move on Earth, the Vision of World History from Christ's Ascension to the End of This Age, the Spreading of the Truths of the Lord's Recovery as a Preparation for His Coming Back, and Persevering in Prayer, While Discerning "the Signs of the Times"

Scripture Reading: Acts 5:31; 17:26-27; Dan. 2:31-45; Rev. 6:1-8; 4:1-2; 1:10-11; Col. 4:2; Matt. 24:3-14, 32-34

- Acts 5:31 This One God has exalted to His bright hand **as Leader and Savior**, to give repentance to Israel and forgiveness of sins.
- Acts 17:26 And He made from one every nation of men to dwell on all the face of the earth, **determining beforehand their appointed seasons** and the boundaries of their dwelling,
- Acts 17:27 That they might seek God, if perhaps they might grope for Him and find Him, even though He is not far from each one of us;
- Daniel 2:31 You, O king, were watching, and there was **a single great image**. This image, large and its brightness surpassing, stood opposite you; and its appearance was frightful.
- Daniel 2:32 Concerning this image, its head was of fine **gold**, its breast and its arms of **silver**, its abdomen and its thighs of **bronze**,
- Daniel 2:33 Its legs of **iron**, its feet **partly of iron and partly of clay**.
- Daniel 2:34 You were watching until **a stone was cut out without hands**, and it struck the image at its feet of iron and clay and crushed them.
- Daniel 2:35 Then the iron, the clay, the bronze, the silver, and the gold were crushed all at once, and they became like chaff from the summer threshing floors; and the wind carried them away so that no trace of them was found. And the stone that struck the image became a great mountain and filled the whole earth.
- Daniel 2:36 This is the dream; and we will tell its interpretation before the king.
- Daniel 2:37 You, O king, are king of kings, to whom the God of the heavens has given kingship, power, and strength and glory.
- Daniel 2:38 And wherever the children of men, the beasts of the field, or the birds of the sky dwell, He has given them into your hand and has made you ruler over all of them. You are the head of gold.
- Daniel 2:39 **And after you another kingdom will arise, inferior to you; and there will be another kingdom, a third one, of bronze, which will rule over all the earth.**
- Daniel 2:40 **And there will be a fourth kingdom as strong as iron, inasmuch as iron crushes and shatters everything; and like iron that smashes all these, it will crush and smash.**
- Daniel 2:41 And in that you saw the feet and the toes, partly of potter's clay and partly of iron, the kingdom will be a confused mass; but there will be some of the firmness of iron in it, for you saw the iron mixed with the earthy clay.
- Daniel 2:42 And as the toes of the feet were partly of iron and partly of clay, so some of the kingdom will be strong and part of it will be fragile.
- Daniel 2:43 And in that you saw the iron mixed with the earthy clay, they will be mixed together through the seed of men, but they will not cleave to one another, even as iron does not mix with clay.
- Daniel 2:44 And in the days of those kings the God of the heavens will raise up **a kingdom which will never be destroyed**, and its reign will not be left to another people; it will crush and put an end to all these kingdoms; and it will stand forever.
- Daniel 2:45 Inasmuch as you saw that out of the mountain a stone was cut without hands and that it crushed the iron, the bronze, the clay, the silver, and the gold, the great God has made known to the king what will happen afterward; and the dream is certain, and its interpretation trustworthy.
- Revelation 1:10 I was **in spirit on the Lord's Day** and heard behind me a loud voice like a trumpet,
- Revelation 1:11 Saying, What you see write in a scroll and send it to the seven churches: to Ephesus and to Smyrna and to Pergamos and to Thyatira and to Sardis and to Philadelphia and to Laodicea.
- Revelation 4:1 After these things I saw, and behold, a door opened in heaven, and the first voice which I heard was like a trumpet speaking with me, saying, Come up here, and I will show you **the things that must take place after these things**.
- Revelation 4:2 Immediately I was in spirit; and behold, **there was a throne set in heaven**, and upon the throne there was One sitting;
- Revelation 6:1 And I saw when the Lamb opened one of the **seven seals**, and I heard one of the four living creatures saying like the sound of thunder, Come.
- Revelation 6:2 And I saw, and behold, **a white horse**, and he who sits on it had a bow; and a crown was given to him, and he went forth conquering and to conquer.
- Revelation 6:3 And when He opened the second seal, I heard the second living creature saying, Come.
- Revelation 6:4 And I saw, and behold, another horse, **a red one**, went forth; and to him who sits on it, to him authority was given to take peace from the earth, and that men should slay one another; and to him a great sword was given.
- Revelation 6:5 And when He opened the third seal, I heard the third living creature saying, Come. And I saw, and behold, **a black horse**; and he who sits on it had a balance in his hand.
- Revelation 6:6 And I heard as it were a voice in the midst of the four living creatures saying: choenix of wheat for a denarius and three choenixes of barley for a denarius; and do not harm the oil and the wine.
- Revelation 6:7 And when He opened the fourth seal, I heard the voice of the fourth living creature saying, Come.
- Revelation 6:8 And I saw, and behold, **a pale horse**, and he who sits upon it, his name is Death; and Hades followed with him. And authority was given to them over the fourth part of the earth to kill with the sword and with famine and with death and by the beasts of the earth.
- Colossians 4:2 **Persevere in prayer, watching in it with thanksgiving,**
- Matthew 24:3 And as He sat on the Mount of Olives, the disciples came to Him privately, saying, Tell us, When will these things be? And what will be the sign of Your coming and of the consummation of the age?
- Matthew 24:4 And Jesus answered and said to them, See that no one leads you astray.

Matthew 24:5	For many will come in My name, saying, I am the Christ, and they will lead many astray.
Matthew 24:6	And you will be hearing of wars and rumors of wars. See that you are not alarmed, for it must happen; but the end is not yet.
Matthew 24:7	For nation will rise up against nation, and kingdom against kingdom; and there will be famines and earthquakes in various places.
Matthew 24:8	All these things are the beginning of birth pangs.
Matthew 24:9	Then they will deliver you up to tribulation and will kill you, and you will be hated by all the nations because of My name.
Matthew 24:10	And at that time many will be stumbled and will deliver up one another and will hate one another.
Matthew 24:11	And many false prophets will arise and will lead many astray.
Matthew 24:12	And because lawlessness will be <b>multiplied, the love of the many will grow cold.</b>
Matthew 24:13	But he who has endured to the end, this one shall be saved.
Matthew 24:14	And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in the whole inhabited earth for a testimony to all the nations, and then the end will come.
Matthew 24:32	But learn the parable from the fig tree: As soon as its branch has become tender and puts forth its leaves, you know that the summer is near.
Matthew 24:33	So also you, when you see all these things, know that it is near, at the doors.
Matthew 24:34	Truly I say to you that this generation shall by no means pass away until all these things happen.

### Day 1

**I. We need to be in our spirit so that we can be men on earth with God's heart, men to whom heaven can be opened to see the vision of God concerning the destiny of the world—Rev. 1:10; 4:1-2; cf. Gen. 28:12-17; Ezek. 1:1; Matt. 3:16; Acts 7:56.**

**II. The world situation is the indicator of God's move on earth—5:31; 17:26-27; Dan. 2:31-45:**

- A. All the major events of human history have been **arranged and matched by God** for His move on earth; since God has a purpose to accomplish with mankind on earth, He surely has the sovereign authority to manage the situation in human history; as an example, for the spreading of His recovery and for the final stage of His recovery—the building up of the Body as the preparation of the bride—God has sovereignly prepared, preserved, and blessed the United States—Acts 17:26; 5:31; Rom. 12:4-5; Rev. 19:7.
- B. The entire **world situation** with its “birth pangs” is for the completion of the re-formation of Israel and also for the completion of the full delivery of the universal new man—Matt. 24:32-34; Mark 13:8; Dan. 12:1-2; Rev. 12:1-2, 5.
- C. The vision of the **great human image** in Daniel 2 is a vision of “what will happen in the last days” (v. 28); it is a prophetic illustration of the history of human government, **sovereignly arranged** by the Lord for the carrying out of His economy (vv. 31-35):
  1. The **head of gold** (vv. 36-38), corresponding to the **first beast** in 7:3-4, signifies **Nebuchadnezzar**, the founder and the king of Babylon.
  2. The **breast and the arms of silver** (2:39a), corresponding to the **second beast** in 7:5, signify Medo-Persia.
  3. The **abdomen and thighs of bronze** (2:39b), corresponding to the **third beast** in 7:6, signify Greece, including Macedonia.
  4. The **legs of iron and the feet partly of iron and partly of clay** (2:33), corresponding to the **fourth beast** in 7:7-8, signify the Roman Empire with its last ten kings (2:40-44a; 7:7-11, 19-26; Rev. 17:7-13).

### OUR RESPONSIBILITY

What is our burden? What is our responsibility? We must not just preach the gospel. We must **bear** the testimony of Jesus, as Revelation says (1:2, 9). We must be witnesses to Him, as Acts 1:8 tells us. We must bring forth fruit by **abiding** in Him, as John 15:5 and 16 tell us. This is the proper preaching of the gospel. There is no need to use any gimmicks. We must lay our gimmicks aside, just as Paul determined not to use excellence of speech. Our responsibility is to **live** Christ, to **bear** a living witness to Him in our daily life, to know nothing but Christ, the all-inclusive One revealed in the completing ministry of Paul and the mending ministry of John.

Our ultimate responsibility is to **live** Christ and to **meet** together in our locality in such a way that we may be the Body, the new man, the lampstand, and the bride. We meet in oneness. The Christ we live and preach is not divided. The Christ we testify is not divided. We live Him according to this view that we have of Him. We live the all-inclusive, extensive Christ who is now the life-giving Spirit as the ultimate expression of the Triune God after many processes. And we meet together according to locality as the church, the church which is not only an assembly but also the Body, the new man, the lampstand, and the bride. We also practice the genuine oneness in every locality—one Body, one Spirit, one city, one church. Such a living is our **ultimate responsibility**.

*(The World Situation and God's Move, chapter 7, section 3)*

### Day 2

5. Although the form and appearance of the Roman Empire have vanished, the **culture, spirit**, and essence of the Roman Empire continue to exist today; at the beginning of the great tribulation (Matt. 24:21) the form and appearance of the Roman Empire will be restored under Antichrist (Dan. 7:12).
- D. The **ten kings with their kingdoms**, typified by the **ten toes** of the great image in Daniel 2, will be joined together under Antichrist, who will be the last Caesar of the revived Roman Empire; all of this will transpire in Europe—Rev. 17:10-14:
  1. The **mystery of lawlessness** is working today among the nations and in human society; this lawlessness will culminate in the man of lawlessness, Antichrist—2 Thes. 2:3-10.
  2. **Antichrist** will be the power of Satan, the embodiment of Satan; he will persecute and destroy the people of God—both the God-fearing Jews and the Christ-believing Christians—Dan. 8:24; Rev. 12:17; 13:7.
  3. Antichrist will **demolish** and **desolate** the temple of God and the city of God; he will cast truth down to the ground—Dan. 9:27; 8:12.
  4. Antichrist will have **sharp insight** to perceive things and will speak things against the Most High—7:8, 20, 25.

5. Antichrist will **wear out** the saints of the Most High; we have to resist and oppose the gradual, repeated, frequent, and daily wearing-out tactics of Satan—v. 25; Matt. 24:12; Judg. 16:16; Eph. 6:11-13.
6. Satan and Antichrist want the souls of men to be the instruments for their activities in the last age—Rev. 18:11-13; 2 Tim. 3:5; cf. Zech. 12:1.

Colossians 4:5 says, "Redeeming the time," and Ephesians 5:16 says, "Redeeming the time."

"Time"...does not merely refer to time...in [some] instances it is translated opportunity. Galatians 6:10 says, "*As we have the opportunity, let us do what is good toward all.*" This means that we should **seize the opportunity** to do good. These words from the Bible show us the Lord's thought about opportunity. The Lord considers opportunity to be something very important. One could translate the word time in the passages from Colossians and Ephesians as "redeeming the opportunity." I do not know how much you understand the word opportunity. I always wonder how many opportunities I have missed. In many matters, on the negative side, we do not know how many opportunities we have missed. Many things which we can do are all too easily missed by us. Many people which we can save are all too easily neglected by us. Many cities where we can start an assembly are all too easily overlooked by us. Many brothers whom we can gain are lost through us. **We have lost so many opportunities!** When we face the Lord in the future, we will truly have much regret to face! We are confused and unclear about everything, and we do not know how many opportunities we have missed!

Of the days which the Lord has ordained for us, perhaps yesterday should have been the greatest day of our life, but we may have lived yesterday in an ordinary way. This is what it means to miss the opportunity. One who is learning to serve should not do the same thing today as he did yesterday. If he is the same today as yesterday, he has squandered his opportunities. If we do not know what the Lord is doing today or what is going to happen today, we are **missing the opportunity**. I believe that God has given more opportunities than we can imagine. If we can **seize** every opportunity God gives us, the increase of the work will be according to God's expectation. The work has not increased as God wants because we have limited it. We hope this limitation will end here today.

*(Collected Works of Watchman Nee, The (Set 3) Vol. 55: The Ministers & The Open Door, Chapter 7, Section 1)*

### Day 3

- E. At His appearing as the God-cut stone, Christ with His overcomers—the **corporate Christ**—will strike the ten kings with Antichrist (Rev. 19:11-21), thereby **crushing** the great image from the toes to the head (Dan. 2:35).
- F. Before the crushing of Antichrist and the totality of human government transpires, the Lord's recovery must spread to Europe and be rooted there; Europe, in the consummation of the fulfillment of the vision concerning the great human image in Daniel 2, is more vitally crucial than any other country or race—the crushing of the two feet of the great human image will be the crushing of the entire human government—vv. 34-35.
- G. After coming to defeat Antichrist and to crush the aggregate of human government, the **corporate Christ**—Christ with His overcoming bride—will become a great mountain to fill the whole earth, making the whole earth God's kingdom; this kingdom will consummate in the **New Jerusalem**—the ultimate and consummate step of the divine history—Rev. 20:4, 6; 21:10.

### Watching and Being Ready for It

When the **Lord comes**, He will come secretly as a thief to those who love Him and will steal them away as His treasures and bring them into His presence in the heavens (Matt. 24:42-43). Hence, we need to **watch** and **be ready** (25:13; 24:44). If we desire to be raptured, first we must be **filled** with the heavenly breath and have oil in our vessels. If we are rooted on the earth and occupied daily with the anxieties of this life and with earthly pleasures, we will not be raptured at that time. We should remember Lot's wife. Because she loved and treasured the evil world, which God was going to judge and utterly destroy, she took a backward look. Thus, she became a pillar of salt and was left to suffer in a place of shame. This should be a warning to us. If we love the world, the Lord will leave us here to pass through the great tribulation so that we may be put to shame until we become mature and are raptured.

### Beseeking to Prevail to Escape

The Lord also reminded us to take **heed** to ourselves and to be **watchful** at every time, beseeching lest our hearts be weighed down with debauchery and drunkenness and the anxieties of life, and that the day of the great tribulation come upon us suddenly as a snare; for it will come in upon all those dwelling on the face of all the earth. We should **guard** our hearts and give all the room to the Lord so that we may prevail to escape all these things and stand before the Son of Man (Luke 21:34-36; cf. Rev. 12:5-6, 14).

To attain maturity is **not** an overnight matter. Therefore, for His coming we must **prepare** ourselves, love Him, and grow in Him, that at His appearing we may be mature to be raptured and receive the reward.

*(The Up-to-date Presentation of the God-ordained way and the Signs Concerning the Coming of Christ, chapter 7, section 4)*

### Day 4

III. The **first four seals** opened by the Lamb-God give us a vision of world history from Christ's ascension to the end of this age (cf. 4:1-2; 5:1-14); they show us that immediately after His ascension (Mark 16:19-20) there has been a **four-horse race** continuing through the entire age of the church until Christ's return:

- A. The **first seal** consists of a **white horse** and its rider, signifying the **spreading of the gospel**—Rev. 6:1-2:
  1. The bow without an arrow signifies that Christ's fighting for the constitution of the gospel of peace is **finished** and that the victory is **won**; a crown signifies that the gospel has been crowned with the glory of Christ—2 Cor. 4:4.

2. **Went forth conquering** signifies that the gospel has been going forth with Christ to conquer all kinds of opposition and attack—Rev. 6:2.
  3. The **overcomers** who preach the gospel of the glory of Christ become the **riders of the white horse**—Eph. 3:8-11; Rom. 1:1; Rev. 19:11, 13-14.
- B. The **second seal** consists of a **red horse** and its rider, signifying the **spreading of war**— 6:3-4:
1. Red signifies the **shedding of blood**, and a great sword signifies **weapons for fighting**.
  2. To take peace from the earth signifies that **war is continuing** on the earth; that men should slay one another signifies that people will **fight one another**—v. 4; Matt. 24:7.
- C. The **third seal** consists of a **black horse** and its rider, signifying the **spreading of famine**— Rev. 6:5-6:
1. A balance, a scale used to weigh precious things, being used here to weigh food signifies the scarcity of food; a quart of wheat, good pay for a day's labor, and three quarts of barley, also good pay for a day's labor (Matt. 20:2), signify the high price of food in its scarcity.
  2. Do not harm the oil and the wine (oil and wine are for man's pleasure—Psa. 104:15— and are always in short supply and become precious in famine) signifies the **presence of famine**.
- D. The **fourth seal** consists of a **pale horse** and its rider, signifying the **spreading of death**— Rev. 6:7-8:
1. Pale signifies the color of the appearance of those **stricken with the plague**; Hades following Death signifies that Hades receives and retains those whom death has killed.
  2. Authority is given to Death and Hades over the fourth part of the earth to kill with the sword, famine, and death and by the beasts of the earth—cf. vv. 9-11; Luke 18:1-2, 7-8.

### THE WAY FOR THE LORD TO COME BACK

Luke 21:24 has now been fully accomplished. But how can the Lord come back? If we read the entire New Testament, we will realize that there must be a **group of people** on this earth who have been **regenerated, transformed, built up together**, and **prepared** as His bride for Him to come back as the Bridegroom. The Lord is returning to judge the earth, but this is not His goal. The main purpose of the Lord's return is for His bride (Rev. 19:7-9). To judge the earth is on the negative side, but to come for His bride is positive.

We should not expect that all the Christians will be revived. That will not occur. The Lord will work according to the principle of the **overcomers**. This means that the majority of God's people will not prepare the way for His return. Only a **remnant** will go along with the Lord and by His mercy stand with Him to fight for His recovery. This is the principle whereby the Lord can do a quick work. If we must wait for the Lord to revive all the Christians, I do not know how long that would take. But it is easy for the Lord to raise up a small number of seeking ones here and there in all the earth. The Lord is going to raise up a **small number** to take the standing of the overcomers to go along with Him. These will be the representatives of His Body, and their standing will be sufficient to bring the Lord back.

*(The Practical Expression of the Church, chapter 22, section 2)*

### Day 5

#### IV. The **spreading of the truths** of the Lord's recovery will be a preparation for the **Lord's coming back** to bring the recovery and restoration not only to Israel but also to the entire creation—Matt. 24:14; 28:19; 19:28; Isa. 11:9; cf. Rev. 5:6-8:

- A. Immediately after Christ's ascension, these four things—the gospel, war, famine, and death—began to run like riders on four horses, and they will continue until Christ comes back—6:1-8:
  1. The **spreading, running, and racing** of the gospel of the kingdom throughout the whole inhabited earth is the **kernel** of the divine history within human history—Matt. 24:14.
  2. The gospel of the kingdom, signified by the white horse of the first seal in Revelation 6:1-2, will be preached in the whole earth for a testimony to all the nations before the end of this age, the time of the great tribulation.
- B. We are not preaching a partial gospel but the **full gospel** that encompasses everything from Matthew through Revelation—the gospel of God's eternal economy to dispense Himself in Christ as the Spirit into His chosen ones through His judicial redemption and by His organic salvation for the building up of His Body in the local churches to consummate the New Jerusalem as His bride, His wife, for His eternal expression—1 Tim. 1:3-4; Rom. 1:1; 5:10; Rev. 1:10-11; 21:2-3, 9-11; 22:1-2.
- C. Actually, the gospel includes **all** the divine truths; the **entire** New Testament is the gospel, and the New Testament as the gospel is typified by the Old Testament; thus, we may say that the gospel includes the **entire Bible**.
- D. God's unique purpose in this age is to have the **gospel preached** so that the church as the Body of Christ might be built up to consummate the New Jerusalem—Eph. 3:8-11.
- E. May the Lord burden us to **learn** the divine truths of the gospel and to **spread** them everywhere for His recovery—Isa. 11:9; Dan. 11:32b-33; 2 Tim. 2:21

### Day 6

#### V. In the present environment of the world, we need to **devote** ourselves to and persevere in **prayer**, while discerning “the signs of the times”—Acts 6:4; Col. 4:2; Matt. 16:3; Luke 21:24-36; Matt. 24:3-14, 32-34; Rom. 13:11-14:

- A. We need to realize that we are in the **midst** of “birth pangs” (Matt. 24:8, 32-34), that “the kingdom of God is near” (Luke 21:31), and thus, **pray** the last prayer in the Bible—“Come, Lord Jesus!” (Rev. 22:20); the entire Bible concludes with the desire for the Lord's coming expressed as a prayer (cf. S. S. 8:13-14; 2 Tim. 4:8; Acts 26:16); Christ's coming will be His presence (Gk. parousia) with His people (Matt. 24:3; Acts 26:15-16; Mark 13:8; John 14:21, 23).



- B. We need to **pray** with the full realization of God's view of human history by seeing that the gospel is speeded up and even maximized by war, famine, and death and by seeing that we **need** to gain God to the **fullest** extent to accomplish the goal of His divine economy—Phil. 3:8, 12-14:
1. After he rebelled against God, Satan was condemned and even sentenced by God, but in His wisdom and sovereignty, God has not yet fully executed His judgment on Satan; He still has given Satan a certain limited time to do something to **meet** some negative need in the fulfillment of His economy—Job 1:6-8; 2:1-6; cf. John 12:31.
  2. The book of Job shows us that God, through Satan as an “ugly tool,” was tearing down Job in two ways: **stripping** and **consuming**; God's stripping and consuming were exercised over Job to tear Job down that God might **gain** Job so that he might gain God more; our outer man is being consumed so that our inner man may be renewed day by day—Phil. 3:8-10; 2 Cor. 4:16-18.
  3. Job's sufferings were not God's judgment but God's stripping, consuming, and tearing down so that He might have a base and a way to rebuild Job with Himself, to make Job a **God-man**, a **new man** in God's new creation—5:17; Gal. 6:15.
  4. It is through His stripping, consuming, and tearing down that God **dispenses** Himself into those who love Him and seek after Him—Job 10:13; Eph. 3:9; cf. John 3:6; Phil. 3:3.
  5. God's purpose in dealing with His holy people is that they would be **emptied** of everything and receive only God as their gain; the desire of God's heart is that we would **gain** Him in full as life, as the life supply, and as everything to our being, which ultimately consummates in the New Jerusalem—Rom. 8:28-29.
  6. The end of the book of Job tells us that Job eventually saw God; in the New Testament sense, **seeing God equals gaining God**; to see God is to be transformed into the glorious image of Christ, the God-man, that we may express God in His life and represent Him in His authority—42:5-6; 2 Cor. 3:18.
  7. The **more** we see God, know God, and love God, the **more** we abhor ourselves and the more we deny ourselves—Matt. 16:24; Luke 9:23; 14:26.
- C. According to Solomon's prayer in 1 Kings 8:48, we always need to **pray** toward the Holy Land, typifying Christ as the portion allotted by God to the believers (Deut. 8:7; Col. 1:12); **toward** the holy city, signifying the **kingdom of God in Christ** (Psa. 48:1-2); and **toward** the holy temple, signifying **God's house**, the church, on the earth (Eph. 2:21; 1 Tim. 3:15):
1. Daniel **prayed** three times a day by opening his windows toward Jerusalem; through His faithful channels of prayer, God carries out His economy with His elect for Christ's coming—Dan. 6:10; Acts 2:42; 6:4.
  2. God will listen to our prayer when our prayer to God is **toward Christ**, the kingdom of God, and the house of God as the goal in God's eternal economy; this means that our prayer should always be **aimed at the interests of God**, that is, at Christ and the church as God's interests on earth, for the fulfilling of God's economy.

#### PREPARING OURSELVES IN SEVERAL MATTERS

Now we need to prepare ourselves in several matters. **First**, we must **pursue** and **grow** in the spiritual life, earnestly maintaining a living fellowship with the Lord, fully consecrating ourselves to Him and having proper dealings before Him. We are contacting not merely a religious object but a living person. He is the living Spirit who dwells in our spirit. Therefore, we can fellowship with Him and receive His shining, guidance, and supply, allowing Him to regulate us in great or small matters so that we may have **genuine** growth in life.

**Second**, we must be **equipped in the truth**. People read the Bible in black and white according to their own understanding, barely scratching the surface. In particular, the Chinese are filled in their mind with things such as filial piety, honor, humility, patience, and forgiveness. For this reason, when they read the passages in the Bible that talk about honoring the parents, loving the wives, and submitting to the husbands, they feel that these things are very good, because they are similar to the virtues taught by the ancient Chinese sages. Actually, the Bible is full of the light of truth and the revelation of Christ. We need to **read, get** the Lord's word **into us**, and get ourselves into His word so that we may be **mingled** with the word.

**Third**, we need to **build up** a good character. We have to admit that although we have a God-created character in us, our fallen and corrupted character is loose, lazy, careless, and sloppy. In 1953 when I held a training in Taipei, I put together a small book on thirty character traits—being genuine, exact, strict, diligent, broad, fine, and others—hoping that we could exercise to cultivate them little by little. We should not merely read them and quickly forget about them, like many Chinese who read the books written by Confucius and Mencius. We need to **exercise** ourselves in these thirty items to build up a character that is useful to the Lord. We need to pray to the Lord, because although we do not have the strength to do this, the Lord is the bountiful supply within us. In Philippians 4 Paul says, “What things are true, what things are dignified, what things are righteous, what things are pure, what things are lovely, what things are well spoken of...take account of these things” (v. 8). These things are all related to character. Then Paul goes on to say, “I am able to do all things in Him who empowers me” (v. 13). Therefore, we can all build up a good character in Him who empowers us.

**Fourth**, we must receive a **higher education**. In the process of receiving our education we should learn some languages, especially English, the international language with which we must become proficient. In addition, we should learn at least one other foreign language, be it Spanish, German, French, Japanese, or Korean. These are all major languages that are commonly used in the world today. In brief, we need to be familiarized with two other languages besides Chinese. Not only so, we also need to **study** and get into the depths of the Bible. For this purpose it is best that we learn some Greek. The more we learn of literature and languages, the better it is. We must attain to some depth in the study of languages.

**Fifth**, we need to **know** history, **recognize** the situation and the tide of the world, and **be aware** of the condition on the earth today. We need to pay attention to these five items: life, truth, character, language, and common knowledge. We need to endeavor to practice these things while paying attention to our living. The Lord is living; to be sure, He can bear all our responsibility. Moreover, today the Lord's recovery on the earth is widespread. In this widespread recovery we mutually care for and supply the needs of each other, which is a great help. Therefore, you should not be anxious; rather, you should **diligently equip** yourselves by laboring on these matters—life, truth, character, language, and a knowledge concerning world culture, history, current events, and present trends. In this way we will be able to advance toward the goal to gospelize Taiwan, Japan, Europe, Australia, and New Zealand. May the Lord bless us with His presence.

(A Blessed Human Life, chapter 4, section 3)