

Material Offering and the Lord's Move Today Week 3 – Day 1

Morning Nourishment

Phil. 4:18

But I have received in full all things and abound; I have been filled, receiving from Epaphroditus the things from you, a sweet-smelling savor, an acceptable sacrifice, well pleasing to God.

Today's Reading

Sometimes God will ask a person to **sell all** he has. Sometimes He will only ask a person to give what he has **in excess**. Whatever it may be, **the heart has to be released**. In Acts, the apostle **rebuke Ananias** for keeping back what he had in excess (**Acts 5:3-4**) **If there is an excess, it should be given away**.

Sister Eva said that every time she went to bed, she would consider **how she could save something** from her spending in order that others may receive more. We need to take care of our livelihood, and we need to take care of our family. But that is not this issue today. As long as we would **set aside a portion from our income** and would **lower our standard of living a little**, we will be able to give away all our excess.

Today, when we speak of **handing ourselves over**, we are not talking about what we have to do to take care of our money. Rather, we are saying that a person has to **offer himself up for the Lord** and for the gospel. Brothers and sisters who are engaged in an occupation, the Lord needs your ministry in your job! These few years we are short of new co-workers. Formerly, at its peak we had about four hundred co-workers. Today we only have about two hundred, with two hundred short. In order to fill up the gap of these two hundred workers, there must be a group of people who would go to make money. Formerly, I dare not say such a word. But today I dare to say such a word. **Some should go to make money and offer their money to the Lord's service**. They should **consecrate** themselves **to make money for the Lord's service**. Perhaps such a one can make million dollars. He will only take what he needs to sustain his livelihood. The rest he will give to the church. If you are only a spectator here, nothing will happen to you. But if you want to give yourselves for the co-worker's need, it demands your life.

First, **He wants us; then He wants what is ours**. We ourselves have to come to Him first before we can bring what we have to Him. If we do not come, God will not accept what we have. All the brothers and sisters have to see that **everything is for the lord** and that **everything has to center around the Lord**. We must have the same center. Although some function in **money-making ministry** while other function is their **ministry of the word**, the center for both must be the same. (*The Resumption of Watchman Nee's Ministry*, vol. 1, pp. 310-311)

The fragrant odor [in **Philippians 4:18**] refers to the sweet savor of the burnt offering (**Gen. 8:20-21; Lev. 1:9**). The offering we give to God's servants is not only a sacrifice to God, but also a **fragrant odor of a burnt offering that is well-pleasing** to Him. This reveals that the sacrifice here is like a burnt offering that is satisfying and well-pleasing to God.

By being offered to God for God's use by us who are of God, what was considered by God as "mammon of unrighteousness" (**Luke 16:9**), that is, as deceitful riches (**Matt. 13:22**) and uncertain riches (**1 Tim. 6:17**) which will fail (**Luke 16:9**), can actually **become** our **"fellowship" with the saints**, our **"righteousness" toward men before God**, an acceptable **"sacrifice" to God**, and a well-pleasing **"sweet-smelling savor" to Him**. **Riches that deceive men, corrupt men, and destroy men can actually become such transparent blessings that we have before God! This all depends on our offering of material riches**. (*Life Lessons*, p. 187)

Further Reading: The Resumption of Watchman Nee's Ministry, vol. 1, pp.309-312; *Life Lessons*, lsn.24)

Week 3 - Day 2

Morning Nourishment

2Cor. 5:13

For whether we were beside ourselves, *it was* to God; or whether we are sober-minded, *it is* for you.

Today's Reading

The Bible also tells us about many people who were **beside themselves in offering up** their possessions and houses. Acts 4 mentions the disciples selling their all and laying the money they received at the apostle's feet (VV. 34-35). Many people agree that we should be zealous, but they say that we should be careful, balanced, and not go to extremes. Yet throughout the past two thousand years, all those who have **truly consecrated** themselves to the Lord were men who **risked everything** to offer up themselves. The more a person loves the Lord, the more he consecrates. One brother asked me, "How can you love the Lord so much, and why can't I love Him as much?" I said, "If you give your money to the Lord, you will love Him. The Lord said that **where your treasure is, there is your heart** also." If you want your heart to follow the Lord, your money must first go to the Lord. When your money goes into the offering box, and you say, "Amen," your heart will go with it as well.

In Shanghai two sisters who were nurses each earned less than a hundred dollars a month. They saved their wages in the bank. After they heard the Lord's word, they were moved in their heart, and one after the other offered up all their saving.

Today many people are planning too much for themselves. They are not willing to offer up their all. They make reservations for themselves. The result is that the gospel has lost its impact. During every great revival in history, we find men who were beside themselves in loving the Lord, who risked all to offer up themselves. I am **not exhorting you to give everything to the Lord**, **but** you must **be a person who is fully consecrated to the Lord**.

One elderly sister once came to Mr. George Muller and said, "My seventieth birthday is approaching. By that time, I will have saved enough money to buy a coat. This has been my wish for many years. I have been saving since I was forty-two years old, and I have been looking forward to the day when I would have such a coat. I have **waited twenty-eight** years. Today I can finally buy it. However, the Lord is touching me to offer up these fifteen pounds." When Mr. Muller heard this, he felt that this would cost the elderly sister too much, and he wondered whether she would later regret it. He dared not accept that money. Yet the sister was quite resolute and determined to offer it up. Later, Mr. Muller testified that **he had thought** that **it was difficult for poor people to love the Lord**. But the Lord had died for all, and when one was touched by the Lord, even a savings of twenty-eight years meant nothing to her anymore.

Today we want all the young people to **offer their time** to the Lord. At the same time, we want them **to offer themselves fully** to the Lord. Some may have to give themselves to **make money** for the Lord. Such ones have to do their best to earn and offer.... Some may have to offer themselves to **serve** the Lord **full-time**. We need both kinds of people. Does not the gospel need to be preached in many places? Is not the church taking the right path? If there were no need to preach the gospel, and if the church were on the wrong path, we could keep our money and save it for our own use. But if the gospel needs to be preached and if the church is on the right path, we have to be beside ourselves for the Lord. We have to **recalibrate the focus of our living**. Formerly, we earned money for ourselves. Today everything has to be for the Lord.... We have to rise up and be beside ourselves. We have to be beside ourselves in the preaching of the gospel and in offering up our all. (*The Collected Works of Watchman Nee*, vol. 41, pp. 198-200)

Further Reading: The Collected Works of Watchman Nee, vol. 41, ch. 26

Week 3 - Day 3

Morning Nourishment

Mal 3:10

Bring the whole tithe to the storehouse that there may be food in My house; and prove Me, if you will, by this, says Jehovah of hosts, whether I will open to you the windows of heaven and pour out blessing for you until there is no room for it.

Heb 13:15-16

Through Him then let us offer up a sacrifice of praise continually to God, that is, the fruit of lips confessing His name. But do not forget doing good and sharing *with others*, for with such sacrifices God is well pleased.

Today's Reading

In the Lord Testament... the Israelites were in great poverty and difficulty. How could they carry out the words of [Malachi 3:10](#)? The Israelites might have asked, "If we cannot get by with ten loads of rice, how can we get by with nine? If ten bags of flour are insufficient, how can nine bags be sufficient?" These are words out of a carnal and foolish mouth. God reproached the people and told them that what is impossible with man is possible with God.

Ten loads are the reason for poverty, while nine loads are the cause for abundance. Man thinks that the more he has in his hand, the better off he will be. However, keeping things in one's hand is the very cause for poverty, while offering things to God is the very cause for blessing. If I have an additional load in my hands, it will become my curse. But if it is put in God's storehouse, it becomes my blessing.... When you hold something back, you end up in poverty. (*The Collected Works of Watchman Nee*, vol. 49, p431)

The "tithe" [in [Malachi 3:10](#)] is the legal amount of offering which God required from the harvest of the Israelites.... This word superabundantly displays the infinitely rich promise of God. Although it is spoken to the Israelites in the Lord Testament, in principle it applies also to the New Testament believers. If we will fully offer to God what belongs to Him that the church may be richly supplied, God will open the windows of heaven for us and pour out a blessing to us, which there will not be enough room to contain. (*Life Lessons*, p.183)

Two sacrifice are spoken on [in [Hebrews 13:15-16](#)]. The first is the sacrifice of praise, and the second is that of doing good and sharing with others. A sacrifice is something that is a loss to oneself and a gain to God. A sacrifice of praise is a praise that is rendered to God at one's own loss. A sacrifice of sharing or giving is giving something to God at one's own expense.

We do not have adequate praise in the bread-breaking meeting because we fall short in sharing and giving. We must give to the extent that we "feel" our giving. In other words, we have to give to the extent that we can sense the loss. Only this kind of offering can be considered a sacrifice. When we do this, we will spontaneously offer up the sacrifice of praise. If we give in a casual way, our praise will not be high. If we do not have the sacrifice of giving, we will not have a sacrifice of praise.... In addition to the sacrifice of praise, there is still something that follows. The phrase "do not forget" refers to the fact that it is most easy for men to forget.... We should not forget doing good and sharing with others.

Praise and giving are like two legs. If one is shorter than the other, we cannot expect a person to walk properly. Praise and giving are also like two wings. If one is missing, a bird cannot fly. It may still have one wing, but the wing is useless. A bird with only one wing cannot fly. When we come to the have one wing, but the wing is useless. A bird with one wing cannot fly. When we come to the meeting, we sometimes find superficial ones uttering a few words of praise, but their praise is never high. (*The Collected works of Watchman Nee*, vol. 43, pp.725-726)

Further Readings: The Collected Works of Watchman Nee, vol. 43, ch. 85

Week 3 - Day 4

Morning Nourishment

Rom 12:1-2

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. And do not be fashioned according to this age, but be transformed by the renewing of the mind that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and well pleasing and perfect.

Today's Reading

Romans 12 speaks in a strong way of the matter of consecration. The consecration there is for service. This service is a service in the Body of Christ. It is not individual service, but service in the Body. If a man is not in the Body, it is difficult for him to understand God's will. I am afraid some people will misunderstand what we are doing here during the past few days and will think that we are rallying a fund-raising campaign. If you understand things in this way, you are off. We have received God's grace to serve Him in this age. In order to do that, we have to offer up everything and put everything in the Body. We need to be coordinated in our work and in our jobs. In order for God to take the fast way, and in order for the work to reach a high standard, we must have such a kind of consecration.

Why do we have to touch the matter of riches? It is because the Lord says, "For where your treasure is there will your heart be also" (**Matt. 6:21**). Where your heart is, there will be your very person also. Riches are like a nail; they nail a person down. Perhaps in these few days, some nails have loosened up. But they have not fallen down yet.

Today, every one of us is still under the tight grip of riches; they are still nailing us down. May God deliver every one of us from riches. **Roman 12** speaks of two bodies. One is our own body, and the other is the Body of Christ. We offer up our bodies for the Body of Christ. If a man has not been delivered from riches, he cannot offer up his body to God.

Acts 2 and **4** show us that as soon as money goes out, there is the one accord. When the disciples took care of the problem of money, the one accord followed, and God's work was realized in a marvelous way in an instant. The book of Acts is our standard. The first time God saved men, He saved them in great numbers. All those men were delivered from riches. Their service was carried out in the Body. This service in one accord is the Body service spoken of in **Romans 12**.

If a Christian has not been terminated by God with respect to money, he cannot serve the Lord along with other members. Even if he is to serve, his service will be superficial one and will not be one that issues from the heart. One of the greatest obstacles to our consecration is the matter of riches. And one of the greatest enemies in the Body of Christ is individualism. In Acts, no one said that anything was his own. If you say that this money is yours, it will be difficult for you to be delivered from individualism. The strongest manifestation of individualism is in the matter money.

Our way, our work, and our testimony in the future lie with the Body. If the question of money is not settled, we cannot expect to have good coordination, and we cannot expect that we can serve God.

During these years, concerning money, the co-workers can boast that they have not been tied down with jobs for a living. Although the other brothers and sisters have more occasions to be exposed to money, they have to remember that they are serving God just as the co-workers are. We do not expect anyone among us to be a steward for his whole life and yet find nobody to receive him into the eternal tabernacle [Luke 16:9]. (*The Resumption of Watchman Nee's Ministry*, vol. 2, pp. 443-445, 426)

Further Reading: The Resumption of Watchman Nee's Ministry, vol. 2, ch. 58

Week 3 - Day 5

Morning Nourishment

Rom 14:7-9

For none of us lives to himself, and none dies to himself; For whether we live, we live to the Lord, and whether we die, we die to the Lord. Therefore whether we live or we die, we are the Lord's. For Christ died and lived *again* for this, that He might be Lord both of the dead and of the living.

Today's Reading

For one to present his body to God is to go full-time. If you do not go full-time, how could your body be free to be presented to God as a living sacrifice? Our entire being is contained in our body, and our body is confined in time. Therefore, the body is the center of these two things, the center of our being and the center of our time. The being is what we are, and the time is where we exist. We can change the places where we live, but we cannot move ourselves out of time. You always remain in time. To present your body to God means you give yourself to God. This is to be full-time. We Christians should all be full-timers. We have to give ourselves to Him. We do not give ourselves to anything else, only to our saving God.

In principle, we have to realized that every saved one should be a full-timer. This is why Paul has the ground to charge us to present our bodies to God. Every saved one must be a full-timer, presenting his body to God.... To present your body is just to present yourself to God. As a saved one, you have to present yourself to God. Having presented yourself to God, you will be led by the Lord to either do a job to make money or to preach the gospel without making any money. Whether you do a job or preach the gospel depends upon the Lord's leading.

To be a full-timer means to be one who is absolute for the Lord. Your income may be five times what you need, yet you would only spend that one-fifth for your living and give the other four-fifths to the Lord. To talk about tithing as the Seventh-Day Adventists practice is a shame. That is something from the Old Testament, something in the law. In the New Testament it is not to present one-tenth but to present your body, to present your entire being. This includes everything you are, everything you have, everything you can do, and everything you earn. It is not just one-tenth but ten-tenths.

The real meaning of being full-time is to live to Him. To go full-time does not mean to drop your job and become a preacher. It does not mean that you give up your business and become one who preaches the gospel or who labors in the word all the time. A full-timer is one who lives to the Lord. Who should be such a one? Every believer, without one exception. As long as you are a believer, you have to realized you should be one living to Him. We have to live to Him because He is ours and we are His. To live to Him is based upon the fact that we are His. Not only is He ours, but we also are His.... To live to the Lord includes living for, by, with, and in Him. This is one being two and two in one. There is not only no separation between us and the Lord but also no distinction when we are living to Him.

To be full-time means that you live to the Lord. You do not live for Him but to Him. This is a great privilege. A full-timer does not mean what we may think. A full-timer is one who lives to the Lord; every believer, as one bought by the Lord with a price, should be a person living to the Lord. He is yours and you are His. He and you are one. He is to you and you are to Him. There is no distinction in anything. He does not need your permission to use you, nor do you need his permission to use Him. (*Elder's Training, Book 8: The Life-pulse of the Lord's Present Move*, pp. 105, 111, 113-114, 116-118)
Further Reading: Elder's Training, Book 8: The Life-pulse of the Lord's Present Move, ch. 7

Week 3 - Day 6

Morning Nourishment

2Cor 5:15

And He died for all that those who live may no longer live to themselves but to Him who died for them and has been raised.

Mat 24:45-46

Who then is the faithful and prudent slave, whom the master has set over his household to give them food at the proper time? Blessed is that slave whom his master, when he comes, will find so doing.

Today's Reading

I believe we have touched the bottom of the significance of what it means to be full-time. The job-dropping full-timers may not have realized that they should be to the Lord. The most they may have realized is that they are for the Lord. They are not to the Lord. To be for the Lord means that you still could be away from the Lord. If you are to the Lord, you could never be away from Him. To be to the Lord means that you are one with Him. It means that we breathe to the Lord, eat to the Lord, walk to Him, and even exercise to Him. If you are practicing the real ownership of the Lord, you will do everything to Him.

I hope we all can realized the proper denotation of the spiritual term *full-time*. To be full-time does not mean that you need to give up your job. To be a full-timer means that whatever you do, you do to the Lord; whatever you are, you are to the Lord; and whatever you have, you have to the Lord. If you remain in a job, you remain to the Lord. If you leave your job, you leave it to the Lord. As long as you are to the Lord you are a full-timer. Whatever you have to do practically all depends upon the One to whom you live. He leads you. Then you know whether you have to remain in a job or leave a job or whether you need to get married or remain single. It does not mean that if you remain single, you are full-time and that if you get married, you are not full-time. To be full-time simply means to live to the Lord.

Every dear saint who really means business with the Lord must be one all the way living to Him. Paul said that even when we die, we die to Him ([Rom. 14:8](#)). Thus, there is no problem concerning whether we live a longer life or whether we die today. If we live, we live to the Lord, if we die, we die to the Lord. There is no difference. Whatever I do and whatever happens to me, I am to the Lord because I am one with Him. To think that only those who give up their jobs to do the Lord's work are full-timer is a wrong understanding. This is still the understanding under the influence of degrade Christianity.... When you say that you are a full-timer, it means that you are to the Lord.

Since October of 1984, I fully realized that we had become somewhat stuck in the Lord's recovery. We held the Lord back very much, so we did not carry out His commission to the recovery.... Let, us all be full-timers! If we are led to drop our jobs, then we drop them to Him and go out to serve the precious truths.... We will gain much increase. I care for the spreading of the truths so that they can get into the needy hearts. If we spread these truths, we will become the faithful servants to serve food to the Lord's people at the appointed time ([Matt. 24:45](#)). Then we will fulfill the commission of the Lord's recovery. This is where my heart is. I will die to this. I told the brothers in the Far East I will not stop until my entire being is exhausted by this ministry. I hope you all will say the same thing.

Let us rise up to go full-time, either by dropping our jobs to go out or by remaining in our jobs to make more money and give every cent to the Lord's move. Then the Lord's move will not be short of men or money. We will be short of nothing.... The wise way is that we all take the full-time way.... This is what the Lord needs! (*Elder's Training, Book 8: The Life-pulse of the Lord's Present Move*, pp. 121-123, 126-127)

Further Reading: Elder's Training, Book 8: The Life-pulse of the Lord's Present Move ch. 8