

The Church Book Service

July 7, 2024

Living Stream Ministry

THE CHURCH BOOK SERVICE

July 7, 2024

Workshop Schedule

Time:	Session:
08:00 – 08:45	Registration (MCC north entrance)
08:45 – 09:15	Lord's Table Meeting
09:15 – 10:10	General Session: Topic 1
10:10 – 10:30	Transition
10:30 – 11:25	Breakout Sessions: Topics 2 & 3
11:25 – 11:35	Transition
11:35 – 12:25	General Sessions: Topic 4
12:25 – 13:25	Lunch (bookstore open)
13:25 – 14:20	General Session: Topic 5
14:20 - 14:30	Transition
14:30 – 15:25	Breakout Sessions: Topics 6 & 7
15:25 – 15:45	Transition
15:45 – 16:40	Breakout Sessions: Topics 8 & 9
16:40 – 16:50	Transition
16:50 – 17:45	General Session: Conclusion and Overflow
17:45	Dismissed (bookstore open until 18:15)

THE CHURCH BOOK SERVICE

Table of Topic Contents

- 1. The Vision and Burden of a Healthy Book Service**
 - a. Fellowship concerning the Book Service
 - b. Promoting the Reading of the Ministry Publications among the Saints
 - c. An Opening Word
- 2. Establishing and Maintaining a Healthy Book Service:**
 - a. Three Keys for a Healthy Book Service—People, Products, and Programs
 - b. Setting Up Book Displays and Book Rooms
 - c. Church Book Service History Questionnaire
 - d. Various Examples of Churches with a Book Service
- 3. The Crucial Function of the Elders and Responsible Brothers in the Book Service**
 - a. Reference: *Fellowship for Establishing and Maintaining a Healthy Book Service*
 - b. Reference: *The Propagation of the Truth in the Lord's Recovery*
- 4. Living Stream Ministry**
 - a. The Publication Work in the Lord's Recovery
 - b. Coordination with the LSM Book Section
 - c. Living Stream Ministry Copyrights
 - d. LSM's General Policy concerning the Use of LSM-Copyrighted Materials by the Saints, the Churches, and the Work
 - e. Additional Reading
- 5. Reading and Truth Pursuit Programs**
 - a. *The Holy Word for Morning Revival (HWMR)* and Publications for Distribution and Shepherding
 - b. *Nuggets and Gems from the Bible*
 - c. Personal Distribution
 - d. How to Lend Books
- 6. Setting Up Book Displays and Book Rooms and Reading and Truth Pursuit Programs**
- 7. Strengthening and Developing an Existing Church Book Service**
 - a. Reference: *Fellowship for Establishing and Maintaining a Healthy Book Service*
- 8. Listening to the Ministry**

9. Reading the Ministry

- a. An Overview of www.lsm.org
- b. MinistryBooks.org
- c. 500 Life-studies App
- d. FTTA-OL

Topic One

THE VISION AND BURDEN OF A HEALTHY BOOK SERVICE

Fellowship Concerning the Book Service

Scripture Reading: 1 Tim. 2:4; Matt. 24:45; Col. 3:16; Psa. 119:103; Acts 6:7

I. In 1 Timothy 2:4 Paul says that God “desires all men to be saved and to come to the full knowledge of the truth”; we should not merely have the knowledge of the truth, but the full knowledge, the complete knowledge, the perfect knowledge, of the truth—1 Tim. 2:4; 2 Tim. 3:15-17:

- A. Knowing the truth requiring others' explanation and the Lord's opening of our minds—Acts 8:30-31; Luke 24:44-45.
- B. We all know that it is not easy to understand the Bible; however, through the Life-study messages and the publications in the Lord's recovery, we can understand the central thought of every book in the Bible, and we can be clear about the true meaning of every chapter and verse—Psa. 119:130.
- C. I hope that we would receive the burden to thoroughly study the truths of the Lord's recovery and to spread these truths.

II. In order to deliver these truths into the hands of God's children, we need to go out to visit people and to supply them, and we need the serving ones in all the localities to faithfully labor in the book service in the churches to diligently distribute the food to the saints—Matt. 24:45:

- A. Even the wonderful truth of the excellent gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ requires us to speak much with all our heart and to preach diligently so that people will receive and believe it—Col. 1:28-29; 4:12; Rom. 15:16.
- B. We have a heart to serve the Lord and that we have obtained His mercy to serve Him in His word; we must have a proper attitude and be positive and aggressive, doing our best to urge people to read His word—Rom. 12:1, 11; Col. 1:28-29.

III. The most important burden of the book service is not to care for the inventory of books but to study and find a way to spread every book into all the homes of the saints in your locality and, once the books are in the homes, to find a way to deposit their contents into the saints' hearts—Col. 3:16:

- A. The primary matter is not to promote the books but to stir up the saints' interest in pursuing the truth and to encourage them to enjoy reading the spiritual publications—Psa. 119:103:
 1. We should help the saints to build up a practice or a habit that every day they would spend at least thirty minutes in the Word.
 2. Encourage the brothers and sisters to build up the habit of reading spiritual books after every meal and before going to bed; they will gain a great benefit from reading in this way—Acts 17:11-12; Matt. 4:4; 1 Pet. 2:2.
 3. I hope that the elders in each locality will give the saints some help and encouragement so that each household will have a supply of spiritual books: The saints can place a copy in various places within their homes—on their dining table, on their nightstand, on their bathroom counter, and in their kitchen—to

make enjoying the Lord's word in every place convenient for all the members of their family and even for their guests—Psa. 119:105.

4. These books are full of God's rich grace; it would certainly be beneficial for each household to place them throughout their home—19:9-10.
- B. We must see that serving in book sales is really to be the Lord's co-worker, to promote His truth, and to spread His divine economy and divine speaking to the whole earth—1 Cor. 3:9; Acts 6:7; 12:24; 19:20.

THE VISION AND BURDEN OF A HEALTHY BOOK SERVICE

Promoting the Reading of the Ministry Publications among the Saints

1. Helping to Promote the Standing Order:

"I hope that all the churches in all the localities, which have received the supply in the Lord's word from this ministry, will do their best to help the publication of the ministry in the matter of standing orders...We encourage the brothers and sisters to sign up for standing orders so that we can print books in larger quantities but at a cheaper cost, which benefit everyone" (*The Collected Works of Witness Lee [CWWL]*, 1984, vol. 5, "The Faithful and Diligent Spreading of the Truth—Concerning the Publication Service," p. 189).

2. Encouraging the Saints to Build Up the Habit of Reading:

"We also want to encourage the brothers and sisters to build up the habit of reading spiritual books after every meal and before going to bed. They will gain a great benefit from reading in this way.

"I hope the elders in each locality will give the saints some help and encouragement so that each household will have a supply of spiritual books. The saints can place a copy in various places within their homes—on their dining table, on their nightstand, on their bathroom counter, and in their kitchen—to make enjoying the Lord's word in every place convenient for all the members of their family and even for their guests. These books are full of God's rich grace; it would certainly be beneficial for each household to place them throughout their home" (pp. 189-190).

3. Leading the Saints to Become Addicted to Reading the Truth:

"We should lead the saints to become addicted to reading the truth. We should consider reading the truth to be more important than eating and drinking. If we do this, this truth in the Lord's recovery will greatly increase and be victorious; furthermore, the number of people in all the churches will spontaneously multiply (Acts 6:7)" (pp. 206-207).

4. Finding Ways to Promote the Truth:

"We must have a proper attitude and be positive and aggressive, doing our best to urge people to read His word. If we do not find ways to promote the truth or pray, how can the Lord's word be spread? If we take the Lord's word lightly, how can we have boldness to promote the publications among the saints?" (p. 207).

5. Being Jealous to Change the Atmosphere to Make Reading a Priority:

"Some brothers and sisters spend more time reading the newspaper and watching television than they do reading the ministry publications; this really grieves me. I hope that we could have a jealous heart for the Lord and change the atmosphere so that everyone would have a desire to read the Bible, and each household would make reading the spiritual publications a priority..."

"Despite the fact that the co-workers frequently go to help the churches, their true, long-term help has come from the supply of the publications" (p. 207).

6. Stirring Up the Saints' Interest in Pursuing the Truth:

"Please pick up a burden to return to your localities, fellowship with the elders, and consider this to be an important matter. The primary matter is not to promote the books but to stir up the saints' interest in pursuing the truth and to encourage them to enjoy reading the spiritual publications. This will depend on the way that we do it." (pp. 207-208)

7. Diving into and Bathing in the Life-studies to Be Immersed and Soaked in the Truth:

“If we have a clear view and know the Bible, the condition of today’s Christianity, the truth, and the mercy given to us by God, we would **spend our whole life being immersed and soaked in the truth. Then we would surely have the burden to propagate this truth as much as possible among the brothers and sisters in the churches. We would endeavor to create among the brothers and the sisters an atmosphere of desiring the truth and the Life-studies...** I hope that we could all learn to appreciate the Life-studies by **diving into them, bathing in them, and allowing the light of the truth to penetrate us.** Only then will we be able to spread the blessings and benefits that we have received, thereby **creating an atmosphere in which the saints desire the truth and the Life-studies**” (pp. 172-173).

8. Bringing in a Real Revival:

“The Lord’s word will require that we bear the responsibility to **labor willingly to zealously encourage and urge everyone in all the local churches to pursue the truth and read the spiritual publications.** In this way the Lord’s truth will spread widely, and **there will be a real revival**” (p. 208).

“If all the six hundred churches on the earth would **seriously read the Life-studies and thoroughly study** the truths contained in them, I absolutely believe that **a great revival would begin** not only among us but even on the whole earth” (p. 172).

“I absolutely believe that **if any local church promotes the Life-studies in this way**, it will be revived. If all the saints in a locality practice for one year to read the Life-studies to receive the life supply and study the truth for small group meetings, message meetings, and shepherding and helping others by fellowshipping with them, **the church in that locality will surely be revived.** This is because there is nothing more powerful than the word of God as the truth of God” (pp. 174-175).

9. Fighting Against Satan to Gain Ground for the Truth to Go Forth:

“Satan will resist this matter; hence, we must focus on this matter and **be ready to fight against Satan to gain this ground** so that God’s truth may have a way to go forth.” (p. 175)

10. Giving the Saints Direction, Encouragement, and Incentive:

“We should **help the saints to build up a practice or a habit that every day they would spend at least thirty minutes in the Word...** I think we need to remind them week after week, and sometimes the elders need to **give the saints some direction, some encouragement, and some incentive.**

“Many of you leading ones have never encouraged the saints in the last five years to get the truths in the way of using the Life-studies. You leave the matter of the saints’ getting into the Life-studies altogether up to them. You do not seem to care whether this is a dying matter or a living matter. This way of getting into the truth has become an orphan with no father and no mother, with no fostering. This has been the situation, and in some of the local churches, your problems all have been due to this one thing...as leading brothers try your best in your locality to **stir up an atmosphere and to create a hunger and thirst in the saints after the Lord’s truth**” (CWWL, 1984, vol.2, “Elders’ Training, Book 3: The Way to Carry Out the Vision,” pp. 325-327).

11. Hastening the Lord’s Return and Preparing the Bride:

“I hope that we could live to be eighty or ninety, even to over a hundred, so that we might be able to see the fulfillment of all that we have fellowshipped today. I wish to live on this earth and witness with my own eyes the truth of the Lord not only being printed into books through our hands, but also being sent through us to every part of the world_and prevailing in every place. I absolutely believe that this will hasten the Lord’s return because it is through this that the Lord will prepare His bride. I hope that we all can see the manifestation of such a situation” (CWWL, 1986, vol. 2, “The Economy of God and the Mystery of the Transmission of the Divine Trinity,” p. 460).

Topic One (cont.)

CHURCH BOOK SERVICE WORKSHOP

An Opening Word

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

One of the hopes this weekend is to see the churches recover the function of the booksales service in their localities. We hope that there will be saints, brothers and also sisters, together with leading ones in each local church who are burdened for such a service—a service that makes the publications of the Living Stream Ministry available to the local saints, and also a service that actively promotes the reading of the publications of the ministry of the age among the local saints.

Many years ago, when you walked into a local church meeting, the first thing you would see was a wall full of books for sale; almost every church had a prominent booksales service, which was crucial for the church life. At that time, the LSM office did not deal with individual saints. Instead, all the books were sold to the local saints individually through the booksales service of each church; each church's booksales service received packages of books from Living Stream and distributed them to the saints week by week. Many churches devoted an entire room at the front of their meeting hall just to display the books of the ministry. When the ministry station began in Anaheim in 1974, four individual messages were printed every week and sent out in packages to all churches. These messages were eagerly anticipated by the saints, and they would eagerly and earnestly wait for them to arrive like infants waiting for their next feeding.

Unfortunately, this was lost over the years until nearly no churches maintained a bookroom display or a booksales service. More important than the lack of a physical display of books, the burden to promote the publications also was lost, and individual saints were left to themselves to pursue the reading and the purchasing of the publications. Part of the reason for this loss is that during the past few storms, some of the local booksales services had become a hindrance instead of a help to the distribution of the books. Some churches, because the leading ones or the serving ones had become negative towards the ministry, did not want the saints to have access to the ministry publications. Instead of being held hostage by these negatives ones, the Living Stream Ministry started the Direct Mail Service (DMS), whereby saints could deal directly with LSM and LSM could mail books directly to the address of each individual saint. On the one hand, this made the ministry more accessible to the saints, but on the other hand, the booksales services in the local churches gradually felt that their function had been taken over by the LSM directly. First they stopped actively promoting the ministry, and eventually, many removed their physical displays altogether.

In the 1990's Living Stream began to publish *The Holy Word for Morning Revival*, and over the years, it has become the regular subscription for most of the saints in the Lord's recovery. We thank and praise the Lord for this, but in Brother Lee's mind, he never intended that this would be the only publication circulated among the churches to meet all their needs.

The hope today is that every church in the Lord's recovery would rise up to recover the burden of the booksales service. This is like in the time of Nehemiah when the wall of Jerusalem had been torn down and the city was left in desolation. Nehemiah rose up at night to examine the poor condition, and then he called the people together to charge them to build. The result was that some leading ones as well as ordinary citizens rose up to answer the call. Local groups within each district of the city took care of their local situation and built their own gates or their own part of the wall; soon the whole wall was finished, and the enemy was driven away. Some of these builders were elders, others were full-time serving priests, but many were just local residents. Nevertheless, each group took care of its part of the city, and they built their own gates. It did not matter that what one group built was not the same as others; they all recovered the same function. With the building of the gates and the wall, there was now a line of communication and supply to both the city armory and the city granary; that is, the supply of food and weapons could quickly be distributed to every part of the city, and the need of every district in the city could be conveyed quickly to the armory and the granary. Thus, every gate became a node or joint to serve its own district.

We hope to see in the coming days that there would be the recovery of such "gates" in each local church throughout this country. With a healthy booksales service recovered in every church, whether there are 500 or twenty saints, a healthy channel of supply and communication would be restored, and hopefully the saints would be helped to become more educated, equipped, nourished, and supplied by the ministry. Not only will there be the healthy communication between the churches and LSM, but there will be a healthy communication and blending between all the various "gates." Thus, the blessings received by one church can be shared among the other churches, and many more people will be ushered into the city through these gates in all four directions.

This cannot be the work of one "Nehemiah" alone; it must the work of the burdened ones in the whole congregation of God's people. At the same time, if such a healthy booksales service is recovered and built up in every locality, it would be a big help to LSM, to seeking believers throughout the country, and to the promotion of the ministry of the age. But as it is true with everything else, no one person or group can do it alone; it will take the whole Body to rise up and to take up this burden.

We hope to see that besides the Lord's Table meeting and the prayer meeting, every local church would have the booksales service as a high-priority service in the church to meet the internal need and for external propagation. Such a service must become a crucial part of the church life. We cannot imagine a church in the Lord's recovery without the Lord's Table meeting or the prayer meeting. In the same way, hopefully there will be healthy booksales services within each local church in the Lord's recovery. May the Lord bless His recovery, and may He bless this weekend.

Andrew Yu
July 26, 2018
Anaheim, CA

Topic Two

ESTABLISHING AND MAINTAINING A HEALTHY BOOK SERVICE

Three Keys for a Healthy Book Service—People, Products, and Programs

I. The First Key: People—build up a proper service group:

- A. In order for all the saints to get into the proper and ongoing burden for the ministry publications, there must be a group of saints who will take the lead to help the saints to enter into the burden and practice of reading and distributing the publications:
 - 1. The book service members must be burdened saints.
 - 2. Assigning saints to participate is not sustainable.
 - 3. Both brothers and sisters can serve.
 - 4. Some leading brothers must also be involved for oversight and church coordination.
- B. All those in the group must share the same burden, i.e., the reading and distribution of the ministry publications in the church:
 - 1. “The most important burden of the book service is not to care for the inventory of the books but to study and find a way to spread every book into all the homes of the saints in your locality and, once the books are in the homes, to find a way to deposit their contents into the saints’ hearts.
 - 2. The book service “must encourage the saints in the localities where we serve to cultivate the habit of studying the truth.
 - 3. “We also must have a proper heart and attitude in our way of doing business. We are not selling books like street vendors.
 - 4. “You should urge the saints to have the books in their homes and encourage them to do their best to read them” (*CWWL*, 1984, vol. 5, “The Faithful and Diligent Spreading of the Truth—Concerning the Publication Service,” p. 191).
- C. Form the service group according to Brother Lee’s principles on the formation of the vital groups:
 - 1. Firstly go to the Lord yourself, regarding reading and promoting the ministry publications through speaking, posting, loaning, giving, and selling.
 - 2. Pray for others with the same burden to join you.
- D. The book service group should be active like other church service groups, e.g., children’s work and young people:
 - 1. Meet weekly to pray about the burden, read and enjoy the ministry together.
 - 2. Fellowship about ways to promote the literature among the saints.
 - 3. Provide “direction, encouragement, and incentive” for reading and promoting.

II. The Second Key: Products—setting up a book room or a book display (Topic 6).

III. The Third Key: Programs—promoting reading the ministry and the pursuit of the truth (Topic 6).

IV. Workshop:

- A. Church book service testimonies.
- B. Prayer and fellowship about establishing or strengthening the book service in your church.
- C. Questions and answers about a healthy book service.

Topic Two (cont.)

SETTING UP BOOK DISPLAYS AND BOOK ROOMS

I. Three Purposes of Book Displays

- A. Showcase: Displays the riches of the ministry
- B. Library: Facilitates the borrowing of books
- C. Sales Counter: Assists in the buying or ordering of books

II. Setting Up Book Rooms

- A. Business Matters
 - 1. Business license
 - 2. Sales tax matters
 - 3. Cash register vs calculator
- B. Rented Spaces
 - 1. Portable displays
 - 2. Table displays
 - 3. Book displays
- C. Meeting Halls
 - 1. Book shelves
 - 2. Book tables
 - 3. Book displays

III. Book Room and Book Display Workshop

- A. Rented Spaces
 - 1. Photos and videos of different churches
 - 2. Testimonies
- B. Meeting Halls
 - 1. Photos and videos of different churches
 - 2. Testimonies
- C. Retail Shops
 - 1. Topstone Book Store—photos and reports
 - 2. Chicago Bibles and Books—photos and reports
- D. Questions and Answers

IV. Display/Library Sets

- A. Each church will have its own displays that will differ based on its needs
- B. For detailed information about the contents of a custom book display and pricing, please visit www.livingstream.com or contact the Living Stream Ministry book section.
 - 1. books@lsm.org
 - 2. (714) 236-6050 (Anaheim book section)
 - 3. 2431 W. La Palma Ave, Anaheim, CA 92801

Topic Two (cont.)

CHURCH BOOK SERVICE HISTORY QUESTIONNAIRE

The following questionnaire was sent to a number of churches, most of which are represented at this workshop. The responses that follow should be received as open fellowship that may benefit other churches where applicable.

Church in _____ Book Service History Questionnaire

- 1) What year did the church officially begin meeting in your city?
- 2) What year did the book service begin or how many years has the book service been at least semi-active, meaning selling more than just HWMR.
- 3) Describe your book service meeting “schedule” (day of week and time, frequency, location)
- 4) Describes the activities of your book service meetings.

- 5) How do the saints pay for their books?
- 6) List some key lessons that you have learned over the years

- 7) Summarize briefly the best practices for a new church to follow in order to sustain a healthy and active book service group.

Topic Two (cont.) – Various Examples of Churches with a Book Service

Church in Bellevue, WA Book Service

Beginning

The book service started in 1976 when the saints took the ground in Bellevue. We began meeting in rented facilities at the YMCA. Every Lord's Day a mobile book stand was rolled out to distribute ministry book such as the Life-study booklets and the *Stream* magazine. When we acquired a church house for meetings and later rented facilities from the school district for the church meetings, the mobile book service continued, with a service group who would set out the literature before every meeting.

Meeting Hall

In 1980 the construction of a church meeting hall was completed. One wall in the main meeting area was dedicated to the book service. Six oak book shelves were built to cover the entire wall in order to display ministry books. In the 90s the ministry book inventory was expanded to include the Chinese, Korean and Spanish languages. Two brothers were dedicated to serve on book sales and training registration. Whenever a new book was released by LSM, a brother gave a brief review of the new book on Lord's Day.

Book Service Corner

Three years ago, a "book service corner" was created by building countertops which enclose the corner of the main hall next to the bookshelves.

SQUARE online payment has been enabled which allows saints to make payments with their credit cards.

Present Practices

Each year in the spring and fall, two Puget Sound conferences are held in Bellevue. Whenever possible, we fellowship with the speaking co-workers beforehand and pre-order ministry books in multiple languages which align with the burden of the conference. Saints are encouraged to read the books to enhance their enjoyment of the word released during the conference.

CWWL and Ministry Digest

Recently to encourage the saints to get into *The Collected Works of Witness Lee*, (CWWL), the elders gave their testimonies of how much they gained from reading the ministry. Ten to fifteen minutes were dedicated for this at the end of the Lord's table meeting for several weeks. This resulted in a sizable increase in the number of saints subscribing to the *Ministry Digest*.

Keys to a Healthy Book Service

To have a healthy book service, brothers and sisters meet on a regular basis to strengthen the core serving ones. Additional saints are regularly invited to join the service. The leading brothers are always included in the fellowship.

Topic Two (cont.) – Various Examples of Churches with a Book Service



Topic Two (cont.) – Various Examples of Churches with a Book Service



The Church in Boston, MA, Book Service

Beginning

The church in Boston was re-established and took the ground on November 9th, 2008. Along with many other services that were resumed at the beginning of the church life, the book sale service was semi-active and was mainly responsible for selling the Bible, Hymnal, *The Holy Word for Morning Revival*, gospel calendars and the semi-annual training outlines. The initial book sale service group was coordinated mainly by two brothers, and the coordination took place bi-weekly on the phone. From November 2008 through December 2013 the church in Boston met in rented facilities, so the “bookroom” was portable with minimal display, and the service was carried out mainly after the Lord’s Table meeting on the Lord’s Day.

Meeting Hall

In December of 2013, the church in Boston started to meet at the meeting hall on 1299 Massachusetts Avenue in Boston. The facility also functions as the training center and housing for the Full-time training in Anaheim – extension Boston. Additionally, the facility also contained a Living Stream Ministry bookstore that provided the saints and the trainees with the ministry publications.

From January 2014 to December 2018 this service group was comprised of serving saints who were volunteers for the LSM bookstore. This included XB trainees, thus the total number of participating saints varied from term to term, averaging around eight serving ones at a time. The service group met bi-monthly in the home of one of the serving ones for a love feast and coordination. During this time, we prayed, got into the ministry, and had fellowship regarding practical matters.

Present Practice

At the end of last year of 2018, through fellowship with the LSM serving ones and the responsible brothers in the church in Boston, the LSM bookstore in Boston stopped operating. Since then, the book sale service become more active and strengthened. Many burdened ones were added to the service, weekly coordination among the three serving brothers is held on the phone, and monthly coordination time with all ten serving saints is held at the hall.

During the coordination time with the serving brothers who take the lead in this service, we value the following: 1) to pray for ourselves, for the serving ones, and for all the saints with an ever-increasing appetite for the ministry; 2) to consider on an ongoing basis what books to recommend to the saints that match the Lord’s present speaking to the churches and our locality; and 3) to create incentives for the saints, especially our young people and college students, to get into the ministry.

For all the serving saints, we have a reading schedule to get into one chapter a week of a specific ministry book. We encourage one another to share his or her enjoyment from the reading in a GroupMe group chat. When we come together for our monthly coordination time, we will share our enlightenment and enjoyment from the reading. Our payment method is using Square.

Lessons Learned

The main lesson the serving brothers are still learning is having frequent and definite prayer times together. As we pray to the Lord to receive His burden, that burden will give us the direction from the Lord. All the saints on this service are learning the importance of being served before we can serve others. Without first being served by the Lord through being in His ministry, we cannot properly serve and ask the saints to be in the ministry.

The Church in Charlotte, NC, Book Service

I. Meeting Facilities

- A. The church in Charlotte was re-established in 1998 through a migration that brought saints to Charlotte from all over the United States.
- B. Before the church had its own meeting hall, the saints initially met in a home, later a second home, then in a school, and at the University of North Carolina in Charlotte (UNCC).
- C. In 2004, the church continued meeting in its newly built hall up to the present time.

II. Book Service History

- A. When the Lord's table was begun in 1998, the initial meeting of the church was in a home, and subsequently in another home. In both locations the *Holy Word for Morning Revival* (HWMR) was sold at the back of the meeting area.
- B. When the church began meeting in a school and later at UNCC the book room was a large canvas container moved around as necessary by the serving ones:
 1. The serving ones sold the ministry books, counted and totaled the proceeds, placed them in an envelope, which was put in the church offering box or handed to one of the finance brothers.
 2. Later the responsibility for counting the proceeds from the ministry book sales was given to the finance brothers.
- C. Beginning in 1999, two saints were given the responsibility to care for the book service under the guidance of the leading brother. The serving ones sold the ministry books to the saints according to cost, shipping and handling, less taxes.
- D. In 2004, the church moved into the new meeting hall. A room in the back of the hall was designed to be mutually used for the ministry books, tapes, and translation services:
 1. Later the church began its *standing order* for new publications. There were minimal sales of the ministry books; thus, after several years the standing order was discontinued except for the HWMR.
 2. At one time the church had a ministry tape service group, which stopped meeting some years ago. The book service assumed maintaining a self-service audio library. The church book service still subscribes to the audio messages from the semi-annual trainings, international conferences, and the Full-time Training Wednesday ministry meeting messages in multiple languages.
 3. Throughout the past years at least eight sisters have participated in the book service in some capacity. The service primarily focused on book sales. But a great shortage for years was the lack of "a service group meeting."
 4. Toward the end of 2017 or the beginning of 2018, through fellowship among the leading brothers, two coordinating brothers began to head up the book service, which brought in changes, a fresh direction, and the service group began to meet.
 5. Since the beginning of 2019, the church had a new beginning with all the service areas. Now there are two (2) brothers and seven (7) sisters serving in the book service.

III. Book Service Meeting

- A. The book service group meets biweekly on Saturday morning at 10:00 in the church meeting hall.
- B. The service meeting always begins with prayer for the service, for one another, for the church, and for the propagation.
- C. In the gatherings, the service group has been reading the materials from the *Church Book Service Workshop*, which was given in August 2018.
- D. After prayer and reading the ministry, the service group takes care of practical matters such as caring for the display and sales area, book inventory, pricing of individual books, and checking the accounting of weekly sales.

IV. Book Displays

- A. Currently we use permanent bookcases and wall shelving for book displays.
- B. We have one open tiered seven (7) row bookcase that displays the covers of forty-nine titles.
- C. A table and counter space enable us to display tracts, “rainbow booklets,” and CD’s.
- D. We are planning to place several movable displays in the meeting area of the saints in the future.
- E. Photos of the book room and book displays are presented on the last page.

V. Payment Methods

- A. Purchase of ministry books is by check or cash.
- B. If one is without a check or cash, then they may still take a book(s), and sign the “I Owe You” (IOU) ledger and pay their obligation at a later time.

VI. Lessons Learned and Keys to the Formation, Growth, and Continuation of a Healthy Book Service

- A. We have learned that the saints in the group must come together to pray and fellowship otherwise there is no progress or development of the service:
 1. The burden is to get the ministry into the saints’ hands and to encourage one another to partake of this ministry more and more.
 2. Praying together strengthens and encourages us as we contact the Lord and sense His living presence with us. Together we touch His burden to minister to the church.
 3. Although many saints are dutiful, at this time there seems to be at best a maintenance of sales without group prayer.
- B. If the brothers bearing responsibility do not pray and fellowship together and contact the other serving saints by email, text, or phone to encourage them to meet, then there are only a few saints who will regularly come to the hall to meet for the service:
 1. Building up the service groups really requires the shepherding, which eventually will be in mutuality.
 2. But at the present time, this shepherding depends very much on those bearing responsibilities to open to the Lord for the care of the saints, then the practical matters will follow.

Photo 1



Photo 2



Photo 3



Photo 4



Church in London, ON, Canada, Book Service

- 1) What year did the church officially begin meeting in your city?

1970

- 2) What year did the book service begin or how many years has the book service been at least semi-active, meaning selling more than just HWMR.

1976

- 3) Describe your book service meeting “schedule” (weekday and time, frequency, location)

The book service has ceased meeting quite a few years ago when the ones caring for it moved away.

- 4) Describe the activities of your book service meetings.

- 5) How can the saints pay for their books?

Mostly it is self-serve, i.e., there is a slot in the counter where they can put the payment for a book. Otherwise, they ask the one still caring for the books to help them with suggestions or change for what they are buying.

We also have another arrangement where saints who want can sign up and prepay for new books that come in. The sign-up is by the same categories that LSM allows for standing orders.

- 6) List some key lessons that you have learned over the years

Having saints sign up first for standing orders and then pay later did not work well. The saints often were not willing to pay for particular books that were on their standing order if they didn't think that they would read them.

- 7) Summarize briefly the best practices for a new church to follow in order to sustain a healthy and active book service group.

We are interested in learning from other churches.

Church in San Antonio, TX, Book Service

The book room in San Antonio is not in a separate room, but is part of one large meeting room. We have three bookcases, a table on which to conduct sales that also serves to hold *The Holy Word for Morning Revival* and *The Ministry of the Word*, and another table with various books and booklet displays. We have several types of books in two of our bookcases, e.g., hymnals, Bibles, etc., and the *CWWL* is in a third bookcase. Once we get our new meeting hall, we will have a separate room where we can do much bigger displays and keep many more books in stock and on display for the saints. Currently we are limited in space, in service time from the serving ones, and in ways to keep the area secure.

We took the ground on September 2, 1984, and the brothers simply ordered the books and put the saints' names on them. The saints put their money in a box and picked up a book. Of course, the church here started with only ten saints so this worked until we grew. Later many got on Direct Mail Service (DMS). In 2001, the book service was turned over to one of the elders and his wife who had moved here to help with this growing locality. They handled the ordering and the selling of all of the materials. It has continued to be active since that time, and in the spring of 2018, six sisters took over the book service.

A leading brother and one serving sisters from San Antonio attended the August 2018 Church Book Service Workshop. After they returned, we held meetings in various homes to go over the workshop binder, and these meetings are still ongoing on various days and times. We have tried meeting for lunch at homes after the Lord's Day meeting and for lunch during the week or for breakfast on a Saturday morning. Since some of the sisters work, meeting during the week to include the whole group does not work well. Some subset of the serving sisters have met together to pray at coffee shops as often as they can to discuss the service work. Those meetings are usually on Thursday mornings; however, we have not met for a couple of months. One sister is leaving to get married, so we have just five serving sisters at the current time.

We accept cash and credit card payments. We purchased a machine for approximately \$300 by Square, and it works much more easily than the iPhone Square we originally used. When we have a large sales day, we can use both the Square machine and the iPhone Square. Our saints love that we can take credit cards now. Most young people do not carry cash.

We conducted a survey, this past winter and had fifty families respond. Our normal attendance is 90 to 120 saints so we had a large response to the survey. This gave us a better idea of how many were using DMS, purchasing books on their phones, or buying their materials at the hall. We also asked them about the use of credit cards and how they would like to be made aware of new ministry materials. Most wanted to use credit cards and the majority preferred email.

We have learned that it is very hard to have full attendance at book service meetings with working sisters serving. They have so much to do on the weekends, and stay-at-home sisters want to be home with their families on the weekends when the working ones are available. At this point in time, the book service functions under the leadership of the leading brothers; however, no brothers actively participate in the book service.

Even though the church has been here for many years, the book room service has only recently been established. We are learning as we go, and dealing with practical situations as they arise. Thus, regarding ideas for best practices for the formation, growth, and continuation of a healthy book service we are just beginning and are in the “infancy” stage. However, we can tell we need to continue to endeavor to find a way to meet on a regular basis, at least monthly if at all possible.

We also long to enter into the burden of this ministry to help our serving ones not just sell books, but learn to get the books from the hall, to the homes and into the hearts of all the saints and new ones. We are burdened to bring the book service saints in particular, and the local saints in general, into Brother Lee’s vision that the book service and distribution of the printed ministry is the most important practical service of a local church. What a privilege to be here—growing, learning, and endeavoring in this ministry!

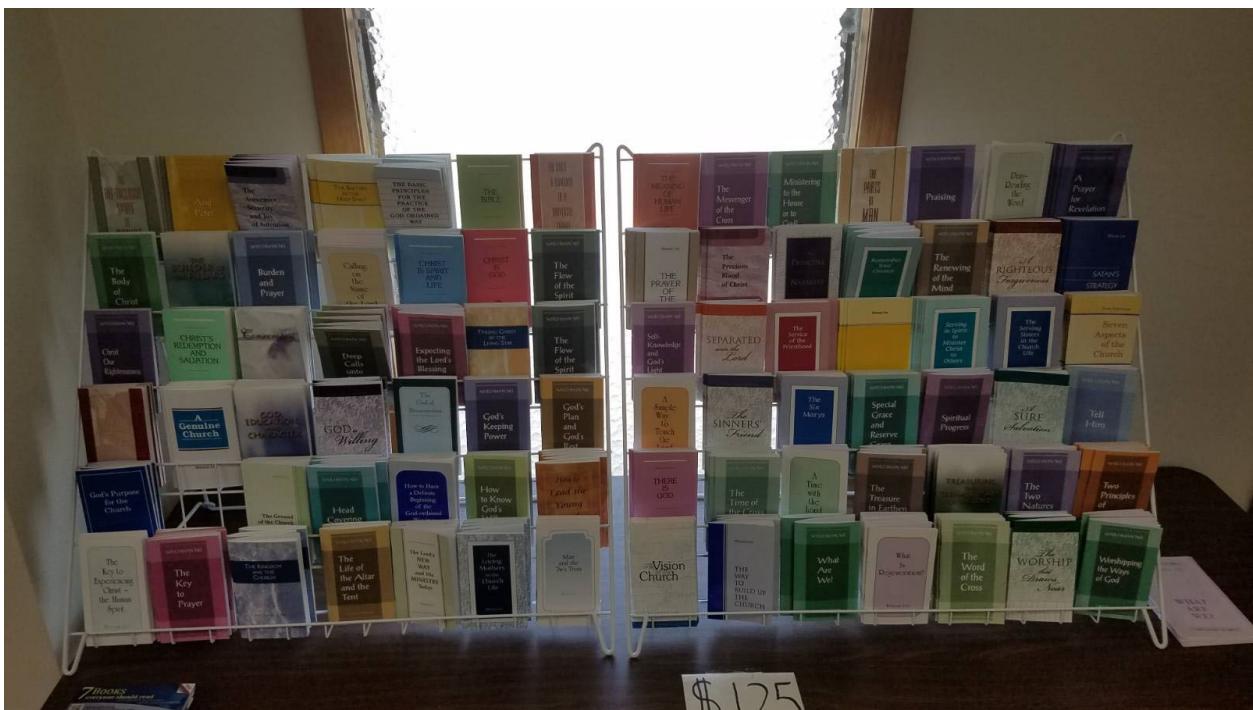
The Church in Spokane, WA, Book Service

- There were no service groups in the church in Spokane's early years after it began in 1970. Due to the limited availability of books we had a single table set up for display. Around 1974 we began having service groups and the Bookroom service group was very popular. We kept around 4 copies of each of the books and began adding more tables. We also ordered Watchman Nee's books from CLC and CFP. Once the meeting hall was built in 1975 we then had a separate bookroom. For many years since the only source for the saints to obtain ministry materials we had a very busy bookroom with a service group of between 8 to 10 saints. We met weekly for prayer, fellowship and the practical service of ordering and stocking. We had a card system embedded in the book display. When we got down to 3 copies of a book a green card would display so we would re-order. A white card indicated we were completely out of that book. Eventually we had to knock down a wall and expand our bookroom area. Two things happened to decrease the bookroom service. One was when LSM began offering a direct mailing service so many of the saints no longer needed to utilize the bookroom to obtain their books. The result of this was that there was no need of so many saints serving in the bookroom. At about the same time a number of saints moved away, some of which had served in the bookroom. We still continued to keep a large inventory of books.
- Our meeting hall capacity has around 250 in the main meeting area. In 1983 we built a major addition with an office, classrooms, a tape room and a smaller meeting area. Our bookroom is part of our original meeting hall and is contained in 3 separate rooms with 2 of them for books and a smaller working room with some additional storage.
- We currently have about 14 3-shelf bookcases for our books, life-studies, bibles and hymnals. We also have a booklet display set up on a table. We are considering how to add additional space.
- Currently the saints pay for their books either by cash or check. We looked into debit/credit card processing about a year ago and decided against it as our sales volume did not justify the cost. We have a couple of cases where saints have paid an amount up front and will come in and get materials. We keep a running account of their total.
- We try to stock all of the English written materials (books, life-studies, booklets, Bibles, hymnals) that are in the LSM book catalog and keep 3 to 5 copies of each. The books are arranged in alphabetical order except we have a separate bookcase for all of Brother Lee's books that have been published since he passed away. Every 2 weeks during service group time we check our inventory to see what we need to order. We usually order about 60 HWMR when they come out and will re-order more if necessary. We also will order from LSM any special requests for the saints like non-English materials. We price all of our materials based upon the retail invoice or catalog price. We also distribute the training outlines twice a year.
- One lesson learned is to not order more books than necessary as we have limited storage space and still have some excess materials from years ago. Another lesson is to require payment when materials are purchased (with some minor exceptions). Several years ago we had a credit system where the saints could pick up materials and pay later. The accounting for that was complicated and it was very difficult in some cases to track down some of the saints and remind them to pay.
- The book service currently does not have a separate meeting but the church has service groups every 2 weeks on Saturday at 9:30 a.m. At that time different service areas group together for prayer and fellowship for an hour. Then the different groups split off for service so that is when we do our practical book service.

- The bookroom is open for sales during after our Lord's day morning meeting. We will stay there until there are no more saints that come in. On the Lord's day evening we will open it up if there are saints wishing to purchase books. We will also open up after conference meetings.
- For about 20 years there was only 2 brothers serving in the bookroom. About 2 years ago we added another younger brother.
- We are in the process of setting up a lending library for the CWWL and CWWN. Two sisters are starting to put that together.
- In our view the key to a healthy book service is the saint's appetite for the ministry. Another key is to have available all of the materials any of the saints might want.







\$125

The Church in Storrs, CT, Book Service

Beginning

The church in Storrs began to meet in September, 2011. In December of 2017, the responsible brothers of the church in Storrs of 25 saints through fellowship and prayer assigned two particular brothers to establish a regular book service. Accordingly, three brothers (including a leading brother) began reading, praying, and reading specific portions from *The Collected Works of Witness Lee* regarding service, the publications, and history of the book service. These meetings served as a foundation for the book service.

Our locality does not own or rent a "meeting hall" and has no permanent bookstore. The book service members bring select titles to the meeting location each week as a tabernacle and tent service. A wire bookshelf rack, cash register, and folding table are a part of this mobile book service.

Practice and Setup

The church in Storrs purchased an Enhanced Display Package A from the Living Stream Ministry to best meet the needs of our locality. A list of titles, the Life-studies of the Bible, and The Conclusion of the New Testament were a part of this purchase. A majority of the books are kept at a responsible one's home on bookshelves as a permanent fixture. Most books are open for saints to borrow and/or purchase. The 135 volumes of CWWL are housed and on shelves in this home, and are in the process of being arranged for permanent display.

The book service group meets every week for prayer, CWWL reading, and fellowship regarding practical matters such as: taxes, revenue counting, inventory tracking, and fellowship regarding what material to promote to the saints. Each week at the Lord's Table, a member of the book service is also responsible for promoting a particular book which is read by the group prior to that Lord's Day.

The ministry books chosen for promotion vary throughout the year and are usually in coordination with the leading ones. The book service may promote books targeted to young college students, serving ones, how to speak to new ones, or for finding nourishment in the word. Our early promotions were focused on ministry publications that opened the word and how to read the Bible. The book service oversees the book inventory, places orders for the saints through LSM such as HWMR and standalone books, and provides information to the saints regarding DMS, *Ministry Digest*, etc. The saints pay for their books by cash or check.

Current State of Affairs

The church in Storrs currently meets in the homes of two leading brothers. The book service arrives before the Lord's Table (usually at least 30 minutes before others) to arrange the book display and cash register. This is done to avoid being a distraction to other arriving saints. We are promoting the ministry publication *Eating the Lord*, a short publication on taking the Lord as food. We have found that promoting short publications such as these are more easily digested and retained by saints for regular nourishment.

Lessons Learned

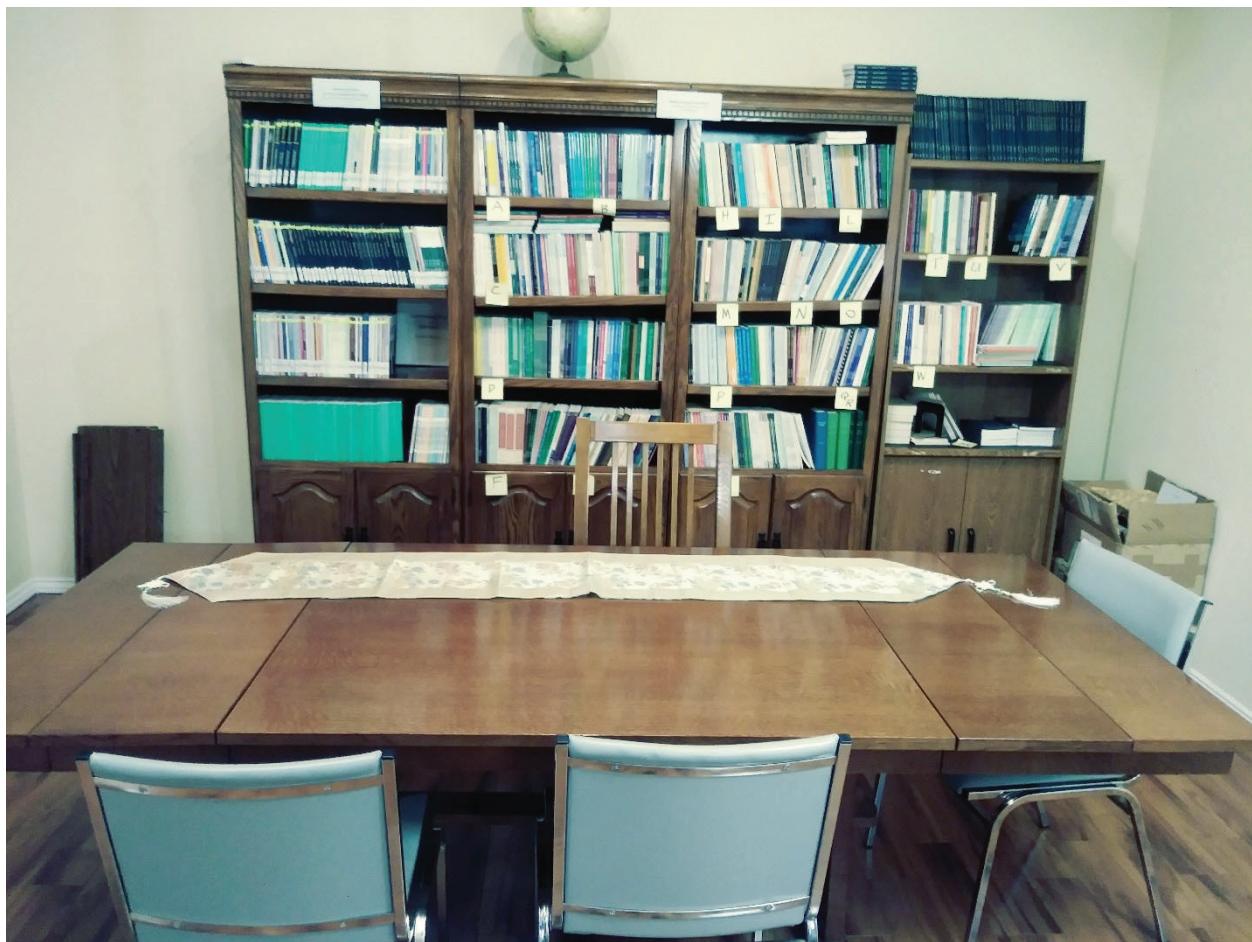
1. Consistent, regular, weekly book service meetings with a leading brother involved.
2. Public promotion of books at the LT weekly.
3. Quick and efficient book service ordering and turnaround to/from LSM for the saints' benefit.

Church in Tacoma, WA, Book Service History

- 1) Describes your meeting facility: meeting hall, rented facility, homes, etc.
 - a) Tacoma meets in a hall which was purchased in 1985.
- 2) Include year the book service began or how many years the book service has been active or semi-active.
 - a) The church began to have a bookroom from the time the hall was purchased, 1985.
- 3) Include day of week and time, how often, and where the book service meets.
 - a) Our book service can at best be described as semi-active. There is no regular meeting of the service group. The church has a standing order for new books and HWMR. These publications are displayed and the saints come to the book sales area to purchase them.
- 4) Describes what you do in your bookroom meetings.
 - a) We have been inspired by last year's workshop to develop this service into an organic, functioning group. We hope to establish this service by the end of 2019.
- 5) Describes what kind of book displays you have, e.g., tables, bookshelves, portable stands,
 - a) Our books are displayed in three ways:
 - i) In a room separate from the main meeting room we have a library with two sections in four bookcases:
 - (1) One section contains all the ministry material which is referenced in the 32 lesson God-ordained Way training. These books have been serialized and are signed out/in using a check-out binder.
 - (2) The other section is a free loan library which consists of books which have been donated by the saints and unsold books from inventory. The saints may simply take these books for their use and return them.
 - ii) In the hall's main meeting room our retail book display is in one corner with five bookshelves and two tables.
 - (1) On the bookshelves we display example copies (not for sale):
 - (a) Bookcase #1 (spine visible)
 - (i) The Collected Works of Witness Lee
 - (ii) Paper back copies of ministry books arranged in alphabetical order.
 - (iii) The Ministry Magazines
 - (b) Bookcase #2 (front cover visible)
 - (i) Life-Study of Genesis and Exodus
 - (ii) "Classic" book titles such as The Experience of Life, The Knowledge of Life, The Normal Christian Life...
 - (iii) New publications
 - (iv) LSM catalog in English and Chinese
 - (v) Pamphlets
 - (vi) Rainbow books
 - (c) Bookcase #3: (spine visible)
 - (i) The Collected Works of Watchman Nee
 - (ii) The Life-Studies
 - (iii) Classic titles in Spanish
 - (iv) Hymnals and leather-bound Holy Bibles
 - (d) Bookcases #4 and 5 (spine visible)
 - (i) Various books and hymnals in Spanish, Korean, Chinese and Russian

- (e) On Table #1:
 - (i) Blank forms for ordering books
 - (ii) Books for sale:
 - 1. The current Holy Word for Morning Revival in English, Spanish, Korean and Chinese
 - 2. Books which are currently being promoted:
 - a. For young working adults
 - b. For basic truth meetings (quarterly)
 - c. Children's service
 - d. New publications
 - i. In English and Spanish
 - ii. The Ministry Digest
 - iii. Information sheets for the CWWL
- (f) On Table #2:
 - (i) A display copy of the Holy Bible Recovery Version OT/NT
 - (ii) Free literature:
 - 1. NT Recovery Versions in English, Spanish and Russian
 - 2. Basic Elements of the Christian life
 - 3. Mystery of Human Life
 - 4. Gospel tracts
 - 5. Reading schedules
- 6) Includes two to four photos of your book room.
 - a) Loan library in a separate room
 - b) Book sales area of the main meeting room
- 7) Includes how the saints pay for their books
 - a) All book sales are by check or cash
- 8) Includes lessons learned
 - a) The main lesson we have learned is that whatever publication we promote in the meetings gets purchased. This is true for individual books and for HWMR.
 - b) We have learned to "look ahead" to topics which the church will be covering and order a few copies of a book that relates to that topic.
 - c) It has been difficult for us to order the correct amount of HWMR. We often either sell out of copies or have too many left over.
 - d) We have a substantial inventory of unsold Ministry Magazines.
 - e) We need to greatly increase our inventory of languages other than English.
 - f) We need to get catalogs for publications in Korean and Russian.
 - g) We are considering how best and what to display in the foyer of our meeting hall such as the Recovery Version, Hymns and pamphlets.
 - h) We plan to add a technology kiosk to help the saints access the Ministry online.
- 9) Includes a summary paragraph listing the keys or "best practices" to the formation, growth, and continuation of a healthy book service.
 - a) The book service is a service which we have only last year realized the need for. It is a work in progress. Our vision was too low. But we are full of hope for a vital, organic service with many more saints participating. We are inspired to take the Ministry Digest to the home meetings and present its content as a way to continue in the teaching and fellowship of the Apostles. The workshop held last August was a great help and

inspiration for us to pursue developing this service. As we have spoken of this vision, already some saints are expressing a burden to participate. Two saints are attending this workshop that did not attend last year.



Free loan library



Book service area



Book sales table



Free literature table

Church in Virginia Beach, VA, Book Service History

The church in Virginia Beach currently does not have a meeting hall but meets in a home on the Lord's day. Approximately 35-40 saints gather for the Lord's table and prophesying each week. Due to its proximity, the church in Newport News meets corporately with the church in Virginia Beach on the first Lord's day each month. This corporate meeting sees about 55-60 saints gathering in one home in Virginia Beach. Although there is close fellowship with these two churches, the prayer meetings, small group meetings, and church fellowship meetings of the responsible brothers for each church are held separately during the month.

The church in Newport News was established as a locality about 1985 and obtained a DMS account after that date (#123). The church in Newport News received many LSM publications on a standing order basis throughout the years. Although there had been individual saints living in Virginia Beach for the past 45 years, generally they met corporately with the church in Newport News until August 2017 when the Lord led the local brothers to establish two separate localities. At that time Virginia Beach obtained a separate DMS account (#862) and began purchasing LSM publications for the saints in the Virginia Beach. Although some of the local saints have their own DMS account, the church in Virginia Beach and the church in Newport News order publications for the saints in their separate localities.

Currently, the LSM publications ordered by each of the two churches include the Recovery Bible, the Recovery New Testament, the Recovery Hymnal, the *Holy Word for Morning Revival*, the Ministry Magazine, the *Ministry Digest*, Life Study volumes, and selected publications of various LSM titles that the saints request. Many of the saints in both church have a complete set of the Life Studies and the *Collected Works of Watchman Nee*. Some have received the *Collected Works of Witness Lee*. Since each church has their own DMS account, payment for all publications are made through their respective accounts for each separate church. The house where both churches meet corporately on the first Lord's day of the month displays the Recovery Bible and New Testament, a complete set of the LSM Life Studies, the *Collected Works of Watchman Nee*, various LSM publications, gospel tracts, and other LSM publications.

There is no Book Service group either for the church in Virginia Beach or the church in Newport News that meets on a regular basis; however, both churches fellowship closely concerning the ministry and reading schedule in the *HWMR* and the Life Study reviews. In addition, responsible brothers in each church coordinate the purchase of LSM publications for the saints in their respective churches so that both churches can generally follow the same ministry line together.

The leading brothers of the church in Virginia Beach and the church in Newport News all realize the importance of the Ministry publications for assisting the saints to grow in life and to come to the full knowledge of the truth for the building up of the Body of Christ. In addition, there is an increased recognition for the saints in Virginia Beach and in Newport News of the need to obtain, review, digest, and assimilate all publications that will help them increase their time in the Word, in the Spirit, and in fellowship with the Body of Christ that they may grow Christ, exhibit Christ, and be found in Christ in their daily walk. The Book Service for the churches in Virginia Beach and Newport News is in an embryonic state but is being revived to assist the saints in obtaining the publications that will help them come to the full knowledge of the truth, grow in life, and practice a vital church life. The saints in both churches are beginning to read more of the LSM publications individually, in small groups, and corporately each month. We anticipate that the leading and responsible brothers of the churches in Virginia Beach and in Newport News will increase the emphasis of the Book Service in the coming year and that the saints will have a growing appetite for these publications.

Topic Three

THE CRUCIAL FUNCTION OF THE ELDERS AND RESPONSIBLE BROTHERS IN THE BOOK SERVICE

I. References (inserted in this binder):

- A. *Fellowship for Establishing and Maintaining a Healthy Book Service*
- B. *The Propagation of the Truth in the Lord's Recovery*

LIVING STREAM MINISTRY

The Publication Work in the Lord's Recovery

I. The importance and value of the publication work:

- A. God initiated the publication work:
 - 1. God is a speaking God (Heb. 1:1).
 - 2. As the Word, God came to people and inspired them to write down His word (2 Pet. 1:21), which became the contents of the Bible that we hold in our hands (2 Tim. 3:16).
 - 3. If we did not have the Bible, Christians would suffer an incalculable loss.
 - 4. The Bible is God's publication work; this is a marvelous thing.
- B. The usefulness of the publications is long-lasting and widespread.
 - 1. There will be a great loss in the Lord's work in the gospel and in the truth if it is not done in coordination with the publication work.
 - 2. Brother Nee's ministry has not only endured but has spread throughout the whole earth mainly because of the publication work.
 - 3. Like water, the publications can spread widely and imperceptibly "seep" into people; the effect of the publications lasts forever and is not as shallow as the effect of only hearing a message.
 - 4. A person may be touched as he listens to a message, but after three days his feeling may wane, and he may forget it; however, the more a person reads the messages, the more he will understand, and the messages will stay in his memory a longer time and give him a deeper impression.
 - 5. The value of the publications lies in the fact that their effect is long lasting and widespread.
 - 6. The Bible has been among human beings for a few thousand years, and its effect is self-evident.
- C. The publications spread the divine truth and supply life to the Lord's people:
 - 1. The publication work in the Lord's present recovery began in China and was limited mainly to the Chinese language.
 - 2. By bringing the publication work to the United States and into the English language, the Lord's recovery quickly spread throughout the United States, Central and South America, Europe, Africa, and Australasia; many local churches have been raised up through the publications.
 - 3. At first, the recovery spread by the saints contacting people, but eventually the seeking ones have received benefit directly from the publications as spiritual food for their nourishment; on the surface this seems like a slow way to spread, but actually it is the fastest way.
 - 4. Most of the churches rely on the publications and the video messages; if we were to stop supplying them with these, there would be a famine.
 - 5. The publication work is crucial.
- D. What the Lord wants to accomplish in this age is to recover the truth.
 - 1. Today the entire earth is in a famine; there is little rich truth in the publications of Christianity.
 - 2. When you look at the publications among us, they are full of rich truth; this is a proof that the Lord has blessed us.

3. We should receive the burden and not worry that there are too many books piled up in the meeting halls; instead, we must find a way to distribute these books, and we must first get them into the homes of the saints.
4. We are pushing to have everyone prophesy and speak the truth; but if we are to arrive at this goal, the first requirement is that we must teach the saints the truth.
5. If we are a group of believers who have only been saved but who do not understand the truth, what will be the future of the Lord's recovery?
6. We must get the truth into the saints' homes; in every church each household needs to teach the truth and study the truth.
7. Some complain that there are too many books and too many meetings and that they are too busy to read the books.
8. Everything depends upon our heart; if we realized that we could obtain "gold and diamonds" every time we read the truth, we would read more, and if we could receive treasures whenever we read the ministry, we would even sleep less in order to obtain the treasure. Do we consider the truth to be precious?
9. We must lead the saints to become addicted to reading the ministry; we should consider reading the truth to be more important than eating and drinking.
10. Then the truth in the Lord's recovery will greatly increase and be victorious; furthermore, the number of people in all the churches will spontaneously multiply (Acts 6:7).

II. The Living Stream Ministry office:

- A. Brother Lee said, "The Living Stream Ministry office is only a business office to serve my ministry for two things: publish the messages in book form and to distribute these messages in both video and audio tapes. That is all the ministry office should do and nothing else. I did not have much time to check on everything related to the office in the past, but the ministry office has always had this specific function and no other function. This little office is a Levitical service serving my ministry to put out the word of God in print and through video and audio tapes." (*The Collected Works of Witness Lee*, 1988, vol. 3, "A Timely Word," p. 78).
- B. The Living Stream Ministry exists to serve Brother Lee's personal ministry, which he considered a continuation of Brother Nee's ministry. With advances in technology, we have added other channels for the distribution of this ministry, yet our function remains the same.
- C. In addition, Living Stream provides logistical support for the release of the word in the seven annual feasts and in the full-time training in Anaheim.
- D. The Living Stream Ministry office is not the church or even the ministry, *per se*; it is the unique depository of the ministry of the age and, as such, is an indispensable resource and supply to both the ministry and the work in the Lord's recovery. This office exists to safeguard the integrity of this ministry through copyrights and to distribute the genuine New Testament ministry to feed and educate the Lord's children throughout the earth for the building up of the Body of Christ.

III. References: (CWWL, 1984, vol. 5, "The Faithful and Diligent Spreading of the Truth—Concerning the Publication Service," chs. 3, 4, and 6)

LIVING STREAM MINISTRY

Coordination with the LSM Book Section

I. The Book Section of the Living Stream Ministry has different ways to make the riches of this ministry available to the saints.

II. Standing Order / Direct Mailing Service (DMS):

- A. Receive books automatically in monthly shipments according to the subscribed categories.
- B. Categories available:
 - 1. New books - Softbound, previously unpublished messages by Witness Lee.
 - 2. *The Holy Word for Morning Revival*:
 - a. “Basic HWMR”: Comprises “Holy Word” publications from the two semiannual trainings, the annual Memorial Day weekend conference, and the annual Thanksgiving weekend conference, containing 36 weeks of content every year.
 - b. “Supplemental HWMR”: Comprises all other “Holy Word” publications not included in the “Basic HWMR” category; that is, from the international Chinese-speaking conference and the two International Trainings for Elders and Responsible Ones (ITEROs), containing 22 weeks of content per year.
 - 3. *The Ministry of the Word* (periodical): Contains the edited messages from six of the seven annual feasts (the two semi-annual trainings, the two national conferences, and the two “elders’ trainings”) plus the weekly ministry meetings in the full-time training in Anaheim (FTTA). Also included are brief reports concerning the Lord’s move throughout the earth and a schedule of upcoming gatherings.
- C. This program is available in English, Traditional and Simplified Chinese, Spanish, Korean, and Portuguese. However, not all categories may be available in every language.
- D. In general, churches that participate in this program receive a 40% discount, and individuals receive 30% discount. These discounts may not apply to some publications.
- E. Books received via Standing Order / DMS are not returnable. However, the Book Section will replace any books that are defective or arrived damaged.

III. Placing Orders:

- A. Irregular orders: All orders that are not “Standing Order” or “DMS” orders are considered irregular orders. Irregular orders can be placed with the Book Section for any book in our retail catalog. These orders can be placed in the following ways:
 1. Online at <https://livingstream.com>. Churches may now place their orders online and receive the church discount. To receive the church discount, you must first “link” your account on the lsm.org website before placing your order on the livingstream.com website. Under the “Service” tab, select the “Direct Mail Service (DMS)” tab, then click the “link your LSM accounts” and fill out the information fields. To link your account, you must have the correct account number and the email on file for this account.

2. By email at books@lsm.org:
 - a. For each item being ordered, send an email with the catalog number, title, language, and quantity.
 - b. The email must be sent from an email address that has been authorized to place orders for your account, regardless of whether or not the order is being charged to your LSM account.
3. By phone at +1 (714) 236-6050:
 - a. If possible, please have the following information before calling: the catalog number, title, language, and quantity of each item that is being ordered.
 - b. The caller needs to be one who is authorized to place orders for the account, regardless of whether or not the order is being charged to your existing LSM account.

B. Return policy:

1. Books in these orders can be returned to LSM for full credit. This may include a full order or part of an order, subject to the following conditions:
 - a. Books need to be returned within 90 days of the invoice date, and
 - b. Books need to arrive in an undamaged condition. Credit will not be issued for books that are damaged or have markings, price tags not placed by LSM, or glue on the cover.

IV. Special Orders

A. Orders for books that are Out of Print:

In the case where a book is needed and LSM has no plans to reprint it (e.g., an old “Holy Word” or “Ministry of the Word”), LSM may decide to reprint the book to fulfill your order. In such cases a minimum order quantity may be needed, usually 50. Such orders usually take up to 4 weeks to be fulfilled. An estimate of how long it will take to fulfill the order will be provided when the order has been placed. Such orders cannot be returned to LSM.

B. Church reading programs:

Sometimes a church decides to cover a book as part of a church reading program. We recommend that the church place an order with LSM 6 to 8 weeks before the book is needed to ensure that we either have enough stock or have time to reprint the needed and ship the requested title in time. While a faster response may at times be possible, LSM cannot commit to this.

V. Using the Book Retail Catalog:

- A. LSM publishes a Book Retail Catalog online at www.lsm.org/pdfs/RetailCatalog.pdf.
- B. The Catalog includes the Catalog Number, Title, Retail Price, and sometimes Comments concerning a title.
- C. The Catalog has two sections:
 1. Alphabetical, in which products are sorted in alphabetical order.
 2. Categories, in which products first are grouped in categories and then in alphabetical order

VI. Workshop:

Practice using the catalog as a help, compose and email order, or fill out an order form with at least three titles being ordered.

Living Stream Ministry Copyright

I. The history of the publication office:

- A. The publication work began with Brother Nee:
 - 1. In 1927 Brother Nee move his publishing company, the Gospel Book Room, to Shanghai.
 - 2. The publication work did not belong to any church or any work group; in the beginning it belonged to Brother Nee himself.
 - 3. In 1934 Brother Nee felt that he alone could not handle so much work; therefore, he arranged for me to be responsible for editing *The Christian*, but the Gospel Book Room, the publication work, still belonged to him personally.
 - 4. Before 1949 the books that were published were mostly by Brother Nee; other than a few books translated into Chinese and a few that were written by Brother Lee, no other books were published, and there was not another publication work.
- B. Taiwan Gospel Bookroom:
 - 1. Bookrooms were established in Taiwan and Hong Kong in addition to Shanghai.
 - a. In 1949 I went to Taiwan; in the second year I went to Hong Kong to meet with Brother Nee. I mentioned the need for the publication work because I needed his consent before the hymnal and other books could be published.
 - b. Brother Nee decided that there should be a bookroom in Taipei and in Hong Kong in addition to Shanghai and that He would be responsible for the bookroom in Shanghai, I would be responsible for the one in Taipei, and Brother K. H. Weigh would be responsible for the one in Hong Kong.
 - c. He said that these three bookrooms were just one and that copyrights would be shared.
 - 2. There is proof that the three were one and that the copyrights were shared:
 - a. Brother Nee published one thousand fifty-two hymns, which included almost all the hymns contained in the second volume of the Chinese hymnal, which I edited. At the same time, he re-edited my sixty topics of *Crucial Truths in the Holy Scriptures* into fifty-two topics. These proves that the three bookrooms shared the copyrights.
 - b. It was because of this arrangement by Brother Nee that we established a Gospel Book Room in Taipei and in Hong Kong and that we also had the right to publish Brother Nee's books.
 - c. At that time we published many of Brother Nee's books without asking him for the copyright, because he had already arranged for the three bookrooms to be one, and thus they were still his publication work.
- C. Hong Kong Gospel Bookroom:
 - 1. Due to the political situation, we decided that the name Hong Kong Gospel Book Room should be changed to Hong Kong Church Book Room.
 - 2. Nevertheless, it did not belong to the church.
- D. Living Stream and the maintaining of the copyrights:
 - 1. After I went to the United States, I registered the name Living Stream for the publication of *The Stream* magazine. The scope was eventually expanded also to include the ministry in audio and video format.
 - 2. Some have said that Brother Nee's messages are the public property of the church; this is going too far. The messages given by Brother Nee are for the public, but when

the books of Brother Nee are published by one of the gospel bookrooms, the copyright belongs to the publisher. Once a book is published by a publisher, the copyright belongs to the publisher.

3. Even though Brother Nee has passed away, his bookroom is still here:
 - a. Those who translate Brother Nee's books first should contact the publisher.
 - b. I feel sorry that some people, without having a word with us, translated a message given by Brother Nee that was published in one of the issues of *The Present Testimony* in 1934. When they translated the message into English, they changed some of the original speaking concerning Christ being a creature.
 - c. We learned a lesson from this incident and decided that regarding the publication of the ministry of the word, Living Stream would keep the copyrights of the books that it publishes.
 - d. In this way our publication work has been put on the right track.
- E. References: (*CWWL*, 1981, vol. 2, "The History and Revelation of the Lord's Recovery," pp. 33, 259-261)

II. The Living Stream Ministry office:

- A. Brother Lee said concerning his office: "The Living Stream Ministry office is only a business office to serve my ministry for two things: publish the messages in book form and to distribute these messages in both video and audio tapes. That is all the ministry office should do and nothing else. I did not have much time to check on everything related to the office in the past, but the ministry office has always had this specific function and no other function. This little office is a Levitical service serving my ministry to put out the word of God in print and through video and audio tapes" (*The Collected Works of Witness Lee [CWWL]*, 1988, vol. 3, "A Timely Word," p. 78).
 1. The Living Stream Ministry exists to serve Brother Lee's personal ministry, which he considered a continuation of Brother Nee's ministry. With the advances in technology, we have added other channels for the distribution of this ministry, yet the function of this office remains the same.
 2. In addition, Living Stream Ministry provides the logistical support for the release of the word of God in the seven annual "feasts" and in the full-time training in Anaheim.
 3. This office is not the church or even the ministry; it is a part of the work in the Lord's recovery, publishing and distributing throughout the earth the publications that embody the genuine New Testament ministry.
 4. Whenever the publications of this ministry are read, taken in as nourishment, and understood in the way of life, this office is participating in the work of the ministry unto the building up of the Body of Christ.

III. The cooperation needed between the Living Stream Ministry office and the churches, the ministry, and the work:

- A. Ministry meetings hosted by Living Stream—the seven annual "feasts", that is, the seven annual conferences and trainings:
 1. Conferences:
 - a. International Chinese-speaking conference in Anaheim and in Taipei, Taiwan (every third year)
 - b. Memorial Day weekend conference in the United States
 - c. Thanksgiving weekend conference in the United States
 - d. The attendance at these three annual conferences depends primarily upon the encouragement of the leading brothers.

2. The semiannual, 6-day trainings (held in Anaheim each summer and winter) and the two International Training for Elders and Responsible Ones—ITERO (held in Anaheim each spring and outside the United States each October):
 - a. The attendance at these trainings depends primarily upon the encouragement of the leading brothers.
 - b. However, the atmosphere at these trainings and the benefit gained by the attendees also depends upon the proper shepherding by the elders:
 - (1) In exercising much discernment in recommending or rejecting those who apply or are invited to attend.
 - (2) In preparing all those who plan to attend:
 - (a) By meeting with them beforehand for multiple times of prayer,
 - (b) By reading over and explaining in detail all of the regulations of the training, and
 - (c) By infusing them with proper respect for the ministry and the ministry's training.
 - c. The semiannual video trainings:
 - (1) The video trainings are to be conducted under the oversight of the leading ones according to the same regulations and in the same way as the live training.
 - (2) The leading ones should exercise a similar discernment and provide the same preparation with the saints for the video trainings as for the live trainings.
 - (3) Registration is required with Living Stream Ministry:
 - (a) A church may be set up to register directly for both live and video trainings by contacting the LSM Registration section at register@lsm.org.
 - (b) A registration coordinator must be appointed by the leading ones in order to register the saints in that church for the video training and to submit the proper payment and reports required by Registration.

B. Publications produced by Living Stream Ministry:

1. This is the principal function of the church book service—to help all the saints in the church to regularly get into the ministry publications:
 - a. First, they need to have the publications in their homes.
 - b. Second, they need to read and enjoy the publications.
 - c. Third, they need to ministry what they have enjoyed into others.
2. Requiring the cooperation of the churches in order to make them affordable to the saints and the churches:
 - a. A large quantity of Standing Orders and DMS orders allows LSM to print in larger quantities to reduce the cost of printing and the price of the publications:
 - (1) This is crucial for periodical publications like *The Holy Word for Morning Revival* and *The Ministry of the Word*.
 - (2) It is also important for those who want new, stand-alone publications that are extracted from *The Collected Works of Witness Lee* to sign up for this category of Standing Order or DMS.

C. References: (CWWL, 1984, vol. 5, “The Faithful and Diligent Spreading of the Truth—Concerning the Publication Service,” pp. 190-236)

**Living Stream Ministry's General Policy
concerning the Use of Our Copyrighted Materials
by the Saints, the Churches, and the Work**

Living Stream Ministry (LSM) policy allows anyone to make up to twenty copies of portions from our publications for use in home meetings, group meetings, Bible studies, etc., and no permission is required. Of course, any such copies should properly cite the source (author, title, page numbers, and publisher) and include the statement: "Do not duplicate." This provision should be applied to each particular event (gathering), and distribution should be limited to those in attendance. The number twenty is somewhat arbitrary, and upon request LSM usually grants permission for larger gatherings that, in principle, fit these criteria.

Concerning the use of our materials by the work or a local church, LSM is more lenient. A church or a co-worker may make as many copies as are needed, and the single event restriction is extended to cover a short series of gatherings, e.g., a short series of weekly meetings with the young adults, a church weekend conference, a series of church meetings held over several weeks covering a particular subject, etc. Again, distribution should be limited to those in attendance and should be done on a week-by-week basis.

Of course, if a group or a church intends to progressively cover an entire publication, copies of the publication should be purchased for those who would attend regularly, but photocopies may be made on a week-by-week basis for newcomers and those who come sporadically.

It is best to photocopy and then "cut and paste" from our printed publications to create a "master," which can then be duplicated as needed. However, if this is not possible, our online publications may be used, but all electronic material must be deleted as soon as a hard-copy master has been prepared. Furthermore, in preparing such a master, the formatting should be kept as simple as possible in order to avoid the appearance of a formal publication. For the same reason, such materials should not be bound like a publication but simply be stapled at the corner.

Please note that no LSM-copyrighted materials should be distributed electronically in any form or by any means. No LSM materials may be posted on a website unless it is in accordance with LSM's Internet Copyright Policy, which can be found on all of our websites.

These provisions are intended to make it easy to use the ministry publications in the normal church life, while preventing any unauthorized, large-scale reproduction and distribution.

**Política general de *Living Stream Ministry*
acerca del uso por parte de los santos y las iglesias
de nuestros materiales sujetos a derechos de autor**

La política general de *Living Stream Ministry* (LSM) le permite a cualquier persona sacar hasta veinte copias de porciones de nuestras publicaciones para utilizarlas en reuniones de hogar, reuniones de grupo, estudios bíblicos, etc., sin necesidad de solicitar permiso. Por supuesto, todas esas copias deberán citar en forma apropiada la fuente de donde se tomó (autor, título, número de página, y la editorial) y deberán incluir la frase: "No duplicar". Estas citas deberán aplicarse a cada evento (cada reunión), y la distribución del material deberá limitarse a las que personas que asisten a ella. El número veinte es un tanto arbitrario, y por lo general con previa solicitud, LSM concederá el permiso para reuniones más grandes, que en principio, cumplan con estos requisitos.

Con respecto al uso de nuestros materiales por parte de la obra o de una iglesia local, LSM es más concesivo. Una iglesia o un colaborador podría preparar la cantidad de copias que necesite, y la restricción para un solo evento podría ampliarse para abarcar una serie corta de reuniones, tales como una serie de reuniones semanales con adultos jóvenes, una conferencia de la iglesia durante un fin de semana, una serie de reuniones de la iglesia que se realicen durante varias semanas en las cuales se estudie un tema en particular, etc. Repetimos que la distribución deberá limitarse a los que asisten y las copias deberán hacerse semanalmente.

Por supuesto, si un grupo o una iglesia tienen la intención de abarcar en forma progresiva una publicación completa, entonces los que asistan con regularidad deben comprar ejemplares de dicha publicación, pero se podrán preparar fotocopias cada semana para los que recién lleguen y para los que asistan esporádicamente.

Lo mejor es sacar fotocopias de nuestras publicaciones impresas y luego "cortar y pegar" a fin de crear un "original", que se podrá duplicar según la necesidad. Sin embargo, si esto no es posible, podrían utilizarse nuestras publicaciones en línea, pero todo el material electrónico deberá borrarse tan pronto se prepare una copia original impresa. Además, al preparar dicho original, el formato deberá mantenerse tan sencillo como sea posible, a fin de evitar que tenga la apariencia de una publicación formal. Por la misma razón, tales materiales no deberán encuadrarse como una publicación, sino que sencillamente deberán graparse en una esquina.

Favor tener en cuenta que de ninguna forma ni por cualquier medio, deberá distribuirse electrónicamente ningún material que no esté sujeto a los derechos de autor de LSM. Ningún material de LSM deberá publicarse en un sitio de Internet a menos que esté en conformidad con la Política de derechos de autor de LSM en el Internet, la cual se puede encontrar en todos nuestros sitios en Internet.

La intención de estas disposiciones es hacer más sencillo el uso de las publicaciones del ministerio en la vida de iglesia normal, mientras que, al mismo tiempo, se impide cualquier reproducción y distribución a gran escala, que no haya sido autorizada.

Topic Four—Additional Reading

THE BOOK SERVICE AND THE SPREADING OF THE TRUTH

Scripture Reading: 2 Tim. 3:15-17; 2 Pet. 3:15-16; Acts 8:30-31; Luke 24:27, 45

THE BURDEN AND GOAL OF THE BOOK SERVICE

The most important burden of the book service is not to care for the inventory of books but to study and find a way to spread every book into all the homes of the saints in your locality and, once the books are in the homes, to find a way to deposit their contents into the saints' hearts. The book service is a very important service in the churches, and it has an especially important relationship to the elders. In order to carry out the book service in a proper way, our view and understanding must be clear, and we must encourage the saints in the localities where we serve to cultivate the habit of studying the truth. We also must have a proper heart and attitude in our way of doing business. We are not selling books like street vendors. Rather, we are urging the believers in the Lord's recovery to have the books that we have published in their homes, and we are encouraging them to do their best to read these books.

In 1 Timothy 2:4 Paul says that God “desires all men to be saved and to come to the full knowledge of the truth.” Today most of the churches pay attention to the first half of this verse by preaching the gospel to bring people to salvation; however, we are not up to the standard of God’s goal in the matter of leading the saints to know the truth. The responsibility for filling up this lack and arriving at God’s goal lies with us.

Second Timothy 3:15-17 reveals that the Bible is crucial because it can make people wise unto salvation and can equip the man of God, making him complete. This is very precious. However, there is a big problem related to this, which is a common difficulty among believers today. When Christians open the Bible, they do not really understand the meaning of the words that they read. Even a person who is a good learner and who has studied a wide range of topics may not be able to understand the essential meaning of the Bible.

KNOWING THE TRUTH REQUIRING OTHERS' EXPLANATION AND THE LORD'S OPENING OF OUR MINDS

Acts 8:26-39 records the case of the Ethiopian eunuch. Many eunuchs in ancient times were scholars because they had to be well educated to serve in imperial palaces. This Ethiopian eunuch had gone to Jerusalem to worship, and on his way home, he was reading in the book of Isaiah where it says, “As a sheep He was led to slaughter; and as a lamb before its shearer is dumb, so He does not open His mouth” (Acts 8:32; cf. Isa. 53:7). On one hand, he was very interested in what he was reading, but on the other hand, he did not understand the significance of what he was reading. When the Holy Spirit directed Philip to approach him, Philip ran up to his chariot and asked, “Do you really know the things that you are reading?” (Acts 8:30). The eunuch’s answer is very meaningful: “How could I unless someone guides me?” (v. 31). This shows that if we have only the Bible without anyone to guide us and explain it to us, we will still have no way to understand and comprehend it.

In the days of the Lord Jesus the Jews did not have public schools, nor did they have a school system; all their education was carried out in the homes. When Mary was found to be with child of the Holy Spirit, she was quite young, but when she went to visit Elizabeth, almost every sentence of her praise was a quote from the Old Testament (Luke 1:46-55). She

was so familiar with the Old Testament that she could apply verses under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit and make them into a praise of God. If she had not had a foundation in the Old Testament, she would not have been able to compose such praise, even with the inspiration of the Spirit. From this we can see that she was born into a household that knew the Old Testament. The Lord Jesus was born into such a family, and we must suppose that as He was growing to adulthood, He must have received good teaching concerning the Bible. When He came forth to minister, He immediately opened the Bible and began to expound it every time He entered into a synagogue to preach the gospel (4:15-21).

The early disciples, who followed the Lord Jesus for three and a half years and who were under His leading, must have studied the Bible very much; they could not have merely followed the Lord without reading the Bible. However, Luke 24 speaks of two disciples who walked with the Lord on the road to Emmaus but who still did not understand the Scriptures. The Jewish rabbis taught that the Old Testament is divided into three sections—the Law of Moses, the Psalms, and the Prophets—but they did not know that each of these three sections is full of explanations concerning Christ. Although these two disciples were students of the Bible and knew the Old Testament, they had not seen anything concerning Christ in their reading; they needed the Lord Jesus to expound these things clearly to them (v. 27).

Later, when the disciples were gathered together and the Lord Jesus appeared to them, He said, “These are My words which I spoke to you while I was still with you, that all the things written in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and Psalms concerning Me must be fulfilled.” Then He opened their mind to understand the Scriptures (vv. 44-45). The Lord not only pointed things out and explained them clearly to the disciples, but He also opened the mind of the disciples so that they would understand. This shows that Christians need more than just the Bible. We also need someone to expound the Bible to us properly, and we need the Lord to open our mind.

Peter, who was a leader among the disciples, wrote his Epistles when he was older, and there is much revelation in them. However, at the end of these Epistles he spoke of Paul, who “according to the wisdom given to him, wrote to you, as also in all his letters, speaking in them concerning these things, in which some things are hard to understand, which the unlearned and unstable twist, as also the rest of the Scriptures, to their own destruction” (2 Pet. 3:15-16). If we consider the book of Hebrews, we will realize that if there is no one to expound it to us, we could read it ten times and still not understand half of it. At the most we would know that this book speaks of Christ as our High Priest, who is able to save us to the uttermost (7:25) and who is the same yesterday, today, and forever (13:8). But this is only our natural understanding; it is not the center of the book of Hebrews. If we are to understand the central points of the book of Hebrews, we need people to point things out to us, and we need the Lord to open our mind. Now we have the *Life-study of Hebrews*, and this book of the Bible has been opened to us.

Matthew 24:14 says, “This gospel of the kingdom will be preached in the whole inhabited earth.” Most Christians have some understanding of the gospel, but they have very little understanding of the gospel of the kingdom. I have been reading Christian books for many years and have heard many messages, but I have not found one person who adequately points out the meaning of the gospel of the kingdom. Even the subject of the Gospel of Matthew, the kingdom of the heavens, is not understood according to its true significance. Today most people expound the Bible according to their natural understanding. Thus, even though we have the Bible in our hands, we cannot understand what we are reading if we do not have someone to interpret it for us, to teach us, and to open our mind.

THE SPREADING OF THE PUBLICATION WORK IN THE LORD'S RECOVERY

Regardless of whether we are full-timers going out to work or those who serve with books, our goal is to spread the divine truths for the accomplishment of God's goal of establishing and building up churches in every place so that they may become the expression of Christ.

I would like to make something clear from the start. If we think that the goal of the publication work is to make money, we are wrong. From the first day until now we have not had the slightest thought of making money or earning a profit. Our burden is to spread the truth and to serve the churches.

We all know that it is not easy to understand the Bible. However, through the Life-study messages and the publications in the Lord's recovery, we can understand the central thought of every book in the Bible, and we can be clear about the true meaning of every chapter and verse. In order to deliver these truths into the hands of God's children, we need full-timers to go out to visit people and to supply them, and we need the serving ones in all the localities to faithfully labor in the book service in the churches to diligently distribute the food to the saints.

Presently, the publication work throughout the whole earth has developed to the extent that we have three offices. The main office is in Anaheim, the second office for printing is in Irving, and the third office is the Taiwan Gospel Book Room, which publishes materials in Chinese. Due to Taiwan's laws we set up the bookroom in Taiwan as a "juridical party" (the designation for a non-profit organization). In these three offices there are around fifty full-time serving ones; in addition, there are many others who volunteer to come and help. The publication work is quite laborious.

The publication work under my ministry began in August 1949. At that time the twelve members of my family lived in a small house of about three hundred square feet. The study, bedroom, and living room were all one room. In the house there was only one chair and one small table. It was under these conditions that I completed the sixty topics in *Crucial Truths in the Holy Scriptures*. Thank the Lord for blessing the publication work of this ministry and for bringing it to the scale that it has reached today.

In 1962, because I was clear that I should begin the work of the Lord's recovery in the United States and release the truth to God's children there, I moved to the United States. Over the past twenty-five years about three hundred local churches have been raised up overseas due to this ministry, and about eighty percent of them have been raised up through the publications. My co-workers and I did not go to all those places; most of the churches in those places were raised up entirely as a result of the publications going there first. This shows that the effect of the publications can be very great.

Beginning with Luther the Lord has manifested His work of recovery. However, over the past five hundred years the Lord has never done as much related to the recovery of the truth as He has done today among us. This has been especially true since 1974, because the Lord has opened up every book in the Bible through the Life-studies and various messages, pointing out the crucial items concerning Christ, opening the minds of the saints, and bringing us into the depths of God's economy so that we would advance toward His ultimate goal.

This is not to boast in ourselves. Many saints have testified that no matter how many times they read Matthew, they could understand only verses such as "Come to Me all who

toil and are burdened, and I will give you rest" (11:28), which can easily be understood according to man's natural thought. However, they could not understand the verses concerning the kingdom, the reality of the kingdom, the appearance of the kingdom, and the manifestation of the kingdom. They read the words, but they could not understand their significance. However, because of the Life-studies, they now understand that Matthew is a book concerning the gospel of the kingdom.

THE PUBLICATION WORK SUFFERING ATTACKS

Because the churches in all the localities have been pursuing to digest the Life-study messages these past few years, some people have slandered us, saying, "Brother Lee forces all the local churches to read his Life-studies and to neglect the reading of the Bible." However, there is no church among the more than six hundred churches on the earth that can testify that any locality neglects the Bible and reads only the Life-studies. There is no way to read the Life-studies without reading the Bible, because the Life-studies are based on the Bible and serve only to expound the Bible. If some read the Life-studies without reading the Bible, that is an individual practice, and it has nothing to do with the Lord's recovery.

RECEIVING THE BURDEN TO LEARN AND SPREAD THE DIVINE TRUTHS

For the past five hundred years the strongest recovery of the Lord's truth has been among us. Today the books that we publish are very rich and full of truth and revelation. The Life-studies of the New Testament alone contain more than eleven hundred messages with an average of ten pages per message. The Lord has been constantly recovering His truths throughout the ages, but before today the truth concerning the New Jerusalem was barely touched. The New Jerusalem was not expounded thoroughly and clearly until we were raised up.

More than fifty years ago Brother Nee said to me, "Brother Witness, the truths that the Lord has given us are not only for the Chinese-speaking believers; I believe that they are for the whole world." At that time neither of us knew how the Lord was going to spread His truth to the whole globe, but the Lord raised up the environment. When the political situation in China changed, the Lord brought me to Taiwan. After ten years of developing and establishing a foundation, the Lord brought me to the United States. After another ten years the Lord spread His recovery to all the other continents through the publications. Although the number of saints meeting in the local churches is still insufficient, the churches themselves have been widely spread. The Lord has given us an open door from this point forward, and every continent has people who receive our truths and welcome the saints to visit them. Even Burma and India have begun to have meetings.

Through the labor of Brother Nee and myself, the truths of the Bible have been dug out. Beginning in 1974 I spent at least half of each year to write the outlines for the Life-study messages and the footnotes of the Recovery Version. I wrote every word with much care and effort, particularly the footnotes. I did not use my native Chinese for writing; rather, I used English. Anyone with a seeking heart cannot deny that the truth is among us. I hope that we would receive the burden to thoroughly study the truths of the Lord's recovery and to spread these truths.

GETTING THE TRUTHS INTO THE BELIEVERS' HOMES

What the Lord wants to accomplish in this age is to recover the truth. Today the entire earth is in a famine; there is even a famine across the United States, which is a great

Christian country. It is like the situation in the days of Joseph, when only Egypt had food, and all the other places were in famine. At that time if a person wanted food, he had to go to Egypt to buy it. Today there is not much rich truth in the publications of Christianity; their better publications present only a few shallow gospel truths. However, when you look at the publications among us, they are full of rich truth. This is not my boast; it is a proof that the Lord has blessed us. Therefore, we should receive the burden and not worry that there are too many books piled up in the meeting halls; instead, we must find a way to distribute these books, and we must first get them into the homes of the saints.

Paul says that God “desires all men to be saved and to come to the full knowledge of the truth” (1 Tim. 2:4). Today nearly two thousand years have passed since this was written, but even in the Lord’s recovery we have not arrived at this standard. This is why we have changed our way and are pushing to have everyone prophesy and speak the truth. However, if we want to arrive at this goal, the first requirement is that we must teach the saints the truth. If we do not, the saints will still prefer big meetings with one person speaking and everyone else listening. For the past thirty years we have maintained this practice. In conferences we have spoken about items of the truth such as the cross, the resurrection life, and the Body of Christ, but as time has passed, not many among us have really understood the truth. This pains my heart.

Today the Lord has gained saints who have a heart to serve Him; some serve as elders, some serve as deacons, and some serve in book sales. We thank the Lord for this, but please forgive me for speaking honestly to you in love: I am afraid that even you are not clear about the truth. This is the matter that concerns me the most. If we are a group of believers who have only been saved but who do not understand the truth, what will be the future of the Lord’s recovery? The present teaching in the homes is insufficient; we must get the truth into the saints’ homes.

I hope that in every church each household would teach the truth and study the truth. The churches in one particular area of the United States are the best pattern in this matter; the homes of the saints there are full of our publications. Whether you go to the study, the bathroom, the living room, the bedroom, the dining room, or even the kitchen, you will find open ministry books. Wherever anyone goes in these homes, they can seize the time to read a paragraph of a message. In this way they are nourished. Today in Taiwan we have not arrived at this point, and there are even some saints who complain that we have too many books and too many meetings. They say that they are too busy to read the books. In regard to this, I cannot say anything. Everything, however, depends upon our heart. If we realized that we could obtain “gold and diamonds” every time we read the truth, we would read more, and if we could receive some treasures whenever we read the ministry, we would even sleep less in order to obtain the treasure.

My point is that we do not consider the truth to be precious. As leading brothers in the churches in Taiwan, we should imitate the pattern of the elders in the churches in the previously mentioned area of the United States and lead the saints to become addicted to reading the truth. We should consider reading the truth to be more important than eating or drinking. If we do this, the truth in the Lord’s recovery will greatly increase and be victorious; furthermore, the number of people in all the churches will spontaneously multiply (Acts 6:7).

THE PROPER ATTITUDE IN THE BOOK SERVICE

Thank the Lord that we have a heart to serve the Lord and that we have obtained His mercy to serve Him in His word. We must have a proper attitude and be positive and

aggressive, doing our best to urge people to read His word. If we do not find ways to promote the truth or pray, how can the Lord's word be spread? If we take the Lord's word lightly, how can we have the boldness to promote the publications among the saints? Some brothers and sisters spend more time reading the newspaper and watching television than they do reading the ministry publications; this really grieves me. I hope that we could have a jealous heart for the Lord and change the atmosphere so that everyone would have a desire to read the Bible, and each household would make reading the spiritual publications a priority.

We must understand that our service is not to help the Book Room do business and make a profit; rather, it is to bear a burden to minister the word of the Lord and to send out His truth. I hope that our view could be expanded and broadened. The churches in Southeast Asia have been able to maintain their spiritual life for the past thirty years mainly through the publications of the Book Room. Despite the fact that the co-workers frequently go to help the churches, their true, long-term help has come from the supply of the publications. If there had been no books for the past thirty years, the churches in Southeast Asia would not have spread to the extent that they have today. Moreover, during the past twenty years, eighty percent of the more than three hundred churches in the West have been raised up through the publications. Therefore, we must see that serving in book sales is really to be the Lord's co-worker, to promote His truth, and to spread His divine economy and divine speaking to the whole earth.

Please pick up a burden to return to your localities, fellowship with the elders, and consider this to be an important matter. The primary matter is not to promote the books but to stir up the saints' interest in pursuing the truth and to encourage them to enjoy reading the spiritual publications. This will depend on the way that we do it. Even the wonderful truth of the excellent gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ requires us to speak much with all our heart and to preach diligently so that people will receive and believe it. Even more, the Lord's word will require that we bear the responsibility to labor willingly to zealously encourage and urge everyone in all the local churches to pursue the truth and read the spiritual publications. In this way the Lord's truth will spread widely, and there will be a real revival (CWWL, 1984, vol. 5, "The Faithful and Diligent Spreading of the Truth—Concerning the Publication Service," pp. 191-195, 198-208).

LEARNING TO SERVE WITH THE PUBLICATIONS

THE IMPORTANCE OF THE PUBLICATION WORK

God initiated the publication work. God is a speaking God (Heb. 1:1). The Gospel of John tells us that God is the Word (1:1). As the Word, God came to people and inspired them to write down His word (2 Pet. 1:21), which became the contents of the Bible that we hold in our hands (2 Tim. 3:16). If we did not have the Bible, Christians would suffer an incalculable loss. The Bible is God's publication work; this is a marvelous thing.

In the past, after people established a new country, they often carried out a publication work. On a small scale, they published writings to commend themselves, and on a large scale, they controlled the publishing of the country's historical data. Without publications the world would be like a person without a soul.

THE BEGINNING OF THE PUBLICATION WORK IN THE LORD'S RECOVERY

Originating with Brother Watchman Nee

The Lord's recovery among us began with Brother Watchman Nee. Brother Nee was from Foochow, which was a city with literary tendencies. Brother Nee's father was a scholar, and he placed great emphasis on a literary education. He even hired private tutors to teach Brother Nee the classical Chinese language. Brother Nee's grades in Chinese were always among the top in his class. After the Lord raised him up, when he was only twenty years old, he began the publication work. When my second sister began to study theology at the Chinling Seminary in Nanking, Brother Nee's writings were already spreading among the students of theology. She would come home to Chefoo for summer vacations and bring his publications to show me. Thus, before I was saved, I had already read some of Brother Nee's early publications. At this time he was still writing in classical Chinese, not in the vernacular Chinese. Therefore, when I read his writings, I felt that they were very deep, and I could not fully understand their meaning. Later, as the trend of writing in vernacular Chinese began to spread throughout China, Brother Nee began to write in the vernacular as well. Brother Nee was always willing to study; hence, he made the change very quickly and successfully.

THE VALUE OF THE PUBLICATION WORK

Having Long-lasting, Widespread Effects

When the publication work began in Taipei in 1949, I was the only one who was involved. At the most I would sometimes ask another brother to help me by going to the printer. I did the editing and publication work myself, including most of the work related to the printing. In those days in Taiwan the process of printing was not very advanced. Through the Lord's arrangement for my involvement in Brother Nee's publication work in China, I had learned a great deal about printing. Therefore, when I began the publication work in Taiwan, I knew every step of the publication process, including preparing manuscripts, typesetting, printing, and binding. At that time the Gospel Book Room was in my home, and it consisted of one chair and a small table that I used as a writing desk. It was not like the Book Room today, which has many serving ones and modern equipment. As we look back on the difficult times in the beginning, I hope that we would treasure what we have now and that we would endeavor to learn many things.

There will be a great lack and even a great loss in the Lord's work in the gospel and in the truth if it is not done in coordination with the publication work. It would have been very difficult for the ministry of Brother Nee to spread without the publication work. The usefulness of the publications is long lasting and widespread. Like water, the publications can spread widely and imperceptibly "seep" into people. A published message can have a great effect simply by "flowing" into a home and reaching someone whom we do not know. The effect of the publications lasts forever and is not as shallow as the effect of only hearing a message. A person may be touched as he listens to a message, but after three days his feeling may wane, and he may forget it. However, the more a person reads the messages, the more he will understand, and the messages will stay in his memory a longer time and give him a deeper impression. Psychologists have discovered that television is more powerful and has a stronger impact than radio because visual memory lasts longer than auditory memory. Thus, the value of the publications lies in the fact that their effect is long lasting and widespread. The Bible has been among human beings for a few thousand years, and its effect is self-evident.

Spreading the Divine Truth

I hope that the brothers and sisters would realize that it is a great mercy of the Lord that the publication work in the Lord's recovery, beginning with Brother Nee and continuing until now, has given Chinese-speaking Christians the knowledge of the truth. If our publications had not been going out over the past sixty years, we would be in a much poorer condition.

The churches in the Lord's recovery have received help from the publication work in the early days from Shanghai and now from Taipei. For the past thirty years or more the churches have been fed mainly by the ministry of the word in the publications. The Chinese-speaking churches among us rely fully on the ministry of the word in the publications. In 1962 this ministry entered the English-speaking world, and in the past eleven years, due to strenuous labor, we have completed the Life-studies of the New Testament. Even though what we have seen cannot be considered complete, in comparison to other publications it is higher and richer. Now English-speaking Christians in the West are beginning to accept the truths given to us by the Lord.

There is a brother in Christianity who loves the Lord very much and who has set up Bible-study groups in many places. One day he read some of our Life-study messages and received a great deal of help. Although some people in the United States were criticizing us as heretics, he announced that he had read the Life-studies and discovered that they were full of rich content. He declared that he wanted all his Bible-study groups to use the Life-study messages. This happened a little more than a month ago, and he made a special trip to ask for permission to use the Life-studies. Similar things have happened in many other places.

We have recently printed the Life-studies of Paul's Epistles in a nine-volume, hardbound set and sent them as a gift to libraries and seminaries in many places. Every place that has been given a set has warmly welcomed it. Moreover, the Living Stream Ministry office has received letters from some of these libraries expressing their gratitude. This is a sign that the truths of the Lord's recovery will spread to the countries in the West through the publication work.

Supplying the Bread of Life

By going to the United States, we brought the Lord's recovery to the English-speaking world, and through the publication work, the Lord's recovery quickly spread throughout the United States, Central and South America, Europe, Africa, and Australasia. Many local churches have been raised up through the publications. At first the recovery spread through saints contacting people and introducing the recovery to them, but eventually the seeking ones have received benefit directly from the publications.

The churches in Europe are an example. Since it is difficult to travel to visit them, the most reliable and direct way to help them is to send the publications as spiritual food for their nourishment. On the surface this seems like a slow way to spread, but actually the results are surprising and quicker than one would think. For example, churches have been raised up in Mexico in more than fifty localities mainly through the publications. The saints are also helped by watching videotapes of the messages. We have given localities videotapes of messages and some video machines, and the saints take these to various places to spread the ministry. Most of the churches in Mexico have been raised up with the help of the video messages. The churches in Brazil were also raised up through the publications. Presently, about eighty local churches have been raised up in Brazil, and there are dozens of churches

in other countries in South America. All these churches were raised up through the publication work. They now mainly rely on the publications and the videotapes. If we were to stop supplying publications or were unable to send out videotapes, there would be a famine. This shows that the publication work is crucial.

THE VISION OF THE PUBLICATION WORK

Since the effect of the publication work is long lasting and widespread, it is entirely worthwhile to spend time and effort on it. In addition, you must be patient. Every aspect of the publication work, whether writing, editing, proofreading, or transcribing, is very tedious. If you do it for a long time, you will easily become frustrated. Therefore, you must exercise to have the endurance to concentrate on your labor. For the past eleven years I have spent about one hundred days every half a year working on the outlines and footnotes for the Recovery Version. I spend at least four or five hours a day at my desk absorbed in work and allow my wife to take care of everything else in my living. If I had not done this, I would never have been able to complete the footnotes or the Life-studies of the entire New Testament.

In conclusion, the publication work requires vision, patience, and perseverance. Sometimes when we are considering the right words and phrases, we should put down our pens and walk outside to call on the Lord or sing a few verses of a hymn to relax our heart and increase the feeling in our spirit. Then when we return to writing, we will be able to express things well. This word is from my experience, and I hope that it will be an encouragement and help to the young ones (*CWWL*, 1984, vol. 5, “The Faithful and Diligent Spreading of the Truth—Concerning the Publication Service,” pp. 209-210, 216-222, 224).

THE VALUE AND LEARNING OF THE PUBLICATION WORK

THE PUBLICATION WORK BEING STARTED BY GOD HIMSELF

God is a speaking God, and in His wisdom He knows that His word must be written down so that it is not transitory. Without the Bible humanity would be empty, waste, void, and dark. The only reason that there is a small amount of light in human society is because of the existence of the Bible. God not only spoke through the mouths of the patriarchs and prophets in ancient times; He also recorded His speaking in the Bible. This is truly a miracle.

In the whole world there is no other book that is complete in truth and perfect in organization like the Bible. God used the best languages to write this book, and He used at least forty very suitable persons to write it. If Moses had not written the Pentateuch or David had not written a great part of the Psalms, there would be a great lack in the Bible. I do not know how long it took Moses to write the Pentateuch, but I believe that he spent much time on it and wrote it in his old age. David had many responsibilities and experienced many difficulties, but in the midst of his sufferings he wrote of his experiences. Many Old Testament saints and many believers have received help from the Psalms. Without the book of Psalms there would be a great lack. This shows the importance of the publication work initiated by God Himself.

THE PUBLICATION WORK HAVING AN ETERNAL, WIDESPREAD VALUE

As the apostle John indicated, the Word of God can be handled (1 John 1:1). Of course, when John spoke of this touchable Word, he was referring to the Lord Jesus. The Lord Jesus

as the Word of life can be handled. In 1 John, however, the term *word* refers not only to the Lord Jesus as a person but also to the words that He spoke (1:10; 2:5, 7, 14). Thus, as the Word of life, He has been spoken forth and can be handled, but this Word of life is conveyed as well through the written word, which can also be handled. The people of the Old Testament read God's words, and New Testament believers can read His words. Furthermore, people will continue to read these words in the future. The word of God is eternal, and its value is eternal.

Moreover, the publication work can be widespread. Today the Bible has been translated into many languages. Translators even use phonetic symbols to translate the Bible into languages that do not have written forms. Thus, the Bible can be spread to every place. This is of God, and it is according to a principle ordained by God. Throughout the history of the church, the writings of God's people have been continuously published. Those who wrote the twenty-seven books of the New Testament were not the only ones who wrote in the early days of the church; the church fathers also produced writings (*CWWL*, 1984, vol. 5, "The Faithful and Diligent Spreading of the Truth—Concerning the Publication Service," pp. 235-236).

Topic Five

THE HOLY WORD FOR MORNING REVIVAL AND PUBLICATIONS FOR DISTRIBUTION AND SHEPHERDING

I. *The Holy Word for Morning Revival (HWMR):*

- A. History and Purpose
- B. How to Use the *HWMR*
- C. Shepherding with the *HWMR*

II. Publication Propagation:

- A. Giving Away Books:
 - 1. Watchman Nee
 - 2. Witness Lee
 - 3. Books (print and electronic formats)
 - 4. Book bundles
 - 5. Booklets: *Nuggets & Gems from the Bible* (print and electronic formats)
- B. Loaning Books:
 - 1. Setting up a library in homes and meeting halls
 - 2. Hudson Taylor
 - 3. George Livingston
- C. How to Loan Books:
 - 1. Burden and practice
 - 2. Shepherding

III. Getting to know the books for propagation:

- A. Republished and New Booklet: *Nuggets & Gems from the Bible* (print and ePub)
- B. Sample Lists for Shepherding and Loaning Books (See Topic 6)
- C. College-age Book List (required reading for FTTA; see Topic 6)
- D. High school List (See Topic 6)
- E. Junior high List (See Topic 6)
- F. *The Mystery of Human Life*

Topic Five (cont'd)

Selected Reading:

THE HOLY WORD FOR MORNING REVIVAL— REVIVED EVERY MORNING, OVERCOMING EVERY DAY

BEING REVIVED AND OVERCOMING

First, we must be revived every morning. At the end of a day is the night, and after the night has passed is the morning. Every morning we should have a revival from the Lord, a new beginning. For this reason we should call on the Lord and contact Him immediately upon rising in the morning and enjoy the Lord and absorb His rich supply using two or three verses. Whether it is ten minutes or twenty minutes, it is still all right. It is like eating breakfast. We have to eat spiritual food every morning before the Lord so that our spirit is filled every day.

Second, we must live an overcoming life every day through calling on the Lord unceasingly (Rom. 10:12) (*CWWL, 1988, vol. 2, "Messages Given to the Working Saints,"* pp. 346-347).

NEEDING TO BE REVIVED EVERY MORNING AND TO LIVE AN OVERCOMING LIFE EVERY DAY

Throughout history the revivals brought in by the Pentecostal movement were all short-lived because of the shortage of life. Fifty years ago we too promoted this kind of revival, but because of the experience we have gained in the past fifty years, in addition to seeing the lack of influence left from those revivals, we now have a greater realization of the importance of life. We truly need a revival, but this revival must be lasting. If a person lives on the earth for only twenty years, his existence is not that significant, but if a person lives up to eighty years, his existence is more significant. In other words, only something that lasts is significant. What we ask of God is a lasting revival, that is, one that follows God's law of creation, in which there is a new beginning every morning like that of the dawning of the day. Only this kind of revival is meaningful. We need to be revived every morning.

Moreover, we need to confess our sins every day, not only once but many times. This may be compared to washing our hands. We wash our hands every day, not once but many times. A brother who is a medical doctor said that he washes his hands over twenty times a day because he contacts at least ten patients a day. He washes his hands before and after he contacts each patient. If a doctor does not want to get sick, he needs to wash his hands frequently.

No matter how perfect a person may think himself to be, if he does not confess his sins, his living is a failure. If he lives an overcoming life, there will be the confession of sins every day. We have failures, shortcomings, and are negligent throughout the day; we are not that upright and righteous. There are many sins that we need to confess. Experience tells us that after our hands have been washed, they become contaminated within five minutes. This contamination is not from without but secreted from within. This contamination requires our cleansing. For example, when someone picks up a clean cup, he will find that after a while the handle of the cup becomes oily; this is due to the oil secreted from his hand. We need to realize that we are filthy. When we live for an hour, there is an hour of filth. Our source is unclean. As long as we live, we are unclean. Hence, we need to confess and constantly ask for the Lord's cleansing. The degree to which we confess our sins is the degree to which we are forgiven, cleansed, and able to receive the Holy Spirit.

**After Morning Revival,
Calling on the Lord and Enjoying the Lord
as the New Portion in His Word**

Psalm 119:147-148 speaks of a seeker of the Lord rising up, seeking Him, and having fellowship with the Lord in His word before the night watches. Lamentations 3 also says that God's grace, compassions, lovingkindness, and presence are new every morning and that we should enjoy Him as our portion (vv. 22-24).

**Confessing to the Lord and
Receiving the Infilling of the Spirit**

In our living, we need to confess our sins to the Lord and receive the infilling of the Spirit (1 John 1:9; Acts 13:52).

**Walking according to the Spirit
to Live Christ**

Moreover, in our daily life we need to walk according to the spirit in order to magnify Christ and live Christ (Rom. 8:4; Phil. 1:20-21a).

**Praying Unceasingly—
Calling on the Lord Unceasingly**

Christians often ask, "How can we pray unceasingly?" To pray unceasingly is to call on the Lord without ceasing. We can pray unceasingly by calling on the Lord unceasingly, regardless of time, place, or what person or matter we are facing (1 Thes. 5:17).

**Preaching Christ
in Season and out of Season**

We should not be so spiritual as to think that when we preach Christ, we need to consider whether or not it is the opportune time; this is not right. Paul says, "Proclaim the word; be ready in season and out of season" (2 Tim. 4:2). This means that regardless of what time it is, we can speak of the Lord and preach Him to others.

Being Diligent to Meet Together

Hebrews 10:25 says, "Not abandoning our own assembling together...but exhorting one another; and so much the more as you see the day drawing near."

**Relying on the Bountiful Supply of the Spirit
and the Empowering of the Lord**

If we desire to fulfill the aforementioned points, we cannot do so by ourselves. We can do so only by the bountiful supply of the Spirit and the empowering of the Lord (Phil. 1:19; 4:13).

The purpose of this fellowship is to pour out my concern; I hope that all of us will realize that this is a critical moment. May the Lord be merciful to us and cause us to have a reconsideration and a new beginning. We truly do not desire to be the same as before but seek to advance according to the new way (*CWWL, 1988*, vol. 2, "Crucial Words of Leading in the Lord's Recovery, Book 2: Leading the Saints to Practice the New Way Ordained by the Lord," pp. 436-439).

THE PROPHESYING LIFE

If we are going to prophesy, we need to live a prophesying life. First, we need to be revived every morning (Prov. 4:18; Lam. 3:22-24; Psa. 119:147-148). Proverbs 4:18 says, “The path of the righteous is like the light of dawn, / Which shines brighter and brighter until the full day.” The way of the righteous is like the dawn that becomes brighter and brighter until noontime. Every twenty-four hours there is a new start, a dawn, a rising sun. This is according to the natural law in God’s creation. We have to go along with this natural law. Every morning we have to rise early to contact the Lord, to call on Him, and to be revived by Him. In Lamentations 3:22-24 Jeremiah says that the Lord’s compassions are fresh and new every morning. His compassions are like the fresh dew in the morning. Every morning we must enjoy this fresh dew to have a new start, a morning revival.

In addition to being revived every morning, we must also live an overcoming life every day (Rev. 21:7). After the morning revival we should not stop contacting the Lord. We can live a victorious life by fellowshipping with the Lord moment by moment (1 John 1:6). We also need to walk according to the spirit (Rom. 8:4b), not doing anything outside of the Spirit. We should also speak the word (the Lord) all the time. Paul charged Timothy to proclaim the word in season and out of season (2 Tim. 4:2a). We should not say, “Now is not the time for me to speak to people.” Seemingly it is out of season, but even if it is out of season, we still have to speak the word. Such a prophesying life qualifies us to prophesy (*CWWL*, 1988, vol. 4, “The Excelling Gift for the Building Up of the Church,” pp. 463-464).

Topic Five (cont'd)

Selected Reading:

THE HOLY WORD FOR MORNING REVIVAL— PROPHESYING

A SIMPLE WAY TO BEAR REMAINING FRUIT

In order to be fruit-bearing branches of Christ, we need to be revived by the Lord day by day. Our publication *The Holy Word for Morning Revival* has been a help to the saints to be revived by the Lord every morning. The most effective way to live the Christian life is by having a vital, living, active morning watch with the Lord. We should get two verses from the Scripture to live on every day and then contact people for the Lord in a definite way (*CWWL, 1989*, vol. 4, “Elders’ Training, Book 10: The Eldership and the God-ordained Way,” pp. 456-457).

THE NEED TO SPEAK FOR THE LORD IN THE MEETINGS

According to the New Testament, whenever we, the Christians, come together to meet with God, each one has something (1 Cor. 14:26). This is altogether different from the traditional way of meeting, in which one man speaks and all the others listen. The traditional way has influenced us very much; it is even in our blood. Because of this, we do not have the concept that when we come to a meeting, we come to prophesy, that is, to speak for God, speak forth God, and speak God into others (vv. 24-25). Instead, we come with the concept that we will hear someone else speak.

This is the reason we prepared *The Holy Word for Morning Revival*. Every morning we need to get into the holy Word and receive revelation and inspiration. Then at the end of six days there will be an accumulation, and in the Lord’s Day morning meeting we should prepare to speak what we have. There is no need to speak for a long time; speaking for three minutes is sufficient.

We do not practice the old way of Christianity, in which one person speaks and the others are silent. This is not profitable for the Christian life and for the building up of the organic Body of Christ. Rather, we follow what the Bible says, that is, that whenever we come together, each of us should speak something of the Lord. From now on we need to prepare ourselves for six days of the week to come to the Lord’s Day morning meeting to speak. In one hour at least twenty people can speak.

Because the Bible commands us to prophesy, to speak for the Lord (vv. 1, 23a, 24, 31, 39), it is a sin to be dumb and not speak. We should not come to worship God merely by listening to others. We have heard very much already. Now we need to speak to one another. I have been speaking in the United States for many years. Now I would like to hear your voice. I very much appreciate your speaking. I have fed you with many spiritual dinners—course after course. Now I am hungry to be fed (*CWWL, 1990*, vol. 1, “Various Anaheim Meetings and Fellowships,” pp. 7-8).

PROPHESYING

We should shepherd the saints to prophesy by helping them to pray-read a few verses in the Bible each day, Monday through Saturday (Eph. 6:17-18). The saints should also be perfected to make notes concerning their spiritual inspiration from each day and review their daily notes on Saturday evening to compose a short prophecy. We have published *The Holy Word for Morning Revival* as an aid to the believers in developing a daily time of morning revival with the Lord in His word and in preparing a prophecy. Many saints in the churches can testify that they have benefited from this publication. In order to prophesy on the Lord’s Day in an adequate way, the saints need to labor, struggle, strive, fight, and wrestle (*CWWL, 1990*, vol. 1, “Bearing Remaining Fruit for the Lord’s Pleasure,” p. 115).

THE COMPOSITION OF A PROPHECY ACCORDING TO THE WAY IN FIRST CORINTHIANS 14

The Knowledge and Experience of God, Christ, and the Spiritual Things

The composition of a prophecy according to the way in 1 Corinthians 14 comprises, first, the knowledge and

experience of God, Christ, and the spiritual things. If we are going to prophesy, we must have some knowledge and experience of God, Christ, and the spiritual things.

**The Utterance to Speak Forth
What We Know and Have Experienced of God,
Christ, and the Spiritual Things**

Second, the composition of a prophecy comprises the utterance to speak forth what we know and have experienced of God, Christ, and the spiritual things. First we need the knowledge and experience; then we need the utterance, that is, the word and the expression. We can compose a brief prophecy and then practice speaking it to ourselves at home. We may even speak it to ourselves ten times. After speaking it several times, we will know how to correct and improve it. Through this kind of practice we will have the proper utterance.

**The Sight under the Divine Enlightenment
concerning the Situation
and Environment in Which We Are**

The composition of a prophecy also comprises the sight under the divine enlightenment concerning the situation and environment in which we are. Many among us are not clear about the intrinsic contents of the present turmoil in the Lord's recovery, and some prefer not to be clear. Their attitude is that others should be clear about the situation but that they should take care only of enjoying Christ. Such an attitude is wrong. The church is our home and our family. If there is a turmoil in our home among our family, we cannot say, "I do not want to know about it. I simply want to enjoy." We must have the sight to see the things taking place among us and the situation of all the saints. If we cannot see clearly, we need to pray, "Lord, show me the real situation. Shine over me and enlighten me. Give me the full enlightenment that I may know the intrinsic contents of the present situation." We must know what is happening in the church, not so that we may take sides with one group of saints against another but so that we may know the real situation.

**The Instant Inspiration of the Indwelling Spirit
That Stirs Up Our Spirit to Speak**

The knowledge and the experience of God, Christ, and the spiritual things, the utterance to speak forth what we know and have experienced, and a clear view concerning our situation and environment are the basic preparation for our speaking. In addition, we need the instant inspiration of the indwelling Spirit that stirs up our spirit to speak. We are different from the Old Testament prophets. In the Old Testament the saints did not have the Spirit indwelling them. They had to wait until the Spirit came upon them before they could speak for the Lord (2 Chron. 15:1; Ezek. 11:5). However, the New Testament says, "The Lord be with your spirit" (2 Tim. 4:22). We do not need the Spirit to come upon us, because we always have Him in our human spirit. Therefore, we should not wait for the Spirit to come upon us; rather, we should exercise our spirit. When we exercise our spirit, the Holy Spirit who is indwelling our spirit will be moved by us, and we will have the inspiration. It is not He who moves us, but it is we who move the indwelling Spirit. If we remain clear with the Lord by confessing our failures, we will have a direct, open fellowship with Him. He is in our spirit, and we are in Him. When we come to the meeting, we need only to exercise our spirit and say, "Lord Jesus, I want to speak." Then He will rise up, and we can speak according to our experience with the utterance that we have gained and with the enlightenment that we have. If we do this, everyone will have something to speak in the Lord's Day morning meeting.

We need to practice composing a prophecy according to the way in 1 Corinthians 14. To help us in this matter, we have prepared the book *The Holy Word for Morning Revival*. If we use the contents of this book with the knowledge and experience of God, Christ, and the spiritual things, the utterance to speak forth what we know and have experienced, the sight under the divine enlightenment concerning our situation, and the instant inspiration of the indwelling Spirit through the clear and open fellowship with the Lord in the exercise of our spirit, we can easily compose a prophecy and speak it in the church meeting (*CWWL, 1990*, vol. 2, "The Practice of Prophesying," pp. 341-343).

CONCERNING PROPHESYING FOR GOD, THE BELIEVERS:

Needing to Pursue and Desire Earnestly

First Corinthians 14:1 says, "Pursue love, and desire earnestly spiritual gifts, but especially that you may prophesy." We need to desire earnestly the most profitable gift, which is the gift of prophesying. Since to prophesy for God is to

speak for God and to speak forth God, it is to minister Christ to people. This is the most important thing in the church meetings and the most profitable gift in the building up of the saints and the church. In the concluding word of this chapter, Paul still charges us to pursue and desire earnestly to prophesy for God's building (v. 39).

Needing to Learn

First Corinthians 14:31 says, "You can all prophesy one by one that all may learn and all may be encouraged." God's desire is that every believer would prophesy. For this reason we should not only earnestly desire this gift but also make an effort to learn and exercise.

All Having the Capacity

Every saint has the capacity to prophesy for God. God has given this gift to us. All believers possess this gift, and all can prophesy for God.

All Having the Obligation

First Corinthians 14:23-25 shows us that if all prophesy in the church meetings, this will cause people to be convicted and to be brought back to God. However, if we do not prophesy, we owe God something, we owe others something, and we even owe ourselves something. In the church meetings, the thing that edifies people the most is prophesying. Furthermore, what we prophesy edifies ourselves the most. If in a meeting you stand up to prophesy for God, you feel that that meeting is good; otherwise, you may not feel that it is good. Actually, whether a meeting is good or not does not depend on the meeting itself but on whether or not you prophesy for God. The reason is that once you speak, the meeting is yours, and all the riches become your supply. Therefore, if we want to be blessed and edified, we should pray and prophesy in the meetings. This is our duty to God and man.

That God wants us to speak for Him is based on the principle of incarnation. Under the grace of the New Testament, God does not want to do things by Himself; He wants man to cooperate with Him. God and man, man and God, coordinate mutually and cooperate together. When we speak, God speaks. This truly benefits man and glorifies God. Therefore, I encourage all of you to prophesy for God. Do not be afraid or shy. One who is shy cannot learn to speak a foreign language well. The same is true with our prophesying for God. Do not be afraid; regardless of this or that, speak and keep speaking. Do not be afraid that people will laugh at you if you do not speak well. The more you speak, the more you will be able to speak. Furthermore, we can learn from one another and teach one another. We all are students, and we all are teachers. Consequently, we all are being perfected and are becoming good prophets.

If we mean business to learn to prophesy, I would propose to you that every week you set aside two hours and come together with eight or ten to teach one another and to learn from one another. For this reason every one of you should have a morning revival every day. There is a publication that is very suitable for this, *The Holy Word for Morning Revival*, which contains Scripture text, portions from footnotes, and portions from Life-study messages for our pray-reading and enjoyment of the Lord every morning. When you have a morning revival every day in this way, you will surely have some inspiration that you can jot down. When the weekend comes, you can put together the portions that you have written down, read them over, and do a little polishing so that it will be approximately three minutes long. This becomes a very good draft for your prophesying. Doing this is something very basic, and it will be of great benefit to you.

Furthermore, in order to prophesy for God, we need to know more of the Bible. Therefore, we need to memorize the best Scripture verses. If you learn to memorize one or two verses a day, you will have an accumulation of the Word. Then, unconsciously, your prophesying will be strengthened. In addition, when you prophesy, avoid wordiness or common words; instead, speak God's word and speak concise words. Eight or ten of you may take turns to practice, to adjust one another, and to learn from one another. Within half a year or a year you will do very well. At that time, when you come together, you will be able to speak for God; you will be able to speak to the point and speak with substance. Furthermore, you will be able to speak forth God so that people can understand, and you will be able to speak God into people so that they can receive the benefit. If in a meeting twenty people prophesy in this way, no individual preaching can compare with their speaking. When you practice this, in the beginning it may not be so good, but that does not matter. We should simply encourage everyone to speak. It does not matter if we have to "sacrifice" the meeting somewhat. After some practice, gradually the proper condition will be manifested, and the improper condition will disappear. After you have learned to prophesy and the ability has been developed, you will receive great profit. Not only will you be able to speak in the meetings, but even your speaking in your daily life will be helped.

We receive the inspiration in our daily life, and then we can present it in the meetings for the building up of the church. Therefore, our prophesying is not our instant inspiration; it is to prepare something from what we have received of the Lord in our daily life and to offer it in the meetings for others' benefit and for the church's building up. I put these words before you. As long as you mean business to practice this, I am confident that you all will be able to prophesy for God and become New Testament priests of the gospel who fulfill their responsibility (*CWWL, 1990*, vol. 3, "The Up-to-date Presentation of the God-ordained Way and the Signs concerning the Coming of Christ," pp. 568-570).

LEARNING TO PROPHESY

First Corinthians 14:1 says, "Pursue love, and desire earnestly spiritual gifts, but especially that you may prophesy." The wording of this verse is very emphatic, stressing the matter of prophesying. This is indicated by the phrase *but especially that you may prophesy*. Paul encouraged the saints to pursue love and desire earnestly spiritual gifts, but he *especially* encouraged them to prophesy. The stress here is altogether on the matter of prophesying.

First Corinthians 14:31 says, "You can all prophesy one by one that all may learn and all may be encouraged." The words *learn* and *be encouraged* are placed together in this verse to show that learning leads to encouragement. In order to prophesy we must first learn ourselves. *That all may learn* refers to the hearers. Since the hearers should learn what the speaker says, the speaker also must learn a great deal. Prophesying requires much learning. When we have learned something, we are able to prophesy. Then through our prophesying, others will learn from us.

To prophesy according to 1 Corinthians 14:31 is not something that comes down upon a person suddenly in a meeting. That kind of experience does not require any learning. Prophesying requires learning. In order to help the saints to learn how to prophesy, we published the books entitled *The Holy Word for Morning Revival*. In these books only a few verses are given for each day, and we encourage the saints to digest these verses through reading and pray-reading them again and again. We have provided some space within these books for writing down the inspiration one receives each morning. After six mornings, one may have six inspirations. Then these six inspirations can be used to compose a prophecy to speak in the church meeting on the Lord's Day. This is a very good way to learn to prophesy.

Today in the churches we are still learning how to prophesy. One thing that I practice to enrich my prophesying is to read diligently. My riches come from my diligent reading. Throughout the past sixty-six years I have been diligently reading the Bible and the best writings concerning the Bible. The footnotes in the Recovery Version and the Life-study messages can help us to enter into the divine revelation in the holy Word. Learning to prophesy requires our labor on the Word with the help of the proper exposition that opens up the Word.

The elders have to spend a great deal of time to stir up the brothers and sisters to have a heart to learn to prophesy. The elders must also learn to prophesy. If you have never learned, how can you teach others? In one locality some of the Chinese-speaking sisters have been burdened to teach some of the other sisters to prophesy. They encourage the sisters to compose their daily inspirations into a prophecy. The sisters then present their compositions for correction to the other sisters teaching them. Sometimes their compositions are too long, or the point of their prophecy is not very clear. One sister who is more than eighty-eight years of age has asked another sister who is a little over thirty years of age to correct her prophecy. Once her prophecy has been corrected, she comes to the meeting and anxiously waits for an opportunity to speak. She likes to be the first one to speak. Whether or not her prophesying is so good or so rich, I do not care. What I care for the most is her spirit. If all the brothers and sisters in the different localities would have such a spirit, the meetings would be very high.

Today, however, most of the saints do not have a strong sense of the need to prophesy in the church meetings. They may come to the Lord's Day meeting for the Lord's table and the prophesying meeting, but they are very relaxed with little exercise of the spirit. Do you not believe that such a situation is an offense to the Lord? If anyone comes to meet with the Lord in the meeting without exercising his or her spirit, this is wrong. The elders' responsibility is to stir up the saints by telling them that it is altogether an offense to the Lord to come to the meeting in a loose way without exercising their spirit.

I have rarely seen a place where the elders promoted, adjusted, and improved the spirit, attitude, and preparation of the saints in coming to the meeting. In order to do this, the elders themselves must take the lead to be prepared. Their spirit must be high and ready. Then they will have the standing and the qualification to edify others. The elders should come to the meetings early. The way they sit in the meeting, their gesture and attitude, should be right. Because we are

meeting with the Lord, we should not be so loose.

The elders must also bear the responsibility for the attendance in the prayer meeting. In some places the attendance on the Lord's Day is one hundred, but the attendance of the prayer meeting is less than thirty. This percentage is typical throughout the churches. The elders must say something. The elders must struggle and strive. No crop will grow without plowing, sowing, and watering. The farmer's duty is to labor diligently. The elders must labor diligently in the same way (*CWWL, 1991-1992*, vol. 1, "Elders' Training, Book 11: The Eldership and the God-ordained Way (3)," pp. 221-223).

Recently, I was having a time with the Lord in the morning with the help of the publication we have entitled *The Holy Word for Morning Revival*. (*CWWL, 1991-1992*, vol. 1, "The Word Situation and the Direction of the Lord's Move," p. 284).

PRACTICING

In addition to learning and exercising, we also need to practice.

By Pray-reading a Portion of the Holy Word

In our practice we first need to learn to pray-read a portion of the holy Word. We should not merely read the Word, nor should we merely pray it. We must pray-read the holy Word.

By Paraphrasing a Short Portion of the Scriptures

In our practice we also need to learn to paraphrase a short portion of the Scriptures. For instance, John 1:1 says, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." In this sentence there are three independent clauses. In order to make these three clauses into a prophecy, we should first pray-read: "Lord, in the beginning. Amen. In the beginning was the Word. Oh, the Word! How wonderful! The Word, the Word. The Word was in the beginning." This is pray-reading. This is also a good paraphrasing. In our pray-reading we can expound the Word a little: "And the Word was with God. Thank You, Lord, You are with God. You even were with God there in eternity past." However, in doing this we should not go too far. We should come back to the Word and pray, "Lord, You are God. The Word was God." If we desire to prophesy, we must surely practice this.

In recent years we have found a way to use a portion of the Word for morning revival. The practice of pray-reading and reading portions from *The Holy Word for Morning Revival* has been a great help to many of the saints. Many have testified that in the past, when they came to the meeting, they did not want to prophesy; they did not want to speak for the Lord, because they had no inspiration and no subject on which to speak. But since they began to use *The Holy Word for Morning Revival*, their spirits have been stirred up, their thoughts have been inspired, and they now have a subject on which to speak, with some material to eat, to digest, to paraphrase, and to pray-read.

The most helpful way in reading the Bible is to paraphrase. In my writing of the training outlines on the Minor Prophets, I had to give the subject of each book, the central thought of each book, and the revelation concerning Christ in each book. I have found that the best way to receive the proper understanding of each book is to paraphrase. When I paraphrased every verse of every chapter of every book, the light came. The Word itself is light. Psalm 119:105 says, "Your word is a lamp to my feet, / And a light to my path," and verse 130 of the same psalm says, "The opening of Your words gives light." The best way to enter into the Word and receive the light of its shining is to paraphrase the Word. Simply to repeat the words of the Scripture again and again, using the same wording, does not help much. We need to paraphrase: "O Lord, in the beginning. Oh, the beginning. Lord, in the beginning You were the Word. Oh, the Word. You, Lord Jesus, You were the Word." This is to paraphrase. To paraphrase is to touch the "switch" and to turn the light on. When we paraphrase, we "switch on" the light. This helps us to understand the Bible, to receive light, and to prophesy.

By Composing Your Inspirations into a Short Message for Your Speaking in the Practice of Prophesying

We also need to practice by composing our inspirations into a short message for our speaking in the practice of prophesying. If we will pray-read a portion of the Word and paraphrase it, we will surely receive inspiration. When I

wrote the training outlines by paraphrasing the Word, new light came to me at a rapid pace. To pray-read and to paraphrase the Word are the best ways to receive inspiration.

In the Old Testament the practice of meditating on the Word is mentioned a number of times (Josh. 1:8; Psa. 1:2; 119:15, 23, 48, 78, 97, 99, 148), but in the New Testament there is no reference to meditating on the Scriptures in the Old Testament way. The Old Testament saints did not have the indwelling Spirit; thus, they had to meditate on the written Word. But today we not only have the Bible in our hands outwardly, but we also have the indwelling Spirit within us. When we pray-read the Word, we exercise our spirit, and the indwelling Spirit is stirred up by our pray-reading. The same thing takes place when we paraphrase the Word. In contrast, if we sit down to meditate on the Word, in not too long we may become sleepy. To meditate, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was God," is altogether an exercising of the mind. But when we say, "In the beginning, O Lord, in the beginning was the Word. Amen. The Word. Hallelujah, the Word!" this stirs up our spirit. Then the indwelling Spirit leaps within us, and the inspirations come.

It is good always to keep a small notebook in which to write the inspirations we receive. We should write something immediately after receiving an inspiration, even writing only one crucial word to use as a reminder when we do not have time to write more. After that, for our practicing of prophesying, it is good to compose a prophecy of no longer than three minutes from the inspirations we have received. If our prophecy is longer than three minutes, we can shorten it. If it is too short, we can insert something. We can even work together with other saints to practice and to learn.

When Mary, the mother of the Lord, came to see Elizabeth, her relative, both of them prophesied (Luke 1:39-55). Mary's prophecy was a composition of short quotations from the Old Testament. This proves that Mary was very familiar with the history, the wording, and the points in the Old Testament. Her speaking did not result from an instant "inspiration" but issued from an accumulation of the word that had been stored in her being. If we have such an accumulation of the word, then while we are speaking, all that we have stored within us can come up within our being to meet our need.

By Praying the Message You Write for Prophesying

We also need to practice by praying the messages we write for prophesying. After we write a message for prophesying, we need to pray-read our writing. By doing this, it will become constituted into our being. Then we should go to the meeting and prophesy. I have the assurance that such a prophesying will be very good.

By Seeking the Infilling and the Outpouring of the Spirit

Finally, we all need to seek the infilling of the Spirit and the outpouring of the Spirit upon us as power from on high to be our impact (Acts 6:10; 7:55; 4:31). For this we must pray. Even while we are in the meetings, on the one hand we are listening to others, and on the other hand we should pray to get ourselves filled with the Spirit and to have the outpouring of the Spirit upon us to be our power and authority.

In this chapter I have passed on to you the way that I have learned. I hope that in your homes you all can practice at least once a week according to these few points. If you will do this, I believe that your speaking will be even better than mine. Then we will see that all the riches stored in the saints will come out. (*CWWL, 1991-1992*, vol. 2, "The Practice of the Church Life," pp. 603-606).

Topic Five (cont'd)

Selected Reading:

NUGGETS AND GEMS FROM THE BIBLE

(Note: These booklets were formerly referred to as "rainbow booklets.")

TO PREACH THE GOSPEL AND TEACH THE TRUTHS AT ANY TIME AND ANY PLACE BY DIVING INTO THE WORD FOR THE INCREASE AND PROPAGATION OF THE LORD

We should not preach a superficial, superstitious, or low gospel... We need to teach the truths of the processed and consummated Triune God and of the enjoyment of the dispensing of the Divine Trinity in the divine transformation for the divine conformation by living in the organism of the Divine Trinity and participating in the dispensing of the Divine Trinity. We need to teach the truths concerning the New Testament economy of God and concerning God, Christ, the Spirit, the believers, the church, the kingdom, and the New Jerusalem.

We all should preach the gospel and teach the truths any time and any place. Our preaching and teaching should have no limit of time and space. We preach and teach by diving into the truths. Do not think that it is the job only of the full-time workers to go out to preach and to teach. We all are priests of God, branches of Christ, and slaves of the Lord, so every day at any time and any place we preach and teach what the Lord has revealed to us.

We need to somewhat forget about our own enjoyment and think about the Lord's propagation and the Lord's increase. Think about the thousands of dear Christian brothers in your vicinity who need the truth that you have. They need the truth in the Recovery Version and in the Life-study messages. They need us to go to them to read one page or one paragraph of our publications with them. They will receive the light. If we go to others again and again in this way, our entire locality and region will be enlightened. We need to go out to spread the marvelous truths the Lord has shown us.

All the saints in the recovery, old and young alike, need to go out. Go to visit your neighbor with your Recovery Version and take with you many of the rainbow booklets we have published, which contain a slightly edited version of the Life-study messages, for the purpose of distribution. We have thousands of copies of these booklets in storage and are continuing to print more, but many of the churches have not picked up the burden to carry out the distribution. It is not a requirement for you to read all the booklets before you go to distribute them. Put some booklets into your pocket and go to your neighbor. The booklets you choose will sovereignly be the right ones for your neighbor. The titles of these booklets are capturing. By reading some of the titles of the booklets to a new one, they will be attracted to the truths contained in them. We have booklets with titles such as: *A Proper Living in the Relationship between Wife and Husband*, *The Surpassing Greatness of God's Power*, *The Hope of God's Calling*, *A Spirit of Wisdom and Revelation*, *The Spirit—the Pledge of Our Inheritance*, *The Sealing of the Holy Spirit*, and *Chosen to Be Holy*. If you would spend five minutes with your neighbor to give him these booklets and read the titles to him, you have done a marvelous job. We should go out to saturate all the homes with these booklets, and we have to do this to the uttermost. We should fill, saturate, and soak the homes in our localities with all the truths we have in our hands, in our hearts, and on all the tapes. The publications are the weapons and the bullets to fight the spiritual warfare. The ministry offices in Taiwan and Irving are the arsenals creating all the weapons. Many of these weapons are stored in Anaheim and Irving. We are printing every day in Irving and Taiwan to create more and more weapons, but we need some soldiers to use them (*The Collected Works of Witness Lee*, 1985, vol. 1, "The Way to Practice the Lord's Present Move," pp. 485-487).

THE DISTRIBUTION OF THE RAINBOW BOOKLETS

All these points we have fellowshipped should be a mirror to us to "see what is on our face," to see where we are. An example that may help us to further realize where we are is our lack of bearing the burden to distribute the rainbow booklets, which contain a slightly edited version of the Life-study messages. A few years ago many of the churches agreed to distribute these booklets. Initially, the distribution was quite encouraging, but it soon began to wane. Eventually, in nearly all the churches the rainbow booklets have hardly been distributed at all. As a result, the editing and printing of these booklets by the Living Stream Ministry office has become a real burden. We may say that we

have no time or burden to spread the truth. We may have many excuses, but when we appear before the judgment seat of Christ (2 Cor. 5:10), the Lord will settle accounts with us (Matt. 25:19). Could you tell the Lord at His judgment seat that you had no time and no burden? I do not think He will take our excuses.

NO EXCUSES AT THE JUDGMENT SEAT OF CHRIST

The slothful slave who was not faithful with the Lord's talent also had an excuse; he said, "Master, I knew about you, that you are a hard man, reaping where you did not sow, and gathering where you did not winnow. And I was afraid and went off and hid your talent in the earth; behold, you have what is yours" (Matt. 25:24-25). The Lord admitted that He is strict in what He demands of His slaves for His work and indicated that since the slothful slave knew this, he should have done something. The Lord admitted that in a sense He does not sow, yet He claims the reaping. He does not winnow, yet He claims of you the gathering. We may make many excuses that it is really hard to reap anything or to gather anything. We may present these excuses to the Lord at the judgment seat, putting the blame entirely upon Him. We may tell Him, "Why did You delay Your coming back? Why are You so hard, reaping where You did not sow and gathering where You did not winnow?" The Lord will not listen to our excuses but instead will cut us off from His presence and take away the gift He has given to us. This is not my teaching, but this is what the Lord tells us in Matthew 24 and 25.

I hope that this fellowship can be used by the Lord to open our eyes to see that the way we have been taking is not the right way. Instead of making so many telephone calls, use the time to go to contact your next door neighbor, and give him a rainbow booklet that we have published. If you visited one of your neighbors once every two weeks, continuously, regularly, properly, and with a sincere burden and some prayer, do you not believe this person could be caught by the Lord? We cannot take anything as an excuse. We cannot say that many have been poisoned against us or that our particular area is a place full of Christians. We must ask ourselves how much time we have spent in visiting others with gospel tracts, with the Bible, and with some of the rainbow booklets. If you try this week after week and even day after day, you will see the result. The Bible tells us that the husbandmen, or farmers, should labor with patience, expecting to see the gathering (1 Cor. 9:10; 2 Tim. 2:6). You cannot say that it is hard to reap a harvest before you have even sown something. That is not fair. You have to do the sowing, the cultivating, and the watering to help the crop grow. After a certain time according to the natural law, something will grow up. We all must ask ourselves whether or not we have done our duty. We have to realize that some day we will stand before the judgment seat (*The Collected Works of Witness Lee*, 1985, vol. 1, "The Way to Practice the Lord's Present Move," pp. 541-545).

THE WAY TO BE FAITHFUL

Our edition of the Recovery Version is not as expensive as some other Bibles. It would be wonderful if we could distribute some copies of this version to the Lord's seekers. We all should have the spirit and the burden to spare some money to get some copies of the Recovery Version into others' hands. This is one of the ways to feed the Lord's people.

Some of us may not be able to afford to purchase extra copies of the Recovery Version, but all of us can distribute the rainbow booklets. We have many thousands of these inexpensive booklets stored away, and we are still publishing them. If we would practice this, this will be a base for us to stand before the Lord when He comes back. None of us will care for money when we are standing before His judgment seat. To save some money and spend it on the Lord's work is to use the mammon of unrighteousness to make friends (Luke 16:9). When you feed others with these spiritual publications, you will surely make friends. The Lord will reward you, and those who get saved and edified will receive you into the eternal tabernacles. Furthermore, we can go to others with our Bible and read Matthew 24 and 25 to them. Many Christians need these chapters to wake them up from their stupor (*The Collected Works of Witness Lee*, 1986, vol.1, "Elders' Training, Book 7: One Accord for the Lord's Move," pp. 87-88).

LEARNING TO USE THE RECOVERY VERSION AND OUR PUBLICATIONS

When you are received into a home, through some questions and a short talk, you may realize that these ones are Christians. Then you have to use the Recovery Version. Just as in fighting, you must know how to use the proper weapons. Even carpenters in their carpentry know how to use their tools—sometimes they have to use an axe, and at other times they have to use a hammer or a saw. You all have to learn how to use the Bible the Lord has put into our hands. Become

familiar with the text of the Bible and with the footnotes in the Recovery Version that help to open up the Bible.

You also need to know the contents of the small booklets, especially the booklet entitled *The Mystery of Human Life*. You do not need to use the entire book. Use only one of the four keys in this booklet that unlock the mystery of human life. When you talk to a particular person, you may have the realization that the last key would be very good for him. Simply use that one key and open the door with it. We also have many rainbow booklets, all selected from the Life-study messages on the New Testament books. We should also take these booklets with us when we go to others' homes.

The holy Word needs to be expounded. In 1936 I wrote a booklet on Christ's genealogy after I spent about eleven years to study it. The consummation of my labor on the genealogy is in the footnotes on the first seventeen verses of Matthew 1. Many Bible students would rather skip over this portion of the Word, but these footnotes bring us into its real significance. We all need to study the Word. Thank the Lord that through the footnotes to the Recovery Version and through the Life-study messages the New Testament has been expounded. The footnotes and the Life-studies open up the Bible to us. The "mine has been opened," but there is the need of more digging to gain the truth.

We should also spend some time on the rainbow booklets. It is better to pass out what you have read. Then you will know what is there and how to use it. Therefore, when you go to a home the second time, the first thing you must be able to do is to show them some interesting and attractive portions from the Recovery Version and our publications. Pick a paragraph or a page, and open it to the one with whom you are speaking. Either he or you will read, or you may read together in a very close and intimate way. Do not read too much. The footnotes on the genealogy of Christ are quite long; most of the saints just use one paragraph or point. The sisters I mentioned used the point on the five women, and the brother used the paragraph on the three missing generations. This is good enough (*The Collected Works of Witness Lee*, 1986, vol. 3, "The Way to Carry Out the Increase and Spread of the Church," pp. 198-201).

GOING OUT WITH LIFE AND TRUTH TO SPREAD THE LORD'S RECOVERY

No other Christian body can imitate us because of two main reasons. The Lord started His recovery with two things—life and truth. In church history it is hard to find any organization, any group of Christians, that has been raised up, established, and built up with life and truth. Regardless of how short a time you have been in the recovery, you should have realized that the main item is life. I do not mean that each one of the saints is in life all the time. But in a general way most of the saints in the Lord's recovery are for life. With life there is also the truth.

The Lord has also blessed us with the truth. Now we can go out by life with the truth. We have the life within, which is our very fiber, our very element, our very essence. We go out with this life essence within and with the truth in our hand—life within and the truth without. We have the Recovery Version of the New Testament, *The Mystery of Human Life*, the rainbow booklets, the Life-study messages, and all the books in the Lord's recovery (*The Collected Works of Witness Lee*, 1986, vol. 3, "The Way to Carry Out the Increase and Spread of the Church," pp. 205-207).

Topic Five (cont'd)

PERSONAL DISTRIBUTION

I. REGARDING THE DISTRIBUTION OF THE PRESENT MINISTRY

In recent months there has been much consideration of the need to increase the distribution of the present ministry. One source of encouragement came from a particular speaking by Witness Lee.

“...I hope that we could live to be eighty or ninety, even to over a hundred, so that we might be able to see the fulfillment of all that we have fellowshipped today. I wish to live on this earth and witness with my own eyes the truth of the Lord not only being **printed into books through our hands** but also being **sent through us to every part of the world** and prevailing in every place. I absolutely believe that this will hasten the Lord’s return because it is through this that the Lord will prepare His bride. I hope that we all can see the manifestation of such a situation.”¹

II. REGARDING THE GIVING AWAY OF BOOKS

In 1925 in an announcement in *The Christian* magazine, Watchman Nee promoted the buying of books and then giving them away.

ANNOUNCEMENT CONCERNING THE GIVING AWAY OF BOOKS

This work is very important. Of course, we should do our best to proclaim our beloved Lord and other truths with our mouth. But we cannot take hold of everyone to speak to him. For this reason, **we should give away books**. Do you know that giving books away produces the greatest results? Do you know that giving away a good book can lead others to receive the Lord, to understand the truth, and to forsake heresies? Unfortunately, those believers who are able would not do this work. Although we cannot know the result of giving books away, in that day when we stand before the judgment seat, we will see why it was worthwhile to do this work. We publish books, and **you should buy and give away books**.²

In 1995 we were encouraged by Brother Lee to visit people and give them books.

We should learn how to visit people by knocking on their doors. When we do this, we should bring certain publications to **give them** as free gifts. Everyone will be happy to receive *The All-inclusive Christ*, *The Economy of God*, and *The Normal Christian Life*. Among the many millions of Christians today, these books are very much needed.³

III. REGARDING THE LOANING OF BOOKS

The biographies of two young men show that two major areas of the earth were opened to the gospel through brothers loaning books to seeking young men.

A. THE OPENING OF AFRICA TO THE GOSPEL AS A RESULT OF LOANING BOOKS

The first account is in the 1820s when a twenty-year-old youth in Blantyre, Scotland,⁴ opened his heart to what he referred to as “a personal application of the provisions of the Savior’s atonement.”⁵ Shortly, it became his desire to show his attachment to the cause of Him who died for him by devoting his life to His service.⁶ “When he determined to be a missionary, the only persons to whom he communicated his purpose was his minister and his parents, from all of whom he received great encouragement.”⁷ His minister at this time was John Moir, a twenty-four-year-old pastor in the adjacent village of Hamilton, Scotland (a walk of about two miles).⁸ During this time Mr. Moir shepherded him by informal meetings and by **lending** him books,⁹ books that included a Greek Lexicon.¹⁰ *These books were “conscientiously returned.”*¹¹ Later, in 1837, Moir approached the London Missionary Society on his behalf.¹² This young man was **David Livingston**, whose labors as a missionary and explorer would open the door to the gospel throughout Africa.

B. THE OPENING OF INLAND CHINA TO THE GOSPEL AS THE RESULT OF LOANING BOOKS

At about this same time in a small town in England, out of boredom, a young man borrowed a pamphlet from his father's library to while away unoccupied hours. It was concerning the finished work of Christ.¹³ This resulted in his "accepting this Savior and His salvation."¹⁴ Soon "he recognized that he was saved to serve, and that a work was waiting for which a life of inner victory and power would be essential."¹⁵ Later, he felt that God had called him to spend his life in missionary service in China.¹⁶ He learned that a minister in his "native town possessed a copy of Medhurst's *China*,"¹⁷ and calling upon him ventured to ask a **loan** of the book."¹⁸

At a certain point the treasurer of the Bible Society and a founder of the Sunday School, John Whitworth, "lent" him Christian papers and books.¹⁹ The young man admitted that there were books that "**I was not able to afford.**"²⁰ He was able to write that "since then I have had access to a tolerably good library."²¹ This young man was **Hudson Taylor** who would take the lead in the opening of inland China to the gospel.

IV. REGARDING RAISING UP BOOKROOMS AND BOOKSTORES

Brother Lee proposed further that we open bookstores for the distribution of the publications.

We should train the young trainees and co-workers not simply to preach but to set up these bookrooms for people to read and study our books.²²

Now what we must do, and what the Lord will do, is to take steps to spread His truth to care for God's people on the whole earth. The best way to do this is to **set up bookstores** with our publications in many languages and in many countries...In a few years the truth will flow like oceans around the earth.²³

Would we be those who give and loan books of this present ministry to many seeking young people? To do this could afford the way for us to tell them of our own help from a particular book and later to fellowship with them regarding their reading. We need to sell the books, give the books, and loan the books. "It is all in the books."

¹ Witness Lee, *The Collected Works of Witness Lee*, 1986, vol. 2, "The Economy of God and the Mystery of the Transmission of the Divine Trinity, (Anaheim: Living Stream Ministry, 2001), p. 460.

² Watchman Nee, *The Collected Works of Watchman Nee*, vol. 7 (Anaheim: Living Stream Ministry, 1992), p. 1236.

³ Witness Lee, *The Collected Works of Witness Lee*, 1995 (Anaheim, Living Stream Ministry, 2007).

⁴ William Garden Blaikie, *The Personal Life of David Livingston, Chiefly from His Unpublished Journals and Correspondence in the Possession of His Family* (New York: Fleming Revell Co., [originally published] 1880), pp. 28-29.

⁵ Blaikie, p. 29.

⁶ Blaikie, p. 29.

⁷ George Seaver, *David Livingston: His Life and Letters* (New York: Harper & Brothers Publishers, 1957), p. 22.

⁸ R. J. Campbell, *Livingstone* (New York: Dodd, Mead & Company, 1930), p. 33.

⁹ Blaikie, p. 35.

¹⁰ Blaikie, p. 35.

¹¹ Blaikie, p. 35.

¹² Campbell, p. 34.

¹³ Dr. and Mrs. Howard Taylor, *Hudson Taylor in the Early Years* (London: The China Inland Mission, 1923), p. 67.

¹⁴ Taylor, p. 67.

¹⁵ Taylor, p. 73.

¹⁶ Taylor, p. 85.

¹⁷ Medhurst was an early missionary to the Chinese.

¹⁸ Taylor, p. 85.

¹⁹ Taylor, p. 103.

²⁰ Taylor, p. 103.

²¹ Taylor, p. 104.

²² Lee, *CWWL, 1994-1997*, vol. 3, p. 50.

²³ Lee, *CWWL, 1994-1997*, vol. 3, p. 53.

Topic Five (con't)

HOW TO LEND BOOKS

I. Having the Proper Vision:

A. You Must be Burdened by Two Things:

1. The spiritual health of individual saints.
2. The ministry publications and their effect on people.

B. Not the Work of a Librarian:

1. Not merely performing the mechanical act of checking out books.
2. Lending books is an active act of seeking out saints who the Lord gives you to shepherd.
3. Recommending books that you think will benefit them; see book lists under Topic Five.
4. Lending books is a way to motivate, monitor, and train the saints to read.

II. Carrying out the Burden to Lend Books:

A. Know the Books:

1. Unlike a librarian who does not have to read the books they check out, you must read through the titles that you plan to recommend to others.
2. The collection of books that you plan to recommend must be titles you have read through, even if casually.

Note 1: See *Journey Through the Bible* for reading lists for young people by grade level.

Note 2: Visit <https://www.ftta.org/prospective-trainees/prepare.php> for a list for college students considering FTTA.

3. There are other book lists suited for new believers and new ones.

B. Know Your Readers:

1. Identify the saints one by one through prayer and fellowship.
2. You cannot just wait for them to come to you. You have to go to them.
3. You cannot merely make an announcement in a meeting and say you are offering books for saints to borrow, expecting them to come to you.
4. If the saints had wanted a book already, they would most likely have purchased it themselves.
5. They need lending because they are not motivated to read a book.
6. You are there to motivate them as well as monitor (shepherd) them to read the books.

C. Follow-up Your Readers:

1. You are there not only to motivate them to read, but also to train and monitor their reading.
2. You need to follow-up your lending by checking on them periodically to see if they are reading the book.
3. If they are reading, find out what they have enjoyed out of the reading.
4. If they are not reading, help them to develop a reading habit.

D. Have Your Readers Write Something:

1. Br. Lee asked the trainees in 1953 to read through *The Spirit of Christ* by Andrew Murray and to write down what they received in a book report and submit it for him to review.
2. Br. Howard Higashi helped the leading brothers in Long Beach in the early '90s to read through the Life-studies and make outlines.

E. Provide Incentives:

1. Provide some incentives such as some kind of “reward” to the saints, especially the young people for reading through an entire book.
2. This matches Brother Lee’s charge to the elders to give the saints “direction, encouragement, and incentives” to read.

F. Pray Much

1. Pray much about the persons to whom you lent books.
2. Ask the Lord to bless them and enlighten them through their reading.

G. Conclusion

1. Lending books is an excellent way to shepherd people to beget them, to cherish and nourish them, to perfect them, and to help them prophesy for the building up of the church.
2. The following excerpts can be applied in principle to lending books:
 - a. “If you use the ‘gold bar’ (the Recovery Version), the rainbow booklets, and all the Life-studies, and present them to the believers and unbelievers all the time, within three months you will get one person. I believe you may even get one person every week.” (*CWWL, 1986*, vol. 1, “Elders’ Training, Book 8: The Life-Pulse for the Lord’s Present Move,” p. 276)
 - b. “If we enter into the riches of the Recovery Version and the Life-studies, within a few years the outcome will be astonishing. Our entering into the riches of the truth will be a great help to the success of the new way, because the success of the new way depends upon speaking the Lord’s word. In order to speak the Lord’s word properly, we need the proper materials, preparation, foundation, and base.” (*CWWL, 1988*, vol. 2, “Crucial Words of Leading, Book 2: Leading the Saints to Practice the New Way Ordained by the Lord,” pp. 529-530)

Topic Six

SETTING UP BOOK DISPLAYS AND BOOK ROOMS

I. Three Purposes of Book Displays

- A. Showcase: Displays the riches of the ministry
- B. Library: Facilitates the borrowing of books
- C. Sales Counter: Assists in the buying or ordering of books

II. Setting Up Book Rooms

- A. Business Matters
 - 1. Business license
 - 2. Sales tax matters
 - 3. Cash register vs calculator
- B. Rented Spaces
 - 1. Portable displays
 - 2. Table displays
 - 3. Book displays
- C. Meeting Halls
 - 1. Book shelves
 - 2. Book tables
 - 3. Book displays

III. Book Room and Book Display Workshop

- A. Rented Spaces
 - 1. Photos and videos of different churches
 - 2. Testimonies
- B. Meeting Halls
 - 1. Photos and videos of different churches
 - 2. Testimonies
- C. Retail Shops
 - 1. Topstone (Houston)
 - 2. Chicago Bibles and Books
 - 3. Amana Book Store (Pleasant Hill)
 - 4. 1299 Massachusetts Ave., Boston
- D. Questions and Answers

Topic Six (cont.)

READING AND TRUTH PURSUIT PROGRAMS

Reading Programs

I. Purpose of the Programs:

- A. To build up an atmosphere of reading in the churches
- B. To have the saints build up a habit to read at least thirty minutes per day

II. Workshop in Two Groups:

- A. Group 1—Church reading
 - 1. Bible reading
 - 2. Corporate reading of ministry book
 - a. Book service and elders can create plans for the saints to read:
 - (1) Foundational books
 - (2) Life-study messages
 - (3) God-ordained way books
 - (4) High-peak books
 - b. Get the whole church involved in reading the same book at an easy pace, perhaps two pages a day
 - 3. Individual reading of ministry books:
 - a. Book service saints can suggest a reading list and reading plans for different needs and interests
 - b. Read based on Lord's leading according to each saint's burden and interest
 - 4. Encourage overflow from the saints' reading in group meetings, at the end of the prayer meeting, and in Lord's Day meetings to create an atmosphere of reading among the saints
 - 5. Testimonies, questions, and answers
- B. Group 2—Home and Group Pursuit and Internet Reading:
 - 1. Home and group truth pursuit
Testimonies and Q&A
 - 2. Internet reading and pursuit
Testimonies and Q&A

Topic Six—Reading Lists

READING AND TRUTH PURSUIT PROGRAMS

Sample Lists for Shepherding and for Loaning Books

I. Booklets:

- A. Salvation:
 - 1. The Mystery of Human Life
 - 2. What is Regeneration?
 - 3. The Assurance, Security, and Joy of Salvation
 - 4. Christ's Redemption and Salvation
 - 5. The Precious Blood of Christ
 - 6. God Is Willing
 - 7. The Sinners' Friend
 - 8. A Sure Salvation
 - 9. A Righteous Forgiveness
 - 10. The Worship That Draws Near
 - 11. Separated unto the Lord
 - 12. The Bible
 - 13. There Is God
 - 14. Christ Is God
 - 15. Christ's Redemption and Salvation
 - 16. The Meaning of Human Life
- B. Life:
 - 1. Christ is Spirit and Life
 - 2. The Key to Experiencing Christ—the Human Spirit
 - 3. Two Principles of Living
 - 4. Man and the Two Trees
 - 5. Deep calls unto Deep
- C. Christian Practice:
 - 1. Calling on the Name of the Lord
 - 2. A Time with the Lord
 - 3. A Simple Way to Touch the Lord
 - 4. Pray-Reading the Word
 - 5. The Life of the Altar and the Tent
 - 6. Praising
 - 7. Tell Him
- D. Church:
 - 1. What are We?
 - 2. A Genuine Church
 - 3. The Ground of the Church
 - 4. God's Purpose for the Church
 - 5. Satan's Strategy against the Church
 - 6. The Way to Build Up the Church

II. Beginner Level:

- A. Bible:
 - 1. Recovery Version of the New Testament
 - 2. On Knowing the Bible (4 chapters)
 - 3. Search Ye the Scriptures (2 chapters)
 - 4. Life-study of John (softbound volumes)
- B. Life:
 - 1. Life Lessons
 - 2. Basic Lessons on Life
 - 3. Normal Christian Faith (15 chapters)
 - 4. The Living and Practical Way to Enjoy Christ (8 chapters)
 - 5. A Young Man in God's Plan (4 chapters)
 - 6. Watchman Nee's Testimony (4 chapters)
 - 7. Hymnal
- C. Truth:
 - 1. The Parts of Man (3 chapters)
 - 2. The Four Major Steps of Christ (4 chapters)
 - 3. A Brief Presentation of the Lord's Recovery (2 chapters)
 - 4. The Glorious Church (5 chapters)
 - 5. The World Situation and God's Move (4 chapters)
- D. Christian Practice:
 - 1. Basic Lessons on Service
 - 2. The Prayer Ministry of the Church (5 chapters)
 - 3. The Organic Practice of the New Way (6 chapters)
 - 4. Character (7 chapters)
 - 5. The Speciality, Generality, and Practicality of the Church Life

III. Advanced Level:

- A. Bible:
 - 1. Recovery Version Holy Bible with footnotes
 - 2. How to Study the Bible
 - 3. Life-study of the Bible (softbound volumes)
- B. Life:
 - 1. Our Human Spirit (10 chapters)
 - 2. The Crucial Revelation of Life in the Scriptures (16 chapters)
 - 3. Basic Lessons on Life (20 chapters)
 - 4. Love Not the World (11 chapters)
 - 5. Watchman Nee: Seer of the Divine Revelation (33 chapters)
 - 6. Hymnal
- C. Truth:
 - 1. A Blessed Human Life (8 chapters)
 - 2. The Economy of God (chapter 24)
 - 3. The All-Inclusive Christ (16 chapters)
 - 4. The History of the Church and Local Churches (10 chapters)
- D. Christian Practice:
 - 1. The Normal Christian Life (14 chapters)
 - 2. The Normal Christian Worker (10 chapters)
 - 3. The Genuine Ground of Oneness

Topic Six—Reading Lists (cont.)

READING AND TRUTH PURSUIT PROGRAMS

Possible One-year Ministry Reading Schedules

7th grade—28 chapters

- Calling on the Name of the Lord (booklet)
- A Time with the Lord (booklet)
- Pray-Reading the Word (booklet)
- A Simple Way to Touch the Lord (booklet)
- The Key to Experiencing Christ—Our Human Spirit (booklet)
- Consecration (booklet)
- The Principle of the Nazarite (booklet)
- The Precious Blood of Christ (booklet)
- The Mystery of Human Life (booklet)
- The Bible (booklet)
- Christ is God (booklet)
- Christ is Spirit and Life (booklet)
- Christ's Redemption and Salvation (booklet)
- The Meaning of Human Life (booklet)
- There is God (booklet)
- The Assurance, Security, and Joy of Salvation (booklet)
- Life Lessons, Volume 1 (12 lessons)

8th grade—36 chapters

- Life Lessons, Volume 2 (12 chapters)
- Fellowship with the Young People (3 chapters)
- What Is Regeneration? (1 chapter)
- Our Human Spirit (10 chapters)
- Watchman Nee's Testimony (3 chapters)
- Men who Turn the Age (2 chapters)
- The Parts of Man (3 chapters)
- Finding Christ by the Living Star (2 chapters)

9th grade—44 chapters

- Life Lessons, Volume 3 (12 chapters)
- A Young Man in God's Plan (4 chapters)
- The Four Major Steps of Christ (4 chapters)
- The Living and Practical Way to Enjoy Christ (8 chapters)
- The Crucial Revelation of Life in the Scriptures (16 chapters)

10th grade—50 chapters

- Life Lessons, Volume 4 (12 chapters)
- The All-Inclusive Christ (16 chapters)
- Love Not the World (11 chapters)
- The History of the Church and the Local Churches (10 chapters)
- Two Principles of Conduct (1 chapter)

11th grade—49 chapters

The Kingdom and the Church (4 chapters)
The Recovery of God's House and God's City (8 chapters)
The Knowledge of Life (14 chapters)
On Knowing the Bible (4 chapters)
The Glorious Church (10 chapters)
Character (7 chapters)
Glad Tidings to Fallen Man (1 chapter)
The Divine Stream (1 chapter)

12th grade—70 chapters

The Economy of God (24 chapters)
The Life for the Preaching of the High Gospel (7 chapters)
The Secret of Experiencing Christ (11 chapters)
Christ and the Church in the Psalms (24 chapters)
The Passover (3 chapters)
Satan's Strategy against the Church (1 chapter)

Additional books:

The Normal Christian Faith (17 chapters)
The Normal Christian Life (14 chapters)
The World Situation and God's Move (7 chapters)
The Vision of God's Building (19 chapters)
The Experience of Life (chapters 1-8)
Watchman Nee's Basic Lesson series
Authority and Submission (11 chapters)
Truth Lessons, Level One, Volume One (12 chapters)
Truth Lessons, Level One, Volume Two (12 chapters)
The Character of God's Workman (10 chapters)
Life and Building in the Song of Songs (16 chapters)

This is a example of what one church has produced to help the saints read the ministry.



HE SAINTS SHOULD BE ENCOURAGED to experience and enjoy a crucial point day by day and hour after hour during the week. Their assignment for the week would be to study, to learn, and to experience and enjoy this crucial point. When the saints come back to the next meeting a number of them will have the experience of this crucial point. Many times in the past the saints gave testimonies merely of their experiences with seemingly nothing related to the Word. By experiencing, enjoying, and laboring on a crucial point of the truth for an entire week, the saints will give testimonies not merely of their experiences, but of their experiences wrapped up with the divine revelation. Their testimonies will be a mingling of the divine Word with their experiences.

Everybody wants to speak, but no one has anything to speak about. By laboring in a crucial point of the truth, you create something for the saints to speak about. This is why I say again—do not take the easy, short-cut way. We all need to take the way of labor for the long run. If you practice like this week after week, month after month, and year after year, consider what the issue will be in your locality after four years. The issue will be something marvelous.

I assure you that this is the best way not just to use the Bible in the way of knowledge but in the way of life. We can use the notes of the Recovery Version plus the Life-study Messages in order to dive into the crucial points of the Scriptures. The notes of the Recovery Version and the Life-studies are a mine that requires much digging on your part. Going to these two sources will save you much time. If you get into these mines you will see something more and something higher. Take the way of laboring on the crucial points of the truth.

Name _____

Date:

2018 Plan:

100: BREAD OF LIFE

For I rejoiced greatly at the brothers' coming and testifying to your **Steadfastness in the truth**, even as you walk in truth. I have no greater joy than these things, that I hear that my children are **Walking in the truth**.

New Testament and/or Old Testament
OT: 39 Books, 929 chs, 3 ch./day (15 min)
NT: 27 Books, 260 chs, 1 ch./day (5 min)
Objective: Complete either or both OT and NT by the end of 2017

101: THE CLASSICS

*The All-Inclusive Christ; The Economy of God;
The Glorious Church; The Knowledge of Life;
The Experience of Life; The Normal Christian Life;
The God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob*
Total: 105 chs
1 ch./3 days (15 min/day)
Objective: Complete any three of these books by the end of 2017

102: FOUNDATION SEEDS

Life-study of Genesis
Total: 120 msgs
1 msg/2 days (15 min/day)
Objective: Complete the entire *Life-study of Genesis* by the end of 2017

201: CRUCIAL NT L-S

*Life-study of Matthew; Life-study of John;
Life-study of Romans; Life-study of Hebrews;
Life-study of Ephesians*
Matthew: 72 msgs, John: 51 msgs, Romans: 69
msgs, Hebrews: 69 msgs, Ephesians: 97 msgs
1 msg/2 days (15 min/day)
Objective: Complete any two (out of 5) Life-studies by the end of 2017

202: CRUCIAL OT L-S

Life-study of Exodus
• Total: 180 msgs
• 4 msg/wk (20 min/day)
Objective: Complete the entire *Life-study of Exodus* by the end of 2017

INDEPENDENT STUDIES:

301: L-S MESSAGES

Complete all of the Life-study volumes
• Total: 1984 msgs
• Self paced (5 yrs program)
Objective: Complete all of the Life-study volumes in approximately 5 years

302: CONCLUSION OF NT

Complete all Conclusion volumes
• Total: 436 msgs
• Self paced (18-24 mo program)
Objective: Complete all of the Conclusion volumes in approximately 18-24 months

400: HIGH PEAK BOOKS

Complete all High Peak books
• Total: 204 msgs
• Self paced (18-24 mo program)
Objective: Complete all of the High Peak books in approximately 18-24 months

Topic Seven

STRENGTHENING AND DEVELOPING AN EXISTING CHURCH BOOK SERVICE

I. Reference (inserted in this binder):

- A. *Fellowship for Establishing and Maintaining a Healthy Book Service*

Topic Eight

Listening to the Ministry Introduction

Scripture Reading: Gal. 3:2, 5, 20, 9, 14; Rom. 8:2, 6, 10-11, 30; 10:17

- I. **To receive the Spirit by faith is God's revealed way; it is in the light of God's revelation and issues in life and glory; hence, we must treasure faith, not the works of law; it is by the hearing of faith that we have received the Spirit that we may participate in God's promised blessing and live Christ—8:2, 6, 10-11, 30:**
 - A. God's New Testament economy is a matter of supplying the Spirit and receiving the Spirit; on God's side, He supplies the Spirit; on our side, we receive the Spirit; the supplying of the Spirit and the receiving of the Spirit do not take place once for all; on the contrary, they are continual—Gal. 3:5; John 3:34; 7:38.
 - B. Both the supplying of the Spirit and the receiving of the Spirit are by the hearing of faith, not by the works of law—Gal. 3:2, 5.
- II. **We all should declare that we are hearing Christians, not working Christians; to hear is a great blessing; we come together for the hearing of faith; by this hearing we receive the supply of the Spirit—1 Tim. 1:4; Gal. 3:5.**
- III. **As we hear about those things in which we are to believe, faith is produced within us; the more we hear about these good things, the more we appreciate them; spontaneously this appreciation issues in our believing in those very things about which we have heard—Rom. 10:17:**
 - A. People hear of God's grace; then they appreciate it and call upon the Lord; they go on to receive, accept, join, partake of, and enjoy this grace, which is the Triune God processed to be everything to us; this is faith—John 3:16; 1:12; Rom. 10:9, 13.
 - B. In His New Testament economy God intends to make us hearers of faith; this faith is the reflection of the Triune God processed to become our all-inclusive grace; God desires that we become those who continually hear the faith; through this enjoyment we become one with Him; we become a universal and eternal entity to express His marvelous divinity—Gal. 3:14.

A BRIEF OVERVIEW OF MINISTRY RESOURCES

In recent years the number of ways to receive the ministry of the word in the Lord's recovery has increased dramatically. This handout is a guide to help the saints in the churches access these resources:

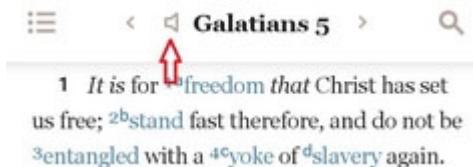
Audio

- Audiobooks of many LSM publications are available at lsm.org/audiobooks.
- An archive of LSM's *Life-Study of the Bible with Witness Lee* Radio Broadcast is available at lsmradio.com. Each program is less than 30 minutes and features Brother Lee's speaking and a discussion of the program's subject by two of his co-workers.
- LSM's online radio station—lsmchristianradio.com—plays messages from LSM's archives and readings from *The New Testament Recovery Version*. It is available via browser or the LSM Radio app that can be downloaded from either the Google Play Store or the Apple App Store. The site's home page lists the broadcast schedule for the current date.
- <https://youtube.com/@livingstreamministryhymns> is an LSM channel for playing audio recordings of hymns. It includes topical playlists and videos that display the lyrics as a hymn is playing.¹
- The ministrybooks.org site includes an audio feature that is available to those who have subscribed to the Ministrybooks.org Subscription Service (see the "Reading" section below). If you see the symbol



below the menu and above the title of the book, you can click on it and your device will "read aloud" the contents of the book in an audio stream.

- The Recovery Version smartphone app also has an audio feature. If you click on the speaker icon at the top of the display, your device will speak the chapter to you.



Video

- LSM's Webcast Subscription Service—lsmwebcast.com—allows you to pay for individual video or audio messages or to subscribe for \$9.95 per month to have access to all video content on the site.
- LSM posts a Timely Speaking Weekly Broadcast at lsm.org/timely-speaking.html.
- LSM operates a YouTube channel—youtube.com/@LivingStreamMinistry—with multiple series of messages by Brother Lee and of LSM radio broadcasts (see note 1 on this page).

¹ For a more complete description see newsletters.lsm.org/having-this-ministry/issues/February2023-017/lsm-youtube-channels.html.

Topic Eight

Reading

- Print copies of books can be ordered through a church's bookroom, or through livingstreambooks.com. They can also be purchased at the LSM Bookstore in Anaheim.
- The redesigned ministrybooks.org site is a rich resource. The full text of the entire Life-study of *the Bible* and ten other select titles, along with an advanced search feature and the ability to view the Scriptures referenced in the text, are available at no charge. There is also a subscription service for \$8.00 per month or \$80.00 per year that adds access to the full text of the *The Collected Works of Watchman Nee*, *The Collected Works of Witness Lee*, and *The Conclusion of the New Testament* volumes, and more. The subscription service also allows you to insert bookmarks, highlight text, track your reading, search by page number, and listen to audio readings of the *Life-study* messages and *The Collected Works of Witness Lee*. Many of the features are shown in videos that are available at ministrybooks.org/help/videos.
- The text of the *Holy Bible Recovery Version* is available online at text.recoveryversion.bible.
- The *Recovery Version* app can be downloaded from Google Play Store or Apple App Store. The recoveryversion.bible/manual.html page introduces the app's main features. The recoveryversion.bible/app page contains many short videos on its rich features.
- *Ministry Digest* (see lsm.org/ministry-digest) was a monthly periodical and contained four lines of ministry (The History of the Lord's Recovery, Words for New Believers, Maturing in Life, High Peak of the Divine Revelation) drawn from *The Collected Works of Witness Lee*. (Note: *Ministry Digest* was discontinued at the end of 2024, but past issues are available for purchase until the remaining stock is depleted.) The publication is a good way to introduce the LSM publication to others.
- *The Ministry of the Word* contains the messages given in the seven LSM international trainings and conferences and in the weekly FTTA Wednesday night ministry meeting.²
- eBooks are available for many publications in EPUB and Kindle formats. Specific information on how these platforms are supported and what books are available on each platform can be found at lsm.org/epublications.html.

Reading Helps

- The 500 Life-studies (500LS) app integrates with ministrybooks.org and allows you to set up a Life-study reading schedule and to track your progress in your reading. Two short videos, one about the app and the other showing how to create a reading schedule and how to track your progress, are available at newsletters.lsm.org/having-this-ministry/Issues/Apr2023-019/videos.html.
- LSM provides reading schedules to track your reading of the Old and New Testaments at recoveryversion.bible/reading-schedules.html.
- *Having This Ministry* is an LSM electronic newsletter sent out to its subscribers. It contains reports on the spread of the ministry and various events, moreover; it included new tools and features for receiving the ministry, ministry excerpts from recent conferences and trainings, informational videos, discounted publications, and new publication releases. Past issues and a way to subscribe can be found at newsletters.lsm.org/having-this-ministry.

² See newsletters.lsm.org/having-this-ministry/Issues/Jul2021-003/ministry-of-the-word.html for more information.

Topic Nine

AN OVERVIEW OF WWW.LSM.ORG

I. ANNOUNCEMENTS:

- A. Recent Announcements from LSM
- B. Highlights – Quick access to website links shared by LSM
- C. LSM Conference and Training information

II. PUBLISHING:

- A. **Online Bookstore:** (www.livingstream.com): Order LSM publications online.
- B. **eBooks:** information page for eReaders
- C. **Ministrybooks.org** (www.ministrybooks.org): Read and Search Ministry Books
- D. **Digital Publications and Distribution:** Collection of digital publications for distribution

- E. **Recovery Version of the Bible**
- F. **Life-study of the Bible**
- G. **The Collected Works of Watchman Nee**
- H. **The Collected Works of Witness Lee**
- I. **Affirmation and Critique:** Motivating a reconsideration of the crucial aspects of Christian thought and practice in light of a vital, yet neglected, aspect of the Bible—the *oikonomia* of God (Eph. 3:9).
- J. **Historical Evaluations of Christian Thought**
- K. **Conference and Training Outlines:** Outlines of recent conferences, Wednesday night meetings, and ITERO messages.
- L. **Tracts for Downloading:** Tracts that can be freely downloaded, reproduced, and distributed.
- M. **Internet Copyright Policy.**

III. Audio/Video:

- A. **Audiobooks**
- B. **LSM Webcast** (www.lsmwebcast.com): Audio and videos of both current and past conferences and trainings, Open Windows, and scripture reading MP3 files.
- C. **LSM's YouTube Channel (@LivingStreamMinistry)**
- D. **LSM Radio** (www.lsmradio.com): *Life-Study of the Bible with Witness Lee* is a 30-minute radio broadcast composed of excerpts from Witness Lee's spoken ministry followed by a discussion of the portion presented, including questions and answers. *Available in MP3 format and podcast.*
- E. **LSM Christian Radio: 24 Hour Streaming**
- F. **Free Audio Downloads:** Scripture singing, Semi-annual banner songs, and an audio book for download.

IV. Free Resources

- A. **Nuggets and Gems from the Bible:** Free eBooklets
- B. **“Having This Ministry...” Newsletter** (link.lsm.org/newsletter)
- C. **Read and Share Ministry Portions**
- D. **Tracts** (Mystery of Human Life, Gospel Tracts, and Vital Group Tracts)
- E. **eManna** delivers the Word of God as the bread of life daily via email. With a few verses from the Bible and a short word of ministry, it will nourish you and strengthen your faith.
- F. **Quick Links for Our Daily Life:** (www.lsm.org/daily)

V. Services:

- A. Customer Payment Portal**
- B. Direct Mail Service (DMS)**
- C. Publication Catalogs**

VI. About

- A. Statement of Faith**
- B. About Watchman Nee**
- C. About Witness Lee**
- D. Contact LSM**
- E. Internet Copyright Policy**
- F. Privacy Policies**

VII. Donations

VIII. A Timely Speaking

Topic Nine (cont.)

MINISTRY PUBLICATIONS (WWW.MINISTRYBOOKS.ORG)

I. Ministrybooks.org - Read and Search the Ministry of Watchman Nee and Witness Lee

- A. *The Collected Works of Watchman Nee, The Collected Works of Witness Lee, the Life-study of the Old Testament, the Life-study of the New Testament, The Conclusion of the New Testament*, and more.
- B. Subscriber features – Bookmarks, highlight text, keep track of completed titles, listen to audio readings from CWWL and Life-studies, print page numbers from searches
- C. Available for free – Life-study of the Bible (1st Edition), and ten selected titles, advanced search function, Scripture viewer

II. Read

- A. Titles A-Z
- B. *The Collected Works of Watchman Nee* (CWWN)
- C. *The Collected Works of Witness Lee* (CWWL)
- D. *The Conclusion of the New Testament*
- E. The High-peak Books
- F. *Life-study of the Old Testament*
- G. *Life-study of the New Testament*

III. Search

- A. Search Publication Titles
- B. Search Ministry Contents
- C. Advanced Search

IV. Account

- A. Dashboard
- B. Account Information
- C. Annotations
- D. Bookmarks
- E. Completed Titles
- F. User Settings

V. Reader View

- A. Book Navigation (Chapter and Section)
- B. Book information and purchase links
- C. Change Font Size
- D. Find a Page Number
- E. Mark Title completed
- F. Bookmark section
- G. Highlighter tool

VI. Listen to Audio Reading Help

- A. Overview: Navigation of Help section with Quick Tour video
- B. Videos: Short videos to help with different features of the site
- C. Support: Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) on Finding a publication, login problems, subscription and payments, and reader features.
- D. Recent Updates: A changelog of fixes and new features that have been added to the site.

Topic Nine

Outline Four

Promoting the Life-studies to Raise the Standard of the Church Life and Bring in a Genuine Revival

Scripture Reading: 1 Tim. 4:6; 2 Tim. 1:13; 2:2, 15; 3:10, 14-17

I. We need to be nourished with the riches of Christ by reading the Life-study messages so that we can uphold the high standard of the church life:¹

- A. If we are not nourished with the riches of Christ by reading the Life-study messages, the standard of the church life will remain low; it is by receiving spiritual nourishment in the messages that we can uphold the high standard of the church life—1 Tim. 4:6.
- B. In recent years many churches have experienced a revival by obtaining spiritual nourishment in the Life-study messages; the saints in these churches not only enjoy the riches of Christ by reading the messages but also enliven and supply the church meetings by sharing these riches with one another in the meetings—cf. Eph. 4:15-16.
- C. In order to raise the standard of the church life and hasten the progress of the Lord's move among us, we need to partake of the riches of Christ in the Life-study messages—3:8-11.

II. We need to promote the study of the life-studies to bring in a genuine revival in the Lord's recovery:²

- A. Now that all the Life-studies of the New Testament have been published, we hope that all the churches would take this set of books as the basis for their study and greatly promote the learning of the truth.³
- B. In every church we have to help all the saints to study the Recovery Version of the New Testament, especially the footnotes, in a careful and thorough way.
- C. Now the way has been clearly presented to us, and everything depends on whether or not we are willing to pay the price; if we are willing to pay the price, in a relatively short period of time the church will make great progress in learning the truth.
- D. We should help the saints to build up a practice or a habit that every day they would spend at least thirty minutes in the Word—Acts 6:4; 17:11:⁴
 - 1. This can be done by taking ten minutes in the morning, ten minutes in the evening, and another ten minutes before going to bed.
 - 2. We all need to build up such a practice to spend at least thirty minutes a day to get into God's Word.
 - 3. The best way is to charge the saints to study a book of the New Testament according to their choice; they should get into this book continually and every day.
 - 4. We should charge them to pray-read two or three verses of this book every day; then they have to study the accompanying message—Jer. 15:16; 1 Tim. 4:6; 2 Tim. 2:15.
 - 5. They also need the help of the footnotes and the Life-study messages to enter into the truth; the saints need to take this way every day to get into the truth.
 - 6. After one year of studying the Bible in this way, there will be a solid change in the saints' home life, private life, and church life.
 - 7. It is not a matter of quantity but a matter of endurance; you must endure this kind of Bible study.
 - 8. We need to remind the saints week after week, and sometimes the elders need to give them some direction, some encouragement, and some incentive—cf. Rom. 15:15; 2 Tim. 1:6; 2 Pet. 1:12-13; 3:1.
- E. Try your best in your locality to stir up an atmosphere and to create a hunger and thirst in the saints for the Lord's truth; tell them that the truth is in the unique holy Word and that the best help to usher them into the Word is the Recovery Version with the footnotes and all the Life-studies—John 17:17; Eph. 3:3-4; *Hymns*, #806.

Topic Nine

- F. If the saints do love the Lord's recovery, they must get themselves fed all the time with the healthy food so that they may be strong; as a result of eating a proper, regular diet, the saints will be strong, and the Lord will have a strong testimony—1 Tim. 6:3; 2 Tim. 1:13; Titus 1:9; 2:1.
- G. Today the reason that the gospel of the Lord cannot be spread is that we do not know the truth; the truth is the gospel—Eph. 1:13; Col. 1:5:
 - 1. If we speak the truth in every place, we are in fact preaching the gospel in every place—Acts 8:4, 30-35.
 - 2. The entire Bible is the gospel of God, but it seems that we do not understand this.
 - 3. Now we have to turn this situation around so that all the saints among us will know how to speak the truth and preach the gospel; this will provide the Lord a broad way to fulfill His desire—Eph. 4:25.
- H. If the saints have Life-study messages everywhere in their homes, their spiritual condition will be greatly revived—cf. Deut. 11:18-21:
 - 1. If they have the Lord's word, it will be impossible for them not to be revived.
 - 2. As long as we are willing to take the lead to encourage the whole church to read and to absorb what they have read, revival will definitely come.
 - 3. If we all rise up to study the truth and to know and pursue the Lord, this will bring in a big, long-lasting, and genuine revival of the church.
- I. We should have a burden to promote the Life-studies continent by continent until every household has the Life-studies, and every saint has the Life-studies both inwardly and outwardly.⁶
 - 1. The Life-studies are for teaching and helping people to read the Bible.
 - 2. When you read the Bible, your mind may not be enlightened even after reading it a hundred times—cf. Acts 8:30-31.
 - 3. However, when you open the Recovery Version of the New Testament, there are footnotes that open the truth to you in the places you cannot understand—vv. 32-35; Eph. 3:3-4.
 - 4. Once the word of the truth is opened, you will receive the revelation; then when you read the Life-studies, you will be enlightened even more; after you have read the Life-studies, the few verses that you have studied will be fully opened to you—Psa. 119:130.

III. We need to learn and practice the truth:⁷

- A. We need to make a decision to learn the truth; if the young saints do not make such a decision, the church has no future—2 Tim. 3:14-17; 1:13.
- B. For the sake of the spreading of the church to new localities, there is a need of leading ones, some who can bear responsibility; we are short of such ones because in the daily church life we do not learn or practice the truth—1 Tim. 3:2; 5:17; 2 Tim. 2:24.
- C. If we learn the truth and practice the truth in the daily church life, every member will be able to bear some responsibility; then wherever we spread, there will be no problems; every local church will be strong—1 John 2:14; Rev. 3:8-10.
- D. If we study the biblical truths thoroughly and then present them to people, especially to the college students, they will fully appreciate what we say:⁸
 - 1. On the contrary, if we are short of the knowledge of the truth, it will be impossible for us to preach the gospel on the campuses effectively.
 - 2. Hence, we must strive to pursue the truth; we must exert some effort to be solidly equipped in the truth.
- E. Remember “the tortoise wins the race”:⁹
 - 1. Never forget the race between the hare and the tortoise; the tortoise wins the race.
 - 2. If we keep going slowly, we will win the race; all the “running ones” will be defeated, but the working ones will win the race.
 - 3. Eat regularly, continuously, and slowly; you will then reach the goal.

Topic Nine

Excerpts from the Ministry:

BEING NOURISHED WITH THE RICHES OF CHRIST TO RAISE THE STANDARD OF THE CHURCH LIFE AND HASTEN THE LORD'S MOVE

If we are not nourished with the riches of Christ by reading the Life-study messages, the standard of the church life will remain low. It is by receiving spiritual nourishment in the messages that we can uphold the high standard of the church life. In recent years many churches in the Far East have experienced a revival by obtaining spiritual nourishment in the Life-study messages. The saints in these churches not only enjoy the riches of Christ by reading the messages but also enliven and supply the church meetings by sharing these riches with one another in the meetings. In order to raise the standard of the church life and hasten the progress of the Lord's move among us, we need to partake of the riches of Christ in the Life-study messages. (*CWWL, 1977*, vol. 1, "Various Meetings in Anaheim," ch. 1, pp. 515-516)

PROMOTING THE LEARNING OF THE TRUTH

Now that all the Life-studies of the New Testament have been published, I hope that all the churches would take this set of books as the basis for their study and greatly promote the learning of the truth. In every church we have to help all the saints to study the Recovery Version of the New Testament, especially the footnotes, in a careful and thorough way. This will truly be a great task. In the past we felt that we had nothing to do. Actually, this was because we did not do anything and did not want to do anything. Even when we truly wanted to do something, we could not find the way to do it, so we lost interest in doing anything. However, now the way has been clearly presented to us, and everything depends on whether or not we are willing to pay the price. If we are willing to pay the price, I believe that in three to five years the whole church will make great progress in learning the truth. (*CWWL, 1984*, vol. 5, "Truth, Life, the Church, and the Gospel—The Four Pillars in the Lord's Recovery," ch. 8, pp. 439-440)

THE TRUTH ENABLING MAN TO RECEIVE LIGHT AND FREEDOM

The Lord Jesus said that the truth shall set us free (John 8:32). There is light in the truth, and once we receive the light, we are set free. During the time of the Lord Jesus, the Pharisees and lawyers also read the Old Testament, but they studied only the letter without the light of the truth. However, once the Lord Jesus gave the explanation, the truth was revealed. For example, there was a group of Sadducees who did not believe that there was such a thing as resurrection, so they went to question the Lord. The Lord Jesus said to them that in Exodus 3:6, the section concerning the burning bush, Moses clearly pointed out that God is the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. The Lord also told them that God is not the God of the dead but of the living (Mark 12:18-27; Luke 20:27-38). Since God called Himself the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, this proves that Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, who had died, will be resurrected. This example shows us that the Lord Jesus' knowledge of the truth and the light of the Scriptures was very thorough, and the way He expounded the Scriptures was not only according to letter but also according to the life and power implied within them. This is also the focus of the Life-studies. Thus, we must make an effort to read the Bible and study the Life-studies in order to know the truth.

We do not need to worry about the shortage of material or about the way for us to pursue the truth. The only need is for us to be willing to spend the time and effort on this matter. If we all rise up to study the truth and to know and pursue the Lord, this will bring in a big, long-lasting, and genuine revival of the church. (*CWWL, 1984*, vol. 5, "Truth, Life, the Church, and the Gospel—The Four Pillars in the Lord's Recovery," ch. 8, pp. 446)

Topic Nine

PROMOTING THE STUDY OF THE LIFE-STUDIES TO BRING IN A GENUINE REVIVAL IN THE LORD'S RECOVERY

We should have a burden to promote the Life-studies continent by continent until every household has the Life-studies, and every saint has the Life-studies both inwardly and outwardly. The Life-studies are for teaching and helping people to read the Bible. When you read the Bible, your mind may not be enlightened even after reading it a hundred times. However, when you open the Recovery Version of the New Testament, there are footnotes that open the truth to you in the places you cannot understand. Once the word of the truth is opened, you will receive the revelation. Then when you read the Life-studies, you will be enlightened even more. After you have read the Life-studies, the few verses that you have studied will be fully opened to you. Ephesians has only six chapters, but there are ninety-seven messages in the *Life-study of Ephesians*. If you read two messages a day, you will need about fifty days to finish it. After you have spent fifty days to read through all these ninety-seven messages, the content of the six chapters, the entire book of Ephesians, every sentence, and even every word will be clear and enlightening to you. In other words, Ephesians, this mysterious and marvelous book, will be fully opened to you. (CWWL, 1984, vol. 5, "Truth, Life, the Church, and the Gospel—The Four Pillars in the Lord's Recovery," ch. 9, pp. 457-458)

THE LIFE-STUDIES AND THE RECOVERY VERSION

Through the past ten years up to the present time, it has been fully proven among us that the most profitable writings and publications are the Life-study messages with the footnotes of the Recovery Version. I wrote these things not for scholarly study for people to get a degree but for life ministering, for truth releasing, and for opening up the books of the Bible. We do not need scholarly writings or any kind of books that build up people's degrees...However, I do have a burden to publish things full of Christ, full of the processed Triune God, full of the life-giving Spirit, full of life, and full of the church. The Lord's recovery is just for the processed Triune God to be dispensed into us, and the living Christ, the Spirit, life, and the church are the crucial contents of the Lord's recovery. There is no other place to pick up other books that are so rich, so enlightening, and so nourishing concerning the recovery of Christ, the Spirit, life, and the church. Since this is the real situation and the real condition, I feel that we have no choice but to use the Life-studies, because we realize that this is the best way to bring people into the holy Word.

The holy Word itself says in Psalm 119:130: "The opening of Your words gives light." Millions of copies of the Bible have been distributed. They have been placed in hotels, in homes, and in many places. Nearly everywhere you go today, you find a Bible, but who has entered into the Bible? There has been nearly no entrance. Many have a copy of the Bible, but the Bible has been closed and nearly never opened. Now the Lord has given us a key, an opener. I consider our writings as the opener to open the holy Word. I believe that those of you who have read the Life-study messages can testify honestly that these messages with the footnotes of the Recovery Version have opened up a certain chapter or a certain book of the Bible to you. This is not to replace the Bible but to bring people into the Bible. (CWWL, 1984, vol. 2, "Elders' Training, Book 3," ch. 10, p. 320-321).

THE NEED FOR A SOLID FOUNDATION IN THE WORD

...I have the assurance that if you would get into the Life-study messages continually, you will be different after fifty days. Any message from any book, such as Genesis, Exodus, Matthew, or Revelation, is good for your study. Just go to the Life-study messages. I hope that the Lord would really have mercy upon us so that we would not hold any kind of personal feeling or individualistic opinion. We must be those who solely take care of the interest of the Lord's recovery and the benefit of all the dear saints who have come into the Lord's recovery. We care only for this.

We must do our best to get ourselves into these truths and to get these truths constituted into our being. This cannot be done within a short time, but this must be our practice. I also am burdened that

Topic Nine

all the leading ones, either the elders or the serving ones taking some kind of lead, should have a real burden to pray for the saints in your locality that the Lord may stir up their interest, their seeking heart, and their spirit to seek after the Lord in His truth. The truth is nowhere but in the Bible, yet the Bible needs an opener. We need to lead the saints into the real, right, and proper realization of the need of the Bible and also of the help of the Life-study messages and the Recovery Version.

BUILDING UP A HABIT OF SPENDING TIME IN THE WORD

We should help the saints to build up a practice or a habit that every day they would spend at least thirty minutes in the Word. This can be done by taking ten minutes in the morning, ten minutes in the evening, and another ten minutes before going to bed. We all need to build up such a practice to spend at least thirty minutes a day to get into God's Word. The best way is to charge the saints to study a book of the New Testament according to their choice. They should get into this book continually and every day. Some saints may decide to study the book of Romans or the book of Hebrews. They should study every day either three times for ten minutes each or one time for thirty minutes. We should charge them to pray-read two or three verses of this book every day. Then they have to study the accompanying message. We have messages on all the verses. The saints do not need to pray-read the Life-study messages, but they have to pray-read the biblical verses in order to get the help to enter into the truth conveyed in these few verses. They also need the help of the footnotes and the Life-study messages to enter into the truth. The saints need to take this way every day to get into the truth. After one year of studying the Bible in this way, there will be a solid change in the saints' home life, private life, and church life. A few verses seems very slow, but we must realize that breathing is a slow thing. We breathe only a little at a time, but this continual practice accumulates and keeps us living. We may think that this is too slow, but even if it took us ten years to finish the entire New Testament, that would be wonderful. To pick up the truth contained in half of the New Testament after five years would be marvelous. We do not encourage the saints to be greedy and attempt to finish one book in one day. Then "their stomach will burst." We should not encourage them in this way. Rather, we should slow them down. It is not a matter of quantity but a matter of endurance. You must endure this kind of Bible study. I think that we need to remind them week after week, and sometimes the elders need to give the saints some direction, some encouragement, and some incentive. (pp. 324-325)

THE NEED OF A PROPER DIET

...We must realize that to shepherd a church is to take care of a big family with many folks who are young, old, and middle-aged. We must feed them properly, and we must consider what is the most nourishing, healing, and germ-killing diet. We have to make a choice.

Please do not think that I am "selling my cargo." I beg you to forget this thought, which comes from the devil. I am not selling my cargo, but I am ministering the divine truth to God's people. Therefore, as leading brothers, try your best in your locality to stir up an atmosphere and to create a hunger and thirst in the saints for the Lord's truth. Tell them that the truth is in the unique holy Word and that the best help to usher them into the Word is the Recovery Version with the footnotes and all the Life-studies. Of course, we should not practice anything legal. We should not make these things a legal matter that the saints are required to do. However, if the saints do love the Lord's recovery, they must get themselves fed all the time with the healthy food so that they may be strong. As a result of eating a proper, regular diet, the saints will be strong, and the Lord will have a strong testimony. (pp. 326-327)

A PRIVATE TIME IN THE LORD'S WORD

We should encourage the saints to have a private time in the Lord's Word and that they should do this as a proper rule of their daily life. Regardless of how busy or how tired we are, we can reserve

Topic Nine

thirty minutes a day for a time with the Lord in the Word. It all depends upon our will. If there is the will, there is the way. To save half an hour among twenty-four hours is not a hard thing. If the saints could practice spending one hour or more in the Lord's Word, this would be wonderful, but at least we should encourage them to give half an hour to the Lord every day. The saints should be encouraged to separate or sanctify thirty minutes every day to the Lord. We all can realize what a blessing this will be, and I believe that this will make the Lord very pleased. Then every local church needs to find a way to carry out the meetings in the principle of giving the saints the proper education in the full knowledge of the truth.

Learning and Practicing the Truth

In 1 Timothy 3:15 Paul refers to "the church of the living God, the pillar and base of the truth." We are each a living member of the church with the living God in us. The church being the pillar and base of the truth implies that every member of the church should know the truth. We need to make a decision to learn the truth. If the young saints do not make such a decision, the church has no future. For the sake of the spreading of the church to new localities, there is a need of leading ones, some who can bear responsibility. We are short of such ones because in the daily church life we do not learn or practice the truth. If we learn the truth and practice the truth in the daily church life, every member will be able to bear some responsibility. Then wherever we spread, there will be no problems; every local church will be strong. (CWWL, 1978, vol. 2, "Crucial Principles for the Christian Life and the Church Life," ch. 7, pp. 618-621)

Needing to Progress in the Study of the Truth

Today we can easily attract crowds of students through our gospel preaching on the campuses because the students are quite educated and will readily receive the high gospel according to logic and reasoning. In the villages, however, it may not be that easy to preach the gospel due to the people's shortage of knowledge and lack of understanding. In any case, human beings all have the desire to pursue knowledge. If you study the biblical truths thoroughly and then present them to people, especially to the college students, they will fully appreciate what you say. On the contrary, if you are short of the knowledge of the truth, it will be impossible for you to preach the gospel on the campuses effectively. Hence, you must strive to pursue the truth. If you still do things today in the old way—graduate from high school, study two years of theological school, and then go out to be a preacher—that will not work. That way is an outdated way and cannot meet the need of this age. You must exert some effort to be solidly equipped in the truth. This is my main burden for you. (CWWL, 1985, vol. 5, "Vessels Useful to the Lord," ch. 1, pp. 21-22)

THE TORTOISE WINS THE RACE

A diligent seeker of the Lord could possibly finish the entire New Testament by studying two hours a day for two and a half years. If the church, however, took seven and a half years to get through the entire New Testament, this would still be wonderful. Never forget the race between the hare and the tortoise. The tortoise wins the race. If we keep going slowly, we will win the race. All the "running ones" will be defeated, but the working ones will win the race. We need to eat regularly, continuously, and slowly. I advise you not to go too fast but to go slowly. You will then reach the goal. If we had started this practice ten years ago, we would have finished the entire New Testament already. Even if you get through half of the New Testament, you will see that you are different. Also, if the entire church could get through half of the New Testament, the church would be different. (CWWL, 1984, vol. 2, "Elders' Training, Book 3," ch. 13, p. 362)

Topic Nine

References and Further Reading:

1. *The Collected Works of Witness Lee, 1977*, vol. 1, “Various Meetings in Anaheim,” ch. 1.
2. *The Collected Works of Witness Lee, 1984*, vol. 5, “Truth, Life, the Church, and the Gospel—The Four Pillars in the Lord’s Recovery,” chs. 8-9.
3. *The Collected Works of Witness Lee, 1984*, vol. 2, “Elders’ Training, Book 3,” chs. 9-13.
4. *The Collected Works of Witness Lee, 1978*, vol. 2, “Crucial Principles for the Christian Life and the Church Life,” ch. 7.
5. *The Collected Works of Witness Lee, 1985*, vol. 5, “Vessels Useful to the Lord,” ch. 1.

Topic Nine

¹ CWWL, 1977, vol. 1, "Various Meetings in Anaheim," ch. 1, pp. 515-516.

² CWWL, 1984, vol. 5, "Truth, Life, the Church, and the Gospel—The Four Pillars in the Lord's Recovery," ch. 9, pp. 457.

³ CWWL, 1984, vol. 5, "Truth, Life, the Church, and the Gospel—The Four Pillars in the Lord's Recovery," ch. 8, pp. 439-445.

⁴ CWWL, 1984, vol. 2, "Elders' Training, Book 3," ch. 10, p. 325.

⁵ CWWL, 1984, vol. 5, "Truth, Life, the Church, and the Gospel—The Four Pillars in the Lord's Recovery," ch. 8, pp. 439-445.

⁶ CWWL, 1984, vol. 5, "Truth, Life, the Church, and the Gospel—The Four Pillars in the Lord's Recovery," ch. 9, pp. 457.

⁷ CWWL, 1978, vol. 2, "Crucial Principles for the Christian Life and the Church Life," ch. 7, pp. 618-621.

⁸ CWWL, 1985, vol. 5, "Vessels Useful to the Lord," ch. 1, pp. 21-22.

⁹ CWWL, 1984, vol. 2, "Elders' Training, Book 3," ch. 13, p. 362.

Topic Nine

Outline Seven

Using the Life-studies in Order to Advance the Lord's Recovery

I. The Lord's recovery is a recovery of the truth—1 Tim. 2:4:¹

- A. The Bible reveals that God's work is carried out through His speaking:
 - 1. In His work of creation God spoke, and it was; He commanded, and it stood—Psa. 33:9.
 - 2. In the Old Testament age all of God's work was carried out through His speaking to man.
 - 3. This is also the case in the New Testament, in which God speaks to us in the Son; God's work in the New Testament is altogether a matter of the word—Heb. 1:1-2.
 - a. The Lord Jesus came to accomplish God's work as the incarnated Word—John 1:1, 14.
 - b. In the apostolic age the apostles carried out their work mainly through the word.
- B. Through His word God's work has been able to advance on the earth throughout the ages:
 - 1. In church history we can see the progress of God's word; whenever God's word cannot spread, God's work cannot advance; this has been especially true among us.
 - 2. From the time that Brother Nee began to minister until now, the Lord's recovery has been a recovery of the truth, a recovery of God's word.
 - 3. Because of the degraded situation of today's Christianity, we can definitely say that God has commissioned us with His word and His truth in these last days.
 - 4. Although Brother Nee released a considerable amount of truth in the early days, less than twenty percent of it was printed; most of his messages were not published.
 - 5. With this in view Brother Lee had the feeling that we must do our best to publish all the messages released among us concerning the knowledge of the truth.
 - 6. For this reason, Brother Lee concentrated all his energy to work on the Recovery Version of the New Testament and the Life-studies.

II. We need to supply the saints with the Lord's word—1 Tim. 4:6:

- A. In order to work for the Lord, we need to supply the saints with the Lord's word; this is true even in preaching the gospel; we need to have the truth and the word of the gospel—Eph. 1:13; Col. 1:5-6.
- B. We have thoroughly studied the first two books of the Pentateuch in the Old Testament; the studies of these two books have been published in the *Life-study of Genesis* and the *Life-study of Exodus*.
- C. There are one hundred twenty messages in the Life-study of Genesis and one hundred eighty-five messages in the Life-study of Exodus; it is difficult to find a book in Christianity that has more spiritual value than the books that we publish.
- D. “I really hope that we would appreciate what we have and would not waste our time looking for something else. If all the [local] churches on the earth would seriously read the Life-studies and thoroughly study the truths contained in them, I absolutely believe that a great revival would begin not only among us but even on the whole earth”—CWWL, 1984, vol. 5, “The Faithful and Diligent Spreading of the Truth...,” ch. 1, p. 172.

III. We need to propagate the word of the truth among the saints:

- A. According to Brother Lee's observation [in 1984], less than half the saints have truly entered into the Life-studies.
- B. The Life-studies were produced from what he gained through his study of the Bible over the course of [more than] fifty years.
- C. In arranging the crucial points of every book, he included all the valuable points gleaned from authoritative references; all the valuable light and revelation from them and all the items that supply life have been incorporated into the Life-studies.

Topic Nine

- D. If we have a clear view and know the Bible, the condition of today's Christianity, the truth, and the mercy given to us by God, we would spend our whole life being immersed and soaked in the truth—cf. Acts 17:11; 2 Tim. 2:15.
- E. Then we would surely have the burden to propagate this truth as much as possible among the brothers and sisters in the churches; we would endeavor to create among the brothers and the sisters an atmosphere of desiring the truth and the Life-studies.
- F. “I hope that we could all learn to appreciate the Life-studies by diving into them, bathing in them, and allowing the light of the truth to penetrate us. Only then will we be able to spread the blessings and benefits that we have received, thereby creating an atmosphere in which the saints desire the truth and the Life-studies”—p. 173.

IV. We need to see at least five uses of the Life-studies:

- A. The first use of the Life-studies is for our own supply; reading the Bible along with the Life-studies is one way to receive the supply:
 1. For example, Colossians 1:12 reveals that Christ is the portion of the saints in the light.
 2. When we turn this word into prayer, we will receive the supply; then, we can open the *Life-study of Colossians*, which contains a message on the portion of the saints, and read that message carefully.
- B. The second use of the Life-studies is for the study of the Bible:
 1. Those who have a desire to be equipped in the truth should study the Bible book by book.
 2. However, as they study each book, they should use the Life-study of that book; then they will know the value of the Life-studies because the Life-studies will answer any questions that may arise; they solve the common and hard problems in the New Testament.
 3. Moreover, all the main points and the riches of life are laid out, therefore, the Life-studies are very valuable reference books for research purposes.
- C. The third use of the Life-studies is for small group meetings:
 1. The best way for small group meetings to receive the supply of the word is to give an extract of each Life-study message and even to use the content of the Life-study messages to preach some short gospel messages.
 2. While we are reading, we can read short portions, read by repeating, read with emphasis, read livingly, pray-read, sing-read, and read with explanation.
 3. In this way the main points will spontaneously get into the saints in the group meeting.
- D. The fourth use of the Life-studies is for message meetings:
 1. On the one hand, we can read the Life-studies at the same pace in our morning time with the Lord and digest them in small group meetings; on the other hand, the Life-studies can also be used for our speaking in the message meetings.
 2. The brothers who minister the word in the churches need to spend time and energy to help the saints apply the Lord's word in their living and to enter into the reality of the word.
- E. The fifth use of the Life-studies is for shepherding and caring for people:
 1. If we are filled with the light of the truth, when we visit the saints to converse and fellowship with them, at a crucial point we may feel that a certain portion of the Life-studies would be helpful to them.
 2. Then we can share it with them or even ask them to read it with us; this will stimulate their appreciation of the Life-studies and create an atmosphere of desiring to read the Life-studies.
- F. “I absolutely believe that if any local church promotes the Life-studies in this way, it will be revived. If all the saints in a locality practice for one year to read the Life-studies to receive the life supply and study the truth for small group meetings, message meetings, and shepherding and helping others by fellowshipping with them, the church in that locality will surely be revived”—pp. 174-175.

Topic Nine

Excerpts from the Ministry:

CONCERNING THE PUBLICATIONS IN THE LORD'S RECOVERY—THE WAY FOR THE LORD'S RECOVERY TO ADVANCE

THE LORD'S RECOVERY BEING A RECOVERY OF THE TRUTH

The Bible reveals that God's work is carried out through His speaking. In His work of creation God spoke, and it was; He commanded, and it stood (Psa. 33:9). In the Old Testament age all of God's work was carried out through His speaking to man. This is also the case in the New Testament, in which God speaks to us in the Son (Heb. 1:1-2).

God's work in the New Testament is altogether a matter of the word. The Lord Jesus came to accomplish God's work as the incarnated Word. In the apostolic age the apostles carried out their work mainly through the word. History shows that the apostles, who were greatly used by God, all ministered the word. Paul's fourteen Epistles constitute over half of the twenty-seven books in the New Testament.

Through His word God's work has been able to advance on the earth throughout the ages. In church history we can see the progress of God's word. Whenever God's word cannot spread, God's work cannot advance. This has been especially true among us. From the time that Brother Nee began to minister until now, the Lord's recovery has been a recovery of the truth, a recovery of God's word. Because of the degraded situation of today's Christianity, we can definitely say that God has commissioned us with His word and His truth in these last days.

We have a basis for saying this. For more than sixty years we have studied in depth all the biblical expositions found in the teachings of the ancient church fathers and in the various schools of theological teachings. We have labored on the Bible every day, and we have published many books as a result of bringing these earlier studies together. Although Brother Nee released a considerable amount of truth in the early days, less than twenty percent of it was printed; most of his messages were not published. Moreover, nearly all the notes from those messages were lost over time because we were forced to move from place to place. With this in view we had the feeling that we must do our best to publish all the messages released among us concerning the knowledge of the truth. For this reason, over the past ten years I have concentrated all my energy to work on the Recovery Version of the New Testament and the Life-studies.

Now the Life-studies of the New Testament have been completed. The first two books of the Old Testament have also been covered, but we have to go on to study the books of Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy. I hope that the Lord would grant me many more years to finish the Life-studies of the Pentateuch, the books of prophecy, and the books of history. If we are able to study the Pentateuch, the books of prophecy, and the books of history in a careful way, we will be able to say that the complete revelation in the Old Testament and the New Testament is in writing and that we have a bird's-eye view of both the Old Testament and the New Testament. In addition to these books, there also are the books of poetry in the Old Testament—Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and Song of Songs. There are already publications pertaining to some of these books, such as The Song of Songs, which is Brother Nee's exposition of Song of Songs. I also have studied Psalms and Song of Songs in the past (*see Christ and the Church Revealed and Typified in the Psalms and Life and Building as Portrayed in the Song of Songs*). As for Proverbs and Ecclesiastes, they require less time. The book of Job, however, is worthy of more attention. I hope that we would be able to study all these books. We need to pray for this matter; it may take us another ten years to complete the Life-studies of the Old Testament.

SUPPLYING THE SAINTS WITH THE LORD'S WORD

This is indeed a rare opportunity for me to fellowship what is on my heart with many who are serving in the publication work in various places and a number of elders and co-workers. I believe

Topic Nine

that all the co-workers agree that in order to work for the Lord, we need to supply the saints with the Lord's word. This is true even in preaching the gospel; we need to have the truth and the word of the gospel. Yet where can we find this word? Some have tried looking outside the recovery for materials from which to speak, but it has not been an easy task. This is because the word that we have received from the Lord includes all the gospel material contained in ordinary Christian publications; moreover, our utterance is richer and higher.

Since the beginning of the Lord's recovery we have released some basic truths. In Taiwan, for example, during the first period of the ministry of the Lord's word, we covered sixty topics related to the truth in *Crucial Truths in the Holy Scriptures*. Volume 1 contains sixteen topics: the condition of man, the love of God, Christ's redemption, the work of the Holy Spirit, repentance and believing, forgiveness, cleansing, sanctification, justification, reconciliation, regeneration, eternal life, release—freedom, salvation, the assurance of salvation, and the security of salvation. Many of these topics can also be found in publications in Christian bookstores. In 1938 in Chefoo, using numerous writings in English as references, I finished writing on forty-two topics of crucial truths. After I came to Taiwan, I added another eighteen topics, which make a total of sixty topics. In content these topics are complete. Even the original English writings that I studied have only sixty to seventy percent of what we have in the recovery. After reading our publications, you will find other publications to be lacking.

Over the past sixty years the Lord has given us much new light that has not been seen or heard by Christians in the past. Consider, for example, the matter of justification by faith. We have not written as much as Martin Luther on this topic, but apart from us, we have not heard of others speaking concerning objective justification and subjective justification. Objective justification is the Lord Jesus as our righteousness before God positionally. Subjective justification is the Lord Jesus in us and living out of us as our righteousness. Paul refers to this experience in Philippians 3:8-9, which says, "That I may...be found in Him, not having my own righteousness which is out of the law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which is out of God and based on faith."

We have thoroughly studied the first two books of the Pentateuch in the Old Testament. The studies of these two books have been published in the *Life-study of Genesis* and the *Life-study of Exodus*. There are one hundred twenty messages in the *Life-study of Genesis* and one hundred eighty-five messages in the *Life-study of Exodus*. It is difficult to find a book in Christianity that has more spiritual value than the books that we publish. I have heard people say critically, "Brother Lee forces all the churches to use his Life-studies and speak his messages." However, today I speak this to you as members of my own family: I really hope that we would appreciate what we have and would not waste our time looking for something else. If all the six hundred churches on the earth would seriously read the Life-studies and thoroughly study the truths contained in them, I absolutely believe that a great revival would begin not only among us but even on the whole earth.

PROPAGATING THE WORD OF THE TRUTH AMONG THE SAINTS

Apparently, all the churches are using the Life-studies for the meetings on the Lord's Day, but according to my observation, less than half the saints have truly entered into the Life-studies. The Life-studies were produced from what I gained through my study of the Bible over the course of fifty years. While I was preparing them, I placed all the important relevant reference books before me. In arranging the crucial points of every book, I included all the valuable points gleaned from authoritative references. If you were to read those authoritative writings, you would discover that all the valuable light and revelation from them and all the items that supply life have been incorporated into our Life-studies. I have full assurance concerning this matter. If I were to ask you to spend another fifty years to study the truths in the Bible and then another ten or more years to read the reference books and write something, I feel that none of you would be able to do what I have done.

By the Lord's mercy I heard the gospel and was saved before I was twenty years old. Since the day that I was saved, the Lord has caused me to love His Word. I thank the Lord that He also has kept me

Topic Nine

on this earth for so many years. In 1943, when I was stricken with tuberculosis, I asked the Lord to give me fifteen more years. I lived those fifteen years from 1943 to 1958. In 1958, however, my relationship with the Western world had just begun. Since then, another twenty-seven years have passed. I never thought that the Lord would keep me on this earth for so long. Furthermore, because the Lord has had mercy on me, my memory has not failed, and my ability to comprehend seems to be even stronger than before. As a result, I can still remember all the crucial points in the Bible. All this is due to His mercy.

If we have a clear view and know the Bible, the condition of today's Christianity, the truth, and the mercy given to us by God, we would spend our whole life being immersed and soaked in the truth. Then we would surely have the burden to propagate this truth as much as possible among the brothers and sisters in the churches. We would endeavor to create among the brothers and the sisters an atmosphere of desiring the truth and the Life-studies.

The Life-study of Galatians is currently being used in small group meetings in Taipei. I find myself reading these messages with such relish that I cannot put them down. I am afraid that we cannot find such a book on the bookshelves of today's Christian bookstores telling us that the Gospel of Matthew is the Gospel of the kingdom, the Gospel of Mark is the Gospel of service, the Gospel of Luke is the Gospel of the forgiveness of sins, and the Gospel of John is the Gospel of life. Likewise, I am afraid that there is not a book in Christianity that can tell us that the gospel preached by Paul is the gospel of completion, including such items as Christ being revealed in us, Christ being in us as the hope of glory, Christ being formed in us, Christ making His home in us, and Christ filling us to make us the fullness, the expression, of God. Even if someone could find such treasures outside the recovery, he would have to spend decades of strenuous effort going through thousands of books in order to find them.

If we study the Life-study of Galatians seriously, we will find that every page is a treasure. I hope that we could all learn to appreciate the Life-studies by diving into them, bathing in them, and allowing the light of the truth to penetrate us. Only then will we be able to spread the blessings and benefits that we have received, thereby creating an atmosphere in which the saints desire the truth and the Life-studies.

FIVE USES OF THE LIFE-STUDIES

According to my observation, there are at least five uses of the Life-studies. The first use of the Life-studies is for our own supply. Reading the Bible along with the Life-studies is one way to receive the supply. For example, Colossians 1:12 reveals that Christ is the portion of the saints in the light. When we turn this word into prayer, we will receive the supply. Then, we can open the *Life-study of Colossians*, which contains a message on the portion of the saints, and read that message carefully.

The second use of the Life-studies is for the study of the Bible. Those who have a desire to be equipped in the truth should study the Bible book by book. However, as they study each book, they should use the Life-study of that book. Then they will know the value of the Life-studies because the Life-studies will answer any questions that may arise. While I was preparing the Life-study messages, I spent a great deal of time and energy to solve the common and hard problems in the New Testament; moreover, I laid out all the main points and the riches of life. Therefore, the Life-studies are very valuable reference books for research purposes.

The third use of the Life-studies is for small group meetings. The best way for small group meetings to receive the supply of the word is to give an extract of each Life-study message and even to use the content of the Life-study messages to preach some short gospel messages. While we are reading, we can read short portions, read by repeating, read with emphasis, read livingly, pray-read, sing-read, and read with explanation. In this way the main points will spontaneously get into the saints in the group meeting.

Topic Nine

The fourth use of the Life-studies is for the message meetings. On the one hand, we can read the Life-studies at the same pace in our morning time with the Lord and digest them in small group meetings; on the other hand, the Life-studies can also be used for our speaking in the message meetings on the Lord's Day. With the same book being used in the mornings, in small groups, and in the Lord's Day message meetings week after week, the saints will gain a deep impression and a rich supply. The brothers who minister the word in the churches need to spend time and energy to help the saints apply the Lord's word in their living and to enter into the reality of the word.

The fifth use of the Life-studies is for shepherding and caring for people. If we are filled with the light of the truth, when we visit the saints to converse and fellowship with them, at a crucial point we may feel that a certain portion of the Life-studies would be helpful to them. Then we can share it with them or even ask them to read it with us. This will stimulate their appreciation of the Life-studies and create an atmosphere of desiring to read the Life-studies.

I absolutely believe that if any local church promotes the Life-studies in this way, it will be revived. If all the saints in a locality practice for one year to read the Life-studies to receive the life supply and study the truth for small group meetings, message meetings, and shepherding and helping others by fellowshipping with them, the church in that locality will surely be revived. This is because there is nothing more powerful than the word of God as the truth of God. Satan will resist this matter; hence, we must focus on this matter and be ready to fight against Satan to gain this ground so that God's truth may have a way to go forth. (*CWWL, 1984*, vol. 5, “The Faithful and Diligent Spreading of the Truth...,” ch. 1, pp. 169-175)

References and Further Reading:

1. *The Collected Works of Witness Lee, 1984*, vol. 5, “The Faithful and Diligent Spreading of the Truth—Concerning the Publication Service,” ch. 1.

¹ *CWWL, 1984*, vol. 5, “The Faithful and Diligent Spreading of the Truth...,” ch. 1, pp. 169

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Topic Nine

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Topic Nine

HOLY BIBLE RECOVERY VERSION APP FOR MOBILE DEVICES

I. HOLY BIBLE RECOVERY VERSION – App for mobile devices

- A. Available in English and Spanish
- B. The Complete Text of the Holy Bible
- C. Outlines, Footnotes, Cross References, Charts, and Maps
- D. Search Verses and Footnotes in the App
- E. Highlight, Annotate, Tag, and Bookmark in the App
- F. Listen to the Bible in the App
- G. Create Reading Profiles and Customize the Appearance in the App
- H. Keep control of your annotations and other data
- I. View in light, dark, or sepia mode

II. HELP VIDEOS - www.recoveryversion.bible/app/

- A. Profiles Introduction -An overview of profiles
- B. Profiles Basics - How to use profiles
- C. Profile Settings (1) - How to set default profile
- D. Profile Settings (2) - How to designate a profile when using verse links
- E. Export User Data - How to export your user data from the app
- F. Import User Data - How to import your user data to a new device
- G. Full Version and Restore a Previous Purchase - How to restore a previous purchase
- H. Version Information and Acknowledgements - How to find information about your app
- I. Audio Feature - How to use the text to speech audio feature
- J. Software Updates - How to check app version for latest update
- K. Sync Feature - How to sync user data to the cloud making it available on any device

FTTA-OL

Full-time Training in Anaheim Online

<http://onlineftta.org>



“For so many years we missed the way to teach the truths in a lesson way, in a way of education, to let the saints have a basic knowledge of God’s revelation.”

Brother Witness Lee, *Elders’ Training, Book 8: The Life-Pulse of the Lord’s Present Move*, p. 70

ABOUT FTTA-OL COURSES

The Full-Time Training in Anaheim (FTTA) is one of the ways Brother Lee took to address the need of teaching the saints the basic truths in an educational way. The Full-Time Training in Anaheim Online (FTTA-OL) offers the FTTA curriculum completely online and maintains thorough consistency with its counterpart. Online learning in this program requires active interaction with course materials, substantial participation from every learner in the form of deliberate written responses, and weekly oral and written tests.

Each week learners are required to study ministry resources and complete the following activities:

Lesson: Fully developed written lessons present the week's burden to the learners and provide relevant ministry in the form of readings and short videos.

Written Fellowship: Learners are expected to participate on at least four days each week by posting substantive responses to fellowship questions as well as to the responses of their fellow learners.

Crystallization Statement: Each week learners create a brief statement that summarizes the week's learning and highlights the main burden for the week.

Oral Prophecy: Each week learners record an oral prophecy online for review by all the class. The oral prophecy relates to the main burden in the material for the week.

Quiz: Each week there is a quiz on the material covered that week.

In addition to the required activities above, there are also supplemental resource materials in the form of ministry readings, videos of Brother Witness Lee, and FTTA class videos, as applicable.

TESTIMONIES

This is by far the best online course I've ever taken. The whole program is very well designed to help the saints actively enter into the ministry. If the whole church would enter into this, then I am sure there will be a great revival in the churches with everyone functioning in the meetings. *D.C.*

I have heard for a long time about being constituted with the truth, and it has always been somewhat nebulous to me how exactly one gets constituted with the truth. I simply assumed that it was just a general matter of reading the Bible and ministry publications and somehow one day it will all "click" together. But, through FTTA-OL, I can now say I've experienced, at least in part, getting constituted with the truth in the way of education, as Brother Lee has spoken of, by diving into the Word in a very precise, specific way, and participating in the process of a blended learning with my fellow learners, eventually entering into the Lord's burden in a concrete way. I only wish many other saints, in fact all saints, can have this experience. *H.T.*

We prayed for a long time considering how we could get to the FTTA even though we have two small children and school debt. I feel like so far this was an answer to prayers. It changed our daily living. *A.W.*

FTTA-OL COURSES

- Run eight weeks in length, beginning in January, March, May, August, and October each year
- Require a few hours of work per week
- Follow a weekly schedule
- Allow work to be done at any time, day or night, within the assignment schedule
- Can be taken anywhere an Internet connection is available
- Do not require learners to be online at the same time
- Cost US\$200.00 per course

Language Requirements

Because FTTA-OL classes involve extensive writing, we require that all learners have the ability both to read and to write comfortably in English. Learning in the classes is collaborative, and insufficient English-language skills will result in frustration not only to the learner but to the entire class.

Facilitation

A team of experienced facilitators oversee each FTTA Online class. The serving ones are not a group of experts or teachers but are facilitators who coordinate to foster the learning process and generally facilitate the study of the truth.

COURSES OFFERED

As FTTA's online counterpart, FTTA-OL offers the same major lines of courses as the training in Anaheim. Since the online classes run in shorter terms (eight weeks in FTTA-OL vs. eighteen weeks in FTTA), more courses are required to cover all the material in FTTA. Here are the courses offered in FTTA-OL:

<i>Line</i>	<i>Courses</i>
The Word of God	1
The Triune God	1
The God-ordained Way	2
The New Jerusalem	2
The Experience of Christ as Life	3
The Body of Christ	5
God's Economy	5
The Spirit	5
The Full Ministry of Christ	6
Total	30

TESTIMONIES

The thoroughness and the depth of entering into the material is like nothing else that I have experienced in my church life...I definitely think that the time spent in pursuing the truth together with the other saints in this course will be a great benefit to my Christian life, church life, and for the Lord's move on the earth. I know already that my being is changed, and I feel more solid in the matter of pursuing the facts, receiving the revelations, and seeing the vision for the Lord's move. It is one of the highlights of my over 30-year church life. *R.S.*

Being trained has always been on my heart, and this is the only way at this time that I can do it. This training has affected my life greatly, not only how I am seeing every word, hearing every song, or receiving every message in a new way, but how I have to schedule my time; to me this is a very organic way to have a scheduled living for the Lord. I am so thankful for this opportunity! Praise the Lord. *K.M.*

I am so thankful to have had an online community of saints to fellowship with and the structure in which to study the ministry. My view concerning the Bible and how I handle it is different. My appreciation of pray-reading has increased. And for the first time in a long time I am realizing that my function (especially in not being afraid to speak my portion from the ministry) is being restored. I cannot stress how important I feel the FTTA-OL is. *H.Z.*

How to REGISTER

1. Visit <http://onlineeftta.org>
2. Browse a sample week
3. Read course descriptions
4. Check class dates and course offerings
5. Create an account
6. Click on “Enroll in courses”
7. Add “office@onlineeftta.org” to Safe Sender email list
8. Follow emails with further instructions for registration

OUR NEED FOR TRAINING WITH DEFINITE TEACHING CONCERNING THE EXPERIENCES OF LIFE

Too often we help the brothers in the church only in a general way. This is why I tell the co-workers that the proper way to learn something is in courses. The proper way to learn mathematics, for example, is by completing one course and moving on to another. If we do not learn by courses, we can study for our whole life and never learn much. In the church we may have message after message every week, but some brothers have been listening to messages for fifty years without learning much because the teaching is too general. The writings of the apostles, especially of the apostle Paul, are not general; they are very definite. Today in the church we need definite teachings. This is why we need trainings. It is right to take a certain period of time in a local church to deal with the stages of spiritual experience...We need period after period in this way for a number of years. Then we will see a local church built up with a group of believers who have the real experiences...The believers will have not merely a certain desire or love but the experience of life, the genuine learning, the discipline, and the practice. Such a church is a proper church.

Brother Witness Lee
Practical Lessons on the Experience of Life, pp. 42-43



Living Stream Ministry

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