

# GOD'S ECONOMY IN FAITH

(Friday—Second Morning Session)

## Message Two

### The Intrinsic Significance of Faith

JL Hymns: 559

Scripture Reading: Heb. 11:1, 5-6; 3:7-8a, 12-13, 15a; 4:7

- Heb 11:1 Now faith is the substantiation of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen.  
Heb 11:5 By faith Enoch was translated so that he should not see death; and he was not found, because God had translated him. For before his translation he obtained the testimony that he had been well pleasing to God.  
Heb 11:6 But without faith it is impossible to be well pleasing to Him, for he who comes forward to God must believe that He is and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.  
Heb 3:7 Therefore, even as the Holy Spirit says, "Today if you hear His voice,  
Heb 3:8a Do not harden your hearts as in the provocation, ...  
Heb 3:12 Beware, brothers, lest perhaps there be in any one of you an evil heart of unbelief in falling away from the living God.  
Heb 3:13 But exhort one another each day, as long as it is called "today," lest any one of you be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin--  
Heb 3:15a While it is said, "Today if you hear His voice, do not harden your hearts ...  
Heb 4:7 He again designates a certain day, today, saying in David after so long a time, even as He has said before, "Today, if you hear His voice, do not harden your hearts."

#### I. Faith is the substantiation of God's facts:

- A. Hebrews 11:1 says, "Now faith is the substantiation of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen"; the word *substantiation* means the capacity to make something real (colors are substantiated by our eyes, sounds by our ears, etc.); thus, it is one thing for objects to exist, and it is another thing for these things to be substantiated.
- B. All of God's facts recorded in the Bible are real; however, these facts can be substantiated only by faith, because faith is the substantiation of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen.
- C. We need faith to substantiate a spiritual, divine fact, just as we need eyes, ears, and hands to substantiate physical objects; faith is not a mental understanding of a truth; it is the seeing of a divine fact and the substantiation of it; the accomplished facts of Christ's person, living, and work must be substantiated by us; that is, they must be made real to us.
- D. Believing is exercising our spirit of faith (2 Cor. 4:13) to substantiate the divine facts; once we believe by saying Amen to God's word, we substantiate the divine facts, and we have them; Amen does not mean a wish for something to be accomplished, but a declaration that it will surely be accomplished, and that there is no doubt about it; when we believe, we are accepting what the Lord has already promised to do.
- 2 Cor 4:13 And having the same spirit of faith according to that which is written, "I believed, therefore I spoke," we also believe, therefore we also speak,

#### II. Faith is the substantiation of the substance of the truth (Heb. 11:1), which is the reality of the contents of God's New Testament economy:

- Heb 11:1 Now faith is the substantiation of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen.
- A. Such a faith is allotted to all the believers in Christ as their portion, which is equally precious to all who have received it—2 Pet. 1:1; cf. Col. 1:12.
- 2 Pet 1:1 Simon Peter, a slave and apostle of Jesus Christ, to those who have been allotted faith equally precious as ours in the righteousness of our God and Savior, Jesus Christ:
- Col 1:12 Giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified you for a share of the allotted portion of the saints in the light;

- B. As such a portion from God, this faith is objective to us in the divine truth, but it brings all the contents of its substantiation into us, thus making them all, with itself (faith), subjective to us in our experience.
- C. It is like the scenery (truth) and the seeing (faith) being objective to the camera (us); but when the light (the Spirit) brings the scenery to the film (our spirit) within the camera, both the seeing and the scenery become subjective to the camera.

### III. Faith means that we believe that God is and we are not—Heb. 11:5-6, 1-2; 2 Cor. 4:13, 18:

- Heb 11:5 By faith Enoch was translated so that he should not see death; and he was not found, because God had translated him. For before his translation he obtained the testimony that he had been well pleasing to God.
- Heb 11:6 But without faith it is impossible to be well pleasing to Him, for he who comes forward to God must believe that He is and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.
- Heb 11:1 Now faith is the substantiation of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen.
- Heb 11:2 For in this the elders have obtained a good testimony.
- 2 Cor 4:13 And having the same spirit of faith according to that which is written, "I believed, therefore I spoke," we also believe, therefore we also speak,
- 2 Cor 4:18 Because we do not regard the things which are seen but the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporary, but the things which are not seen are eternal.
- A. Without faith it is impossible to be well pleasing to God, to make God happy—Heb. 11:6a.  
Heb 11:6a But without faith it is impossible to be well pleasing to Him, ...
- B. To believe that God is, is to believe that He is everything to us and that we are nothing—John 8:58; Eccl. 1:2.  
John 8:58 Jesus said to them, Truly, truly, I say to you, Before Abraham came into being, I am.  
Eccl 1:2 Vanity of vanities, says the Preacher; / Vanity of vanities; all is vanity.
- C. To believe that God is implies that we are not; He must be the only One, the unique One, in everything, and we must be nothing in everything—Gen. 5:24; Heb. 11:5.  
Gen 5:24 And Enoch walked with God, and he was not, for God took him.  
Heb 11:5 By faith Enoch was translated so that he should not see death; and he was not found, because God had translated him. For before his translation he obtained the testimony that he had been well pleasing to God.
- D. To believe that God is, is to deny our self; in the whole universe He is, and all of us are nothing—Luke 9:23.  
Luke 9:23 And He said to them all, If anyone wants to come after Me, let him deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow Me.
- E. I should not be anything; I should not exist; only He should exist—"it is no longer I who live, but it is Christ"—Gal. 2:20.
- F. Before Enoch's translation, he obtained the testimony that he had been well pleasing to God (Heb. 11:5-6); Enoch continually walked upward with God day and night for three centuries, exercising his faith to believe that God is, becoming closer to God and more one with God each day until "he was not, for God took him"—Gen. 5:22-24; cf. S. S. 8:5a.  
Heb 11:5 By faith Enoch was translated so that he should not see death; and he was not found, because God had translated him. For before his translation he obtained the testimony that he had been well pleasing to God.  
Heb 11:6 But without faith it is impossible to be well pleasing to Him, for he who comes forward to God must believe that He is and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.  
Gen 5:22 And Enoch walked with God after he had begotten Methuselah three hundred years, and he begot more sons and daughters.  
Gen 5:23 And all the days of Enoch were three hundred sixty-five years.  
Gen 5:24 And Enoch walked with God, and he was not, for God took him.  
S. S. 8:5a Who is this who comes up from the wilderness, / Leaning on her beloved? ...

#### **IV. Faith means that we believe that God is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him—Heb. 11:6; Gen. 15:1; Phil. 3:8, 14:**

- Heb 11:6 But without faith it is impossible to be well pleasing to Him, for he who comes forward to God must believe that He is and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.
- Gen 15:1 After these things the word of Jehovah came to Abram in a vision, saying, Do not be afraid, Abram; I am your shield and your exceedingly great reward.
- Phil 3:8 But moreover I also count all things to be loss on account of the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, on account of whom I have suffered the loss of all things and count them as refuse that I may gain Christ
- Phil 3:14 I pursue toward the goal for the prize to which God in Christ Jesus has called me upward.
- A. Enoch's reward was the highest degree of life—escape from death—Heb. 11:5a; 2 Cor. 5:4; Rom. 8:6, 10-11; 5:17.
- Heb 11:5a By faith Enoch was translated so that he should not see death; and he was not found, because God had translated him. ...
- 2 Cor 5:4 For also, we who are in this tabernacle groan, being burdened, in that we do not desire to be unclothed, but clothed upon, that what is mortal may be swallowed up by life.
- Rom 8:6 For the mind set on the flesh is death, but the mind set on the spirit is life and peace.
- Rom 8:10 But if Christ is in you, though the body is dead because of sin, the spirit is life because of righteousness.
- Rom 8:11 And if the Spirit of the One who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who indwells you.
- Rom 5:17 For if, by the offense of the one, death reigned through the one, much more those who receive the abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness will reign in life through the One, Jesus Christ.
- B. The Lord is a rewarder, and we need to be His seekers—Psa. 27:4, 8; 42:1-2; 43:4; 73:25; 119:2, 10.
- Psa 27:4 One thing I have asked from Jehovah; / That do I seek: / To dwell in the house of Jehovah / All the days of my life, / To behold the beauty of Jehovah, / And to inquire in His temple.
- Psa 27:8 When You say, Seek My face, / To You my heart says, Your face, O Jehovah, will I seek.
- Psa 42:1 As the hart pants / After the streams of water, / So my soul pants / For You, O God.
- Psa 42:2 My soul thirsts for God, / For the living God. / When will I come and appear / Before God?
- Psa 43:4 And I will go to the altar of God, / To God my exceeding joy; / And I will praise You with the harp, / O God, my God.
- Psa 73:25 Whom do I have in heaven but You? / And besides You there is nothing I desire on earth.
- Psa 119:2 Blessed are those who keep His testimonies, / Who seek Him with all their heart.
- Psa 119:10 With all my heart I have sought You; / Do not let me wander from Your commandments.
- C. We are those who live by faith, looking away to the reward of the uttermost enjoyment of Christ in the millennial kingdom and, like Moses, persevering as one seeing the unseen One—Phil. 3:14; Heb. 11:26-27.
- Phil 3:14 I pursue toward the goal for the prize to which God in Christ Jesus has called me upward.
- Heb 11:26 Considering the reproach of the Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt; for he looked away to the reward.
- Heb 11:27 By faith he left Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king, for he persevered as one seeing the unseen One.

#### **V. Faith is rooted in God's great, eternal, and divine facts covenanted to us in His holy Word; the believers' subjective faith is in their spirit, which makes their mingled spirit a spirit of faith—2 Cor. 4:13 and footnote 2:**

- 2 Cor 4:13 And having the same <sup>2</sup>spirit of faith according to that which is written, "I believed, therefore I spoke," we also believe, therefore we also speak,
- note 2 "Not distinctly the Holy Spirit, — but still not merely a human disposition: the indwelling Holy Spirit penetrates and characterizes the whole renewed man" (Alford). "Spirit of faith: not distinctly the Holy Spirit, nor, on the other hand, a human faculty or disposition, but blending

both" (Vincent). The spirit of faith is the Holy Spirit mingled with our human spirit. We must exercise such a spirit to believe and to speak, like the psalmist, the things we have experienced of the Lord, especially His death and resurrection. Faith is in our spirit, which is mingled with the Holy Spirit, not in our mind. Doubts are in our mind. Here spirit indicates that it is by the mingled spirit that the apostles lived a crucified life in resurrection for the carrying out of their ministry.

- A. We must exercise our spirit of faith to believe in the fact that God is love—1 John 4:8.  
1 John 4:8 He who does not love has not known God, because God is love.
- B. We must exercise our spirit of faith to believe in the fact that God's grace is sufficient—2 Cor. 12:9.  
2 Cor 12:9 And He has said to me, My grace is sufficient for you, for My power is perfected in weakness. Most gladly therefore I will rather boast in my weaknesses that the power of Christ might tabernacle over me.
- C. We must exercise our spirit of faith to believe in the fact that Christ is able to save us to the uttermost—Heb. 7:25.  
Heb 7:25 Hence also He is able to save to the uttermost those who come forward to God through Him, since He lives always to intercede for them.
- D. We must exercise our spirit of faith to believe in the fact that we are in Christ, that Christ is in us, and that we and Christ are one—1 Cor. 1:30; Col. 1:27; John 14:20; 15:5.  
1 Cor 1:30 But of Him you are in Christ Jesus, who became wisdom to us from God: both righteousness and sanctification and redemption,  
Col 1:27 To whom God willed to make known what are the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory,  
John 14:20 In that day you will know that I am in My Father, and you in Me, and I in you.  
John 15:5 I am the vine; you are the branches. He who abides in Me and I in him, he bears much fruit; for apart from Me you can do nothing.
- E. We must exercise our spirit of faith to believe in the fact that we are God's children and heirs—Rom. 8:16-17.  
Rom 8:16 The Spirit Himself witnesses with our spirit that we are children of God.  
Rom 8:17 And if children, heirs also; on the one hand, heirs of God; on the other, joint heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him that we may also be glorified with Him.
- F. We must exercise our spirit of faith to believe in the fact that we have been made full in Christ—Col. 2:10.  
Col 2:10 And you have been made full in Him, who is the Head of all rule and authority.
- G. We must exercise our spirit of faith to believe in the fact that we are the temple of the living God and that our body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within us—1 Cor. 3:16; 6:19; 2 Cor. 6:16.  
1 Cor 3:16 Do you not know that you are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwells in you?  
1 Cor 6:19 Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own?  
2 Cor 6:16 And what agreement does the temple of God have with idols? For we are the temple of the living God, even as God said, "I will dwell among them and walk among them; and I will be their God, and they will be My people."
- H. We withstand the devil by being firm in our subjective faith in God's protecting power and loving concern—1 Pet. 5:8-9:  
1 Pet 5:8 Be sober; watch. Your adversary, the devil, as a roaring lion, walks about, seeking someone to devour.  
1 Pet 5:9 Him withstand, being firm in your faith, knowing that the same sufferings are being accomplished among your brotherhood in the world.
1. We must exercise our spirit of faith to believe that the Lord was manifested for the purpose of destroying the works of the devil—1 John 3:8.  
1 John 3:8 He who practices sin is of the devil, because the devil has sinned from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil.

2. We must exercise our spirit of faith to believe that the Lord's death has destroyed him who has the might of death, the devil—Heb. 2:14.  
 Heb 2:14 Since therefore the children have shared in blood and flesh, He also Himself in like manner partook of the same, that through death He might destroy him who has the might of death, that is, the devil,
3. We must exercise our spirit of faith to believe that the Lord's resurrection has put Satan to shame; the resurrection life is a life that cannot be touched by death, that transcends death, that is beyond the boundary of death, that comes out of death, and that death cannot hold—Acts 2:23-24; Phil. 3:10; Col. 2:12-15, 20; 3:1; John 14:30.  
 Acts 2:23 This man, delivered up by the determined counsel and foreknowledge of God, you, through the hand of lawless men, nailed to a cross and killed;  
 Acts 2:24 Whom God has raised up, having loosed the pangs of death, since it was not possible for Him to be held by it.  
 Phil 3:10 To know Him and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death,  
 Col 2:12 Buried together with Him in baptism, in which also you were raised together with Him through the faith of the operation of God, who raised Him from the dead.  
 Col 2:13 And you, though dead in your offenses and in the uncircumcision of your flesh, He made alive together with Him, having forgiven us all our offenses;  
 Col 2:14 Wiping out the handwriting in ordinances, which was against us, which was contrary to us; and He has taken it out of the way, nailing it to the cross.  
 Col 2:15 Stripping off the rulers and the authorities, He made a display of them openly, triumphing over them in it.  
 Col 2:20 If you died with Christ from the elements of the world, why, as living in the world, do you subject yourselves to ordinances:  
 Col 3:1 If therefore you were raised together with Christ, seek the things which are above, where Christ is, sitting at the right hand of God.  
 John 14:30 I will no longer speak much with you, for the ruler of the world is coming, and in Me he has nothing;
4. We must exercise our spirit of faith to believe that the ascension of the Lord has put Him far above the power of Satan—Eph. 1:20-22; 2:6; 6:11, 13.  
 Eph 1:20 Which He caused to operate in Christ in raising Him from the dead and seating Him at His right hand in the heavenlies,  
 Eph 1:21 Far above all rule and authority and power and lordship and every name that is named not only in this age but also in that which is to come;  
 Eph 1:22 And He subjected all things under His feet and gave Him to be Head over all things to the church,  
 Eph 2:6 And raised us up together with Him and seated us together with Him in the heavenlies in Christ Jesus,  
 Eph 6:11 Put on the whole armor of God that you may be able to stand against the stratagems of the devil,  
 Eph 6:13 Therefore take up the whole armor of God that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.
5. We must exercise our spirit of faith to believe that the victory of the Lord is complete and that our whole life is included in this victory; we must see that we have already overcome and that we fight from a position of victory in order to maintain our victory; we can overcome because we are all included in the Lord as the leading Overcomer; He is the Head, center, reality, life, and nature of the man-child, and the man-child as the following overcomers is the Lord's Body—Rev. 3:21; 12:5.  
 Rev 3:21 He who overcomes, to him I will give to sit with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat with My Father on His throne.  
 Rev 12:5 And she brought forth a son, a man-child, who is to shepherd all the nations with an iron rod; and her child was caught up to God and to His throne.

## **VI. All our spiritual possessions in Christ are realized and actualized by faith:**

- A. Faith opens the door to every blessing that is ours in Christ—2 Tim. 3:15; Eph. 1:3.  
 2 Tim 3:15 And that from a babe you have known the sacred writings, which are able to make you wise unto salvation through the faith which is in Christ Jesus.  
 Eph 1:3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenlies in Christ,
- B. Faith cuts off the flesh with its natural energy and effort and gives us access into God's grace and a solid standing in grace, which is the Triune God processed so that we may enter into Him and enjoy Him—Rom. 5:2.  
 Rom 5:2 Through whom also we have obtained access by faith into this grace in which we stand and boast because of the hope of the glory of God.
- C. We are all “sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus”—Gal. 3:26.
- D. The righteousness that is God Himself lived out of us is through faith in Christ; Christ Himself infused into us through our appreciation of Him becomes our faith, the faith of Christ that brings us into an organic union with Him—Phil. 3:9.  
 Phil 3:9 And 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,
- E. We are sanctified dispositionally, which is to be saturated with God as our possession for our enjoyment today and to be transformed by and with the holy nature of God—Acts 26:18; Rom. 6:19, 22; 2 Cor. 3:18.  
 Acts 26:18 To open their eyes, to turn them from darkness to light and from the authority of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and an inheritance among those who have been sanctified by faith in Me.  
 Rom 6:19 I speak in human terms because of the weakness of your flesh. For just as you presented your members as slaves to uncleanness and lawlessness unto lawlessness, so now present your members as slaves to righteousness unto sanctification.  
 Rom 6:22 But now, having been freed from sin and enslaved to God, you have your fruit unto sanctification, and the end, eternal life.  
 2 Cor 3:18 But we all with unveiled face, beholding and reflecting like a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, even as from the Lord Spirit.
- F. The inward cleansing of man's heart can be accomplished only by the Holy Spirit with the divine life by faith.
- G. Christ makes His home deep down in our hearts through faith; Christ's indwelling is mysterious and abstract, and we apprehend it not by our physical senses but by the sense of faith—Eph. 3:17.  
 Eph 3:17 That Christ may make His home in your hearts through faith, that you, being rooted and grounded in love,
- H. At the time of our regeneration, we believed into Christ and received the Spirit by faith as the ultimate blessing of the gospel; after this, God is supplying the Spirit to us continually, and our receiving the Spirit is a lifelong, continuous matter by the hearing of faith—Gal. 3:2-5, 14.  
 Gal 3:2 This only I wish to learn from you, Did you receive the Spirit out of the works of law or out of the hearing of faith?  
 Gal 3:3 Are you so foolish? Having begun by the Spirit, are you now being perfected by the flesh?  
 Gal 3:4 Have you suffered so many things in vain, if indeed it was in vain?  
 Gal 3:5 He therefore who bountifully supplies to you the Spirit and does works of power among you, does He do it out of the works of law or out of the hearing of faith?  
 Gal 3:14 In order that the blessing of Abraham might come to the Gentiles in Christ Jesus, that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.
- I. We are inheriting the promises of God through faith—Heb. 6:12.  
 Heb 6:12 That you may not be sluggish, but imitators of those who through faith and long-suffering are inheriting the promises.

- J. We have victory over the world through faith, by which we are enabled to overcome the Satan-organized-and-usurped world.
- K. We have victory over the evil one by taking up the shield of faith, which is able to quench all the flaming darts of the evil one, which are Satan’s temptations, proposals, doubts, questions, lies, and attacks—Eph. 6:16.  
 Eph 6:16 Besides all these, having taken up the shield of faith, with which you will be able to quench all the flaming darts of the evil one.
- L. Through faith we are able to overcome in the midst of all our circumstances of suffering and difficulties—Heb. 11:33-34.  
 Heb 11:33 Who through faith overcame kingdoms, worked righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions,  
 Heb 11:34 Quenched the power of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, were made strong in weakness, became mighty in war, routed the armies of foreigners.
- M. We are kept by the power of God through faith, and we have power through faith—1 Pet. 1:5; Matt. 17:19-20; 21:21-22.  
 1 Pet 1:5 Who are being guarded by the power of God through faith unto a salvation ready to be revealed at the last time;  
 Matt 17:19 Then the disciples, coming to Jesus privately, said, Why were we not able to cast it out?  
 Matt 17:20 And He said to them, Because of your little faith; for truly I say to you, If you have faith like a mustard seed, you will say to this mountain, Move from here to there, and it will move; and nothing will be impossible to you.  
 Matt 21:21 And Jesus answered and said to them, Truly I say to you, If you have faith and do not doubt, you will not only do what was done to the fig tree, but even if you say to this mountain, Be taken up and cast into the sea, it will happen.  
 Matt 21:22 And all that you ask in prayer, if you believe, you will receive.

**VII. “Beware, brothers, lest perhaps there be in any one of you an evil heart of unbelief in falling away from the living God. But exhort one another each day, as long as it is called ‘today,’ lest any one of you be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin...‘ Today if you hear His voice, do not harden your hearts’”—Heb. 3:12-13, 15a:**

- A. *Falling away* also means “turning away”; when we exercise our spirit of faith and keep our heart turned to the Lord, the veil is taken away, and we can behold Him as the God of glory with an unveiled face, so that we may be continually transfused with Him, with His believing element, so that we can live by Him as our faith and remain in the process of being transformed from one degree of glory to another degree of glory into the same image of the resurrected and glorified Christ—2 Cor. 4:13; 3:16-18; cf. Gen. 1:26; Isa. 43:7.  
 2 Cor 4:13 And having the same spirit of faith according to that which is written, "I believed, therefore I spoke," we also believe, therefore we also speak,  
 2 Cor 3:16 But whenever their heart turns to the Lord, the veil is taken away.  
 2 Cor 3:17 And the Lord is the Spirit; and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom.  
 2 Cor 3:18 But we all with unveiled face, beholding and reflecting like a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, even as from the Lord Spirit.  
 Gen 1:26 And God said, Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of heaven and over the cattle and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth.  
 Isa 43:7 Everyone who is called by My name, / Whom I have created, formed, and even made for My glory.
- B. We need to see that unbelief is the greatest sin; we are believers who walk by faith and not by sight (2 Cor. 5:7); a believer is one who does not trust in things that can be seen, but he takes certain unseen things, confesses them, and realizes them by faith.  
 2 Cor 5:7 (For we walk by faith, not by appearance)-

- C. We overcome the devil, the accuser of the brothers, by our declaration of the divine facts, which is the word of our testimony (Rev. 12:10-11); we follow the Lord as the One who confronted the enemy not by His own word but by repeatedly saying, "It is written..."—Matt. 4:4, 7, 10.
- Rev 12:10 And I heard a loud voice in heaven, saying, Now has come the salvation and the power and the kingdom of our God and the authority of His Christ, for the accuser of our brothers has been cast down, who accuses them before our God day and night.
- Rev 12:11 And they overcame him because of the blood of the Lamb and because of the word of their testimony, and they loved not their soul-life even unto death.
- Matt 4:4 But He answered and said, It is written, "Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that proceeds out through the mouth of God."
- Matt 4:7 Jesus said to him, Again, it is written, "You shall not test the Lord your God."
- Matt 4:10 Then Jesus said to him, Go away, Satan! For it is written, "You shall worship the Lord your God, and Him only shall you serve."
- D. We should not believe in our feelings but believe in the divine facts in God's holy Word; we must learn to declare the divine, mystical, and eternal facts of what the Lord has done, is doing, and will do in us, for us, and through us for the accomplishment of His eternal economy; when God says a certain thing, we should also speak that thing simply because the Bible tells us so.

**VIII. As people of faith, we are people of "today"; the first point of the up-to-date way to practice the Lord's present move is to be filled with the Spirit inwardly and outwardly, essentially and economically, for our life and our work "today"—Acts 2:4; 13:52; Heb. 3:7-8a, 13, 15; 4:7:**

- Acts 2:4 And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in different tongues, even as the Spirit gave to them to speak forth.
- Acts 13:52 And the disciples were filled with joy and with the Holy Spirit.
- Heb 3:7 Therefore, even as the Holy Spirit says, "Today if you hear His voice,
- Heb 3:8a Do not harden your hearts as in the provocation, ...
- Heb 3:13 But exhort one another each day, as long as it is called "today," lest any one of you be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin--
- Heb 3:15 While it is said, "Today if you hear His voice, do not harden your hearts as in the provocation."
- Heb 4:7 He again designates a certain day, today, saying in David after so long a time, even as He has said before, "Today, if you hear His voice, do not harden your hearts."

"Forget about yesterday's enjoyment of Christ. You need a fresh enjoyment. You need something up to date. The Lord was there in Elden hall, but He is not there now. He is here presently moving in His recovery, and He is in you. Wherever you are, He is in you, and He is in you right now. Do you believe He is repeating all the things He did in the past? He is not repeating anything. He is always going on and on and on. The Lord is working. He is moving.

"Are you a person of yesterday? All of us should be people of today. Every day is a today. With some people every day is tomorrow, and with others every day is yesterday...Do not look ahead to the future, and do not look back to the past. We are people of today. Do not talk about your old experiences in the past. Talk about your experience today...Every day is a today. We do not have yesterday. We had yesterday, but we do not have it now. We will never have tomorrow. All the time we have is today. Every day is a today. When we enter into the New Jerusalem, we will have today since every day in eternity is today. The only day we have is today. Be filled inwardly [with the Spirit] today. Be filled outwardly [with the Spirit] today. Be filled today" (*The Collected Works of Witness Lee, 1985, vol. 5, "The Way to Practice the Lord's Present Move," pp. 484-485*).

## Excerpts from the Ministry:

### THE IMPORTANCE OF THE BELIEVERS' FAITH

#### He Who Comes Forward to God Must Believe That God Is

He who comes forward to God must believe that God is (Heb. 11:6b). This is very simple. God requires you only to believe that He is. The verb *to be* is actually the divine title of our Triune God. In Exodus 3 Moses asked God what His name was. God answered that His name is I Am Who I Am (vv. 13-14). Our God's name is the verb *to be*. He is I Am Who I Am. He is the only One.

Thus, when Jesus came, He declared that He was the I Am three times in John 8. He told the unbelieving Pharisees, "Unless you believe that I am, you will die in your sins" (v. 24). He also said, "When you lift up the Son of Man, then you will know that I am" (v. 28). At the end of the chapter, the Jews said to Him, "You are not yet fifty years old, and have You seen Abraham?" (v. 57). Jesus responded, "Truly, truly, I say to you, Before Abraham came into being, I am" (v. 58). According to grammar, this is the wrong tense. The Lord should have said, "Before Abraham came into being, I was." But the Lord said that He is the I Am, indicating that He is the very Jehovah. This is why Paul says in Hebrews 11:6, "He who comes forward to God must believe that He is." God is always, eternally, in the present tense.

Revelation 1:4 and 5 say, "John to the seven churches which are in Asia: Grace to you and peace from Him who is and who was and who is coming, and from the seven Spirits who are before His throne, and from Jesus Christ, the faithful Witness, the Firstborn of the dead, and the Ruler of the kings of the earth." In these verses we see the three of the Divine Trinity. God the Father is called by John in Revelation 1:4 "Him who is and who was and who is coming." The One who is coming is the One who will be. This means that in the whole universe, nothing else is. Only One is. He is, because He is real. All other things created by Him are not real. This is why Solomon, the wise king, said that all things are vanity (Eccl. 1:2). You think you are, but you are vanity. Everything is vanity. The sun, the moon, the living creatures, the heavens, and the earth are all vanities. Only One is. This *is*, the verb *to be*, implies existing. He is the One who was existing, who is existing, and who is to be existing. No human language can adequately express what this title *I Am* means.

Paul says that he who comes forward to God must believe that God is. A Chinese version says that when you come forward to God, you must believe that there is God. This is too shallow. The English translation is very good because it is equivalent to the Greek—we must believe that God is. This implies everything. Do you need God? God is. Do you need food? God is. This is why we use the word *great* in saying that Jesus is the great I Am. He told us, "I am...the life" (John 14:6a). "I am the resurrection" (11:25). "I am the door" (10:7, 9). "I am the good Shepherd" (v. 11). "I am the bread of life" (6:35). He is the real food. There is only one kind of food that is. This food is Jesus, the great I Am. He is the breath (20:22), the living water (4:10, 14), and the tree of life (15:1; 14:6a; Rev. 2:7). He is God (John 1:1; 20:28-29; Rom. 9:5), the Father (Isa. 9:6; John 14:9-10), the Son (Mark 1:1; John 20:31), and the Spirit (2 Cor. 3:17; 1 Cor. 15:45b). He is everything to us.

The Bible says that if you do not believe in Christ, you have no life (John 3:15-16, 36). When I was young, I could not understand this. I thought that as a strong boy, I did have life. Later, I realized that our life is a false one. It is not the life that is. This means that our life is not something that exists forever. We are today, but eventually, we will not be tomorrow. So in the whole universe we are nothing. I am nothing, our hall is nothing, Anaheim is nothing, California is nothing, the United States is nothing, and the whole globe is nothing! This is because they do not exist forever. The day will come when they will not exist; they will be over. Actually, the things that are seen are not the things that exist; they are vanities (2 Cor. 4:18).

Then what is existing? Who exists? Only the great I Am—I Am Who I Am. He who comes forward to God must believe that God is. Faith is so critical. Without this, you can never make God

happy. You must believe that God is. Let me illustrate. If a husband realized that only God is and he is not, then he would not love his wife by himself and in himself. Sisters, when you go shopping, if you realized that in the whole universe only God is, would you buy anything you want? You would realize, "I am not. I am nothing. I don't go shopping, but He is, so He goes."

What is faith? Faith is to stop yourself from doing anything. You are nothing. Faith joins you with God to make God the only One who is. I am not, so I should not be the one who loves my wife. It should be Christ loving my wife. He is; I am not. I should not be the one to go shopping. He should be the One. When you pick up something on sale in the department store, you have to check, "He is, or I am?"

Faith is to stop you from doing anything but to make God everything to you. This equals Paul's word in Galatians 2:20: "I am crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but it is Christ who lives in me." Who lives? It is no longer I. I do not exist. I was terminated. I was crucified. I am finished. It is no more I, but it is Christ who lives in me. Christ lives. Christ is. Christ exists. I do not exist. This is the very essence of the short phrase *believe that He is*. To believe that God is implies that you are not. He must be the only One, the unique One, in everything, and we must be nothing in everything.

The brothers need to ask themselves, "Is it me or Christ who is the husband to my wife?" If a sister has a husband who does not take Christ as the One who is, she will be miserable. But if her husband is Christ, she has the only Husband, the unique Husband. Only Christ is the Husband. No husbands are real husbands. They are all vanity. Do you come forward to God? If you say yes, then you have to believe that God is, implying that you are nothing. You are finished.

It would be good to speak a word like this at a wedding. The person marrying a couple could say to them, "Are you the dear bride, and are you the dear bridegroom?" The bridegroom should say, "No. I am not. But Christ is." The bride should say, "I am not the bride. I am so ugly and poor. I am not pretty. Christ is the beautiful One. I am not the bride, but He is." This is a believer.

When you say what Paul said, "It's no longer I, but Christ," you believe that God is. To believe that God is, is so deep. It implies that you realize that you are not, but He is. *You are not* means that you do not exist. This is what the Bible means when it says to deny yourself. When a sister is about to be married, she needs to realize that she is nothing. She should not feel that she is the most beautiful and wonderful one. If she does, her marriage will be finished. That is not a believer's marriage. A believer who is about to be married should say, "Lord, I am going to marry this man. Lord, You know I am nothing. I cannot be the proper wife. I am nothing, Lord." What a blessing this is! This is the blessing of denying yourself in everything.

The Lord Jesus said, "If anyone wants to come after Me, let him deny himself" (Luke 9:23). This word is the same as what Paul said: "He who comes forward to God must believe that He is." To deny yourself equals to believe that God is, and to believe that God is equals to deny yourself. This is because you believe that only He is. In the whole universe He is, and all of us are nothing. I should not be anything. I should not exist. Only He should be everything. Only He should exist. So Paul says, "I have been crucified. It is no longer I, but Christ."

When the apostle Paul was Saul, he was a very aggressive young man. Everything with him was "I, me, my, and mine." With Saul it was "I first, my and mine in the middle, and me last." Everything was Saul of Tarsus. But the Lord Jesus knocked him down on the road to Damascus, and Saul asked, "Who are You, Lord?" (Acts 9:5). The Lord said, "I am Jesus" (v. 5). The Lord was saying, "I am the great I Am. I am the One who is. You must believe that I am and you are not." Eventually, Saul changed his name. Saul was over, and Paul came up (13:9 and footnote 1, Recovery Version). This Paul was the one who told us, "It is no longer I who live, but it is Christ who lives in me." This is to believe that God is.

Nothing can make the unique God happy except one thing. That is faith. Faith is to believe that God is. Then I would check with you, "If only God is, where are you?" The first stanza of *Hymns*, #483

says, “Buried with Christ, and raised with Him too; / What is there left for me to do? / Simply to cease from struggling and strife, / Simply to walk in newness of life. / Glory be to God!” Where are you? You are in the tomb. Today who are you? You need to say, “It is no longer I, but Christ.” I would like again to refer to what Darby said: “O the joy of having nothing and being nothing, seeing nothing but a living Christ in glory, and being careful for nothing but His interests down here.” This is faith. We care for nothing but His interest. We should always say, “Not I, not me, not my, not mine; but He, Him, His. He is the first and the last and everything in between.” “Christ, only Christ” (see *Hymns*, #591— stanza 5).

Why did John write the book of Revelation and declare, “Grace to you and peace from Him who is and who was and who is coming” (1:4)? This was because the degraded church had become too much. The biggest religious society on this earth is the Catholic Church. They use the term *the Church*, which refers to the pope. They do not say, “Christ says...” Instead, they say, “The pope says...” Whatever the pope says is what they do. But it should be no more the Catholic Church, no more the pope, but Christ. This is to believe that God is, and this is the faith of the believers.

Only faith can make God happy, and faith is to believe that God is. It is not I, but Christ. To believe that God is, is the only way, the unique way, to make God happy, to please God. I would like to ask the sisters, “When you are combing your hair, who is combing it?” While you are combing your hair, you should say, “No longer I, but Christ.” But with many sisters it is not Christ, but them. If Christ were doing the combing, He would not comb your hair according to your way. You have to remember this. When you comb your hair, you should be able to say, “Praise the Lord. It is no longer I, but Christ.” You and I have to do everything in this way.

When brothers come to visit me, quite often I pray, “Lord, the brothers are coming to see me. I am not the one who can meet their need. Lord, You are the One.” This is faith— believing that I should be out and believing that He should be in. I must deny myself in everything and trust in Him in everything. To deny yourself and to trust in Him is faith. This is to believe that God is.

Even at the end of a ministry meeting, we may say, “Saints, now it is your turn to share.” But we have to say, “It is not our turn, but Christ’s turn.” If we live in this way, the riches of Christ will come out of our mouth. Quite often before coming to a meeting, I pray to the Lord, “Lord, I should not be the speaker, but You. I have been crucified, but You live in me. You should be the speaker.” This makes a big difference—to deny the self, to trust in the Lord, that is, to believe that God is. (*The Collected Works of Witness Lee, 1994–1997*, vol. 1, “Crystallization-study of the Epistle to the Romans,” pp. 276-281)

## WITHSTANDING SATAN BY FAITH

First Peter 5:8-9 says, “Be sober; watch. Your adversary, the devil, as a roaring lion, walks about, seeking someone to devour. Him withstand, being firm in your faith.” God’s Word shows us clearly that the way to withstand Satan is by faith. There is no other way to withstand him. What should our faith rest on? How should we exercise our faith to withstand him? Let us consider what the Word of God says concerning this.

### **Believing That the Lord’s Manifestation Is to Destroy the Works of the Devil**

First, we must believe that the Lord was manifested for the purpose of destroying the works of the devil (1 John 3:8). The Son of God has come to the earth; He was manifested. When He was on earth, He destroyed the work of the devil wherever He went. Often Satan’s work was not obvious; he hid behind natural phenomena. However, the Lord rebuked him every time. It is clear that He was rebuking Satan when He rebuked Peter’s speaking (Matt. 16:22-23), when He rebuked the fever of Peter’s mother-in-law (Luke 4:39), and when He rebuked the winds and the waves. Although the devil hid behind many natural phenomena, the Lord Jesus rebuked him. Wherever the Lord went, the power of the devil was shattered. This is why He said, “But if I, by the Spirit of God, cast out the demons, then

the kingdom of God has come upon you” (Matt. 12:28). In other words, wherever the Lord went, Satan was cast out, and the kingdom of God was manifested. Satan could not remain where the Lord was. This is why He said that He was manifested to destroy the works of the devil.

We should also believe that in manifesting Himself on the earth, the Lord not only destroyed the works of the devil but also gave authority to His disciples to cast out demons in His name. The Lord said, “Behold, I have given you the authority to tread upon serpents and scorpions and over all the power of the enemy” (Luke 10:19). He gave His name to the church so that His church might continue His work on earth after His ascension. The Lord used His authority on earth to cast out demons. He also gave this authority to the church.

We must distinguish between what the devil has and what we have. What the devil has is power. What we have is authority. All that Satan has is power. But the Lord Jesus has given us authority, which can overcome all the power of Satan. Power cannot prevail over authority. God has given us authority, and Satan will surely fail.

Consider an illustration of how authority overcomes power: A traffic light on a road controls traffic. When a policeman turns on the red light, all pedestrians and cars have to stop. No one is allowed to dash through a red light. The pedestrians and cars are much more powerful than the red light in terms of power. However, no pedestrian or driver will dare dash through the red light because of the presence of authority. This is an example of authority prevailing over power.

Authority prevails over power; this is God’s established policy in this universe. No matter how strong Satan’s power is, one fact remains sure—the Lord Jesus has given His name to the church. This name stands for authority. The church can cast out demons in the name of the Lord. We can invoke the Lord’s name to deal with Satan’s power. Thank God that no matter how great Satan’s power is, the Lord’s name is immeasurably greater. The authority behind the Lord’s name is strong enough to overcome all the power of Satan.

The disciples went out in the name of the Lord. They were surprised when they returned. They told the Lord, “Lord, even the demons are subject to us in Your name” (10:17). The Lord’s name spells authority. His giving of His name to us means that He has given His authority to us. The Lord said, “Behold, I have given you the authority to tread upon serpents and scorpions and over all the power of the enemy, and nothing shall by any means hurt you” (v. 19). Whoever desires to withstand Satan must learn to know the difference between the Lord’s authority and Satan’s power. No matter how great Satan’s power is, the Lord’s authority is able to overcome him. We must believe that God has given this authority to the church. The church can cast out demons and withstand the devil in the name of the Lord Jesus.

### **Believing That the Lord’s Death Has Destroyed Satan**

Second, we must believe that through death the Lord Jesus has destroyed him who has the might of death, the devil (Heb. 2:14). The manifestation of the Lord Jesus destroyed the works of the devil, and the death of the Lord Jesus destroyed the devil himself.

The Lord’s death pronounces the greatest defeat for the devil because the Lord’s death is not only a punishment but also a way of salvation. In Genesis 2:17 God spoke of death: “For in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.” This death is surely a punishment. Satan was delighted at this word. Since man would die if he ate the fruit, Satan tried his best to seduce man to eat it, so that death would reign in man and he could claim the victory. However, the Lord’s death constitutes the greatest way of salvation. It is true that God said, “For in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.” This death is punishment. But the Lord has another death. The second death is a way of salvation. Death can punish those who sin. Death can also save and deliver those who are in sin. Satan thought that death could only punish the sinner. He seized upon this fact and reigned through man’s death. However, God saves and delivers man from sin through the death of the Lord Jesus. This is the most profound aspect of the gospel.

The Lord's death on the cross takes away not only our sins but also the whole old creation. Our old man has been crucified with Him. Although Satan reigns through death, the more he reigns through death, the worse his lot becomes, because his reign stops at death. Since we are already dead, death can no longer sting us. He has no further reign over us.

"For in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." God said this so that man would not eat of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. But man ate it and sinned. What then should be done? The result of sin is death; there is no way to change this. However, there is a way to salvation, a salvation which goes through death. When the Lord Jesus was crucified on the cross for us, the old creation and the old man were both crucified with Him. This means that Satan's authority can only go as far as death. The Scripture says, "Through death He might destroy him who has the might of death, that is, the devil" (Heb. 2:14).

Thank and praise the Lord. We are those who are already dead. If Satan attacks us, we can say to him, "I am already dead!" He has no authority over us because we are already dead. His authority extends only to the point of death.

Our crucifixion with Christ is an accomplished fact; it is God's doing. The Bible does not say that our death with the Lord is something that belongs to the future. It is not some experience that we hope to attain one day. The Bible does not tell us to pursue death. It shows us that we are already dead. A person is not dead if he is still pursuing death. However, our death with Christ is a gift from God in the same way that His death for us is a gift. If a man is still pursuing crucifixion, he is standing on fleshly ground, and Satan has full control over those who stand on fleshly ground. We must believe in the Lord's death. We must also believe in our own death. Just as we believed in the Lord's death for us, so also we should believe in our death in Him. Both are acts of faith, and neither has anything to do with human pursuits. As soon as we strive to realize these facts, we expose ourselves to Satan's attack. We have to lay hold of the accomplished facts and declare: "Praise and thank the Lord; I am already dead."

We must see that, in the eyes of God, our death with Christ is an accomplished fact. Once we see this, Satan can no longer do anything with us. Satan can deal only with those who are not dead. He can rule over only those who are facing death and who are on their way to death. But we are no longer facing death; we have already died. Satan can do nothing about us.

In order to withstand Satan, we must realize that the Lord's manifestation was a manifestation of authority, and the work of His cross has released all those who are under Satan's hand. Satan no longer has any authority over us anymore. We are above him. We are those who are already dead. Satan's way is terminated by death, and there is nothing more that he can do.

### **Believing That the Lord's Resurrection Has Put Satan to Shame**

Third, we must believe that the Lord's resurrection has put Satan to shame. Satan no longer has any way to attack us.

Colossians 2:12 says, "Buried together with Him in baptism, in which also you were raised together with Him through the faith of the operation of God, who raised Him from the dead." This verse speaks of death as well as resurrection. Verse 13 tells us how we died and resurrected; verse 14 tells us what the Lord did at the time of His death; and verse 15 says that the Lord Jesus stripped off the rulers and the authorities and "made a display of them openly, triumphing over them in it." Verse 20 says, "If you died with Christ," and 3:1 says, "If therefore you were raised together with Christ." These verses begin with resurrection and end with resurrection, and the verses in between speak of triumphing in the cross. We stand in the position of resurrection, and we triumph in the cross.

Why can we do this? The statement we made earlier explains this: The Lord has died, and we also are dead in Him. Satan, who has dominion over the old man, can follow us only as far as the cross. Resurrection is beyond him. Just as Satan had nothing in the Lord Jesus while He was on earth (John 14:30), so also he has nothing in Him in resurrection. Satan has no place at all in the new life. He has no authority at all in the new life and cannot touch our new life!

When the Lord was hung on the cross, it seemed as if myriads of demons were surrounding it. They thought that they could destroy the Son of God. It was to have been their greatest victory. Little did they realize that the Lord Jesus would go into death, come out of death, and overcome the authority of death! Here is the glorious fact: The Lord has come out of death! Therefore, we have the boldness and the confidence to say that the life of God is well able to cast away death!

What is the resurrection life? The resurrection life is a life that cannot be touched by death. It is a life that transcends death, that is beyond the boundary of death, that comes out of death, and that death cannot hold. Satan's power extends only as far as death. The Lord Jesus proved how great the power of His life is through His resurrection. He dismantled the power of Satan. The Bible calls this power "the power of His resurrection" (Phil. 3:10). When this resurrection power is expressed through us, everything of Satan is cast down!

We can withstand Satan because our life is a life of resurrection. This life has nothing to do with Satan. Our life issues from the life of God; it is a life that comes out of death. Satan's power only goes as far as death. Whatever it does to us is limited to this side of death. But our life has come out of death. We have a life which he cannot touch. We are standing on resurrection ground, and we look back in triumph through the cross. Colossians 2 speaks of triumphing in resurrection. It is a chapter on resurrection, not death. We do not triumph in death through resurrection; rather we triumph in resurrection through death.

In order to withstand Satan, every child of God must declare with a strong faith, "Thank God, I have resurrected! Satan, what can you do? What you can do goes only so far as death. But the life that I have today has nothing to do with you! This life has been tested by you already. What else can you do? You are powerless! This life has transcended over you! Satan, get away from me!"

We cannot deal with Satan on the ground of hope. We can only stand on the ground of resurrection, the ground of the Lord. This is a very basic principle. Colossians 2:12 tells us that we must believe in "the operation of God, who raised Him from the dead."

We need to take the same position before Satan as that which we take before God. The Bible tells us to put on the robe of righteousness when we come before God (Isa. 61:10; Zech. 3:4-5). Our robe of righteousness is Christ. We need to put on Christ to come before God. In the same way, we need to put on Christ to come before Satan. God cannot find our sins when we put on Christ. Likewise, Satan cannot find our sins when we are in Christ. When we take this stand, Satan can no longer attack us. We are perfect before God and perfect also before Satan. What a glorious fact!

We must not be afraid of Satan. If we are afraid of Satan, he will laugh at us. He will say, "What a fool there is on earth. How can this one be so foolish?" Anyone who is afraid of Satan is foolish, because he has forgotten his position in Christ. We have no reason to fear him. We have transcended over his power. We can stand before him and say, "You cannot touch me! No matter how strong and resourceful you are, you are still one step behind!" On the day of the Lord's resurrection, He led the enemy captive and openly shamed him. Today we are standing on the ground of resurrection, and we triumph through the cross!

### **Believing That the Ascension of the Lord Is Far above the Power of Satan**

Fourth, we must believe that the ascension of the Lord has put Him far above the power of Satan. Ephesians 1:20-22 says, "Raising Him from the dead and seating Him at His right hand in the heavenlies, far above all...not only in this age but also in that which is to come; and He subjected all things under His feet and gave Him to be Head over all things to the church." This means that the Lord Jesus is already seated in the heavenlies and is far above all the power of Satan.

Ephesians 2:6 says, "And raised us up together with Him and seated us together with Him in the heavenlies in Christ Jesus." This is our position, the position of a Christian. The Lord Jesus is resurrected; He is seated in the heavenlies far above all the power of Satan. We are raised up together

with Christ and are seated together with Him in the heavenlies, far above all the power of Satan.

Ephesians 6:11 and 13 say, “Put on the whole armor of God that you may be able to stand against the stratagems of the devil...and having done all, to stand.” Chapter two shows us that we are seated together with the Lord in the heavenlies. Chapter six shows us that we need to stand firm. Chapter two says that we need to sit, while chapter six says that we need to stand. What does it mean to sit? To sit means to rest. It means that the Lord has overcome and that we can now rest in His victory. This is what it means to depend on the Lord’s victory. What does it mean to stand? To stand means that spiritual warfare is not a matter of assault but of defense. To stand does not mean to attack; it means to defend. Because the Lord has overcome completely, we have no need to attack again. The victory of the cross is complete, and there is no further need to attack. Here we see two attitudes: One is to sit, and the other is to stand. To sit is to rest in the Lord’s victory, while to stand is to withstand Satan and to stop him from taking away our victory.

Christian warfare is a matter of warding off defeat; it is not a matter of fighting for victory. We have already overcome. We fight from the position of victory, and we fight to maintain our victory. We are not fighting to win a victory. We fight from victory; victory is something that is in our hands. The warfare spoken of in Ephesians is the warfare of the overcomers. We do not become overcomers through fighting. We need to distinguish between these two things.

How does Satan tempt us? He causes us to forget our own position and our victory. He blinds our eyes to our own victory. If we give in to his tactics, we will feel that victory is far away and beyond our reach. We must remember that the victory of the Lord is complete. It is so complete that our whole life is included in this victory! Once we believe, we overcome. Satan is defeated and we have overcome in Christ. Satan wants to steal away the victory which we have gained. His work is to taunt us to secretly find out if we still have the faith. If we do not know that victory is already ours, we will fail. But if we know our victory, his work will fail.

Therefore, we counter the work of Satan with the work of the Lord Jesus. We withstand Satan through the Lord’s manifestation, death, resurrection, and ascension. We are standing today upon the accomplished work of the Lord. We do not need to *try* to overcome in any way when Satan attacks us. Once we have the slightest thought of trying to overcome, we have failed, because our position is wrong. How great is the difference between a person who tries to overcome and one who withstands by knowing that he has already overcome. To withstand the devil means that we withstand him by the victory of Christ.

This matter indeed needs revelation. We need to see the manifestation of the Lord. We need to see His death, resurrection, and ascension. We need to know all these things.

As Christians we must learn to withstand the devil. We must say to Satan under all circumstances, “Get away from me!” May God be gracious to us so that we may all have such a faith. May we have faith toward the four things the Lord has accomplished for us, and may we exercise strong faith to withstand Satan and reject his work upon us. (*The Collected Works of Watchman Nee*, vol. 50, “Messages for Building Up New Believers (3),” pp. 733-742)