

The HEARING OF Faith

LIVING STREAM MINISTRY RADIO NEWSLETTER

NUMBER 51, JULY 2002

"He therefore who bountifully supplies to you the Spirit . . . does He do it out of the works of the law or out of the hearing of faith?" Galatians 3:5

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*Life-Study of the Bible
with Witness Lee*

THE RADIO PROGRAM OF LIVING STREAM MINISTRY

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Dear Life-study Listener,

One of the most edifying things for us as Christians is to hear how other believers have experienced Christ. We are comforted and strengthened in our faith when we see the Lord's work in others' lives. One of our favorite columns in the *Hearing of Faith* is "Response from Listeners," where each month we share with you a few of the testimonies we joyously receive here.

We appreciate all the notes of appreciation for the ministry, and the more specific messages are truly encouraging. For example, the comments from one reply card included in this month's issue speaks particularly of what this listener gained: "I have grown a lot from the work of Watchman Nee and Witness Lee. They have shown me how to deny the flesh and release the inner man. You have truly helped me in more ways than you will ever know."

We share this with you because it does help us to receive detailed comments from you. But more importantly, we know that when we believers in Christ communicate with others our specific enjoyment of Him, that becomes a source of faith to those who hear. If you would like to practice communicating your faith, please feel free to write to us using the enclosed reply card, call us at (888) 543-3788, or send us an e-mail at radio@lsm.org. Remember, anything that enlightened you from the ministry or affected a change in your life would surely be an inspiration to others.

Living Stream Ministry

WHAT IS A SPIRITUAL GIFT?

*The following is an excerpt from Life-study of Romans, message 26,
where Witness Lee ministers on the matter of spiritual gifts.*

We all need to be impressed with the fact that in Romans 12 the gifts of speaking in tongues, interpretation, healing, and miracles are not mentioned. Such gifts are miraculous gifts, but in Romans 12 we find the gifts of grace in

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RESPONSE *from* LISTENERS

We invite you to share your comments with us and other listeners so we all may be encouraged in the Lord. Responses should be addressed to *The Hearing of Faith*, "Response from Listeners," 2431 W. La Palma Ave., Anaheim, CA 92801 or radio@lsm.org. Responses are subject to editing for the sake of space and clarity.

I have grown a lot from the work of Watchman Nee and Witness Lee. They have shown me how to deny the flesh and release the inner man. You have truly helped me in more ways than you will ever know. So in the name of Jesus, keep up the good work. I'm so glad you came into my life.

Huntsville, TX

Yesterday I was in my car when I heard on a Corpus station a message that I believe was directly from God. I believe it was the Lord in His timing for me to hear your broadcast on Revelation about the Antichrist and Christ's coming back. It was exceptionally good, and I was blessed immeasurably. Then this morning I picked up an envelope and it was from the Living Stream Ministry. I felt God was bringing confirmation and I am thankful to the Lord for this.

El Campo, TX

I was really encouraged when I heard your broadcast today out of Dallas, Texas. It was on the two aspects of the Holy Spirit's work in the life of a believer. It made sense. I had read some things by Watchman Nee, but this gave a further clarification. I just wanted to let you know I appreciate your insight.

Berryville, AR

Excerpt from

THE COLLECTED WORKS OF WATCHMAN NEE

THE ASSEMBLY LIFE

In the parable of the talents in Matthew 25, there are three kinds of gifts—five talents, two talents, and one talent. They were given to three slaves, who were told to do business. The gifts are the capital. When the slaves took the gifts to do business, they could make a profit or incur a loss. If they made a profit, their master would not suffer. If they incurred a loss, their master would suffer. Brothers who have the gift of evangelism can surely save people. But if their works are not done according to God's will and if they are doing these for self-glorification, to meet some personal needs, or for the sake of going along with human affections, they will lose their spiritual power and will be left only with the power of their gifts. Today, many of God's servants are leading conferences, reviving men, helping men, and saving men. Among them, some are indeed gifts given by God. You may find out that although they have the gifts, they do not want to stand on the ground that God wants them to stand on. You may be amazed that they can still save, help, and revive men when they themselves are not standing on the ground God wants them to stand on. Actually, this is a misuse of the gifts. They can save and revive men because they have God's gifts. It is God's gifts that are saving men, reviving men, and helping men. This kind of misuse of gifts is very dangerous. Today God does not interfere and does not say anything. But when we go before the judgment seat, He will reckon with us. As in the parable mentioned in Matthew 25, He will reckon with us according to the amount of gifts that He gave us as capital and according to the way we did business in the world with these gifts...

*Every
regenerated
person has
a gift.*

...Every believer has at least one talent. There is no slave who does not have any gift. First Corinthians 12 says that to one is given one kind of gift and to another is given another kind of gift. Therefore, everyone has some gift. Every regenerated person has a gift. But not everyone has the same kind of gift. According to Ephesians 4, there are only five kinds of gifts that build up the whole church. But as to the gifts that are for the growth of a local church, we have those mentioned in 1 Corinthians 12 and Romans 12. Not every believer has the gifts of Ephesians 4, but they may have one of the gifts mentioned in Romans 12 and 1 Corinthians 12.

The Collected Works of Watchman Nee, vol. 22, pp. 46-48

A SPIRITUAL GIFT

(continued from page 1)

life. An example of a miraculous gift is the speaking in a human language by Balaam's donkey. Although the donkey did not possess a human life, it spoke a human language. Undoubtedly, that was a miraculous gift. The gifts listed in Romans 12 are not miraculous gifts; they are the gifts of grace in life. As you enjoy God as life and grow in life, you find that, corresponding to your growth in life, you have a certain skill or ability. This is what we call a gift of grace in life. The donkey did not need to have growth in life in order to speak a human language. It did not matter whether the donkey was small or big, young or old. The gift was miraculous: it did not depend upon the donkey's growth. However, to be an elder in the church does not depend upon a miraculous gift. Do not think that after being saved a short while you can pray for several hours, receive the so-called baptism, and suddenly become an elder. If a person could become an elder in this way, it would mean that eldership is a miraculous gift. But to be an elder you do not need miraculous gifts; you need the gift of grace by growth in life. You need to grow day by day and year by year. If you do not exhibit the growth in life, you cannot be an elder. You cannot be an elder if you lack the adequate measure of life. I hope that everyone who reads this message is now able to differentiate between these two categories of gifts—the miraculous gifts and the gifts of grace in life....

The gifts of grace in life are necessary for the practice of the Body life. If you neglect the gifts of grace in life and concentrate on the miraculous gifts, the church will be divided in a very short time. Be

assured that we could never be one by stressing miraculous gifts. The miraculous gifts tend to divide, while the gifts of grace in life build up.... Paul, an expert in the church life, knew from his writing of 1 Corinthians that the miraculous gifts had been the cause of divisions there in Corinth. Even in 1 Corinthians we can see the fact that speaking in tongues and the other miraculous gifts had a divisive effect on the church. Therefore,

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Paul did not include these gifts in the book of Romans. Paul was both wise and careful, recognizing the fact that the miraculous gifts were helpful to individual Christians. In 1 Corinthians Paul said that speaking in tongues builds up the individual who exercises it, but that it does not build up the church (1 Cor. 14:4). He told the Corinthians to care for the building up of the church (1 Cor. 14:12, 26). In the book of Romans his concern was not the building up of a particular individual, but the building up of the Body. Thus, he did not include the miraculous gifts in this book.

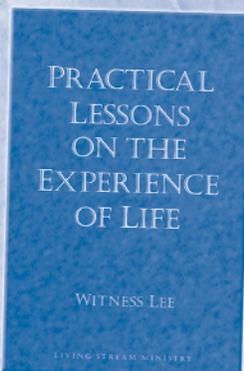
For further reading on this subject, please see *Life-study of Romans*, message 26; *Life-study of 1 Corinthians*, messages 57-63, by Witness Lee, published by Living Stream Ministry.

PRACTICAL LESSONS ON THE EXPERIENCE OF LIFE

According to the Scriptures, God's intention is to be life to us in His Son through the Spirit. Christ came that we may have life, that is, the divine, eternal life, which is Christ Himself. This requires that we not only be instructed in the scriptural truths concerning life, but that we enter into the experience of life. In this way we will grow in the divine life to be built up together as the church that He desires.

In *Practical Lessons on the Experience of Life* Witness Lee presents the basic truths concerning God as life to us. Going beyond mere teachings, however, he also leads us into the practical experience of life. These basic and indispensable lessons can help every believer enter into the central thought of God for the full recovery of the experience of life for growth and for the building up of the church.

Practical Lessons on the Experience of Life
by Witness Lee
ISBN 0-7363-1241-2



Available at Christian Bookstores
through Anchor, Appalachian, Riverside,
and Spring Arbor Distributors.
Published by Living Stream Ministry
2431 W. La Palma Ave. • Anaheim, CA 92801
1-800-549-5164 • www.lsm.org

The PATH OF Life

Below are excerpts focused on matters and practices of the spiritual life as revealed in God's Word. May the Lord show us "the path of life" (Psa. 16:11) that we may have a daily living of enjoying, experiencing, and gaining Christ.

CONSECRATION

CHECKING OUR CONSECRATION AND BEING FAITHFUL TO IT

The way to check whether or not we are faithful and honest in our consecration to the Lord is by our daily life. If we check ourselves, we will see, as Brother Nee pointed out, that in many matters there is a struggle between us and the Lord, and we often win the victory. Whenever there is a struggle, the defeated one is the Lord. It is good to have a struggle with the Lord. If we have no struggle with Him, we are through with the

Whenever the Lord points out something to us, we need to say, "Lord, I let You have it."

Lord. Especially in this age on this earth there is always the struggle. To not have a struggle means that we are fallen and backslidden. In our struggle, however, who wins the victory, we or the Lord? The way to check whether or not our consecration is complete, genuine, and without reservation is by who wins the struggle. That the Lord is defeated is due to the unfaithfulness of our consecration. We have consecrated ourselves, but we may not be faithful and honest to our consecration. If we Christians would keep our consecration, the Lord will always have the victory.

All our problems today are due to our unfaithfulness in consecration. We may not have a morning watch, for example, because of a problem with our consecration. Many of us have passed the crisis, but we have not continued on the way. Therefore, in order

for a church to be built up, the first foundation we must lay is the matter of consecration. We need to check with ourselves and deal with our consecration, and then we need to help others. We need to pray, fellowship, and encourage the brothers and help them one by one to come into the real experience of consecration.

We may say that we do not have much faith. The reason we do not have faith is that we are not faithful to our consecration. When we are faithful to our consecration, we have a living faith. We may say that we do not have power. The reason again is that we are not faithful to our consecration. When we are faithful to our consecration, we have the ground to claim the power, and it is ours. We need to go to the Lord once again to deal with and clear up our consecration. If we do this, we will see the blessings. Then we will have a burden to help others.

ADVANCING STEP BY STEP IN OUR CONSECRATION

We may have consecrated ourselves to the Lord after we were regenerated, but the problem is whether or not we have continued in our consecration. The unfaithfulness to our consecration is the reason why many of us have not grown much and advanced on the Lord's way. We may compare this to someone who walks all the time but does not walk on the right way. We may come to the meetings, fellowship with the saints, and do many things in the Christian life, but we may not be on the proper way. To go on is a matter of consecration. Whenever the Lord points out something to us, we need to say, "Lord, I

let You have it." If we do this, we advance by one step, but if we do not let the Lord have the victory, we are not on the way, regardless of how many things we do. To go on the proper Christian way is to take step after step in our consecration.

We have to go on by consecration day by day. A day without consecration is a wasted day. If we have a struggle with the Lord and we win the victory, making the Lord the defeated One, then regardless of how much we do for the Lord we will only waste our time. The measure of our life and going on is our consecration.

Practical Lessons on the Experience of Life, pp. 34-36, by Witness Lee

THE HEARING OF FAITH

is a publication of Living Stream Ministry. All subscriptions are free. In addition to portions of ministry, this newsletter features broadcast updates and other items of interest. We hope that this newsletter will not only inform you of current news but will also nourish and refresh your spirit. Please be sure to read our reply card and feel free to use it to make comments or ask questions.

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According to the revelation of the Scripture, we believe that any ministry that comes from God should trust in God for all its needs. Therefore, we have made it our policy not to solicit donations or contributions. However, if any of our listeners are led by the Lord to give, we will accept offerings as from the Lord and will use them for the furtherance of His truth.

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