

## **BUILDING UP A HABIT TO LIVE CHRIST**

- We need to build up a lifelong habit of living Christ
- Just as we live by breathing in our human life, we can breathe spiritually by calling on the Lord continuously and checking with Him in everything
- We can also live Christ by letting His word abide in us richly through singing, psalming, and giving thanks in everything

We need to see that we must build up a habit to live Christ. It is like breathing and living. These two matters should be lifelong and all the day long. Yet our experience is altogether different. Occasionally we live Christ in the morning. Then we die for twelve hours, or at least we sleep for twelve hours. Whenever I have a little time I contact the Lord: "Lord, I surely would like to learn the secret that I may continually live You, that I could live You without interruption and without ceasing." Nearly every day I have had this kind of prayer. (*Perfecting Training*, Chapter 14)

### **Praying Unceasingly by Breathing, Calling, and Checking with the Lord in Everything**

According to our physical life we understand and [can] see a full illustration that to live is simply to breathe. Now we need to discover what is our spiritual breathing. No doubt our spiritual breathing is just our praying. But this does not mean prayer in the traditional way. Prayer in the Bible in actual practice is calling. I don't believe you can pray adequately without calling on the name of the Lord...While you are doing anything you must spontaneously check with yourself: are you doing this very thing or is the Lord doing this very thing with you? Are you doing this very thing by yourself or are you doing this very thing by the Lord with you? We need to build up this good habit. As you talk with your wife and your children, you must exercise this habit: "Lord, is this just myself speaking or are You speaking with me?" You must have such a spontaneous checking habit. That checking is the calling, and that calling is the prayer, and that prayer is the breathing. Even you have to drive your car with such a habit: "Lord, are You driving? Are You driving with me?" Don't do anything without praying. You have to pray. And to pray is just to call on the name of the Lord. And to call on the Lord is just to breathe. By this you will live Christ...If you are an accountant working on your books, you have to keep praying. Don't do your accounting work by yourself. Do it with the Lord

Jesus. Do it by having the Lord with you. The best way to have the Lord with you is by calling on Him. It is here you have the victory. It is here you are sanctified. It is here you have everything you need, not only constantly but even instantly.

We have to take Christ as our life and live with Him like two persons who are living one life together. We have to live such a life, and to live such a life is to always call on Him. In other words, using our daily expression, we just talk to Him. Don't stop talking with Him. Talk to Him all the time. While you are talking to your wife, talk to Christ. While you are talking to your boss or employee, talk to Christ. Don't do any talking just by yourself. Don't forget that you should never be single. You're not destined to a single life. You are now living a marriage life, and your husband is Christ. We all have Him as our husband. We must live with our husband. Don't go anywhere without Him. Don't do anything without Him, and don't say anything without Him. All the time you have to do things with Him. This is to pray unceasingly...You must do all things by talking to the Lord, by praying to Him, by calling on Him. This is to breathe that you may live Him. (*Perfecting Training*, Chapter 15)

### **Praying by Speaking Genuinely from our Heart**

Based on Romans 8:4, we have seen the matter of walking according to the spirit, which is the practical way to live Christ. We need to pay our full attention to walking according to the spirit in order to live Christ. When we face serious problems, we often pray desperately to seek the Lord's leading. Before we [speak in the meetings], it is easy to pray. However, walking according to the spirit is different from praying in difficult situations or before spiritual activities. To walk according to the spirit is to do everything in our daily life according to the spirit. We need to walk according to the spirit moment by moment not only in big things but also in small things, such as writing a letter or talking with our family at the dinner table. If we cannot do or say something according to the spirit, we should not do or say it. We must admit that we are short of such a living. To pray only during the meetings or when we face a great problem is not to walk according to the spirit. Our walking according to the spirit in our daily living should be like our breathing. If we do not live Christ or walk according to the spirit, our spiritual activities may be a performance. We should not act one way in the meetings and another way in our daily life. (*The Importance of Living Christ by Walking according to the Spirit*, Chapter 2)

Prayer that contacts God consists of words spoken genuinely from the heart. We must pray according to our inward feeling. We should not exercise our mind like a student taking an exam. Neither should we focus on the wording of prayer as if we are writing an essay. Such prayers are not very genuine; they are rather pretentious. When we come before God to pray, we should not be pretentious. We should speak what we feel within. When we are angry, we should voice our anger before God. When we are happy, we should voice our happiness before God. When we are sad, we should voice our sadness before God. When we are under pressure, we should speak of this pressure before God. When we sense that we are sinful, we should confess it before God. We should speak what we feel within, speaking genuine words from our heart. This can be likened to a young child who always speaks what is in his heart to his parents. The words of our children are always genuine.

There is the danger that new believers will not open their mouths in the meetings because they are influenced by the prayers of those who have been saved for a long time. The prayer of such saints often flows with well-thought-out words like a torrent of water. When new believers compare themselves with these saints, they hesitate to open their mouth. This is abnormal. The church is a family, not a court. In a court one needs to carefully choose each word because a slight mistake will have serious consequences, but in a family one does not need to be so accurate in his wording. Very often the youngest child, who least knows how to speak, speaks the most because he does not care whether his words are right or wrong. The result is that his speaking is genuine. This should be our practice; we should not make up anything but simply pray according to our inward feeling. We should not be afraid of not knowing how to pray. God never blames people for not knowing how to pray...He knows what we mean; He always answers us according to what is right. We do not need to worry, and we do not need elaborate prayers when we fellowship with God. (*Lessons for New Believers*, Chapter 23)

### **Reading, Praying, Singing, Psalming, and Giving Thanks**

From Psalm 119, Ephesians 5 and 6, and Colossians 3, I have been deeply and strikingly impressed that to touch the Word of God in the way of reading is just the initial step. You can never finish anything just by taking the initial step. The initial step is just the initiation; you need to keep on. What are the following steps? You must sing; you must pray; you must psalm; you must thank the Lord all the time. In addition to your reading you must exercise the prayer, the singing, the

psalming and the thanking. Reading is only one part of these five. In the past we were out of proportion because we made our reading too big. Reading is the initial step; then it should be followed by praying. Then it should be followed by singing, by psalming, and by thanking...Then not only pray, but sing. Then you can psalm. Psalming doesn't need much of a melody for singing. You can psalm with your own tune and even with all kinds of irregular tunes. You will see what will come out. There will be a sweet and strengthened receiving of the divine element. Then we need to practice thanking through the Word. If we all would practice praying the Word, singing the Word, psalming the Word, and thanking through the Word, the church life will be much uplifted. (*Perfecting Training*, Chapter 17)

We should sing the Word not only in the meetings, but especially in our daily life. In particular, we should sing the Word at home. When you are alone in your room or with others at the dining table, sing the Word of God...Oh, we need to sing and psalm the Word of God! To sing the Word is better than reading it, and to psalm the Word is even better than singing it. Psalming the Word includes musing upon it and enjoying it. As we psalm the Word, we dwell upon it, muse on it, and enjoy it, thereby giving more opportunity for the Word to saturate us...It is surprising that in Colossians 3:16 Paul does not mention reading. Instead, he emphasizes singing...By praying, singing, and psalming, we are ushered into the Spirit. The best way to receive the word of life and to be saturated with the element of Christ is to sing the Word. (*Life-study of Philipians*, Message 40)

### **Fellowship Questions:**

1. How do we build up a habit of living Christ continuously? What expectations should we have as we embark on building up this habit?
2. What are some practical ways for us to live Christ unceasingly and continuously? What experiences or challenges have we had in this matter this past week?
3. What hinders us from speaking to the Lord genuinely about everything? Consider experiences or learnings that have helped us to break through in this matter.
4. How can our reading of the Word be extended into singing, psalming, and giving thanks? Practice singing a portion of the word daily over the next week, and with others in your home.