

## Session 1

### Christ as the Physician

**Matt. 9:10-13** And as He was reclining at table in the house, behold, many tax collectors and sinners came and reclined together with Jesus and His disciples. And when the Pharisees saw it, they said to His disciples, Why does your Teacher eat with the tax collectors and sinners? Now when He heard this, He said, Those who are strong have no need of a physician, but those who are ill. But go and learn what this means, “I desire mercy and not sacrifice,” for I did not come to call the righteous, but sinners.

- I. Matthew 9:10-13 indicates that we may experience and enjoy Christ as the Physician:**
  - A. In calling people to follow Him for the kingdom, the Lord Jesus ministered as a Physician, not a Judge.
  - B. A judge’s judgment is according to righteousness, whereas a physician’s healing is according to mercy and grace.
  - C. Christ came to minister as a Physician, to heal, recover, enliven, and save us, so that we might be reconstituted to be His new and heavenly citizens, with whom He is establishing His heavenly kingdom on this corrupted earth.
- II. “But go and learn what this means, I desire mercy and not sacrifice”—v. 13:**
  - A. The Lord Jesus heals our spiritual illness, the illness of sin.
  - B. Between sin and death there are all kinds of illnesses, diseases, and infirmities.
  - C. The Lord Jesus forgives our sins and also heals us in every way.
  - D. As sinners, we are sick absolutely, for we are sick physically, spiritually, morally, and mentally, but Jesus, the Forgiver and the Physician, is able to heal all our sicknesses.
  - E. As our Physician, the Lord heals us mainly in our spirit and in our soul, not mainly in our body.
  - F. Although the Lord may or may not heal us in our body, He is always ready to heal us in every part of our spirit and soul.
  - G. The healing of the Lord as our Physician is not mainly physical but spiritual; He is the One who heals our spiritual sicknesses.
- III. As our Physician, Christ has healing authority:**
  - A. His healing is not simply a matter of power but also of authority.
  - B. There is no need for Him to touch us directly in order to heal us.
  - C. He needs only to speak a word, and His authority comes with His word to heal us—Matt. 8:8.
  - D. Our Physician heals us with His authority.

## **FEASTING WITH THE SINNERS**

In Matthew 9:9-17 we come to a very fine, sweet, and intimate portion of the Gospel of Matthew. After the King decreed the constitution of the kingdom of the heavens and after He manifested His authority as the King in many situations, in 9:9-13 we see Him feasting with sinners.

### **A FEAST PREPARED FOR THE KING**

Verse 10 says, “And it came to pass as He was reclining at the table in the house, that behold, many tax collectors and sinners came and reclined at the table together with Jesus and His disciples.” The house spoken of in this verse was Matthew’s house (Luke 5:29; Mark 2:15). As the writer of this Gospel, Matthew purposely did not say that it was his house and that it was he who had made a great feast for the Lord. This was his humility. But Luke 5:29 says clearly that Levi, that is, Matthew, “made a great reception for Him in his house.” Thus, Matthew opened his house and prepared a great feast for the Lord and His disciples.

### **MANY TAX COLLECTORS AND SINNERS PARTICIPATING IN THE FEAST WITH THE KING AND HIS DISCIPLES**

Verse 10 says that “many tax collectors and sinners came and reclined at the table together with Jesus and His disciples.” This reveals the kind of person Matthew was. He was a sinful, despised tax collector who had many sinners as his friends. Although Matthew was such a low person, he was made not only a disciple, but one of the twelve apostles.

A tax collector was a despised person. Nearly all tax collectors abused their office by demanding more than they should by false accusation (Luke 3:12-13; 19:2, 8). To pay taxes to the Romans was very bitter to the Jews. Those engaged in collecting them were despised by the people and counted unworthy of any respect (Luke 18:9-10). Hence, they were classed with sinners (Matt. 9:10-11). How we must worship the Lord that even a person of such a low rank as Matthew, under God’s mercy and by His grace, could become an apostle! After being saved, Matthew was so grateful to the Lord that he opened his house and prepared a feast for Him and His disciples. Thus, this section of the Word opens in such a sweet, intimate way.

### **THE PHARISEES CONDEMNING THE KING FOR EATING WITH TAX COLLECTORS AND SINNERS**

Verse 11 says, “And when the Pharisees saw it, they said to His disciples, Why does your teacher eat with tax collectors and sinners?” The Pharisees, the strictest religious sect of the Jews, were proud of their superior sanctity of life, devotion to God, and knowledge of the Scriptures. While the Lord Jesus was enjoying the feast with all the tax collectors and sinners, the Pharisees criticized and condemned Him, and they asked the disciples why their teacher ate with such people. This question indicates that the self-righteous Pharisees did not know the grace of God. They assumed that God deals with man only according to righteousness. By asking this, they were exposed as dissenters to the heavenly King, thus rejecting Him.

### **THE LORD REVEALED AS THE PHYSICIAN AND AS THE ONE WHO CAME TO CALL SINNERS**

The Lord took the opportunity given Him by the Pharisees’ question to give a very sweet revelation of Himself as the Physician. In verse 12 we see the Lord’s reply to the Pharisees’ question: “Those who are strong have no need of a physician, but those who are ill.” The Lord was telling the Pharisees that these tax collectors and sinners were patients, sick ones, and that to them the Lord was not a judge, but a physician, a healer. In calling people to follow Him for the kingdom, the King of the heavenly kingdom ministered as a

physician, not as a judge. The judgement of the judge is according to righteousness, whereas the healing of the physician is according to mercy and grace. Those whom He made people of His heavenly kingdom were lepers (8:2-4), paralytics (8:5-13; 9:2-8), the fever-ridden (8:14-15), the demon-possessed (8:16, 28-32), those sick of all kinds of illnesses (8:16), the despised tax collectors, and sinners (9:9-11). Had He visited these pitiful people as a judge, all would have been condemned and rejected, and none would have qualified, selected, and called to be the people of His heavenly kingdom. Rather, He came to minister as a physician, to heal, recover, enliven, and save them, so that they might be reconstituted to be His new and heavenly citizens, with whom He could establish His heavenly kingdom on this corrupted earth. The Lord's word here implies that the self-righteous Pharisees did not recognize their need of Him as a physician. They considered themselves strong; hence, blinded by their own self-righteousness, they did not know that they were ill.

The self-righteous Pharisees criticized the Lord Jesus and condemned all those unclean people. But the Lord seemed to say, "These people are not unclean; they are sick. I have not come as a judge to condemn them, but as a physician, as their dear, lovely, intimate healer." As the Lord Jesus was speaking these words, He was surely indicating that the Pharisees, who thought they were righteous, were actually just as sick as the others were.

The Lord Jesus gave the Pharisees a further word in verse 13: "Now go and learn what this means, I desire mercy and not sacrifice, for I did not come to call the righteous, but sinners." The self-righteous Pharisees assumed they knew all things concerning God. In order to humble them, the Lord told them to learn more.

Mercy is a part of grace for man to receive from God. But self-righteous men do not like to receive mercy or grace from God; they prefer to offer sacrifice to God, to give something to God. This contradicts God's way in His economy. Just as God desires to show mercy to pitiful sinners, so He wants us also to show mercy to others in love (Micah 6:6-8; Mark 12:33).

The Lord says here that He did not come to call the righteous, but sinners. Actually, there is none righteous, not even one (Rom. 3:10). All the righteous are self-righteous like the Pharisees (Luke 18:9). The Pharisees were proud of their knowledge of the Scriptures, and they thought that they knew the Bible very well. But here the Lord Jesus told them to go and learn something, to learn the meaning of the word, "I desire mercy and not sacrifice."

Are you righteous? If you say, "No, I am not righteous," you are blessed. Blessed are those who do not think that they are righteous, but who recognize that they are sinful. The reason for this is that the Lord did not come to call the righteous; He came to call the sinners. The Lord could say to the self-righteous ones, "If you consider yourselves righteous, you are not suitable for My coming, because My coming is for the sinners. Do not consider yourselves to be righteous. Rather, you must realize how sinful you are. If you consider yourselves as sinners, then you are ready for My coming."

Without the environment portrayed in these verses, the Lord Jesus would not have had the opportunity to reveal Himself as the Physician. The Lord did not simply tell His disciples, "You must know that I have not come as a judge, but as a physician." This would have been merely a doctrine. As the Lord was feasting with all those sick ones, He revealed Himself as the Physician. While the Lord Jesus was feasting with them, He was healing them.

The Gospel of Matthew is a book of the kingdom, yet it is also a book full of the riches of the heavenly King. This heavenly King is our Physician with healing authority. His healing is not simply a matter of power; it is a matter of authority. To heal us there is no need for Him to touch us directly. He needs only to speak a word, and His authority will come with His word. Remember the case of the healing of the

centurion's servant. The centurion said to the Lord, "Only speak a word, and my servant boy shall be healed." (8:8). The Lord's word heals us not with power, but with authority. Often Christians think that the Lord heals because He is able to heal. This is a natural concept. The Lord's healing is not a matter of His ability to heal; His healing is a matter of authority. He simply needs to say, "Illness, go away." This is authority. (*Life-Study of Matthew*, msg. 27)

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## Session 2

### Christ as the Bridegroom

**Matt. 9:15** And Jesus said to them, “The sons of the bridechamber cannot mourn as long as the bridegroom is with them, can they? But days will come when the bridegroom will be taken away from them, and then they will fast.”

**Matt. 25:1** At that time the kingdom of the heavens will be likened to ten virgins, who took their lamps and went forth to meet the bridegroom.

**Rev. 19:7-9** Let us rejoice and exult, and let us give the glory to Him, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and His wife has made herself ready. And it was given to her that she should be clothed in fine linen, bright and clean; for the fine linen is the righteousnesses of the saints. And he said to me, “Write, Blessed are they who are called to the marriage dinner of the Lamb.” And he said to me, “These are the true words of God.”

#### **I. In Matthew and Revelation Christ is revealed as the Bridegroom—Matt. 9:15; Rev. 19:7-9:**

A. Matthew 25:1 is a further word concerning the Lord Jesus as the Bridegroom:

1. This verse reveals that the Lord will come back as the Bridegroom, as the most pleasant and attractive person.
2. The Bible reveals that Christ is God embodied to have the bride.
3. Therefore, Christ’s status is that of the Bridegroom.
4. As the Bridegroom, He is the pleasant person for our enjoyment.
5. We should appreciate Christ not only as our Physician for the recovery of life but also as our Bridegroom for a living enjoyment in His presence.

B. Revelation 19:7-9 unveils Christ as the Bridegroom:

1. These verses reveal that the Lord Jesus is the Lamb as the Bridegroom.
2. Christ is presented both as the Lamb and as the Bridegroom.
3. In the Gospel of John, Christ is revealed both as the Lamb who came to take away sin and as the Bridegroom who came that He might have the bride.
4. The Lamb is for redemption, and the Bridegroom is for the wedding.
5. The redemption was accomplished by Christ as the Lamb of God, and the wedding will take place when Christ as the coming Bridegroom takes His bride.
6. As the Bridegroom, Christ must have a wedding; our position is that of the bride, and the position of the coming Christ is that of the Bridegroom.
7. We are on the earth being prepared to become the bride to meet Him, and He is on the throne in the third heaven prepared to come as the Bridegroom to meet us.
8. He is coming as the Bridegroom, and we are going as the bride—Matt. 25:1.

## **JESUS PRESENTING HIMSELF AS THE BRIDEGROOM**

The Lord Jesus did not argue or reply to John's disciples and the Pharisees in a doctrinal way. He said to them, "The sons of the bridechamber cannot mourn as long as the bridegroom is with them, can they?" (Matt. 9:15). He answered not with a doctrine but with a person. He referred to Himself as the Bridegroom! His presence caused them to rejoice, the presence of the Bridegroom. The Lord Jesus said nothing according to the teachings, according to the Scriptures, according to any quotation from the Bible in the old way. Neither did He say anything concerning Himself as the almighty God, the Creator, the Lord, or the Master. God in the religious concept is such a One, but the Lord Jesus mentioned nothing of this. On the contrary, He referred to Himself as a bridegroom.

A bridegroom is the most pleasant person in the entire universe. You say that you fear God, you want to please God, and you like to serve the Lord—that is good, but it is rather religious. Have you ever had the concept that your Lord Jesus Christ is not only the most holy God, the Creator, the almighty Lord, and the Master, but He is your Bridegroom, the most pleasant person? In the presence of the Bridegroom, fear is nonexistent. He is so lovely; He is so pleasant; we need not fear such a One. Hallelujah, we have the Bridegroom! The Lord Jesus said that the Bridegroom is here; the most pleasant person is here. Suppose that when He replied to the disciples of John and the Pharisees in such a way, John, James, and Peter suddenly shouted Hallelujah! Do you think the Lord Jesus would rebuke them? Surely not; the Lord Jesus would be so happy.

The Lord Jesus is so much to us: He is the very God, He is the Creator, He is the Lord, He is the Master, He is the Lamb who bears away our sins and accomplishes redemption in a full way, and He is also the One with the dove who imparts life into us and baptizes us with the Spirit. But besides all these, He is the Bridegroom. Eventually, at the end of the Bible, we have such a term, the wife of the Lamb (Rev. 21:9). This is a matter which is to some extent contrary to religion and religious thoughts. The Lamb is the Redeemer, but the Lamb who took away our sins on the cross is also our Bridegroom.

Some of you have been recently saved, while others have been saved for a considerable time. Have you ever prayed in this way: "O Lord Jesus, You are so lovely; You are my Bridegroom. Lord, I love You; I love You just as one who loves her bridegroom." Have you ever spoken to the Lord like this in your prayers? More or less we are under the influence of a religious concept. It is exceedingly easy for any Christian to pray, "O Lord, You are my God; You are my Father; You are my Master; You are my Creator." We could say this, but I fear we are not accustomed to saying, "Lord Jesus, You are my Bridegroom!"

## **THE BRIDEGROOM VERSUS RELIGIOUS CONCEPT**

Our God, our Creator, our Redeemer, our Lord and Master, today is a Bridegroom to us. We must all drop the religious concept and take up something new. I cannot force you, but I would ask you from this day to contact the Lord again and again with the sense that He is your Bridegroom. Would you? There is not much need to pray in the old religious way. I am afraid that when you forget God, you just forget Him; then, whenever you turn back to Him, you immediately pray in that old way. It is so easy to pray like that. But when you pray in the way of appreciating the Lord, it is entirely different. Do not think this is my teaching; it is the Lord's revelation. The Lord is going to recover it, and He is doing it now. We must have a change. Repent! Change your concept! Be buried! Enjoy Jesus as the Bridegroom!

Many times in my room by myself I have really become excited. The Lord is so much to me. He is so good, so wonderful, far beyond what I can express. He is the Bridegroom! Hallelujah! The Bridegroom is with us—we have His presence! We not only have the presence of the almighty God but the presence of the

Bridegroom, the most pleasant person. He is so precious and so lovely. The Lord Jesus must be like this to us.

In the matter of love, none of us keep any formalities or rituals. If we really love someone, we drop all the forms. If not, our love is not genuine. Therefore, since Jesus is our Bridegroom, we must drop all our rituals and formalities.

### **THE BRIDEGROOM'S PRESENCE**

We need our concept radically changed. When we come to our meetings, the church meetings, we are coming to meet the Bridegroom. Whenever we come together, we are coming to be with our Bridegroom. His presence means everything to us. As long as He is with us, we need no regulations, no rituals, no doctrines or forms. Christianity today needs so many doctrines, forms, rituals, and regulations because they have lost the presence of the Lord. In a wedding we have the presence of the bridegroom, but in a funeral we have lost the presence of a dear one. In Christianity people have lost the presence of the dear One, so there is no excitement. But we have the presence of our Bridegroom, and His presence is everything to us. How can we help but be excited? We have to shout; we have to be exceedingly joyful. The Bridegroom is with us—Hallelujah! (*Christ versus Religion, CWWL, 1970, vol. 2*)

### **THE LAMB AS THE BRIDEGROOM**

Revelation 19:7-9 unveils that the Lord Jesus is the Lamb as the Bridegroom. Similarly, in the Gospel of John, Christ is presented both as the Lamb and as the Bridegroom. One day John the Baptist declared, “Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!” (1:29). This verse clearly reveals that Christ came as the Lamb to take away the sin of the world. Later, John the Baptist also indicated that Christ is the Bridegroom. John said, “He who has the bride is the bridegroom; but the friend of the bridegroom, who stands and hears him, rejoices with joy because of the bridegroom’s voice” (3:29). Hence, in the Gospel of John, Christ is revealed both as the Lamb who came to take away sin and as the Bridegroom who came that He might have the bride. Although most Christians are familiar with the former aspect of Christ, only a few pay attention to the latter aspect. The Lamb is for redemption, and the Bridegroom is for the wedding. The redemption was accomplished by Christ as the Lamb of God, and the wedding will take place when Christ as the coming Bridegroom takes His bride.

Christ’s goal is not to remove sin—it is to have the bride. In the book of Revelation, which is also written by the apostle John, we see again that Christ our Redeemer is the Lamb and the coming Bridegroom. Therefore, as the Bridegroom, He must have a wedding. The wedding of the Lamb will be a universal wedding. It will be the marriage of the Redeemer and the redeemed. At the end of the Bible we see a city, the New Jerusalem. This city is the wife (21:2, 9-10), and the redeeming God is the Husband. Our position is that of the bride, and the position of the coming Christ is that of the Bridegroom. We are on the earth being prepared to become the bride to meet Him, and He is on the throne in the third heaven prepared to come as the Bridegroom to meet us. Thus, He is coming as the Bridegroom, and we are going as the bride (Matt. 25:1). The bride and the Bridegroom will meet, neither in heaven nor on the earth but in the air. When we meet Him in the air, we will have a wedding. (*The Conclusion of the New Testament: Experiencing, Enjoying, and Expressing Christ, Volume 3, msgs. 382-436*)

### Session 3

## Christ as the One Who Gives Us Rest

**Gen. 1:26; 2:2** 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...And on the seventh day God finished His work which He had done, and He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had done.

**Matt. 11:28-30** Come to Me all who toil and are burdened, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am meek and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For My yoke is easy and My burden is light.

**I. “Come to Me all who toil and are burdened, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am meek and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For My yoke is easy and My burden is light”—Matt. 11:28-30:**

- A. To take the Lord’s yoke is to take the will of the Father; it is not to be regulated or controlled by any obligation of the law or religion or to be enslaved by any work, but to be constrained by the will of the Father.
- B. The Lord lived such a life, caring for nothing but the will of His Father (John 4:34; 5:30; 6:38); He submitted Himself fully to the Father's will (Matt. 26:39, 42); hence, He asks us to learn from Him:
  - 1. The believers copy the Lord in their spirit by taking His yoke God’s will-and toiling for God’s economy according to His model—11:29a; 1 Pet. 2:21.
  - 2. The Lord, who was submissive and obedient to the Father throughout His life, has given us His life of submission and obedience—Phil. 2:5-11; Heb. 5:7-9.
  - 3. Christ was the first God-man, and we are the many God-men; we have to learn of Him in His absolute submission to God and His uttermost satisfaction with God.
  - 4. God is doing in us that which is well pleasing in His sight through Jesus Christ that we may be able to do His will (13:20-21); God operates in us both the willing and the working for His good pleasure (Phil. 2:13).
- C. We learn from the Lord according to His example, not by our natural life but by Him as our life in resurrection—Eph. 4:20-21; 1 Pet. 2:21.
- D. If we take the Lord’s yoke (the Father’s will) upon us and learn from Him, we will find rest for our souls; the yoke of God’s economy is like this; everything in God's economy is not a heavy burden but an enjoyment.

**II. It is a divine principle that God does not ask us to work until we have had enjoyment; after a full enjoyment with Him and of Him, we may work together with Him:**

- A. If we do not know how to have enjoyment with God, how to enjoy God Himself, and how to be filled with God, we will not know how to work with Him and be one with Him in His divine work; man enjoys what God has accomplished in His work.
- B. On the day of Pentecost the disciples were filled with the Spirit, which means that they were filled with the enjoyment of the Lord; because they were filled with the Spirit, others thought that they were drunk with wine—Acts 2:4a, 12-13.
- C. Actually, they were filled with the enjoyment of the heavenly wine; only after they were filled with this enjoyment did they begin to work with God in oneness with Him; Pentecost was the first day of the eighth week; therefore, concerning the day of Pentecost, we see the principle of the first day.
- D. With God it is a matter of working and resting; with man it is a matter of resting and working.

## CALLING THE BURDENED TO REST AND THE WAY TO REST

In verse 28 the Lord sounded out a call: “Come to Me, all who labor and are burdened, and I will give you rest.” The Lord seemed to be saying, “All you who labor and are burdened, come to Me and rest. All you religious people and all you worldly people who are laboring and are burdened, come to Me and I will give you rest.” What a gracious word! The labor mentioned in verse 28 refers not only to the labor of striving to keep the commandments of the law and religious regulations, but also to the labor of struggling to be successful in any work. Whoever labors thus is always heavily burdened. After the Lord had praised the Father, acknowledging the Father’s way and declaring the divine economy, He called this kind of people to come to Him for rest. Rest refers not only to being set free from labor and burden under the law and religion or under any work and responsibility, but also to perfect peace and full satisfaction.

### **Taking the Heavenly King’s Yoke**

In verses 29 and 30 we have the way to rest: “Take My yoke on you and learn from Me; for I am meek and lowly in heart, and you shall find rest to your souls; for My yoke is pleasant and My burden is light.” The Lord’s yoke is to take the will of the Father. It is not to be regulated or controlled by any obligations of the law or religion, nor to be enslaved by any work, but to be constrained by the will of the Father. The Lord lived such a life, caring for nothing but the will of His Father (John 4:34 ; 5:30 ; 6:38). He submitted Himself fully to the Father’s will (26:39 , 42). Hence, He asks us to learn from Him. God’s will is our yoke. Thus, we are not free to do as we please; rather, we are yoked. Young people, do not think that you are so free or liberated. In the Lord’s recovery we all have been yoked. How good it is to be yoked! The Lord’s yoke is pleasant and His burden is light. The Lord’s yoke is the Father’s will, and His burden is the work to carry out the Father’s will. Such a yoke is pleasant, not bitter, and such a burden is light, not heavy. The Greek word rendered “pleasant” signifies fit for use; hence, good, kindly, mild, gentle, easy, pleasant, in contrast to what is hard, harsh, sharp, and bitter.

### **Learning from Him**

In verse 29 the Lord tells us to learn from Him. He is meek and lowly in heart. To be meek means not to resist any opposition, and to be lowly means not to esteem oneself highly. In all the opposition the Lord was meek, and in all the rejection He was lowly in heart. He submitted Himself fully to the will of His Father, not wanting to do anything for Himself nor expecting to gain something for Himself. Hence, regardless of the situation, He had rest in His heart. He was fully satisfied with His Father’s will.

The Lord said that if we take His yoke upon us and learn from Him, we shall find rest to our souls. The rest we find by taking the Lord’s yoke and learning from Him is for our souls. It is an inward rest; it is not anything merely outward in nature.

If we are opposed as we minister, and we resist, we shall not have peace. But if instead of resisting we submit to the will of the Father, testifying that the opposition is of the Father, we shall have rest in our souls. John the Baptist did not regard his imprisonment as of the Father; therefore, he was not at rest. If he had realized that his imprisonment was due to the Father’s will, he would have been at rest, even in prison. Christ, the heavenly King, always submitted to the Father’s will, taking God’s will as His portion and not resisting anything. Hence, He was always at rest. We must learn of Him and also take this view. If we do, we shall have rest in our souls. (*Life-study of Matthew*, msg. 31)

## A DIVINE PRINCIPLE

It is a divine principle that God does not ask us to work until we have had enjoyment. God first supplies us with enjoyment. Then after a full enjoyment with Him and of Him, we may work together with Him. If we do not know how to have enjoyment with God and how to enjoy God Himself, we shall not know how to work with Him. We shall not know how to be one with God in His divine work.

We do emphasize the matter of working with God and not working for God by our own strength. Yes, we should work with God and even by God. But according to what the Bible reveals, it is not even sufficient merely to work with God. We need to be one with God in His work. This requires that we enjoy Him. If we do not know how to enjoy God and be filled with God, we shall not know how to work with Him, how to be one with Him in His work.

A very good illustration of this principle is found in the New Testament. The New Testament ministry of the apostles began with the enjoyment they had on the day of Pentecost. The disciples did not work for six days and then enjoy the Lord on the day of Pentecost. The actual situation was that the Lord had told them to wait until the Spirit came upon them to fill them. With what were the disciples filled when they were filled with the Spirit? No doubt, they were filled with the enjoyment of the Lord. Because they were filled with the Spirit, others thought that they were drunk with wine. Actually they were filled with the enjoyment of the heavenly wine. Only after they had been filled with this enjoyment did they begin to work with God. This is the way to work with God, the way to work in oneness with Him. When Peter stood up with the apostles to preach the gospel and thereby do a work for God, they all were one with God in His work.

The day of Pentecost was the first day of the week. Pentecost denotes the fiftieth day after a period of seven weeks, or forty-nine days. We know from Leviticus 23 that the day of Pentecost was fifty days after the feast of firstfruit. This means that Pentecost was the first day of the eighth week. Therefore, concerning the day of Pentecost, we see the principle of the first day.

To man, the day of rest has always been the first day. According to the Old Testament Sabbath, the day of man's rest was his first day. Likewise, according to the New Testament, the eighth day, the day of rest for man, was also the first day.

According to the principle in the Old Testament, man's day of rest is a day that comes after God's work has been completed. Man does not rest after his own work is finished; he rests after the completion of God's work and enjoys it. God works, and man enjoys. Man enjoys what God has accomplished in His work.

As soon as man was created, he needed air to breathe and water to drink. God had already created the expanse, the atmosphere, on the second day because He knew that without air man would not be able to live. He had also prepared water and food for him. This is the reason the seventh day was a day of rest for God: He had worked for six days to make everything ready for man to enjoy. When man came forth from God's creating hand, his first day was God's seventh day. Therefore, he had enjoyment with God, he lived with God, he walked with God, and eventually he was ready to work with God. God had put him into the garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it (Gen. 2:15). Perhaps after enjoying rest with God on his first day, Adam worked to care for the garden for another six days. Then on what was his eighth day, another first day, he again rested with God. This is a cycle that would continue again and again with intervals of resting and working. With God it is a matter of working and resting; with man, a matter of resting and working. (*Life-study of Exodus*, msg. 172)