

Divine Romance - Spiritual Warfare

Week 4 – Monday

Isa. 26:3

Rom. 8:6 – Footnotes 6¹, 6²

I also want to recommend hymn 719. This hymn has not been translated into either Spanish or Chinese. Let's sing verse 1 and the chorus:

Like a river, glorious
Is God's perfect peace,
Over all victorious
In its bright increase;
Perfect, yet it floweth
Fuller every day,
Perfect, yet it groweth
Deeper all the way.

Stayed upon Christ Jesus,
Hearts are fully blest;
Finding, as He promised,
Perfect peace and rest.

This chorus uses the phrase, "Stayed upon Christ Jesus". *Stayed upon* is based on the King James Version of Isaiah 26:3 which reads, "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee." We no longer use the word *stayed* in this way. This is actually the sister verse to Romans 8:6: "For the mind set on the spirit is life and peace." Isaiah says, "You will keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed, or set, on Thee." The Recovery Version says, "You will keep the steadfast of mind in perfect peace." The word *perfect* does not appear in the Hebrew. The literal translation is, "You will keep him in peace, peace whose mind is stayed on Thee" or "You will keep the steadfast of mind in peace, peace." Don't you want peace, peace? How do you keep your mind set on the spirit?

This hymn was written by sister Frances Havergal. We have a few of her hymns in our hymn book. Look at verse 2:

Hidden in the hollow
Of His blessed hand,
Never foe can follow,
Never traitor stand;

This verse talks about a foe, an enemy, and a traitor. What is the difference? A traitor is an enemy on the inside, an enemy who was your friend but became an enemy. Who is the traitor? Our mind, our emotion, and our own will. They betray us.

The next line says, "Not a surge of worry." Have you ever had a surge or worry in your morning

prayer? “Oh Lord, I love You—Oh no! I forgot to do this and this.” “Oh no, today is...” How many of you have ever experienced something like that? So I am not alone. I think that we all have experienced this: a surge of worry or a shade of care. That is what I was describing to you before. My natural concern for my family member is like a shade that comes slowly and covers me.

I don't have this kind of utterance but sister Frances Havergal must have had all these same experiences and put them into poetic form. “Not a blast of hurry...” Have you never finished your morning prayer, “Oh Lord Jesus.” Gasp! You see the clock and don't even say “Bye, bye Lord.” Imagine if I am talking with brother Ron, “How is your family?” and then just turned around and ran away. If it was someone else you would at least have the courtesy to say, “Brother Ron, sorry, I need to go. Let's continue later.” But I think that we don't have the sense that we are with a person. With Him we don't need to say, “Bye, bye.” With Him we can say, “Lord Jesus, can we continue this on the way? Can we continue our fellowship in the car? I need to go work now.” You can continue your morning watch with Him all the way to work, but the surge of worry, the shade of care, or the blast of hurry can take us away from the spirit.

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Week 4 – Tuesday

Psa. 42:1-2 – Footnote 1²

Psa. 86:11; 131:2

How can we set our mind on the spirit? Psalm 42, verses 1-2 say, “As the hart pants After the streams of water, So my soul pants For You, O God. My soul thirsts for God, For the living God. When will I come and appear Before God?” Firstly, we should have the sense that when we are spending time with the word that we are appearing before God. We should say, “Lord, here I am. I am not just coming to the Bible. I am not just coming to the material for the prayer. Lord, I am coming to You.” We should have the sense that we are coming to a living person and we just appear before Him. We do not need to say much, but we present ourselves to Him and say, “Lord, here I am. I am available.” Sometimes we sit with people but don’t really appear before them. We are there outwardly but don’t present ourselves inwardly. Especially in these days, if you go to a restaurant, there may be family of 5 or 6 people at the next table with every one of them looking at their phone. There is no fellowship going on between them. I hope that we are not with the Lord outwardly but somewhere else inwardly. So the first thing is that we need to appear before God.

Psalm 86:11 says, “Teach me, O Jehovah, Your way; I will walk in Your truth. Make my heart single in fearing Your name.” The King James Version says, “Teach me thy way, O Lord; I will walk in thy truth: unite my heart to fear thy name.” “Unite my heart to fear thy name.” I need four brothers to help with an illustration” Brother one, you are the mind; brother two, you are the emotion; you are the will; and you are the conscience. Stand in a single line. Now when you come to the Lord you need to pray, “Lord, unite my heart.” But do you know what happens? When we come to the Lord, very often the mind goes somewhere else. (Brother one, go over there.) It is very difficult if the mind is not united, not single. The mind goes and then you come back: “Oh Lord, Oh Lord.” Then 30 seconds later, the mind goes another way, perhaps further away than the first time. And then, “Oh Lord Jesus, oh Lord Jesus” and you come back. But then through the mind you remember, “Oh today, I’m going to see the Blue Jays play.” Do you like the Blue Jays here? Then the emotion, “Tonight my dad is taking me to see the Blue Jays.” You were try to touch the Lord and the emotion got carried away. You try to pray, “Oh Lord, Oh Lord” but then you are too excited to stay there. Sometimes the will just does not want to go along. He just does not feel like it today. Have you ever felt that way? “Lord Jesus, I love You but ... I just don’t feel like opening the Bible.” It can be very difficult. Similarly, if there is something on your conscience, it blocks the flow. So, we need to pray, “Lord, unite my heart. Make my heart single today.”

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Week 4 – Wednesday

Psa. 27:8

Heb. 11:6

Psalm 131:2 begins, “Surely I have calmed And quieted my soul.” This is the key. We need to calm down our soul. We need to quiet down our soul. Our soul is talking too much. The emotion and the mind need to be calmed down. What are some practical helps to calm our soul? One of them is singing. Let’s come to hymn 812:

- 1 I come to Thee, dear Lord,
My heart doth thirst for Thee;
Of Thee I’d eat, of Thee I’d drink.
Enjoy Thee thoroughly.
- 2 Just to behold Thy face,
For this my heart doth cry;
I deeply long to drink of Thee
My thirst to satisfy.

Don’t you sometimes awaken with a hymn in your heart already? Perhaps, it is from the meeting the night before, maybe because you were listening to some hymns in your heart the day before. I take that as the Lord calling me to fellowship. There is something in that hymn; it is good to be in that hymn. Actually, your morning revival started right there, not 30 minutes later after you washed up, got dressed, and came to your set place of prayer. Right there your fellowship began. It is very good to use a hymn to fellowship with the Lord. In my experience, I find that singing brings me to the spirit in the easiest way with the least amount of effort. When I am singing, my mind is not wandering. When I am singing, my heart is drawn to the Lord. When we were singing just now, I don’t know if you were singing just because I asked you to sing or if any of these words touched you, but no one started to pray. Of course, we don’t interrupt the singing in the middle of a verse to pray when we are together. But when you are by yourself, you can sing like this: “Just to behold Thy face” ... Excuse my voice. The Lord does not care what our voice sounds like; He likes to hear our voice. Sometimes in the morning our voice does not sound very good, but the Lord likes to hear it anyway.

You might begin to sing, “Just to behold Thy face, For this my... Yes Lord, my heart.” Do you know that you don’t need to finish singing the line? You don’t need to finish singing the whole song before you pray. You don’t even need to complete a word. As soon as there is some anointing, convert that feeling to words, to prayer. This will lead us in fellowship and this will counter all the flaming darts because we enter into a real, genuine spiritual fellowship with the Lord. We could be singing, “Thy glorious, radiant face My heart delights to see.... Lord, I love seeing Your glorious, radiant face. Lord, I just want to behold You this morning. As I am enjoying Your word, I want to go past the word; I want to behold You. Lord, my eyes are only for You.” As you are praying this, the Lord might say, “Really? What about what you were looking at on the computer yesterday? Were your eyes for me? How long did you spend reading those articles, and then watching this video, and then the other thing?” Then I said, “Yes Lord, forgive me Lord. cleanse me; my eyes are for You.”

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Week 4 – Thursday

Rev. 1:8 – Footnote 8¹

Rev. 21:6; 22:13

How did we get there? Actually, we already had a few things. We had singing; we had calling mingled with our singing; we had praying; and we had confessing. We didn't even get to the verses assigned to this morning and already we entered into a kind of fellowship. I encourage you to follow the anointing in your fellowship with the Lord. Follow that little feeling, that feeling of richness is wet with anointing. Sometimes we pray and it is a little dry, but other times there is a flow when we pray. As soon as there is any kind of feeling, convert the feeling to words. That is how we have fellowship. It is very interesting; as we are talking to the Lord, our speaking to Him becomes His speaking to us, and we confess and go back to more prayer.

It is the same with our reading of the Word. Of course, a good way to calm the mind is to pray-read the Word, pray-read the Bible. But as you are pray-reading, I encourage you to keep the same principle: be flexible and follow the inner anointing. We might be praying over this verse, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." You could be praying, "Lord, in the beginning was the Word. Thank You, in the beginning was the Word." Then you have the feeling, "Lord, Lord, I want Your Word to be my beginning in everything today." You convert the feeling to prayer. You convert the phrase into your prayer. The verse says, "In the beginning was the Word" but this touches you: "Lord, be my beginning. Lord, in everything that I do today, be my new beginning. Be my source. Oh Lord, be my Alpha and be my Omega." The verse doesn't say anything about Alpha and Omega; why do I pray about Alpha and Omega? Sometime in the past I enjoyed a verse that mentions Alpha and Omega. This verse touches me so I pray, "Lord, be my Alpha; be my Omega." Then maybe the Lord touches you, "How about yesterday? Was I your Omega yesterday?" "Oh Lord, no, no. You were my Alpha, maybe you were my Beta, but I don't think that you reached to be my Gamma. I don't think that I applied You even by lunch time. Surely Lord, You were not my Omega. Lord, forgive me. But Lord, thank You for a new beginning. Thank You that Your blood cleanses me." At this point, don't make any promises. Many believers fall into a trap; we confess and then we promise never to do it again. Don't do that because that will not work anyway. Instead of promising, we should consecrate; we give ourselves to the Lord again. So our time with the Lord should also have consecration. These are not steps, one and then the other. Actually, the anointing will lead us. "Lord, I give myself to You that You might be my Alpha and Omega this day."

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Week 4 – Friday

Isa. 50:4-5

Perhaps you start singing a song. We have a song, hymn 389, that says, “From morning to evening my one world Thou art”. Maybe this comes to your mind because you are praying concerning Alpha and Omega. “Lord, from morning to evening be my one world” and then spontaneously you just start to sing. You should not have in your mind, “Singing is over. I can’t sing anymore except at the end. We are in the pray-reading part of our fellowship with the Lord.” Don’t hold the Lord in a box; don’t hold the Lord in a form. If there is a feeling within you, sing. The words of that song may become more fuel for more prayer. When you come back you realize, “I didn’t finish the whole verse. The whole verse says, ‘In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.’ I only prayed, ‘In the beginning was the Word’, six words. I only prayed the first phrase. Such fellowship could occupy 15 or 20 minutes and you didn’t even finish one verse. I hope that our fellowship with the Lord can go deeper, and that we would practice all these things, not merely as practices, but that we would be able to practice this with both sweetness and depth.

Out of this we get some benefits. There are at least three benefits in developing this kind of fellowship with the Lord. The first is that we will get the personal enlightenment; the Lord will shine on us individually and personally. He will shine deeper into us to touch some things that may have been hindering our going on with the Lord for years. We have to say that when we observe the brothers and sisters, some have not had much change after three or five years. I know that they are faithful to serve; I know that they are faithful to be in the Word. Why is there not much change or transformation? It could be that they are not allowing the Lord the time to shine into them. We need the Lord’s light to be like a laser surgery to touch the inward part of our being.

Another benefit is that we get personal encouragement, personal comfort. As I mentioned before, all of us pass through different trials. Often when we are passing through these things we really need someone to sympathise; we need someone to come alongside. There are times when, even though we fellowship, we don’t have the sense that others enter into our feeling. The Lord, as it says in Isaiah 50, can encourage the weary with a word. Sometimes one word from the Lord will give you the strength to go on.

The third benefit is that with this kind of fellowship and practise with the Lord, we learn how to follow the anointing. In our lives in going on with the Lord there are decisions that need to be made. Young people need to decide concerning their future, concerning marriage, concerning taking a job. Perhaps the job is in another town or city; uprooting your family is not a small thing. How do we know the Lord’s will? We need to pray for the Lord’s will. At those times it is very important that we know how to pray and follow the anointing. But where do you learn to follow the anointing? Every morning when you are with the Lord and He is leading you to this hymn, that verse, this impression, that prayer. As we are following the anointing our realization or sense of the anointing becomes stronger.

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Week 4 – Saturday

Psa. 27:4

Isa. 30:15

These are some benefits. I would like to add one more to this list. In our fellowship with the Lord, we should also have praise or thanksgiving. I hope that in all our fellowship with the Lord there could be some praise. We just thank Him. We don't need a reason to thank the Lord; we don't need a reason to praise the Lord. He is worthy of our praises. Praise is really the way to victory; praise is really the way to spiritual victory.

Once we have this kind of fellowship with the Lord, this brings us into oneness with the Lord. Then we can pray in His name. Now is the time to make petitions. But how do we pray? Here I want to highlight two words in Psalm 27, verse 4: *beholding* and *inquiring*. That verse says that the psalmist's desire was to behold the beauty of the Lord and to inquire in His temple. This is the way to behold; this is the way to come into the Lord's presence. Once we are in the Lord's presence, if there is a burden on our heart, we should say, "Lord, how shall I pray? Is it time to pray? Shall I pray for this burden? Shall I pray for that loved one? Shall I pray for this new one?" It is very possible that the Lord will say, "No, not yet. Just stay with Me; just keep enjoying Me; just stay focussed on Me." Our attitude should be, "Okay Lord. Those are all Your burdens so You send me whenever You want." We just continue to behold. Then later on we might say, "Lord, is it time to pray?" Then He might say, "Okay, now it is time to pray." We should not start praying. We should say, "Lord, how shall I pray? What is Your desire for this burden?" In this kind of fellowship we are really one with the Lord for His move in our lives and on the Earth.

I would like to read one verse in closing. Isaiah chapter 30, verse 15 says, "For thus says the Lord Jehovah, the Holy One of Israel, In returning and rest you will be saved; In quietness and in trust will be your strength." This is a word for everyone in general but I would say particularly for those who have a heart to serve in the church life. In returning and rest you will be saved. In quietness and in trust will be your strength. Brother Nee has a very sweet message concerning this verse. It is titled *In Rest Shall be Your Strength*. How do we have the strength to serve the Lord for the long run? How do we have the endurance to live the church life, to be the Lord's testimony in the midst of spiritual warfare? It is not easy—when we are standing for the Lord the enemy will attack us all the time. Where is the source of our strength? It is right here in this verse, "in returning and rest". It is in loving the Lord, in beholding the Lord, in spending time with the Lord to rest before Him. Then it says "in quietness". We need to learn how to be quiet before the Lord. This does not mean that you need to be totally quiet. Last night one of the brothers said that sometimes he falls asleep when he is before the Lord. That is probably the most blessed sleep you will enjoy. But what really needs to be quiet according to Psalm 132:2 is our soul. Our soul needs to be calm and quiet. You can quiet your soul by singing, calling, praying, and so on. When your soul is calmed down, then the Lord has the way to strengthen you. But Isaiah 30:15 ends like this: "but you were not willing." I hope that we can pray-read this verse sometime. The Lord can touch us to pray, "Lord, make me willing. Make me willing to return; make me willing to rest; make me willing to be quiet; make me willing to trust You so that You can energize me, You can empower me and I can be one with You for this warfare. But Lord, I love You; I am focussing on You."