

## **How to Enter into the Riches Of the New Testament Ministry**

### **Scripture Reading:**

**Hymn: 542**

- 1 Tim. 2:4           Who desires all men to be saved and to come to the full knowledge of the truth.
- 1 Tim. 4:6           If you lay these things before the brothers, you will be a good minister of Christ Jesus, being nourished with the words of the faith and of the good teaching which you have closely followed.
- 2 Tim. 1:13         Hold a pattern of the healthy words that you have heard from me, in the faith and love which are in Christ Jesus.

### **I. Setting up a proper schedule of one's daily life.**

- A. Having a budget in time, energy, and finances.
- B. We should set aside some time for the Lord every week and every day.

### **II. The personal aspect of entering into the proper education of the truth:**

- A. Building up a habit of spending time in the Word.
  - 1. Spend at least thirty minutes in the Word every day.
  - 2. Pray-read the verses, study the footnotes and the accompanying life-study messages.
- B. The need of a solid foundation in the Lord's Word.
- C. Growing gradually by life and by the truth:
  - 1. While the issue of nourishment is forever, the nourishment itself only remains temporarily.
  - 2. Once the truth has been constituted into someone, it will remain forever.
- D. Laboring to get into the ministry.

### **III. The meeting aspect of entering into the proper education of the truth:**

- A. Our meetings must be living, nourishing, and educating:
  - 1. Our church meetings should be full of the Spirit, full of life, full of prayer, full of a refreshing atmosphere.
  - 2. We must carry out the saints' education according to the basic truths.
- B. We must endeavor to make all the church meetings educational centers.
- C. Giving the saints the proper education in the full knowledge of the truth.
- D. The leading ones, the co-workers and the ones who take care of the meetings need to be prepared for the meetings.

### **IV. Entering into the riches of the New Testament ministry:**

- A. The New Testament Recovery Version.
- B. *Life-Study* of the Old Testament and New Testament.
- C. *The Collected Works of Watchman Nee*.
- D. *Hymns*.
- E. Messages from the seven annual conferences and trainings.
- F. *Holy Word For Morning Revival*.
- G. Various publications:
  - 1. In Chinese: The Stream, Affirmation & Critique, The Jubilee Paper.
  - 2. In English: Ministry Magazine, Stream Magazine, Affirmation & Critique, Generation Paper, etc.
- H. Radio broadcasts of messages from the ministry, websites on the internet by the Lord's Recovery, etc.

**Reference Books:**    *Messages Given to the Working Saints*, Chapter 8; *Elders' Training*, Book 3, Chapter 9 to 13.

**Excerpts from the Ministry:**

We need to find a way to bring all the saints in the Lord's recovery into a proper education of the truth concerning God's New Testament economy. We need to consider this matter in two aspects—the personal aspect and the meeting aspect. We must have a personal way laid as a foundation for us to stand on and then go on to take care of the meeting way. (*Elder's Training*, Book 3, p. 106.)

**Setting Up a Proper Schedule of One's Daily Life**

You need to set up a proper schedule for your life. Formerly, you were not living to the Lord, and your way of living was like that of those in the world. But now you are living to the Lord; you should set up a new pattern of life. Speaking first of the small things of life, most people like to sleep a little late in the morning. This is especially true with the young people. But now, you have to get up at six-thirty in the morning. The first thing after getting up is to call "O Lord Jesus" and to pray. Speaking next of the more important things of life, most people want to seek after an academic degree and to be famous and glamorous in the world. Now that we love the Lord and live for Him, our way of living is changed. In everything we should still fulfill our duties properly. We study properly and work properly, without any special coveting. In an ordinary way, we should love the Lord and live for Him. Formerly, our life was a struggle and a striving for success in the world. Now we live a simple life of loving the Lord, living for Him, raising a family, educating our children, and daily testifying and bringing people to Him. Even when we venture into business, we do so with a restraint. We only labor in a measured way. We would not be greedy, nor would we be lazy. Neither would we waste time. In this way, we will truly be a person that loves the Lord and lives for Him. Otherwise, even though you may have a strong desire, your outward way of living will eat you up totally and bind you. For this reason, our way of living has to be one that matches our desire to love Him, live for Him, and serve Him. (*Messages Given to the Working Saints*, pp. 85-86.)

**The Personal Aspect of Entering into the Proper Education of the Truth****Building up a Habit of Spending Time in the Word**

We should help the saints to build up a practice or a habit that every day they would spend at least thirty minutes in the Word. This can be done by taking ten minutes in the morning, ten minutes in the evening, and another ten minutes before going to bed. We all need to build up such a practice to spend at least thirty minutes a day to get into Lord's Word. The best way is to charge the saints to study a book of the New Testament according to their choice. They should get into this book continually and every day. Some saints may decide to study the book of Romans or the book of Hebrews. They should study every day either three times of ten minutes each or one time of thirty minutes. We should charge them to pray-read two or three verses of this book every day. Then they have to study the accompanying message, we have messages on all the verses. The saints do not need to pray-read the life study Messages, but they have to pray-read the biblical verses. In order to get the help to enter into the truth conveyed in these few verses. They also need the help of the notes and the Life-study Messages to enter into the truth. The saints need to take this way every day to get into the truth. After one year of studying the Bible in this way, there will be a solid change in the saints' home life, private life, and church life. A few verses seems very slow but we must realize that breathing is a slow thing. We only breathe a little at a time, but this continual practice accumulates and keeps us living. We may

think this is too slow, but even if it took us ten years to finish the entire New Testament that would be wonderful. To pick up the truth contained in half of the New Testament after five years will be marvelous. We do not encourage the saints to be greedy and attempt to finish one book in one day. Then “their stomach will burst.” We should not encourage them in this way. Rather, we should slow them down. It is not a matter of quantity but a matter of endurance. You must endure this kind of Bible study. I think we need to remind them week after week, and sometimes the elders need to give the saints some direction, some encouragement, and some incentive. (*Elder’s Training*, Book 3, pp 108-109.)

### The Need of a Solid Foundation in the Word

The Lord’s recovery has been in the United States for over twenty years. During this time, all those who left the church and who caused trouble and became a failure never received a solid foundation in the Word. Everyone in the past twenty years who has passed through all kinds of tests and who was not only never shaken but also never affected are a real benefit to the Lord’s recovery. Whatever the storm was they remained steadfast and they went on with the Lord and are still here. They have not been a damage or a problem. Everyone like this is one that loves the Word and has a sound foundation in the truth. There is not an exception to this either on the positive side or on the negative side. All those who became a problem never had a solid foundation in the Word.

Over the last ten years we have published approximately twelve hundred Life-studies. I have the assurance to say that whoever has read through five hundred Life-study Messages properly has been an excellent believer. You elders who are shepherding the local churches know the real situation of most of the saints. If a saint in your locality is not that “proper” and he would begin from tomorrow morning to read the Life-study Messages until he reaches five-hundred, he will become another person. Medicine, nourishment, and all kinds of vitamins are included in these messages. This is why I said earlier that I had some realization that some of the saints who contacted me had not read many of the Life-study. I realized that they had not taken the “medicine and nourishment.” In their talk there were symptoms and signs of sickness. For example, a doctor may prescribe certain drugs for his patient. When the patient comes back to him after two months, the doctor can tell whether or not the patient took the drugs. The patient’s breathing, color, and entire being tells the doctor that the patient did not take the prescription. If you would begin to study the Life-studies every day starting tomorrow morning, you will become a different person even after fifty days. (*Elder’s Training*, Book 3, p. 106.)

### Growing Gradually by Life and by the Truth

While the issue of nourishment is forever, the nourishment itself only remains temporarily. Once the truth has been constituted into someone, however, it will remain there forever and its remaining is its supply. Our need for the long run is this kind of education with the truth, which is really something solid, living, and existing. We need this. Do not expect to have an overnight success which is like a factory making artificial flowers. Overnight you can produce many flowers, but in a genuine nursery or garden it takes time to grow flowers. Do not pick up a thought that we could do a quick work. You may have the thought that within two years a great number of people will be added to the church. Most of these people, however, may be empty. This is mushrooming. We must take care of the church in a way of growing gradually by life and by truth. (*Elder’s Training*, Book 3, pp 120-121.)

### **The Meeting Aspect of Entering into the Proper Education of the Truth**

### The Meetings—Educational Center

I am not fellowshipping in a legal way, but in principle I beg the elders to reconsider the way to carry out the meetings. We must have a very available way to carry out God's purpose. We cannot go the religious way. Even today our way of meeting is still very much governed and influenced by the religious way. We come together to pray, read some verses of the Bible, give some messages, and the people who have been sitting in our meetings for years eventually only get some kind of inspiration. This is better than nothing, but for the long run the Lord could not carry out His purpose in this way.

We cannot take the old way of our meeting life. If we continue to take our old way, I am afraid after another ten years we will be in the same condition. We are just giving people a little injection to help them grow in life mainly by inspiration, but no solid truth has been constituted into their being that can remain in their memory and that can be presented to others in a proper doctrinal way. By taking the way we have taken, we have lost the nature of the testimony of Jesus, which must be a constitution of the proper truth that produces a proper daily living. If the saints are not properly constituted with the truth, they cannot live a proper life. If they only live by inspiration and not by the constitution of the truth, I do not trust in that kind of living to be a testimony of the Lord.

I feel that we must endeavor to make all the church meetings educational centers to build the saints up with the proper knowledge. Our meetings should not merely be a restaurant to feed the children or a hospital to heal people. If the parents of a child would not care for the education of their children until they become ten years old, their children would grow up to be persons who are not very useful to society. Proper parents must take care of bringing their children up through elementary, junior high, high school, and college. In like manner, we must educate our spiritual children. We should not only help them grow in life, but also help them to be educated and built up in the proper knowledge of the truth. To carry out this educational work we must come to the Life-study Messages with the Recovery Version and the notes. If all the saints could go through the entire New Testament and the Life-studies with the Recovery Version and the notes in five years I would worship the Lord, This would be wonderful. (*Elder's Training*, Book 3, pp 144-145.)

#### Questions:

1. According to the personal aspect, how do we enter into the truth?
2. According to the meeting aspect, how do we enter into the truth?
3. Please try and list some examples of the riches of the ministry.
4. Set up a new pattern, a proper schedule for your life, so that you can enter into the riches of the New Testament ministry.