

exhaust itself; it was the empty vessels that were exhausted. Brothers and sisters, God is waiting for us to empty ourselves. If there is an infinite emptiness in us, the Holy Spirit will grant us an infinite filling. Whether or not we will receive the blessing of the Holy Spirit depends on whether we have empty vessels. It depends on whether or not we have reserved room for the Holy Spirit and whether or not we have provided Him a place to work in us.

"We need to pray and ask the Lord to dig more deeply in us and make more room in us so that the Holy Spirit can fill us. The filling of the Holy Spirit depends on our emptiness. I will repeat: our emptiness ought to be a continuous state. If we cannot empty ourselves, God cannot fill us. The Holy Spirit is waiting for empty rooms within us. The more empty rooms we give to Him, the more He will fill us. If there is empty room, it means there is more filling by the Holy Spirit to come. Therefore, we need not seek for the filling; all we have to do is to empty ourselves. The Holy Spirit alone is responsible for the filling; our responsibility is to empty ourselves. If we can empty ourselves, we will have the filling. We may not be conscious of the filling, but the fact of the filling will certainly be with us. "Brothers and sisters, God wants to fill the hungry with good things. If God has already created a seeking heart within us and if He is digging and emptying us, we ought to believe that He will certainly fill us. God will only send away empty those who think they are rich."

Note: Text in quotations is based upon the book Twelve Baskets Full, Vol. 4, Chapter 4 by Watchman Nee.

**Bold type** and/or underlining have been added for emphasis.

### *Our Experience in the Church Life*

#### **Prayer Burdens**

1. During the MountainTop conference 7 young people were baptized, and 63 young people prayed for people related to them to be touched by God. Let us continue to pray for them.
2. Let us pray for the 5 Chinese-speaking saints who were recently baptized.
3. Let us thank the Lord for the 450 people who attended the church picnic and for the outstanding weather He provided.

#### **Announcements:**

##### **General**

1. **Videos of Lord's Day messages available**  
The web site [www.churchintoronto.org](http://www.churchintoronto.org) now has the videos of the Lord's day sharing. It is being updated on a regular basis.

## **The church in Toronto**

Twelve Baskets Full Week 22

July 7th - July 19th, 2008

### **Heart and Light**

*Weekly Bible Reading:*

**Joshua 6:1-27; 7:1-26; 2 Kings 4:1-7**

*Hymns:*

**334, 1132, 422, 671, 793**

### **Monday**

*Verses for Morning Revival*

#### **Matthew 5:8**

**8** Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.

#### **2 Corinthians 3:16**

**16** But whenever their heart turns to the Lord, the veil is taken away.

*Readings for Inspiration and Truth*

#### **When Our Heart Is Pure, We See God**

"...four passages show us that when the heart is pure, one sees God; when the heart is single, there is light within; when the heart turns to the Lord, the veil is taken away; and when the heart is pure, one does not slip and can know God further. Since there is such a close relationship between the heart and light, it is necessary to deal with our heart in order see light. [Matt. 5:8; 6:21-23; 2 Cor. 3:16; Psa. 73:1, 13, 16-17, 25]

"What is meant by the 'heart'? What does it refer to? This is not easy to explain. According to the Scriptures, man is divided into three parts. Outwardly there is his body, and inwardly there is his spirit; between the body and the spirit there is the soul. Is the heart in the spirit or in the soul? It is difficult to say; however, we can say that man's heart includes his conscience (Heb. 10:22; 1 John 3:20-21), his mind (John 12:40; Luke 2:35), his emotion (John 14:1; Luke 24:32), and his will (Acts 11:23). Our mind denotes the part with which we think, our emotions denote the part with which we feel, and our will denotes the part with which we make resolutions. The heart is linked to the spirit and also to the soul. We may say that the heart includes the mind, but the heart is not just the mind; the heart includes the emotions, but the heart is not just the emotions; the heart also includes the will, but the heart is not just the will. The heart is something in between the spirit and the soul. The heart occupies an important place in man. The issues of life stem from our heart, and the condition of our heart determines the issues of life (Prov. 4:23).

"What is light? First John 1:5 says, 'God is light.' Only God is light. It is impossible for us to encounter light without encountering God. God is the Father of lights (James 1:17). God is the source of light. Therefore, when we say that we see the light, it means that we see God; we have met Him inwardly. Because we see God, we have light.

"What kind of heart enables a person to see God? Those who are pure in heart shall see God. What does pure in heart mean? A pure heart desires only God and it is focused on God. It is a heart that is for nothing else in this universe except God. Only those who have such a pure heart can see God and can see light."

## Tuesday

*Verses for Morning Revival*

### Matthew 6:22b

22 ...If therefore your eye is single, your whole body will be full of light;

### 1 John 2:10

10 He who loves his brother abides in the light, and there is no cause of stumbling in him;

*Readings for Inspiration and Truth*

### **If Your Heart Is for God and Nothing Else, Nothing Can Stumble You**

“Dear brothers and sisters, have we not seen other saints stumble? Why have they stumbled? The Scriptures give us a principle: Those who stumble must be in darkness. Some may stumble in the daytime, but it is because they do not see the thing that stumbles them. This is the same as those who walk in darkness. Any kind of stumbling proves that a man is in darkness. Brothers and sisters, regardless of how sound your excuses may be, if you stumble, you are in darkness. First John 2:10-11 says, ‘He who loves his brother abides in the light, and there is no cause of stumbling in him; but he who hates his brother is in the darkness.’ If a man is in the light, he will not stumble. If he stumbles, he is clearly in darkness and not in the light. Is it possible for a man whose heart is only for God and for nothing else to be stumbled? If your heart is for God and nothing else, nothing can stumble you. Even if you are misunderstood, despised, and opposed by everyone, you will still not be stumbled. This is because your heart is not after man’s understanding, esteem, sympathy, or praise; your heart is only after God. If you are after man’s understanding and esteem, you will surely stumble when others misunderstand or despise you. But if your heart is only after God, you would not be stumbled even if your circumstances were ten times worse. There is only one kind of person who stumbles—one whose heart is not inclined toward God but rather is seeking and longing for something apart from God. This kind of person lives in darkness. God is like the sun, and we are like mirrors. In order for a mirror to reflect the light of the sun, it must face the sun. Whenever the mirror is misaligned a little, it will lose light. Similarly, whenever our heart is not properly focused, our words will not be properly focused; we will immediately have complaining words, ill-humored words, criticizing words, and gossiping words. This is a very strong proof that we are in the dark and not in the light. Those who are in the light do not stumble. Some brothers and sisters can praise with tears in their eyes. Although their hearts are sorrowful, they can still praise God. They can do this because their hearts are inclined toward God. They live in the light, and nothing can stumble them.

“For instance, if your heart is for God and not for your clothes, you will not become angry or complain when your clothes are spoiled or torn. If your heart is not for God but rather for your clothes, the minute your clothes are damaged, your heart will be provoked, and you will lose your temper and complain. This shows that you are in darkness. Only when your heart is toward God will you not be taken away by your clothes. Only then will you have the light, and only then will you see something.

“Suppose your heart is on your children, and you love them more than God. When you do this you are in darkness. This does not mean that parents should not love their children. It means that if the parents’ hearts are captured by their children, if they indulge in their love for them and have more regard for them than they have for God, they will not have any light. Some brothers and sisters are very clear concerning other things, but

## Saturday

*Verses for Morning Revival*

### Luke 1:53

53 The hungry He has filled with good things, and the rich He has sent away empty.

### Psalm 73:26

26 My flesh and my heart fail, But God is the rock of my heart and my portion forever.

*Readings for Inspiration and Truth*

### **God Wants to Fill Us**

“The story in 2 Kings 4 shows us an important spiritual principle.

“What did the woman and her sons have? They only had a pot of oil. This same pot of oil was later poured into many empty vessels. The little bit of oil that she had at the beginning was crucial. In the Bible oil represents the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit works only on those who already have the Spirit abiding in them.

“The widow’s problem was that she had too few vessels. Elisha told her, ‘Go, borrow three vessels abroad of all thy neighbors, even empty vessels; borrow not a few. And when thou art come in, thou shalt shut the door upon thee and upon thy sons, and shalt pour out into all those vessels, and thou shalt set aside that which is full’ (2 Kings 4:3-4). What did the woman do? ‘So she went from him, and shut the door upon her and upon her sons, who brought the vessels to her; and she poured out. And it came to pass, when the vessels were full, that she said unto her son, Bring me yet a vessel. And he said unto her, There is not a vessel more. And the oil stayed’ (vv. 5-6). She had to borrow empty vessels—this speaks of the need for empty room within us for the Holy Spirit. She was to borrow not a few—this means the more the better. There should not be only one empty room but many empty rooms. One empty space is not enough; there needs to be many empty spaces. The more empty spaces there are, the more fullness there will be. This is a principle which the Lord has shown us: spiritual progress is a matter of being continually emptied out and continually filled up. The work of the Holy Spirit is not ‘once empty then forever full ‘but’ always empty and always full.’ Therefore, brothers and sisters, do not think that as long as we have been emptied once, we will not need any more emptying. The work of the cross in us is ever-increasing and ever-deepening.

“Another very important thing is the place where the oil was to be poured. It was to be poured in the house and with the door shut. To shut the door means to confine the woman, her sons, and the oil within the door. This indicates that we have to deal with the Holy Spirit directly ourselves. Everything should be between us and the Lord. Difficulties and victories are all personal. If there is something wrong with us, we must not bear a grudge against anyone nor blame anyone. We should shut the door, which means we should deal with the Holy Spirit within us alone. Our relationship is with the Holy Spirit alone. It is up to us and the Holy Spirit to decide whether we should live a rich spiritual life or a poor one. As long as we have settled everything with the Holy Spirit, all will go well.

“We should consider another very precious thing: ‘And he [the son] said unto her, There is not a vessel more. And the oil stayed.’ The Holy Spirit will fill every empty vessel, even the very last one. If there had been more empty vessels, there would have been more oil. We must bear in mind that the reason the oil stayed was because there were no more vessels. It was not the oil that first stayed, but the empty vessels that were first exhausted. When there were no more empty vessels, the oil stayed. The oil did not

### **The Difference between Living Faith and Imitating Deeds**

“Living faith never imitates past deeds. The Bible never tells us to imitate the deeds of others’ faith even though it tells us to imitate others’ faith (Heb. 6:12; 13:7). To imitate faith and to imitate the deeds of faith are two entirely different things. We should imitate the faith of the apostles, but we should not imitate the deeds of their faith. Their shadows, handkerchiefs, and aprons were capable of healing the sick (Acts 5:15; 19:12), but this does not mean that we can do the same. Even if we do the same thing, the sick will not be healed because we would only be imitating the deeds of the apostles’ faith and not their faith. Sometimes a person suffers from a certain illness and God heals him. But this does mean that we can be sick with the same illness and expect God to heal us. God never allows us to imitate the deeds of others’ faith. We often travel a long way before we find out that we are imitating the deeds of others’ faith instead of imitating their faith. We often have to pass through many difficulties before we find out that imitating the deeds of faith is a dead end. When we cannot make it and realize that we have come to the end of the road, our prayer will become real and genuine. Only then will we really seek after God. Up to that point, our prayer will merely be mindless words, habitual and unintended. But when we reach that point, our prayer will become genuine. We will become genuinely empty, and we will confess, ‘I am useless. Even the victory I had before cannot help me now.’ When we compare the difficulty God has given us with the strength we now have, we will realize that there is no way we can overcome. Then we will genuinely seek after the Lord and be conscious of our uselessness. We will not need someone to tell us to be humble; we will spontaneously be humble. Our humility will not be a thing taught by others but something that swells up within us spontaneously. Then we will truly know that everything we have is vanity, and we will understand the meaning of ‘apart from Me you can do nothing’ (John 15:5).

“Brothers and sisters, God desires to see you seeking after Him in a genuine way. Therefore, He places trials and difficulties before you. When these things are before you, you should honestly seek after Him. When you really need His power, you will realize that you can do nothing apart from Him. It is true that when you do things according to your own design, you apparently can do quite a bit. But when you have to do something according to God’s design, you will find out that you need His power. Without His power we cannot do anything. Brothers and sisters, we must realize that God has ruled us out on the cross already! We have often overestimated ourselves. In reality, we have been ruled out by God on the cross already. Golgotha is where we were ruled out. We ourselves no longer exist. Brothers and sisters, whenever we become empty, the Lord will fill us up. The Word of God plainly promises: ‘The hungry He has filled with good things’ (Luke 1:53a). Therefore, He will certainly make the hungry satisfied with good things. Brothers and sisters, has God brought us to this point? Have we ever felt that we cannot make it? Those who feel that they have nothing at all are blessed because they will certainly be filled. Only these persons can receive God’s blessing; only these ones will be filled. If you think that you are rich and feel that you are good in everything, you can only expect to be sent away empty. Only one class of people will be filled before God: those who are empty in hand and empty in spirit. Brothers and sisters, are you truly empty? Have you really reached the point where God can bless you? Can you say, ‘I am useless in the service of God, and I can do nothing at all? If you are truly empty and if you are truly seeking after God’s word, He will work and operate in you.’”

they are blind with love for their children. For them, it is reasonable even if their children behave unreasonably. These brothers and sisters are in darkness. Their hearts must turn to God before they can be free from the bondage of their children and before they can have light and see.

“With some brothers and sisters, their hearts are covetous for money. They are surely in darkness because the Lord clearly says that ‘where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.’ When money is in front of their eyes, they will not see God or any light, and they will definitely be in darkness. But if they free their heart from money, they will receive light.

“Whenever you are about to engage in a dispute with another person, you should first check to see whether you are dealing with this person directly or whether you have first turned to God. Then you can deal with this person while keeping your heart on God. Only when your heart is aimed at God will it be enlightened; only then will it see accurately. Otherwise, you will speak foolishly and debate foolishly. You will insist that the other party is wrong and that you are right. If your heart is focused on God, many disputes will not become an issue at all.

“This is not all. Those who are learning to serve the Lord should be alerted to another thing: not only can man, things, and matters become the source of our darkness, but even our service to the Lord or our gifts and talents from God can become the source of our darkness. Regardless of how useful God makes us and how much gift and power He gives us, these things can easily cut off our relationship with God. If our heart is attached to our work or our gift, the most dangerous time is when our work prospers, because we can fall into darkness easily. This is because none of these things is light; only God is light. There is no light besides God. If we put our heart in anything apart from God, whether it is good or bad, it will prevent us from seeing God. Our heart must not be held by our work; it must not be held by our gift or by the result of our work. Our heart should be toward God. Only then can we have light, and only then will we see.

“Brothers and sisters, our heart must be proper and pure, and it must be toward God. If our heart is not toward God, we will surely be in darkness. It is most pitiful to be in such a condition. When our heart is focused on God, we will see light. Once we have light, all the improper things will spontaneously fall away from us. When the heart is proper, there will be light. Once the light comes, it will deliver us from errors. The more light there is, the more deliverance we will have. If we are free from errors, it proves that we are persons in the light. Therefore, in order to have light, we must first deal with our heart.”

### **Wednesday**

*Verses for Morning Revival*

#### **Ephesians 5:8, 10, 16a, 18b, 19b, 20**

- 8** ...you...are now light in the Lord; walk as children of light
- 10** Proving what is well pleasing to the Lord.
- 16** Redeeming the time...
- 18** ...be filled in spirit,
- 19** ...with your heart to the Lord
- 20** Giving thanks at all times for all things in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to our God and Father,

*Readings for Inspiration and Truth*

## **In God's Eyes the Christian Life Should Be an Ever-Deepening Life**

"It is an amazing thing that in our experience the Holy Spirit can empty us. Many genuine Christians have passed through such an experience. When we first became a Christian, we considered ourselves to be rather good and capable in everything. But after some time we noticed that the life we were living was short of the Christian standard; we realized that we had failed and could not go on anymore. Consequently, we felt dissatisfied, and we prayed for God to fill us up and make us obedient. God then ordered some unbearable and distasteful circumstances to come upon us. Yet by the grace of God, we eventually overcame them. Then we had something to testify about, and we were able to say that we overcame. We were able to say that we overcame a certain particular matter and that, at a certain point in time, God filled us. We may have even thought that we would be an overcomer from that point on. But surprisingly, after some time, the victory was lost, and failure came back again. We thought that it was very easy to overcome, but it seemed as if all strength was gone, and new obstacles were before us again. There seemed to be a wall in front of us; we could not find any way out, and there did not seem to be any way to bypass it. Consequently, we said that our previous victory was lost, and we were no longer filled with God.

"Brothers and sisters, have you ever had such an experience? What is the significance of this kind of experience? You should bear in mind that in God's eyes the Christian life should be an ever-deepening life. A Christian should become emptier and emptier, and the Lord's riches to him should become fuller and fuller. After passing the first hurdle, you may think that there can be no higher life than what you have experienced; you may think that you can advance no further and that you have reached the summit. The Lord knows your condition. He does not want you to think that you have abundant life already. Therefore, He allows new difficulties to come upon you, and He places impossible things before you. Based on your past experiences, you may think that you will overcome again. But you fail at your first attempt. You may attribute your failure to the lack of vigilance and effort, and you may take greater care and exert more energy in tackling the situation the second time. Yet you fail again. You may think that your vigilance and effort is still too short and that you ought to exercise greater care and exert more energy. Yet the result again falls short of your expectation, and you fail once more. Eventually, you will find that you cannot overcome this hurdle; there is no way to handle the matter. You will be at a loss as to why you cannot overcome. You will wonder why you still fail and why the initial power of obedience is gone. At the same time, you will realize that it is not right that you repeatedly fail, and you will agonize over these failures. But God has only one reason for doing this—to lead you on further and to dig more deeply into you so that you may receive more filling. This is why new difficulties are in front of you all the time. Unless you have fresh filling, you will not be able to overcome these fresh difficulties. You should bear in mind that the further you go forward, the more difficulties there will be. All your difficulties are ordered by the Holy Spirit for the purpose of creating a stronger craving and hunger in you for Him."

### **Thursday**

*Verses for Morning Revival*

#### **Psalm 73:1, 25**

- 1** Surely God is good to Israel, to those who are pure in heart.
- 25** Whom do I have in heaven but You? And besides You there is nothing I desire on earth.

*Readings for Inspiration and Truth*

## **We Must Never Expect to Have a Once-for-All Victory — We Need New Strength to Go On**

"The victory at Jericho can never be applied to Ai. Although Ai is very small and Jericho, which is huge, has been taken, if we attack Ai by applying our past experience, we will fail. This means we cannot apply our past victory to tackle our spiritual difficulties today. The past has become history, and new power is needed to deal with new spiritual difficulties. God puts new difficulties before us in order to make us sense new needs. We must never expect to have a once-for-all victory. Our eyes must be opened before God, and we must realize that the only way to have a continual filling is to have the continual working of the cross. Unless the Holy Spirit continues His work in us, we cannot continue to overcome. When any trial confronts us or any difficulty is placed before us, no past history or experience will do any good; we need new strength to go on.

"Let us bear in mind that everything ordered by the Lord in our circumstances is intended to create a need in us and make us realize that we cannot overcome by past experience. Past victories remain unchanged, but trying to overcome new difficulties by means of past victories never works. Many people look at their past victories and wonder why they cannot overcome now. Brothers and sisters, we have to realize that God does not want us to have yesterday's manna. With each new difficulty there comes a new need which we have never realized before. Brothers and sisters, we cannot go on without new knowledge of the Lord and a new vision of Him. Whenever He brings us to our end and whenever we find ourselves crying, 'I cannot make it!', our progress has begun. Then God is able to easily create a desire for Him in us. Is it not clear to us that our hunger begins from this kind of experience?

"Thank God that everything we have is the result of His work; even the heart that seeks after Him comes from Him. If it were up to us, I wonder how long we would have to wait before we would seek after Him? Of course, there is a condition: we must be conscious of our weakness and inability as well as the hindrance and pride of the flesh. If we persist in our self-reliance, presume that we are already rich, and do not forget our Jericho victory, it will be impossible for God to give us a seeking heart even if He wants to. If we cannot forget our past victory, we will never make any progress. If we think that we can overcome with our first experience, we have been defeated already. Past victory can never be our present strength. We should remember that God gives difficulties to us in order to dig more deeply in us so that He can fill us more with Himself."

### **Friday**

*Verses for Morning Revival*

#### **Hebrews 6:12b**

- 12** ...be...imitators of those who through faith and long-suffering are inheriting the promises.

#### **Hebrews 13:7**

- 7** Remember the ones leading you, who have spoken to you the word of God; and considering the issue of their manner of life, imitate their faith.

#### **John 15:5b**

- 5** ...He who abides in Me and I in him, he bears much fruit; for apart from Me you can do nothing.