

The HEARING OF Faith

LIVING STREAM MINISTRY RADIO NEWSLETTER

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“He therefore who bountifully supplies to you the Spirit . . . does He do it out of the works of the law or out of the hearing of faith?” Galatians 3:5

In

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Therefore
HAVING THIS
MINISTRY
AS WE
HAVE BEEN
SHOWN MERCY,
WE DO NOT
LOSE HEART.

2 COR 4:1

Dear Life-study Listener,

We hope you are enjoying *Life-study of 2 Corinthians*. It is genuinely a sister book to the book of Philippians, which is on the experience of Christ. In Philippians, the apostle Paul described the believers' experience of Christ by our taking Christ as our living, pattern, goal, power, and secret. In 2 Corinthians, he showed us ones, including himself, who lived in that way as patterns to us.

Paul forgave in the person of Christ (2:10), his life was a fragrance of Christ (2:15) and he spoke in Christ (2:17). He wrote letters of Christ into the believers (3:3) and entreated the Corinthians with the meekness and gentleness of Christ (10:1). The apostles preached Jesus Christ (1:19), not themselves (4:5), and they were His ambassadors (5:20). Paul was a man in Christ (12:2) who spoke in Christ (12:19).

Thank the Lord that in His wisdom He gave us the Epistles in the New Testament that not only explain the experience of Christ but also portray this unique life of living and experiencing Christ as seen in the faithful pattern of the Apostle Paul. May we all be encouraged and exhorted to follow this pattern.

We always desire your prayers for our work to bring to you and other lovers and seekers of Christ this newsletter, the life-study program on the radio in this country and around the world in several languages, and the broadcasts over the Internet. Thank you for standing with us in prayer.

Living Stream Ministry

WHAT IS A MINISTER OF THE NEW COVENANT?

The Recovery Version of the New Testament concisely states that the subject of 2 Corinthians is the new covenant ministry and its ministers. This is a

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A MINISTER OF THE NEW COVENANT

(continued from page 1)

compound subject indicating that 2 Corinthians is a book concerned with the ministry of the new covenant and also with the ministers of the new covenant. In actuality, the ministry and the ministers are one. The new covenant ministry is the living of the new covenant ministers. We have pointed out elsewhere that the new covenant ministry is produced in the believers as they pass through consuming pressures under the cross and are brought into an experiential knowledge of God as the God of resurrection (1:8-9). This constitutes within them the ministry of the Spirit and the ministry of righteousness (3:8-9). This also makes them certain kinds of persons.

In 2 Corinthians we have ample testimony concerning the person of the new covenant ministers. We see in chapter two that they have

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been defeated and captured by Christ and are led by Him in His victorious train of vanquished foes (v. 14). In chapter three, they are mirrors beholding and reflecting the glory of the Lord as they are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory (v. 18). In chapter four, they are earthen vessels conscious of their innate weakness yet boasting not in themselves but in the glorious dynamic treasure that resides within them (v. 7). As such vessels, they do not preach themselves but Christ Jesus as Lord (v. 5). According to chapter five, these ministers of the new covenant are also God's ambassadors, His representatives, who preach the high and complete word

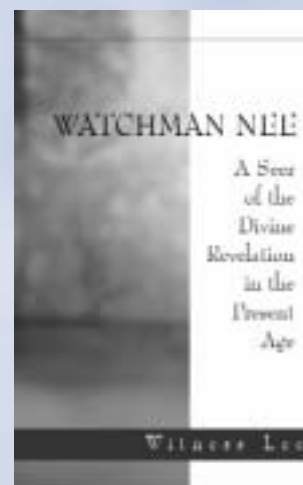
concerning reconciliation (v. 20). To unbelievers, these ministers announce the gospel that appeals to them to be reconciled to God by believing in the Christ who died for their sins (v. 18). These ministers of the new covenant, however, carry out their ministry not only to unbelievers but in a sense, even more, to the believers, the members of the church. Paul, as one of these ministers, knew well that the Corinthian believers still suffered from serious discrepancies and distance between them and God. On the one hand, they had been reconciled to God to a certain extent. On the other hand, they needed a further reconciliation to Him that they would be altogether one with Him for His corporate expression. For this reason, Paul spoke to the believers saying, "Be reconciled to God" (v. 20).

The ministers of the new covenant who carry out such a ministry and announce the word of reconciliation are themselves reconciled persons. This means they are one with God. They are in harmony with Him and live in the closest contact with Him in Christ as the Spirit. As we see in the picture of the tabernacle, these ministers no longer reside in the outer court nor even in the holy place. They have entered into the holy of holies and enjoy the Triune God in glory, being one with Him. From this position of oneness, harmony, and reconciliation with God, they appeal to us on behalf of Christ, "Be reconciled to God." It is a testimony to the triumphant grace of God that we may experience, enjoy and participate in the unique ministry of the new covenant and become in Christ ministers of the new covenant.

For further reading on this subject, please see *An Autobiography of a Person in the Spirit*; and *The Experience and Growth in Life*, message 18, by Witness Lee, published by Living Stream Ministry.

WATCHMAN NEE— A SEER OF THE DIVINE REVELATION IN THE PRESENT AGE

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