

THE CENTRAL LINE OF THE BIBLE

(Friday—First Morning Session)

Message One

The Lines in the Word of God

Note: This outline was produced from notes of a meeting of Brother Witness Lee with the trainers of the full-time training in Anaheim on January 23, 1996.

Scripture Reading: John 1:1; 1 John 1:1; Matt. 28:19; 2 Cor. 13:14; 1 Tim. 1:4; Eph. 1:10; 3:9; John 1:14; 1 Cor. 15:45; 2 Cor. 3:17-18; Acts 16:7; Rom. 8:9-11; Phil. 1:19; Eph. 4:4; 1 Cor. 12:13; Rev. 1:4; 4:5; 5:6; 21:2; Gen. 2:7; Rom. 5:14; Gen. 2:20-24; 3:20; Eph. 5:29-32; 2 Cor. 11:2-3; 1 Cor. 10:1-11; Exo. 25; Heb. 9:2-5; 1 Chron. 28:11; 29:1; 2 Chron. 3—4; John 2:21; 1 Cor. 3:17; Eph. 2:21; Rev. 21:22

I. In the Lord's recovery we consider that there are three lines of truth in the divine revelation of the Bible—the central line, the line of supplemental points, and “the leaves and the branches”:

- A. In all our handling of the Scriptures, the central line should stand out.
- B. We should be particularly careful not to confuse the first two lines—the central line and the line of supplemental points.
- C. We receive all believers according to the standard of the central line, not according to the standard of the line of supplemental points.
- D. The arrangement of classes in the full-time training respects this crucial distinction of lines in the Bible.

II. The central line:

- A. The Word of God—John 1:1; 1 John 1:1:
 1. Although in this universe God is the primary thing, it is the Word of God that tells us about God.
 2. In order to know the living Christ, we must have the written Word—John 5:39; Luke 24:27.
 3. John 1 stresses the relationship between God and His Word.
 4. We must stress the preeminence of the Word of God and make it the basis of all our understanding of the truth—Acts 17:11.
- B. The Triune God—Matt. 28:19; 2 Cor. 13:14:
 1. He is self-existing and ever-existing—Exo. 3:14.
 2. He is eternally one God—Psa. 86:10; Isa. 45:5; 1 Cor. 8:4; 1 Tim. 2:5.
 3. He is eternally three—the Father, the Son, and the Spirit—Matt. 28:19.
 4. The three are never separate in being or action but mutually coinhere and mutually indwell one another—John 10:38; 14:10-11; 17:21.
 5. We must get fully into the Triune God, both in our understanding and in our experience of Him—2 Cor. 13:14.
- C. The economy of God—1 Tim. 1:4; Eph. 1:10; 3:9:
 1. God's economy is His arrangement to fulfill His purpose.
 2. His economy is according to His heart's desire.
 3. The economy of God takes the all-inclusive Christ as its center.

- D. The all-inclusive Christ:
 1. He is the Christ of the four Gospels, God become flesh—John 1:1, 14.
 2. He became the life-giving Spirit of the Epistles; hence, He is the pneumatic Christ—1 Cor. 15:45b; 2 Cor. 3:17-18.
 3. His full ministry is in three stages: incarnation, inclusion, and intensification.
- E. The life-giving Spirit:
 1. The Spirit is Christ's realization; hence, He is called the Spirit of Jesus, the Spirit of Christ, and the Spirit of Jesus Christ—Acts 16:7; Rom. 8:9-11; Phil. 1:19.
 2. The Spirit of Christ brings forth the Body of Christ—Eph. 4:4; 1 Cor. 12:13.
- F. The Body of Christ:
 1. The twenty-two books from Romans through Revelation (all can be considered Epistles) are concerned with the pneumatic Christ as the life-giving Spirit for His reproduction, the Body of Christ.
 2. In God's economy Christ is the center, the Body is the line, and the New Jerusalem is the goal.
 3. The all-inclusive Christ as the life-giving Spirit has been intensified as the sevenfold intensified Spirit to counteract the degradation of the church for the building up of the Body of Christ to consummate the New Jerusalem—Rev. 1:4; 4:5; 5:6.
- G. The New Jerusalem—21:2:
 1. The New Jerusalem is the eternal goal of God's economy.
 2. The New Jerusalem is the aggregate of all the visions and revelations of the Bible.
 3. The New Jerusalem is the organism of the Triune God, an organic constitution of the processed and consummated Triune God and the regenerated, transformed, and glorified elect.

III. The line of supplemental points, for example:

- A. The prophecy concerning Christ.
- B. The Old Testament types:
 1. Adam—Gen. 2:7; 1 Cor. 15:45; Rom. 5:14.
 2. Eve—Gen. 2:20-24; 3:20; Eph. 5:29-32; 2 Cor. 11:2-3.
 3. Israel—see 1 Cor. 10:1-11 and cross references there, and read footnote 6¹ in 1 Cor. 10.
 4. The tabernacle and its furniture—Exo. 25; John 1:14; Heb. 9:2-5 and footnote 4³.
 5. The temple—1 Chron. 28:11; 29:1; 2 Chron. 3—4; John 2:21; 1 Cor. 3:17; Eph. 2:21; Rev. 21:22.
- C. The church, supplementary to the Body of Christ.
- D. The kingdom, including the judgment seat and the wedding feast.

IV. "The leaves and the branches":

- A. There are many other items in the Bible that are there as helps to the central line and the line of supplemental points. These items are either

manifestations of the organic nature of the other lines (leaves) or channels of the organic supply for the working out of the other lines (branches).

- B. These points include but are not limited to the God-ordained way, the Lord's table, the administration of the local church, head covering, foot-washing, the rapture, the keeping of days, the handling of idol sacrifices, one cup versus many cups in the Lord's table meeting, and leavened bread versus unleavened bread in the Lord's table meeting.
- C. We need to use these matters, but we should not be distracted by them. We must learn how to apply these matters to help us progress in the central line of the Bible, but we should never allow them to become our central line.