

WEEKLY FELLOWSHIP

August 3, 2014

The Weekly Newsletter of the Church in Irvine

Prayer Items

- ✿ Migration in the UK and Europe
- ✿ College Work at UCI
- ✿ Irvine—Ministry on “How to Meet”

For additional details regarding the above prayer items, please refer to Detailed Prayer Burdens.

Weekly Truth Pursuit

Life-Study of Galatians, Messages 17 & 18

Bible Reading

	OT Pages	NT Page
Monday	565-566	79
Tuesday	567-568	80
Wednesday	569-570	81
Thursday	571-572	82
Friday	573-574	83
Saturday	575-576	84

Morning Revival

Crystallization-Study of Genesis, Volume 5, Week 26

DETAILED PRAYER BURDENS

International: Migration in the UK and Europe

More than 30 saints, including existing serving saints and graduates from the FTTL and the FTTA-XB, will migrate to different parts of the UK and Europe to strengthen the church life and the clustering of the churches in each area. The cities are Cambridge, Chelmsford, Coventry, Manchester, Glasgow, Cardiff, Southampton, and London in the UK; and Bucharest, Romania; and Madrid, Spain.

- ✿ Please pray for the Lord's abundant blessing and the strengthening, increase, and testimony in these cities.

Local: College Work at UCI

- ✿ Continue to pray that many solid freshman contacts will be gained through the Student Parent Orientation Programs and that those who have been contacted will remain open to us.

- ✿ Pray for the preparing of a corporate vessel in the coming weeks that the church could contain the Lord's blessing from the campus in the new school year through the prayer and coordination of the families, full-timers and students.

Irvine—Ministry on “How to Meet”

- ✿ Pray for the church's reading over the next several weeks of selected portions of the book "How to Meet" that this word of ministry would operate in the saints to bring every kind of gathering of the saints out of oldness and formality and into the newness and freshness of the life-giving Spirit as the reality of resurrection.

MINISTRY PORTION

THE GOSPEL PREACHED TO ABRAHAM

When I first learned that long before Christ came the gospel was preached to Abraham, I was greatly surprised. Galatians 3:8 says, “And the Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the nations by faith, preached the gospel beforehand to Abraham: In you all the nations shall be blessed.” According to Genesis 12:3, in Abraham all the nations would be blessed. In Genesis 12:7 the Lord went on to say to Abraham, “Unto thy seed will I give this land.” There are two main aspects of God's word to Abraham in Genesis 12: the first is that in him all nations would be blessed; the second is that the land would be given to Abraham's seed. In Christ, Abraham's unique seed, the nations would be blessed. Furthermore, to this unique seed the land would be given. This was God's word to Abraham.

In Galatians 3:16 Paul refers to God's word to Abraham as a promise: “To Abraham were the promises spoken and to his seed.” Then in verse 17 Paul goes on to speak of a covenant ratified beforehand by God. This indicates that the promise God gave to Abraham became a covenant, which is more firm than a promise. The word, the promise, and the covenant are the gospel which was preached to Abraham. The gospel is the covenant, the covenant is the promise, and the promise is the word spoken by God.

It is important to see the difference between these four terms. A word is common or ordinary, whereas a promise is much more specific. If you give a promise to someone, your word is not common; it is specific. You promise to do certain things for that person. The word God spoke to Abraham in Genesis 12 was not common; it was a specific word in which God promised Abraham that in him and in his seed the nations would be blessed. We have pointed out that in this chapter God also promised Abraham that his seed would possess the land. Because the word spoken to Abraham in Genesis 12 is very specific, it is a word of promise.

In Genesis 15 this promise became a covenant. Here God appeared to Abraham, and Abraham offered a sacrifice to Him. The sacrifice was divided, and God passed through it. This was a custom in ancient times by which two parties ratified a covenant. By walking through the sacrifice, these parties ratified a covenant in an official and proper manner. In this way the promise given in Genesis 12 was ratified as a covenant in Genesis 15. Then in Genesis 17 the covenant was confirmed by the sign of circumcision.

In Galatians 3 Paul says that the word spoken to Abraham, the word which became a covenant confirmed by circumcision, was the gospel preached to Abraham. In Galatians 3 we are given Paul's understanding and interpreta-

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Upcoming Events

Church-related Websites

General: churchinirvine.org

Blog: members.churchinirvine.org

Calendar: calendar.churchinirvine.org

Offerings: offerings.churchinirvine.org

YP: youngpeople.churchinirvine.org

This Week

3RD ☪ 9:30am–12:00pm Lord's
Lord's Day Table and prophesying
meetings by districts

5TH ☪ 7:30–8:30pm Prayer meet-
Tuesday ings by districts

7TH ☪ 10:00–11:00am Sisters
Thursday prayer meeting at Hall 3

8TH ☪ Evening Small groups in
Friday the homes

10TH ☪ 9:30am–12:00pm Lord's
Lord's Day Table and prophesying
meetings by districts

MINISTRY PORTION (CONT'D)

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tion. Perhaps this interpretation came as a revelation to Paul during the years he was alone with the Lord. Paul came to see that what God had spoken to Abraham was not just a promise or merely a covenant ratified and confirmed, but that it was the very gospel. In this covenant, Paul learned, the main items of the new testament gospel were included. Thus, the covenant ratified with Abraham was a forerunner of the new covenant, of the new testament.

The new testament is a new covenant ratified by the sacrifice of the Lord Jesus. The Lord offered Himself up as a sacrifice to God. In a sense, God walked through the sacrifice offered to Him on the cross by Christ. This new covenant may be considered as either a repetition or a continuation of the covenant ratified with Abraham. The gospel we are preaching today is not merely a promise; it is also a covenant.

In message forty-one of the Life-study of Hebrews, we pointed out the difference between a covenant and a testament. A covenant refers to an agreement concerning things promised, but not yet accomplished. A testament denotes an agreement in which the promised items have been accomplished. When all the items of the promise are accomplished, the covenant becomes a testament. The modern term for testament is will. The new testament is the new will. A will is not an agreement in which the testator promises to do certain things for others. No, a will is a testament which says that the testator has already done certain things or given certain things to particular people. The gospel we preach is first a covenant. Ultimately, however, it is a testament. At the time of Abraham this gospel could not have been a testament. It could only have been a covenant in which God promised to bless all the nations in Abraham and to give the good land to Abraham's seed. Later, in Genesis 15, this promise became a ratified covenant. But for us the new covenant is a new testament because all the promised things have been accomplished by Christ. All

the nations have been blessed in Christ, and the good land has been given to Abraham's seed. Therefore, what we receive today is not a new covenant; it is a new testament, a new will. This will is the gospel.

Paul received a marvelous understanding of spiritual things. Without the revelation given to him, we would not have the confidence to say that the covenant ratified with Abraham was the gospel preached to Abraham. But Paul boldly declares that the Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the nations by faith, preached the gospel beforehand to Abraham (3:8). Apart from Paul's word in Galatians 3, we would not realize that God's word to Abraham was the gospel. Although the gospel is a matter of the new testament, it is important for us to realize that the new testament is a continuation or repetition of God's promise to Abraham.

—*Life Study of Galatians*, Message 17

ANNOUNCEMENTS

☪ Gina Youn

On Wed., July 23, at 12:30am, our dear sister Gina Youn went to be with the Lord after a 10-year struggle with cancer. A memorial meeting was held on the evening of July 24th in Downey with many family members, former colleagues, and saints in attendance, followed by a brief burial ceremony in Orange the following morning.

Sister Gina is survived by her husband, Mark, and two sons, Edward and James. Please stand with the family and the saints caring for them as they grieve the loss of our sister.

☪ Titus Chow

With great joy we announce the birth of our grandson, Titus Christian Chow, on July 23, 2014, weighing 8 lbs, 8 ozs and 21.5 inches long. Both mother and baby are doing fine. Thank the Lord for the new addition to the family. Wing & Minna Chow.