

## Message Five

### **Migration, the Advance of the Lord's Present Recovery, the Function and Reward of the Saints, and the Consummation of the Age**

Scripture Reading: Matt. 28:19-20; 24:14; Eph. 4:16; Acts 1:8; 8:1;  
Matt. 25:21, 28; Rev. 2:5, 7; 6:2; 14:4

#### **I. Migration as a means to increase and spread the church life in the Lord's recovery uniquely matches the God-ordained way to practice the church life for the building up of the Body of Christ; thus, the two practices strengthen one another—Matt. 28:19-20; 24:14; Eph. 4:16:**

- A. Migration is for the spreading of the church life:  
“Because the church is universal, it is also spreading. The most blessed church is the church that spreads the most. If there is a local church that never spreads, it will have more and more problems until it becomes very weak. On the one hand, we must be careful and serious about the spreading of the church, not being loose or careless and using human methods to promote it. We must allow the Lord to work. On the other hand, we must be clear that the church needs to spread, and we must do our best to raise up churches in every place. Although this does not depend on human effort, we should not limit the spreading” (*The Three Aspects of the Church, Book 2: The Course of the Church*, pp. 32-33).
- B. In the past the spreading of the church to a new place required many saints for the big meeting church life, and it also required gifted speakers to maintain those big meetings as well as competent elders to shepherd the saints. In addition, the financial requirement to rent, build, or buy a big building as the center of the church life was often difficult.
- C. Today, in the age of the God-ordained way, each member has the organic function of begetting new believers, shepherding them in their homes, perfecting them in the small group meetings, and prophesying in the district meetings for the building up of the Body of Christ. Thus, the practice of the small meeting church life greatly reduces the difficulties of migration.
- D. Furthermore, the practice of migration opens many new places as opportunities for the saints to practice the church life. New places also mean new markets of people—seeking ones, sinners, and often students—for us to labor on as material for God's building. Everywhere in America people are waiting to be introduced to the unsearchably rich gospel and God's economy:
  1. The basic principle of the church is that it is eternal and universal, so the church must constantly spread on the earth; the growth of the church and the building up of the church are based on spreading—Acts 1:8; 8:1; 9:31.
  2. “We must stress very much that every church must be a gospel-spreading and truth-teaching church. This is our commission. Every church and every saint should be such a one...who preaches the gospel and teaches the truth in his neighborhood, among his relatives, classmates, schoolmates, friends, and colleagues. Our Jerusalem is in our town, in our city, in our village. Then we go out to the surrounding places; then we go out to places at a distance; then we would even go to other states and other countries, even to the remotest part of the earth. We must have such a spirit!” (*Elders' Training, Book 8: The Life-pulse of the Lord's Present Move*, p. 135)

#### **II. The advance of the Lord's present recovery depends upon the churches with the saints rising up to spread the all-inclusive teaching and practice that we have been given to establish local churches as God's kingdom in every part of this earth:**

- A. To cooperate with the Lord in this spreading of His work, we must grasp every opportunity and be willing to pay any price. To overcome in this way, we desperately need to pray for the Lord's mercy and grace.
- B. The truth in the Lord's recovery has been brought to its consummation in the high peak of the divine revelation. The practice of the church life has been perfected in the God-ordained way. The oneness in the Lord's recovery has been established through the practice of blending in every way, by practicing one work for the one Body of Christ and by all the saints living under the vision of the New Jerusalem. Our portion today is to practice and to spread all that the Lord has given us for the establishing of His kingdom on earth.
- C. Although we have had this inheritance and commission for many years, we all must admit that we have fallen far short of giving the Lord the cooperation He desires and requires for His advance in the United States:
  - 1. Our practice of the God-ordained way has fallen woefully short of the goal Brother Lee set—for one-third of the saints in each church to bear one fruit every year. This can be seen in the projection made on that basis in 1997 of the increase of the number of churches, the increase of the number of active saints, and other indicators of a proper advance in the ten-year period after Brother Lee's departure (see chart).
  - 2. We must all humble ourselves and repent for our fruitlessness and lack of spreading in the past, and based upon that repentance, we must ask the Lord to shine on the factors in our being that have contributed to our lack of progress.
  - 3. We must endeavor to receive light from the Lord and profit from the experiences of others so that we can find the way to go on to be more profitable in the Lord's economy—Rev. 2:5, 7.
- D. The lessons from Paul's experience:
  - 1. We must learn from the lesson of Paul in Acts 16:6-12; these verses indicate the problem of workers coming to a place and tending to become set and settled down, not wanting to move; old relationships, old affections, old inclinations, and old concepts keep us from following the inner leading of the indwelling Spirit.
  - 2. "The final problem in the spread of the church is the self. If we stay in our old feelings and relationships, the spread of the church will be delayed indefinitely. To break out of the self, we need a vision. When we break through, the church spreads. This is true even today" (*The Three Aspects of the Church, Book 2: The Course of the Church*, p. 44).
- E. Brother Lee's personal testimony:
  - 1. "In considering my history in the work, my problem is that I have a tendency to remain in one place. Whenever I begin to work in a certain place, I have no desire to move anywhere else. This weakness makes it impossible for the work to expand. Therefore, the Lord has always disciplined me. He has stirred up different circumstances to force me to move from one place to another" (*The Collected Works of Witness Lee, 1968*, Vol. 2, pp. 227-228, available in November 2009).
  - 2. "This [a monetary gift given to Brother Lee so that he could go to America] occurred in 1938, but it was not until 1958, twenty years later, that I went to the United States. I recount these stories so that we can see how our natural disposition can limit the Lord's work. I am convinced that if I did not have such a disposition, the Lord would have been able to spread much more through me" (p. 231).
  - 3. "In my whole life, the greatest price I have paid is for the work in America. I cannot say how great this price was. It was entirely because of my dullness in following Him that the Lord had to chastise me in order to send me to America. If we have a feeling from the Lord to go abroad for His propagation, we should go

and avoid suffering the Lord's discipline. After we have worked to a certain extent in a place, we should go out and propagate. I recount all these matters so that we can all go before the Lord to see that our work needs to spread out. We have not accomplished enough" (p. 233).

4. "I say this word to show that we have been greatly restricted by our natural disposition. We are like a snail that feels at ease when it is untouched but quickly withdraws into its shell and will not come out again when it is touched. This is our problem" (pp. 239-240).
- F. In spite of the shortages felt by Brother Lee, the Lord used him to bring forth a great revival in Cheefoo at the end of 1942 and the beginning of 1943. That revival resulted in the migration of many hundreds of saints. "We met continuously for almost one hundred days, and every day we had new leadings from the Lord. The brothers and sisters consecrated themselves to the extent that every individual and every home was consecrated, and they offered all their possessions, including house deeds, property deeds, stocks, and bank deposits" (*A Blessed Human Life*, pp. 68-69).
- G. The Saturday before the revival broke out, Brother Lee wrote in his diary:  
"December 26: May all the oldness among the brothers and sisters be swept away by the Lord with the passing of 1942! May the revival come with 1943! May the first day of 1943 see the beginning of all things new!  
"The reason why we are so silent, the reason we do not have the ambition to spread the Lord's kingdom, the reason why we do not have the power and the boldness to spread the Lord's gospel, the reason why we do not have the living faith, and the reason why we are fearful, is that we do not have a thorough consecration; we have not denied living for ourselves, and we have not lived for the Lord absolutely!  
"The reason why we do not have the authority to cast out the demons or have the gift of healing is that we are not absolute in living for the Lord! If we are absolute for the Lord, as Peter was at Pentecost, we will be like Peter, who said, 'In the name of the Lord Jesus, rise up and walk.' To say that, we must also be able to say, 'Silver and gold have I none.' Only then will our words be effective! If we live absolutely for the Lord, we will have all kinds of gifts and authority." (unpublished)

### **III. We should seek to become more useful in our function in this age to meet the Lord's need so that we will have a greater reward in the age to come—Matt. 25:14-30:**

- A. It is the Lord's wisdom that the reward of the coming age is related to our faithful service in this age (vv. 21, 28). Often the Lord's leading for our service comes through an opportunity or need presented to us. As we seek the Lord's direct leading, we also should pay attention to the fellowship in the Body concerning the need of the Body:
  1. "I feel that some brothers, especially from the Orange County area of California, should pick up the burden to move to where the Lord has a need. Many of you have been under this ministry and the practice of the church life for many years. According to your consideration, you do not know much or have much. I believe, however, that when you pick up a burden from the Lord to go to another place, you will discover that actually, comparatively speaking, you know a lot and can do a lot. Some places need someone who has had some experience in the church life for a number of years. The saints who have been with us in Orange County under the ministry for over eight years have unconsciously and unknowingly had something deposited in them. If some of these saints who love the Lord enter into an environment where their experience is needed, they would be very useful" (*Elders' Training, Book 5: Fellowship Concerning the Lord's Up-to-Date Move*, p. 129).

2. "I hope that some day many from Taiwan will go to Thailand. I do not have the time to pour out what is on my heart. I hope that Taiwan will be taken. Then all the saints from Taiwan can go to Malaysia, Thailand, Indonesia, and even to India, Ceylon, Pakistan, and the Arabian countries. This is all on my heart. Do not be narrow. We are taking a new way to carry out the Lord's recovery...Perhaps one day a good number will go out from the United States to the Philippines. If fifty would go to the Philippines under my instruction, they could conquer the entire country for Christ and the church" (*Elders' Training, Book 8: The Life-pulse of the Lord's Present Move*, p. 126).
- B. May we open our mind and our heart to be broadened and to be full of faith concerning the future of the Lord's recovery in America and around the world. We should not be discouraged by any situation. Rather, let us exercise our spirit of faith to dream with Brother Lee!
1. "We have the dream that one day there will be five hundred thousand Taiwanese young people knocking on doors all over the earth, and by their door-knocking the Lord Jesus will return" (*A Blessed Human Life*, p. 35).
  2. "Based on my observation, I have a deep feeling. In all of Christian history there has never been a mission, an evangelical group, a Christian organization, or a great evangelist that did not want the door of the gospel to be opened to them, yet their burden was not fully fulfilled" (p. 52).
  3. "However, today the whole world is opened to the Lord's recovery. This is not an exaggeration. If we have one thousand brothers and sisters, each one can immediately be sent out, because Western Europe is opened, New Zealand is opened, Australia is opened, and even Eastern Europe, Africa, South America, and Central America are all opened up. Every letter sent to us from the major continents all over the globe has fellowshipped with us regarding the need for people to go. But where are the people?" (pp. 52-53)
  4. "If Taiwan is to produce five hundred thousand brothers and sisters for the spread of the gospel overseas, then we need to have five million saints in Taiwan so that one out of every ten saints can go out. The people from Taiwan gospelizing the entire world, and the brothers and sisters from Taiwan trekking all over the earth—what a wonderful prospect that would be! Where will you go—to Africa, South America, Central America, North America, Eastern Europe, or Western Europe? We can pray to the Lord, 'O Lord, where should I go? O Lord, where do You want me to go?' May we all answer the Lord, 'O Lord, here am I; send me'" (p. 58).
- C. Every dream must start somewhere, so let us come back to California and begin to take the earth by migrating five percent of the church this year in order to focus on establishing new churches in the cities listed in the accompanying handout:
1. We must begin, proceed, and consummate with prayer. Pray on your own, pray with those you are related to, pray with the church, and pray with those who have the same burden as you do.
  2. Stop to fellowship. Listen to the Body. Don't go by yourself but in the Body and with the Body.
  3. We hope the churches could send out two to five percent of the church every six months. We are beginning now in the last six months of 2009. Let us all pray for a good beginning and a continuing practice until we meet the Lord.

**IV. The consummation of this age is directly linked to the spreading of the church as God's kingdom and His testimony—Matt. 28:19-20; 24:14; Rev. 6:2; 14:4.**