

**LIVING AND SERVING ACCORDING TO
GOD’S ECONOMY CONCERNING THE CHURCH**
(Thursday—First Morning Session)

Message One

**Living and Serving according to
the Heavenly Vision of God’s Economy**

RA Hymns: 750, 554

Scripture Reading: 1 Tim. 1:3-4; Eph. 1:4-5; 3:2, 9; 5:26-27;
Heb. 2:10-11; 1 Thes. 5:23; Acts 26:18-19

- 1 Tim 1:3 Even as I exhorted you, when I was going into Macedonia, to remain in Ephesus in order that you might charge certain ones not to teach different things
- 1 Tim 1:4 Nor to give heed to myths and unending genealogies, which produce questionings rather than God's economy, which is in faith.
- Eph 1:4 Even as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world to be holy and without blemish before Him in love,
- Eph 1:5 Predestinating us unto sonship through Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will,
- Eph 3:2 If indeed you have heard of the stewardship of the grace of God which was given to me for you,
- Eph 3:9 And to enlighten all that they may see what the economy of the mystery is, which throughout the ages has been hidden in God, who created all things,
- Eph 5:26 That He might sanctify her, cleansing her by the washing of the water in the word,
- Eph 5:27 That He might present the church to Himself glorious, not having spot or wrinkle or any such things, but that she would be holy and without blemish.
- Heb 2:10 For it was fitting for Him, for whom are all things and through whom are all things, in leading many sons into glory, to make the Author of their salvation perfect through sufferings.
- Heb 2:11 For both He who sanctifies and those who are being sanctified are all of One, for which cause He is not ashamed to call them brothers,
- 1 Thes 5:23 And the God of peace Himself sanctify you wholly, and may your spirit and soul and body be preserved complete, without blame, at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.
- Acts 26:18 To open their eyes, to turn them from darkness to light and from the authority of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and an inheritance among those who have been sanctified by faith in Me.
- Acts 26:19 Therefore, King Agrippa, I was not disobedient to the heavenly vision,

I. The one thing, the unique thing, that should be focused on, stressed, and ministered in the Lord’s recovery is the heavenly vision of the eternal economy of God; the central subject of the Bible is the economy of God, and the entire Bible is concerned with the economy of God—1 Tim. 1:3-4; Eph. 1:10; 3:2, 8-9, 16-19; Acts 26:18-19:

- 1 Tim 1:3 Even as I exhorted you, when I was going into Macedonia, to remain in Ephesus in order that you might charge certain ones not to teach different things
- 1 Tim 1:4 Nor to give heed to myths and unending genealogies, which produce questionings rather than God's economy, which is in faith.
- Eph 1:10 Unto the economy of the fullness of the times, to head up all things in Christ, the things in the heavens and the things on the earth, in Him;
- Eph 3:2 If indeed you have heard of the stewardship of the grace of God which was given to me for you,
- Eph 3:8 To me, less than the least of all saints, was this grace given to announce to the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ as the gospel
- Eph 3:9 And to enlighten all that they may see what the economy of the mystery is, which throughout the ages has been hidden in God, who created all things,
- Eph 3:16 That He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with power through His Spirit into the inner man,
- Eph 3:17 That Christ may make His home in your hearts through faith, that you, being rooted and grounded in love,

- Eph 3:18 May be full of strength to apprehend with all the saints what the breadth and length and height and depth are
- Eph 3:19 And to know the knowledge-surpassing love of Christ, that you may be filled unto all the fullness of God.
- Acts 26:18 To open their eyes, to turn them from darkness to light and from the authority of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and an inheritance among those who have been sanctified by faith in Me.
- Acts 26:19 Therefore, King Agrippa, I was not disobedient to the heavenly vision,
- A. “God’s economy and plan is to make Himself man and to make us, His created beings, ‘God’ so that He is ‘man-ized’ and we are ‘God-ized’” (*A Deeper Study of the Divine Dispensing*, pp. 51-52).
- B. God’s eternal economy is for Him to become man that man might become God in life and in nature but not in the Godhead for the building up of the Body of Christ to consummate the New Jerusalem—John 1:1, 14; 1 Cor. 15:45b; Rev. 4:5; 5:6; 21:2, 10-11.
- John 1:1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.
- John 1:14 And the Word became flesh and tabernacled among us (and we beheld His glory, glory as of the only Begotten from the Father), full of grace and reality.
- 1 Cor 15:45b ... the last Adam became a life-giving Spirit.
- Rev 4:5 And out of the throne come forth lightnings and voices and thunders. And there were seven lamps of fire burning before the throne, which are the seven Spirits of God;
- Rev 5:6 And I saw in the midst of the throne and of the four living creatures and in the midst of the elders a Lamb standing as having just been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent forth into all the earth.
- Rev 21:2 And I saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.
- Rev 21:10 And he carried me away in spirit onto a great and high mountain and showed me the holy city, Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God,
- Rev 21:11 Having the glory of God. Her light was like a most precious stone, like a jasper stone, as clear as crystal.
- C. Today we can be in one accord because we have only one vision, the vision of the eternal economy of God—Acts 1:14; 1 Cor. 1:9-10; Jer. 32:39.
- Acts 1:14 These all continued steadfastly with one accord in prayer, together with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with His brothers.
- 1 Cor 1:9 God is faithful, through whom you were called into the fellowship of His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.
- 1 Cor 1:10 Now I beseech you, brothers, through the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you all speak the same thing and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be attuned in the same mind and in the same opinion.
- Jer 32:39 And I will give them one heart and one way, to fear Me all the days, for their own good and for the good of their children after them.

II. Our becoming God in life and in nature but not in the Godhead was initiated by God the Father in eternity past by His choosing us to be holy, predestinating us unto sonship; the divine sanctification for the divine sonship is the center of the divine economy and the central thought of the revelation in the New Testament—Eph. 1:4-5:

- Eph 1:4 Even as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world to be holy and without blemish before Him in love,
- Eph 1:5 Predestinating us unto sonship through Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will,
- A. To be sanctified is to be made holy, which is to be separated unto God and saturated with God as the Holy One, the One who is different, distinct, from everything that is common—1 Pet. 1:15-16; Eph. 1:4-5.
- 1 Pet 1:15 But according to the Holy One who called you, you yourselves also be holy in all your manner of life;

- 1 Pet 1:16 Because it is written, "You shall be holy because I am holy."
 Eph 1:4 Even as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world to be holy and without blemish before Him in love,
 Eph 1:5 Predestinating us unto sonship through Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will,
- B. He chose us in Christ before the foundation of the world to be holy in order for us to become God in nature (v. 4); God is the only One who is holy; for us to be holy we need God in His holy nature dispensed into us, and this holy nature becomes the holy element with which the Holy Spirit sanctifies us (2 Pet. 1:4; Heb. 12:14).
 Eph 1:4 Even as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world to be holy and without blemish before Him in love,
 2 Pet 1:4 Through which He has granted to us precious and exceedingly great promises that through these you might become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption which is in the world by lust.
 Heb 12:14 Pursue peace with all men and sanctification, without which no one will see the Lord;
- C. He predestinated us unto sonship even before we were created in order for us to become God in life (Eph. 1:5); for us to become sons of God, we must be born of God by the dispensing of God's life into our being (John 1:12-13; 3:6; 1 John 5:11-12):
 Eph 1:5 Predestinating us unto sonship through Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will,
 John 1:12 But as many as received Him, to them He gave the authority to become children of God, to those who believe into His name,
 John 1:13 Who were begotten not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.
 John 3:6 That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.
 1 John 5:11 And this is the testimony, that God gave to us eternal life and this life is in His Son.
 1 John 5:12 He who has the Son has the life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have the life.
1. Ephesians 1:4-5 reveals that God chose us to be holy for the purpose of our being made sons of God; to be made holy is the process, the procedure, whereas to be sons of God is the aim, the goal, so that our whole being, including our body (Rom. 8:23), may be "sonized" by God (Rev. 21:2, 9-11).
 Eph 1:4 Even as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world to be holy and without blemish before Him in love,
 Eph 1:5 Predestinating us unto sonship through Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will,
 Rom 8:23 And not only so, but we ourselves also, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan in ourselves, eagerly awaiting sonship, the redemption of our body.
 Rev 21:2 And I saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.
 Rev 21:9 And one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls full of the seven last plagues came and spoke with me, saying, Come here; I will show you the bride, the wife of the Lamb.
 Rev 21:10 And he carried me away in spirit onto a great and high mountain and showed me the holy city, Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God,
 Rev 21:11 Having the glory of God. Her light was like a most precious stone, like a jasper stone, as clear as crystal.
 2. Hebrews 2:10-11 reveals that the resurrected Christ as the Captain, the Author, of God's salvation is leading many sons into glory by sanctifying them.
 Heb 2:10 For it was fitting for Him, for whom are all things and through whom are all things, in leading many sons into glory, to make the Author of their salvation perfect through sufferings.
 Heb 2:11 For both He who sanctifies and those who are being sanctified are all of One, for which cause He is not ashamed to call them brothers,
 3. The divine sanctification is the holding line in the carrying out of the divine economy

to sonize us divinely, making us sons of God that we may become the same as God in His life and in His nature (but not in His Godhead), so that we may be God's expression; hence, God's sanctification is the divine sonizing.

4. We say that sanctification is the holding line because every step of God's work with us is to make us holy; the carrying out of the eternal economy of God is by the Spirit's sanctification—1 Thes. 5:23; John 17:17; Eph. 5:26-27; 1 Cor. 6:11; 12:3b; Heb. 12:4-14; Rom. 8:28-29; Eph. 4:30; 1 Thes. 5:19; Rev. 2:7a; Psa. 73:16-17, 25-26; Rev. 21:2, 10.

1 Thes 5:23 And the God of peace Himself sanctify you wholly, and may your spirit and soul and body be preserved complete, without blame, at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

John 17:17 Sanctify them in the truth; Your word is truth.

Eph 5:26 That He might sanctify her, cleansing her by the washing of the water in the word,

Eph 5:27 That He might present the church to Himself glorious, not having spot or wrinkle or any such things, but that she would be holy and without blemish.

1 Cor 6:11 And these things were some of you; but you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and in the Spirit of our God.

1 Cor 12:3b ... and no one can say, Jesus is Lord! except in the Holy Spirit.

Heb 12:4 You have not yet resisted unto blood, struggling against sin,

Heb 12:5 And you have completely forgotten the exhortation which reasons with you as with sons, "My son, do not regard lightly the discipline of the Lord, nor faint when reproved by Him;

Heb 12:6 For whom the Lord loves He disciplines, and He scourges every son whom He receives."

Heb 12:7 It is for discipline that you endure; God deals with you as with sons. For what son is there whom the father does not discipline?

Heb 12:8 But if you are without discipline, of which all sons have become partakers, then you are illegitimate and not sons.

Heb 12:9 Furthermore we have had the fathers of our flesh as discipliners and we respected them; shall we not much more be in subjection to the Father of spirits and live?

Heb 12:10 For they disciplined for a few days as it seemed good to them; but He, for what is profitable that we might partake of His holiness.

Heb 12:11 Now no discipline at the present time seems to be a matter of joy, but of grief; but afterward it yields the peaceable fruit of righteousness to those who have been exercised by it.

Heb 12:12 Therefore set straight the hands which hang down and the paralyzed knees,

Heb 12:13 And make straight paths for your feet, that what is lame may not be put out of joint but rather may be healed.

Heb 12:14 Pursue peace with all men and sanctification, without which no one will see the Lord;

Rom 8:28 And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose.

Rom 8:29 Because those whom He foreknew, He also predestinated to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the Firstborn among many brothers;

Eph 4:30 And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, in whom you were sealed unto the day of redemption.

1 Thes 5:19 Do not quench the Spirit;

Rev 2:7a He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. ...

Psa 73:16 When I considered this in order to understand it, / It was a troublesome task in my sight,

Psa 73:17 Until I went into the sanctuary of God; / Then I perceived their end.

Psa 73:25 Whom do I have in heaven but You? / And besides You there is nothing I desire on earth.

Psa 73:26 My flesh and my heart fail, / But God is the rock of my heart and my portion forever.

- Rev 21:2 And I saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.
- Rev 21:10 And he carried me away in spirit onto a great and high mountain and showed me the holy city, Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God,

III. The divine, dispositional sanctification is carried out by Christ as the life-giving, sanctifying, and speaking Spirit—1 Cor. 15:45b; 1 Thes. 5:23; Eph. 5:26:

1 Cor 15:45b ... the last Adam became a life-giving Spirit.

1 Thes 5:23 And the God of peace Himself sanctify you wholly, and may your spirit and soul and body be preserved complete, without blame, at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Eph 5:26 That He might sanctify her, cleansing her by the washing of the water in the word,

A. Christ as the life-giving Spirit sanctifies the church by cleansing her according to the washing of the water in the word; according to the divine concept, water in Ephesians 5:26 refers to the flowing life of God, typified by flowing water (Exo. 17:6; 1 Cor. 10:4; John 7:37-39; Rev. 7:17; 21:6; 22:1, 17); we are now in such a washing process in order that the church may be holy and without blemish.

Eph 5:26 That He might sanctify her, cleansing her by the washing of the water in the word,

Exo 17:6 I will be standing before you there upon the rock in Horeb; and you shall strike the rock, and water will come out of it so that the people may drink. And Moses did so in the sight of the elders of Israel.

1 Cor 10:4 And all drank the same spiritual drink; for they drank of a spiritual rock which followed them, and the rock was Christ.

John 7:37 Now on the last day, the great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried out, saying, If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink.

John 7:38 He who believes into Me, as the Scripture said, out of his innermost being shall flow rivers of living water.

John 7:39 But this He said concerning the Spirit, whom those who believed into Him were about to receive; for the Spirit was not yet, because Jesus had not yet been glorified.

Rev 7:17 For the Lamb who is in the midst of the throne will shepherd them and guide them to springs of waters of life; and God will wipe away every tear from their eyes.

Rev 21:6 And He said to me, They have come to pass. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End. I will give to him who thirsts from the spring of the water of life freely.

Rev 22:1 And he showed me a river of water of life, bright as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb in the middle of its street.

Rev 22:17 And the Spirit and the bride say, Come! And let him who hears say, Come! And let him who is thirsty come; let him who wills take the water of life freely.

B. The Greek word for *washing* in Ephesians 5:26 is literally “laver”; in the Old Testament the priests used the laver to wash away their earthly defilement (Exo. 30:18-21); day by day, morning and evening, we need to come to the Bible and be cleansed by the laver of the water in the word.

Eph 5:26 That He might sanctify her, cleansing her by the washing of the water in the word,

Exo 30:18 You shall also make a laver of bronze, with its base of bronze, for washing. And you shall put it between the Tent of Meeting and the altar, and you shall put water in it.

Exo 30:19 And Aaron and his sons shall wash their hands and their feet with water from it;

Exo 30:20 When they go into the Tent of Meeting, they shall wash with water, that they may not die; or when they come near to the altar to minister, to burn an offering by fire to Jehovah,

Exo 30:21 They shall wash their hands and their feet, that they may not die. And it shall be a perpetual statute to them, for him and for his seed throughout their generations.

C. Paul uses the Greek word *rhema* when he speaks of the word with its washing process (Eph. 5:26); *logos* is God’s Word objectively recorded in the Bible; *rhema* is the word of God spoken to us on a specific occasion (Mark 14:72; Luke 1:35-38; 5:5; 24:1-8).

Eph 5:26 That He might sanctify her, cleansing her by the washing of the water in the word,

Mark 14:72 And immediately a rooster crowed a second time. And Peter remembered the word, how Jesus had said to him, Before a rooster crows twice, you will deny Me three times. And thinking upon it, he wept.

- Luke 1:35 And the angel answered and said to her, The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore also the holy thing which is born will be called the Son of God.
- Luke 1:36 And behold, Elizabeth your relative, she also has conceived a son in her old age, and this is the sixth month for her who is called barren,
- Luke 1:37 Because no word will be impossible with God.
- Luke 1:38 And Mary said, Behold, the slave of the Lord. May it happen to me according to your word. And the angel departed from her.
- Luke 5:5 And Simon answered and said, Master, through the whole night we toiled and caught nothing; but based on Your word I will let down the nets.
- Luke 24:1 Now on the first day of the week, at early dawn, they came to the tomb, bringing the spices which they had prepared.
- Luke 24:2 And they found the stone rolled away from the tomb;
- Luke 24:3 But when they entered, they did not find the body of the Lord Jesus.
- Luke 24:4 And while they stood perplexed about this, behold, two men stood by them in dazzling clothing.
- Luke 24:5 And they became frightened and bowed their faces to the ground, and the men said to them, Why are you seeking the living One among the dead?
- Luke 24:6 He is not here but has been raised. Remember how He spoke to you while He was still in Galilee,
- Luke 24:7 Saying that the Son of Man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men and be crucified and on the third day rise up.
- Luke 24:8 And they remembered His words.
- D. As the life-giving Spirit, Christ is the speaking Spirit; whatever He speaks is the word that washes us; this does not refer to *logos*, the constant word, but to *rhema*, which denotes an instant word, the word that the Lord presently speaks to us—Matt. 4:4; John 6:63; Rev. 2:7; 22:17a; cf. Isa. 6:9-10; Matt. 13:14-15; Acts 28:25-31.
- Matt 4:4 But He answered and said, It is written, "Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that proceeds out through the mouth of God."
- John 6:63 It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh profits nothing; the words which I have spoken to you are spirit and are life.
- Rev 2:7 He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes, to him I will give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the Paradise of God.
- Rev 22:17a And the Spirit and the bride say, Come! And let him who hears say, Come! ...
- Isa 6:9 And He said, Go and say to this people, Hear indeed, but do not perceive; / And see indeed, but do not understand.
- Isa 6:10 Make the heart of this people numb; / Dull their ears, / And seal their eyes; / Lest they see with their eyes and hear with their ears, / And their heart perceive and return, and they are healed.
- Matt 13:14 And in them the prophecy of Isaiah is being fulfilled, which says, "In hearing you shall hear and by no means understand, and seeing you shall see and by no means perceive.
- Matt 13:15 For the heart of this people has become fat, and with their ears they have heard heavily, and their eyes they have closed, lest they perceive with their eyes and hear with their ears and understand with their heart, and they turn around, and I will heal them."
- Acts 28:25 And when they disagreed with one another, they departed, Paul saying one word to them, Well has the Holy Spirit spoken through Isaiah the prophet to your fathers,
- Acts 28:26 Saying, "Go to this people and say, In hearing you shall hear and by no means understand, and seeing you will see and by no means perceive;
- Acts 28:27 For the heart of this people has become fat, and with their ears they have heard heavily, and their eyes they have closed, lest they perceive with their eyes and hear with their ears and understand with their heart, and they turn around, and I will heal them."
- Acts 28:28 Let it be known to you therefore that this salvation of God has been sent to the Gentiles; they will also hear it.
- Acts 28:29 And when he had spoken these things, the Jews departed, having much dispute among themselves.

- Acts 28:30 And he remained two whole years in his own rented dwelling and welcomed all those who came to him,
- Acts 28:31 Proclaiming the kingdom of God and teaching the things concerning the Lord Jesus Christ with all boldness, unhindered.
- E. The rhema reveals something to us personally and directly; it shows us what we need to deal with and what we need to be cleansed from (the laver of bronze was a mirror that could reflect and expose—Exo. 38:8); the important thing for each one of us is this—is God speaking His word to me today?—Rev. 2:7; 1 Sam. 3:1, 21; Amos 3:7.
- Exo 38:8 And he made the laver of bronze and its base of bronze from the mirrors of the serving women who served at the entrance of the Tent of Meeting.
- Rev 2:7 He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes, to him I will give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the Paradise of God.
- 1 Sam 3:1 And the boy Samuel ministered to Jehovah before Eli. Now the word of Jehovah was rare in those days; visions were not widespread.
- 1 Sam 3:21 And Jehovah continued to appear in Shiloh, for Jehovah revealed Himself to Samuel in Shiloh by the word of Jehovah.
- Amos 3:7 Surely the Lord Jehovah will not do anything unless He reveals His secret to His servants the prophets.
- F. One thing that we always treasure is that the Lord still speaks to us personally and directly today; true growth in life depends upon our receiving the word directly from God; only His speaking in us has true spiritual value—Heb. 3:7-11, 15; 4:7; Psa. 95:7-8.
- Heb 3:7 Therefore, even as the Holy Spirit says, "Today if you hear His voice,
- Heb 3:8 Do not harden your hearts as in the provocation, in the day of trial in the wilderness,
- Heb 3:9 Where your fathers tried Me by testing Me and saw My works for forty years.
- Heb 3:10 Therefore I was displeased with this generation, and I said, They always go astray in their heart, and they have not known My ways;
- Heb 3:11 As I swore in My wrath, They shall not enter into My rest!"
- Heb 3:15 While it is said, "Today if you hear His voice, do not harden your hearts as in the provocation."
- Heb 4:7 He again designates a certain day, today, saying in David after so long a time, even as He has said before, "Today, if you hear His voice, do not harden your hearts."
- Psa 95:7 For He is our God, / And we are the people of His pasture / And the flock of His hand. / Today, if you hear His voice,
- Psa 95:8 Do not harden your heart as at Meribah, / As in the day of Massah in the wilderness;
- G. The central point of our prayers should be our longing for the Lord's speaking, which enables us to fulfill the goal of His eternal economy according to His heart's desire to have His divine sonship—Luke 1:38; 10:38-42; Eph. 1:5.
- Luke 1:38 And Mary said, Behold, the slave of the Lord. May it happen to me according to your word. And the angel departed from her.
- Luke 10:38 Now as they went, He entered into a certain village, and a certain woman named Martha received Him into her home.
- Luke 10:39 And she had a sister called Mary, who also sat at the Lord's feet and was listening to His word.
- Luke 10:40 But Martha was being drawn about with much serving, and she came up to Him and said, Lord, does it not matter to You that my sister has left me to serve alone? Tell her then to do her part with me.
- Luke 10:41 But the Lord answered and said to her, Martha, Martha, you are anxious and troubled about many things;
- Luke 10:42 But there is need of one thing, for Mary has chosen the good part, which shall not be taken away from her.
- Eph 1:5 Predestinating us unto sonship through Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will,
- H. In a very practical sense, the Lord's presence is one with His speaking; whenever He speaks, we realize His presence within us; Christ's speaking is the very presence of the life-giving Spirit—cf. Exo. 33:12-17; Heb. 11:8.
- Exo 33:12 And Moses said to Jehovah, See, You say to me, Bring up this people; but You have

- not let me know whom You will send with me. Yet You have said, I know you by name, and you have also found favor in My sight.
- Exo 33:13 Now therefore if I have found favor in Your sight, please let me know now Your ways, that I may know You, so that I may continue to find favor in Your sight. Consider also that this nation is Your people.
- Exo 33:14 And He said, My presence shall go with you, and I will give you rest.
- Exo 33:15 And he said to Him, If Your presence does not go with us, do not bring us up from here.
- Exo 33:16 For how then shall it be known that I have found favor in Your sight, I and Your people? Is it not by Your going with us, so that we, I and Your people, are distinct from all the other people who are on the face of the earth?
- Exo 33:17 And Jehovah said to Moses, I will do this thing also that you have spoken; for you have found favor in My sight, and I know you by name.
- Heb 11:8 By faith Abraham, being called, obeyed to go out unto a place which he was to receive as an inheritance; and he went out, not knowing where he was going.

- I. The speaking of the indwelling Christ as the life-giving Spirit within us is the cleansing water that deposits a new element into us to replace the old element in our nature and disposition; this metabolic cleansing causes a genuine and inward change in life, which is the reality of dispositional sanctification and transformation.

IV. Acts 26:18 reveals the contents of our divine commission to serve according to the heavenly vision of God’s economy; we need to pray over these contents, asking the Lord to make them our experience and reality so that we can bring others into this experience and reality:

- Acts 26:18 To open their eyes, to turn them from darkness to light and from the authority of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and an inheritance among those who have been sanctified by faith in Me.
- A. “To open their eyes”—v. 18:
1. We need to continually pray for a spirit of wisdom and revelation to understand and to see more and more of Christ, the Body of Christ, and the divine dispensing for the divine economy—Eph. 1:17; 3:5; cf. Rev. 4:6; 3:17; Matt. 6:6.

Eph 1:17 That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to you a spirit of wisdom and revelation in the full knowledge of Him,

Eph 3:5 Which in other generations was not made known to the sons of men, as it has now been revealed to His holy apostles and prophets in spirit,

Rev 4:6 And before the throne there was as it were a glassy sea like crystal; and in the midst of the throne and around the throne, there were four living creatures full of eyes in front and behind.

Rev 3:17 Because you say, I am wealthy and have become rich and have need of nothing, and do not know that you are wretched and miserable and poor and blind and naked,

Matt 6:6 But you, when you pray, enter into your private room, and shut your door and pray to your Father who is in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will repay you.
 2. We cannot go on without new knowledge of the Lord and a new vision of Him—Acts 26:16; Phil. 3:8b, 10a, 13; cf. Deut. 4:25.

Acts 26:16 But rise up and stand on your feet; for I have appeared to you for this purpose, to appoint you as a minister and a witness both of the things in which you have seen Me and of the things in which I will appear to you;

Phil 3:8b ... on account of whom I have suffered the loss of all things and count them as refuse that I may gain Christ

Phil 3:10a To know Him and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings, ...

Phil 3:13 Brothers, I do not account of myself to have laid hold; but one thing I do: Forgetting the things which are behind and stretching forward to the things which are before,

- Deut 4:25 When you have brought forth children and grandchildren and have languished in the land, and you have spoiled yourselves by making an idol, the form of anything, and have done that which is evil in the sight of Jehovah your God so as to anger Him;
3. Our commission is to “enlighten all that they may see what the economy of the mystery is”—Eph. 3:9.
- B. “To turn them from darkness to light”—Acts 26:18:
1. Light is the presence of God; we need to be people who are full of light—Isa. 2:5; 1 John 1:5; Luke 11:34-36.
 - Isa 2:5 House of Jacob, come and let us walk in the light of Jehovah.
 - 1 John 1:5 And this is the message which we have heard from Him and announce to you, that God is light and in Him is no darkness at all.
 - Luke 11:34 The lamp of the body is your eye. When your eye is single, your whole body also is full of light; but when it is evil, your body also is dark.
 - Luke 11:35 Watch out therefore that the light which is in you is not darkness.
 - Luke 11:36 If therefore your whole body is full of light and does not have any dark part, the whole will be full of light as when the lamp with its rays illuminates you.
 2. The enjoyment of Christ as our God-given portion is “in the light”—Col. 1:12; John 8:12; 1:4; Psa. 119:105, 130; Matt. 5:14; Rev. 1:20.
 - Col 1:12 Giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified you for a share of the allotted portion of the saints in the light;
 - John 8:12 Again therefore Jesus spoke to them, saying, I am the light of the world; he who follows Me shall by no means walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.
 - John 1:4 In Him was life, and the life was the light of men.
 - Psa 119:105 Your word is a lamp to my feet / And a light to my path.
 - Psa 119:130 The opening of Your words gives light, / Imparting understanding to the simple.
 - Matt 5:14 You are the light of the world. It is impossible for a city situated upon a mountain to be hidden.
 - Rev 1:20 The mystery of the seven stars which you saw upon My right hand and the seven golden lampstands: The seven stars are the messengers of the seven churches, and the seven lampstands are the seven churches.
 3. We need to be luminaries in the world, holding forth the word of life (Phil. 2:14-16); we need to tell out the virtues of the One who has called us out of darkness into His marvelous light (1 Pet. 2:9).
 - Phil 2:14 Do all things without murmurings and reasonings
 - Phil 2:15 That you may be blameless and guileless, children of God without blemish in the midst of a crooked and perverted generation, among whom you shine as luminaries in the world,
 - Phil 2:16 Holding forth the word of life, so that I may have a boast in the day of Christ that I did not run in vain nor labor in vain.
 - 1 Pet 2:9 But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people acquired for a possession, so that you may tell out the virtues of Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light;
- C. “To turn them...from the authority of Satan to God”—Acts 26:18:
1. The highest point in our spiritual experience is to have a clear sky with the throne above it; to have the throne above a clear sky is to give the Lord the preeminence in our being and the highest and most prominent position in our life—Ezek. 1:22, 26; Col. 1:18; cf. Ezek. 14:3.
 - Ezek 1:22 And over the heads of the living creature there was the likeness of an expanse, like the sight of awesome crystal, stretched forth over their heads above.
 - Ezek 1:26 And above the expanse that was over their heads was the likeness of a throne, like the appearance of a sapphire stone; and upon the likeness of the throne was One in appearance like a man, above it.
 - Col 1:18 And He is the Head of the Body, the church; He is the beginning, the Firstborn from the dead, that He Himself might have the first place in all things;

- Ezek 14:3 Son of man, these men have set up their idols in their hearts and have put the stumbling block of their iniquity before their faces. Should I be inquired of at all by them?
2. If we are under a clear sky with the throne above it, genuine authority will be with us to bring others under God’s authority—2 Cor. 10:4-5, 8; 13:3, 10.
 - 2 Cor 10:4 For the weapons of our warfare are not fleshly but powerful before God for the overthrowing of strongholds,
 - 2 Cor 10:5 As we overthrow reasonings and every high thing rising up against the knowledge of God, and take captive every thought unto the obedience of Christ.
 - 2 Cor 10:8 For even if I should boast somewhat more abundantly concerning our authority, which the Lord has given for building you up and not for overthrowing you, I will not be put to shame.
 - 2 Cor 13:3 Since you seek a proof of the Christ who is speaking in me, who is not weak unto you but is powerful in you.
 - 2 Cor 13:10 Therefore I write these things while being absent in order that when present I would not have to use severity, according to the authority which the Lord has given me for building up and not for overthrowing.
 3. Our uttermost love for the Lord qualifies, perfects, and equips us to speak for the Lord with His authority—cf. John 21:15, 17.
 - John 21:15 Then when they had eaten breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, Simon, son of John, do you love Me more than these? He said to Him, Yes, Lord, You know that I love You. He said to him, Feed My lambs.
 - John 21:17 He said to him the third time, Simon, son of John, do you love Me? Peter was grieved that He said to him the third time, Do you love Me? And he said to Him, Lord, You know all things; You know that I love You. Jesus said to him, Feed My sheep.
- D. “That they may receive forgiveness of sins”—Acts 26:18:
1. We need to go to the Lord to receive a thorough forgiveness of all our sins—1 John 1:7, 9.
 - 1 John 1:7 But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus His Son cleanses us from every sin.
 - 1 John 1:9 If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.
 2. David begged God to blot out his transgressions, wash him thoroughly from his iniquity, and cleanse him from his sin—Psa. 51:1-2, 7, 9:
 - Psa 51:1 Be gracious to me, O God, according to Your lovingkindness; / According to the greatness of Your compassions blot out my transgressions.
 - Psa 51:2 Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity, / And from my sin cleanse me.
 - Psa 51:7 Purge my sin with hyssop, and I will be clean; / Wash me, and I will be whiter than snow.
 - Psa 51:9 Hide Your face from my sins, / And blot out all my iniquities.
 - a. Like David we need to stay in the presence of God to have a thorough and genuine repentance and confession to receive a full forgiveness from God.
 - b. If we confess our sins to receive God’s forgiveness, we will have the gladness of God’s salvation and be sustained with a willing spirit; then we can teach transgressors His ways, and sinners will turn back to Him—vv. 12-13.
 - Psa 51:12 Restore to me the gladness of Your salvation, / And sustain me with a willing spirit.
 - Psa 51:13 I will teach transgressors Your ways, / And sinners will turn back to You.
- E. “That they may receive...an inheritance among those who have been sanctified by faith in Me”; this inheritance is the Triune God Himself with all He has, all He has done, and all He will do for His redeemed people—Acts 26:18:
1. The Triune God is embodied in the all-inclusive Christ, who is the portion allotted to the saints as their inheritance—Col. 2:9; 1:12.
 - Col 2:9 For in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily,

- Col 1:12 Giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified you for a share of the allotted portion of the saints in the light;
2. We enjoy the pneumatic Christ as the pledge of our inheritance (Eph. 1:14) “among those,” that is, among those in the church life (cf. 2 Tim. 2:22).
 - Eph 1:14 Who is the pledge of our inheritance unto the redemption of the acquired possession, to the praise of His glory.
 - 2 Tim 2:22 But flee youthful lusts, and pursue righteousness, faith, love, peace with those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart.
 3. We need to bring people into the enjoyment of the all-inclusive Christ in the church life so that they may enjoy Christ as we do and be sanctified dispositionally with the holy nature of God through the exercise of their spirit—Heb. 2:10-11; 1 Cor. 1:9; 2 Cor. 4:13.
 - Heb 2:10 For it was fitting for Him, for whom are all things and through whom are all things, in leading many sons into glory, to make the Author of their salvation perfect through sufferings.
 - Heb 2:11 For both He who sanctifies and those who are being sanctified are all of One, for which cause He is not ashamed to call them brothers,
 - 1 Cor 1:9 God is faithful, through whom you were called into the fellowship of His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.
 - 2 Cor 4:13 And having the same spirit of faith according to that which is written, "I believed, therefore I spoke," we also believe, therefore we also speak,

V. Our being sanctified for the divine sonship ultimately consummates in the New Jerusalem as the holy city (Rev. 21:2, 10) and the aggregate of the divine sonship (v. 7); this is the ultimate consummation of God becoming a man in the flesh that man might become God in the Spirit to gain a great, corporate God-man (vv. 3, 22) for the corporate expression, the glory, of the Triune God (vv. 11, 23).

- Rev 21:2 And I saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.
- Rev 21:10 And he carried me away in spirit onto a great and high mountain and showed me the holy city, Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God,
- Rev 21:7 He who overcomes will inherit these things, and I will be God to him, and he will be a son to Me.
- Rev 21:3 And I heard a loud voice out of the throne, saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will tabernacle with them, and they will be His peoples, and God Himself will be with them and be their God.
- Rev 21:22 And I saw no temple in it, for the Lord God the Almighty and the Lamb are its temple.
- Rev 21:11 Having the glory of God. Her light was like a most precious stone, like a jasper stone, as clear as crystal.
- Rev 21:23 And the city has no need of the sun or of the moon that they should shine in it, for the glory of God illumined it, and its lamp is the Lamb.

Excerpts from the Ministry:

THE LORD’S APPEARING MAKING SAUL A WITNESS

Acts 26 is also set against the background of the Jewish religion. In verse 17 the Lord said that He would deliver Saul from the people to whom He would send him. The word *people* in this verse does not refer to mankind but to the Jewish people, the religious people. In the Jewish religion there was a young man named Saul who had a strong will and who was faithful to that traditional religion. He was very zealous for the religion and tradition of his forefathers. While he was on the way to damage the church, doing his best to persecute it, the Lord Jesus appeared to him and knocked him to the ground. Saul asked, “Who are You, Lord?” And the Lord said, “I am Jesus, whom you persecute” (v. 15). The background here is not that of paganism but of the typical religion. Saul was zealous for God according

to the traditional religion, but he was persecuting the church of Christ and opposing God's economy. Although he was so zealous for God, he did not realize that he was part of the greatest deviation from the central line of God's revelation.

After Saul had been knocked down, the Lord called him, saying, "Rise up and stand on your feet; for I have appeared to you for this purpose, to appoint you as a minister and a witness both of the things in which you have seen Me and of the things in which I will appear to you" (v. 16). Often the Lord knocks us down and then tells us to rise up. At these times the Lord may say, "Don't lie there—rise up. If you rise up, I will make you a minister and a witness, not a religionist. I will make you a witness of what you have seen." The Lord seemed to be telling Saul, "You have seen Me speaking to you from the heavens. Now go and witness to people of this. Witness to the priests, the elders, and the scribes. Formerly, you said that I was killed and buried, but now you must witness to the fact that I have been resurrected and am now living in the heavens."

In verse 16 the Lord told Saul that he would be a witness both of the things in which he had seen Him and of the things in which the Lord would appear to him. The Lord said that He would reveal other things to Saul, not in the way of teaching but by means of His appearing. In whatever the Lord appeared to Saul, Saul was to witness of that to the people. This is not a teaching, a doctrine, or a religion; it is absolutely a revelation of Jesus. All that the apostle Paul later ministered was something in which the Lord had appeared to him. He was not taught by the Lord; rather, he had revelation that came from the Lord's appearing. After his experience on the way to Damascus, Saul could say, "I have seen the living Jesus in the heavens. I will go tell people what I have seen. My seeing comes from the appearing of this living Lord. He charged me to minister those things in which He has ministered to me, and He even promised to appear to me again and again. Every time He appears, I see something. Then I go out and witness to people about what I have seen." Being a witness is not a matter of teaching and knowledge but of appearing and vision. The things in which the Lord appears to us are the things that we must minister to others.

THE LORD'S CHARGE

In Acts 26:18 the Lord charged Saul "to open their eyes, to turn them from darkness to light and from the authority of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and an inheritance among those who have been sanctified by faith in Me." This is the work that you young people should do today. Do not preach the traditional gospel of Christianity. Rather, open the eyes of this generation that they may turn from darkness to light. The first thing we must do is to help others to see. In order to do this, we ourselves must have the vision and see the heavenly things. We must see the things concerning Christ, not by being taught but by having Christ appear to us. After you have seen the vision, you need to contact people, telling them that Jesus has appeared to you and that you have seen Him. Do not preach the low, traditional gospel. Many who have received this poor gospel are still blind and in darkness. Do not teach people religion—open their eyes that they may turn from darkness and Satan to light and God. By turning in this way, they will be released from the evil power of darkness, which is the authority of Satan, to God. As a result, they will receive forgiveness of sins and a portion among those who are sanctified. All the saved and forgiven ones are saints, and all the saints have a portion (Col. 1:12). According to Colossians, the portion of the saints is simply Christ Himself. Christ has been allotted to us, and we all share a portion in Him. What is our portion? It is neither the heavens nor the earth but Christ. Thus, Christ is the common portion of all the saints. Unbelievers do not have a positive portion. Their portion—the lake of fire—is negative. Our portion—Christ—will consummate in the New Jerusalem. Those who turn from Satan to God will not have a portion individually but corporately and collectively with all the saints. This means that they will have a portion among those who are members of the church life. We cannot have such a portion alone; we can only have it among the saints, among those who are sanctified by faith.

THE FULL GOSPEL

In Acts 26:18 the full gospel is presented. The complete, perfect, whole gospel is found here: to open people's eyes and to turn them from darkness to light and from the authority of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, be sanctified by faith, and enjoy the common portion of the saints to have the church life. In this one verse there are seven points: (1) to open people's eyes, (2) to turn them from darkness to light, (3) to turn them from the authority of Satan to God, (4) to help them receive forgiveness of sins, (5) to help them to be sanctified by faith, (6) that they may have a common portion among the saints, and (7) be in the church life. Have you ever heard such a gospel? This is the gospel that the young people must preach to this generation. Do not preach the poor gospel about going to heaven—preach the uplifted gospel revealed in Acts 26:18.

THE NEED FOR PRAYER

It is quite easy to point out all the seven facets of the gospel found in this verse. But now you need to go to the Lord and pray, saying, "Lord, open my eyes. I don't need knowledge, Lord. I need my eyes to be opened. Lord, turn me from anything dark. I don't want to remain in darkness. Lord, turn me from darkness to light." This is spiritual reality. When we are in it, people will realize it when we contact them. You also need to pray, "Lord, turn me from the authority, the dominion, of Satan to Yourself. I must be a person who is absolutely in God. God is my sphere, my realm, my kingdom. I must be in God." If you pray like this, you will become another person. I can assure you that you will be different. If necessary, even fast and pray about these matters, saying, "Lord, I want to have my eyes opened like they have never been opened before. I don't want to be opaque. I want to have eyes like the four living creatures in the book of Revelation." The living creatures have eyes everywhere, without and within. We need to be like this. Then when we contact people, they will realize that we are crystal clear. We are not opaque like others are. Others may be good, ethical, religious, moral, and even scriptural, but they are opaque. When people contact us, they must immediately sense that we are crystal clear. This is not preaching—this is witnessing. We must be this kind of person.

We also need to pray, "Lord, grant me a full and thorough forgiveness of all my sins. I want to have a clearance of sins from the top to the bottom. I would leave nothing that has not been dealt with. Lord, I also want to be fully sanctified. I don't want to be merely a forgiven person but also a sanctified person. Then I will be able to enjoy my portion, the all-inclusive Christ." Day by day we enjoy Christ as our portion, not in an individualistic way but by enjoying Him among the saints. Who and where are the saints? They are those who are sanctified in the church. The saints are the church. When we get into the church, we get among the saints. Oh, how we must pray over these seven matters! Pray desperately to the Lord, saying, "Lord, I want to experience the gospel that You revealed to Paul as mentioned in Acts 26:18. I want to experience this full, complete, perfect, and thorough gospel." This gospel covers not only God's kingdom but also Satan's kingdom. It includes the rich Christ as our portion and all the saints as the corporate Body, the church of Christ. How we need to experience this gospel!

If we experience the whole gospel, we shall not merely be a preacher—we shall be a witness. I can guarantee you that whenever you pray this way, the Lord Jesus will appear to you, and His appearing will give you a vision. Then you will see certain things. In all these chapters we need to see a vision. I cannot give you anything. We all must touch the throne of grace. Does the Lord still need to knock you down? Are you that stubborn? There is no need to be so stubborn. Rather, we should say, "Lord, I'm here. You don't need to knock me down. Lord, I'm here touching Your throne of grace. Open my eyes and turn me thoroughly from all darkness to light. Turn me from the authority of Satan to God, and grant me a thorough forgiveness of all my sinfulness. O Lord, sanctify me that I may enjoy You as my portion among the saints in the local churches."

PAUL'S RELIGIOUS BACKGROUND AND THE LORD'S APPEARING

In Galatians 1:11-16 we also see the religious background of the revelation of Christ in Paul's experience. In Galatians 1:13 and 14 Paul says that he persecuted the church of God and advanced in Judaism, being more abundantly a zealot for the traditions of his fathers. In these verses Paul seems to

be saying, “You know of my conduct. I was exceedingly zealous in the religion of my fathers, surpassing many of my equals. As far as religion was concerned, I was on top. I even persecuted the church, doing my best to lay it waste and to oppose God’s economy. But one day the very God who separated me from my mother’s womb was pleased to reveal His Son in me.” All we need is this revelation, this vision.

I am concerned for many of you because our situation today is exactly the same as that in the ancient times. We all have been influenced by the background of Christianity. I am fearful that as you do a work among the young people, you may carry it out in a religious way. When you preach, you may preach the traditional gospel of Christianity. In these days we all must see something. We should no longer bring old traditional Christianity into our gospel preaching. Rather, we must cast away the old things and say, “Lord, show me something by appearing to me. Lord, You appeared to Paul, and he saw something, and You told him that You would show him more through Your appearing to him. Lord, appear to me so that in Your appearing I may see something and then tell people of what I have seen.” It is not adequate simply to read this chapter. You must pray to the Lord. I can assure you that if you go to Him, He will be open. He is in the heavens, but to Him heaven is the same as earth, for He is everywhere. While Saul of Tarsus was going his way, the Lord Jesus, who was in the heavens, appeared to him. Today the Lord is open to us all. Simply come to Him, saying, “Lord, I have never heard such a gospel before. Lord, open my eyes and turn me from all other things to Yourself.” I assure you that if you pray this way, He will appear to you immediately. In His appearing, you will see something. This appearing will make you a witness. Then, as you contact other young people, you will not merely be a preacher but a witness.

You will be a witness telling people of what you have seen in the presence of the living Lord. It pleased God to reveal His Son to us that we might preach Him. Our preaching must be the issue of what we have seen. We do not preach doctrine; we minister and witness of what we have seen in His appearing.

GRACE GIVEN TO LESS THAN THE LEAST

In Ephesians 3:8 Paul says, “To me, less than the least of all saints, was this grace given to announce to the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ as the gospel.” Probably we all hold the concept that the apostle Paul was a specially selected one. But here he says that he was less than the least of all saints. If one who is less than the least can have such a vision, then certainly all of us can have the same thing. Do not say, “I am not an apostle, especially not the apostle Paul. Thus, I could never see as much as he did.” Paul said that he was less than all of us. Paul said this because he had opposed God’s economy. In Paul’s understanding, the one who opposed the most was the smallest and the least. Since he was the most opposing, he became even less than the least. Peter, John, Andrew, and Matthew were with the Lord Jesus, but Paul was far away. No one else opposed Christ and the church as much as Paul did. Therefore, this one who was the farthest away and the most opposing became the least and smallest one. In Ephesians 3 Paul seemed to be saying, “Dear brothers in Ephesus, don’t you realize that I was once far, far away? None of you was as far away from Christ as I was. Because I was the farthest away, I am less than the least of all the saints.”

Anyone who is closer to Christ than Paul was is greater than he. Since we are all close to Christ, we are more than qualified to receive the vision and get the revelation. If the one farthest away from Christ could receive the revelation of Jesus Christ, then why could we not receive it also? We should be encouraged by this. Do not be disappointed. I am familiar with the subtlety of the enemy. When I was young, I excused myself, saying that the verses in Ephesians 3 were wonderful, but they were only for the apostle Paul, not for me. Since I did not care for these verses, I missed the grace. But one day I woke up and saw Ephesians 3:8, and I believed it. I jumped up, shouting, “Hallelujah! I am bigger than Paul. To one less than I, grace was given. If he could receive this grace, then why can’t I? I’m more qualified than he was.” I can testify that since that day the vision has always been with me. If we saw this, we would all be like the apostle Paul. I am not saying that you should presume to claim your

apostleship. No, what I mean is that as far as qualification goes, we all are greater than Paul. Thus, we must pray, “Lord, whether I understand it or not, Ephesians 3:8 says that Paul was less than I am. If grace was given to him, then, Lord, You must also give this grace to me. Standing on Ephesians 3:8, I claim the grace.”

We need this grace in order to see and enjoy all the riches of Christ. We must go to the Lord, the source of the heavenly vision, and see something. There is no other way except to pray. If you pray, you will be different, and the Lord will have a way. Many eyes will be opened, and many young people will turn from darkness to light and from the authority of Satan to God and will enjoy forgiveness, sanctification, and the common portion among all the saints in the proper church life. Ephesians 3 indicates that the riches of Christ are for the producing of the church. Therefore, in this portion of the Word we have Christ with all His riches and the church as God’s instrument to shame His enemies, the principalities and powers, and through which God will make known the manifold wisdom of His economy. Pray-read all the verses mentioned in this chapter in a serious, weighty way. Say, “Lord, I mean business with You. You have given grace to one who is less than I, and now You must give grace to me. Lord, I mean it. Lord, cause us all to experience the riches of the unlimited Christ and to have the church life that comes out of this enjoyment.” If you pray like this, something will happen. The Lord is real, living, present, practical, and available. If you mean business with Him, He will mean business with you. I know what I am talking about.

Do not follow the trend of today’s Christianity. Rather, forget about it. We have a new, heavenly trend. In Revelation we have the seven local churches. If you will pray-read all these verses and live in them and witness according to them, the issue will be the local churches. In the local churches we have the practical church life. The enemy, Satan, hates the Spirit because the Spirit is the reality of Christ. Today Christ is realized as the Spirit, but some are fighting against this, saying that it is heresy to teach that Christ is the Spirit. Moreover, Satan also hates the local church and causes some to rise up against it. Most Christians only care for the universal church, but to have only the universal church is to have a vanity fair. While most Christians care for the universal church, they insist on perpetuating the denominations and free groups. Due to this, there is no local church. Instead, there is the vanity fair of the so-called universal church and all the denominations and groups. Where is the church? It can exist only when the saints realize that all Christians in a particular locality must be one. This is the local church.

Are you young people burning today? If you are, then I challenge you to pray with all these verses. If you pray, something will come out, and you will see the vision of the full gospel and become a witness of what you see of the Lord to today’s young generation. You all must fellowship about this chapter and pray about it both individually and corporately until you are transfused by the Lord with such a heavenly vision and are burdened for the Lord’s move among today’s young generation to bring a number of them into the Lord’s testimony. (*The Collected Works of Witness Lee, 1975–1976*, vol. 3, “Young People’s Training,” pp. 308-316)