

Raising Up A New Church Life

(Fellowship from Minoru Chen on October 18, 2020)

The Need to Match the Flowing and Advancing Spirit

I feel that these Lord's Day afternoon times are precious, and I look to the Lord for some particular anointing in terms of how we should carry out the church life going forward, at least in these 10 cities. I want to firstly say something about the need for revival in the Lord's recovery. Then I will say something concerning some of the principles in practicing our present-day church life that would match and facilitate the Lord's advance.

The Lord is always advancing. The Spirit is progressive. In Revelation 22 the river of water of life is a sign of the moving and flowing Spirit. If the Spirit is a river, then this implies that the Spirit is ever flowing. It is not a lake or a pond. The Spirit is a moving current, a current that is advancing and moving forward. Too often, we lag behind the current of the Spirit, of this living stream, by becoming stagnant, static, and not flowing with the Spirit. Even if the Spirit is longing and desirous to go further, higher, deeper, and broader, we are not able to catch up and match that move. We have seen this again and again in the history of the church. What has happened is that because of that lack of cooperation, again and again the Lord has had to move on to another people. This is the history of the church. When one group of people whom He raised up failed to continue to cooperate after a certain time, it forced God, the Lord, to go to another people. Again, this is church history. It is sad, but this is how the Lord must go on. He cannot wait. That moving on has been the move of His recovery since the 1500s. One group after another were raised up, and then they died off. They were very much used by the Lord, then they became useless.

So it went on.

Now the recovery has come to us in these last hundred years. If you study the history of the Lord's recovery, you will see the same thing in miniature. Even in our short history, the Spirit has constantly been moving. Particularly, this being the Lord's recovery, something special is always moving on, it never stops. Starting in China and from decade to decade, the ministry has taken the lead, always advancing, always moving into new territory, always advancing in its height and depth as far as the truth of the word is concerned. And accompanying that truth would be the practice of the church life to match the truth or the revelation. The practice is also something that has always gone on. You can say that is the recovery flow. This flow is flowing us back to the beginning, to recover what is lost and what once was. It is a flow.

The Advancing Spirit of Brother Nee and Brother Lee

The spirit of our senior co-workers Brother Nee and Brother Lee was always a pioneering one, an exploratory one. They were never contented or satisfied but were always seeking to study the word to receive more light, to bring the recovery's testimony to more spirit and life according to the word of God. Especially in the realm of the truth, all these rich and deeper divine truths in the word of God have continued to go up. Brother Lee said this word in the year when he passed away, 1997, "Step by step, level by level, we will arrive at the New Jerusalem." Eventually, he himself reached the high peak of the divine revelation.

Sorry to say that we have not been as keen and as cooperative as our brothers to advance, progress, not stay still, and not be easily contented. As a result, there are times in the Lord's recovery over these many decades that the recovery has become stagnant. Last week, I used the word *malaise*, a stagnant, sickly condition. It is hard to describe what it is. Sometimes you could not put a hand on it, but you just know something is amiss, something has deteriorated or degraded. We are not where we should be, as far as our personal life

and our church life are concerned. The recovery is still the recovery. The Lord is ever faithful to His recovery. We trust the Lord will not leave His recovery; but will continue to bless and preserve. This the Lord has done. But while the Lord is doing this, we cannot be okay and be fine with status quo, with how things are. I have to be very honest with you that for a long time, despite the Lord's blessing, despite the Lord's safeguarding and care – the Lord has really done a lot among us, really blessed us very much – we, especially in the churches in the United States, have not done our part to follow the current of the Spirit adequately. The result is that, while the Lord's move and work is not stopped, it is certainly delayed. We should not go ahead of the Lord, of course, but neither should we fall behind the Spirit. We should be in lockstep with the Lord. When we fall behind, that is when we cause a delay, a frustration, to the going on.

Brother Lee was always fighting that inertia to be just stopped, to be just where we are and not move. He was always fighting, always doing things. His going back to Taiwan for five years was exactly that. Here was a man who was 79 years old. He was 79 when he went back to Taiwan. No one at that age should be starting a new move, but he did. Not only did he do that, but he poured himself out to do that. And he accomplished so much in terms of building up a model or a small prototype in Taiwan, in terms of the new God-ordained practice of the church life. His intention was to bring that back to this country of the United States and do it here, knowing and believing that by successfully practicing it here in the United States, it will impact the whole earth.

The Need for a Revival in the United States

The United States is key – regardless of its outward condition. Our number in the recovery in this country is still relatively small at 25,000, and the number of churches is also small. It has been 58 years since 1962, but we still have a very small number of churches and saints. Brother Lee was desperate to have a breakthrough out of a kind of a dormant period of time that began in the late '70s and into the '80s.

He just could not stand it. Unfortunately, there was another rebellion – a worse one – that arose and that basically denied Brother Lee the opportunity to carry that out. He was aged, he had a major illness, and he was still commissioned to finish the high peak of the divine revelation, so he could not do that much. But he charged us, the co-workers, to do that. Unfortunately, we did not carry it out according to his desire, except for the success that we gained in Russia in the early '90s. As far as the U.S. is concerned, he was disappointed. I can say this because I was there with him and with other brothers, seeing him unable to carry this out. In the very last training on the vital groups, he said, "All I can say is if you still don't do it, I will not speak anymore." True to form, in the last six months of his life, he ceased speaking concerning the vital groups or the God-ordained way.

Brothers, my point is that we must consider these last 23 years since Brother Lee passed away. While the Lord has faithfully preserved the recovery, and there has been some growing and going to Europe, Africa, and in different places – I come back to the United States. This is what is concerning us. Brothers, in terms of what our brother would have liked to see, we are not there. Then when you look at the outward situation in this country, can we just say that the Lord has gained the U.S. and we can kind of cruise on? I cannot. Every night I cannot sleep well because we are not there. Still so many of the truths that we have has not been distributed across this land of the USA. Today, Brother Witness Lee is still an unknown entity. Brother Watchman Nee is well known, at least in certain circles, but Witness Lee is unknown. It does not make sense. What Brother Lee has put out should make him so well known, but no. I do not mean that we want a good name for Brother Lee. I am talking about his truth, the truth that he has put out.

On the other side, the state or condition of the church, in terms of its growth, increase, morale, and impact, is not where it should be, at least certainly not where it once was, back in the '60s and '70s. Brothers, I am not pining for the good old days, but this is a fact.

Today, after 60 years in this country, the recovery should be powerful, dynamic, very relevant, very influential, but we are still very small, hidden, and kind of unknown. We do not have the kind of influence that we should have. In addition, there is the lack of the local, typical Americans in our midst, the small size of many of the churches, and just the lack of a prevailing testimony among us.

The Readiness of the Inward and Outward Situations in the U.S.

I do not say all of this to be critical or to feel hopeless. I feel, brothers, the time is now. The Lord's move is often seasonal. Right now, in these United States, the inward situation of the churches is ready. There are so many faithful saints. With the truth that they have picked up over these decades, with the oneness that the Lord has blessed us with, and with a new generation coming up, many of whom have been trained in the full-time training, we are poised, we are ready. We cannot say that we are not ready, because when will we be ready? That would be my question.

Secondly, the outward situation in the world, in our society, should also be a sign to us. In the recent Memorial Day Conference, we had the timely word. In the ITERO, we spoke much about the Lord's imminent return. All of this were in the context of the fulfillment of His economy at the end of the age. Brothers, when will be the time? My heart is always just full to talk about these things. For many of you, this is not the first time that you heard me talk like this. But we now have more brothers from the 10 cities in these meetings, and I feel to say something to all.

Brothers, the outward and the inward situations match. I feel we should not wait – we should take the step to cross this river Jordan and have faith in the Lord. We should do our very best – that is all we can do – to labor, to bring about what Brother Lee was not able to see: a strong recovery in the United States that is sizeable, prevailing, and impactful. There is no reason why that cannot be.

The Burden for this Year's GTCA

The GTCA move has a role in this general burden. GTCA began 22 years ago, in 1998. Charlotte and Memphis were the first cities for the migrations. At that time, we did not have this acronym GTCA, but that is what it was with the migration and so on. In these 22 years, the Lord has blessed to a measure – new churches have been raised up. But by and large, we still have not taken this country. Recently, I read a list on the 100 best cities to live in. I do not know what the ranking criteria were, and there were smaller and larger cities. I looked – and I really had to go through every town and city – and I will say that the local church is in a small percentage of the 100 cities, maybe in one out of every four or less. Cincinnati and Charlotte were on that list. There are different places where there is a church life that were there. But by a long shot, there are no churches in many of these cities, after our 60 years in this country. This is simply not right. I think there should be a church in each of those cities.

Brothers, this requires a certain view that we have to adopt, which I feel was Brother Lee's view. It also takes a certain kind of spirit – a spirit of faith that the Lord will do it and can do it, even through us. And it takes a certain kind of attitude of aggressiveness and boldness. It says in Daniel that those who know their God should be strong and take action. Remember the Lord's word to Joshua, before they crossed the river. Three times Jehovah said to be courageous, to be very courageous, and the Lord will give him success and will prosper him. Brothers, I want to kind of infuse you, if I can, with such a spirit and attitude. I hope that this round of the GTCA in 2020, in the way we do this work and in the way we strengthen the churches, will be quite different than the first 22 years. I hope that this would be a new season, a new version of GTCA. To put it very simply, my burden is that all these 10 cities where you are brothers would become revived churches, model churches. Brother Lee said that revival and model are sort of the same thing. He said that revival simply means we have successfully implemented or worked out what the Lord has revealed to us. It has to do with practice, with our testimony, and with our

church life. Whether some of us are in smaller places or in larger places, the burden is the same. I hope that all the brothers in the 10 cities would seize this opportunity, seize this moment, and even leverage this situation of migration into your cities to really have a reset, a new start, to experience a renewal and a revival. What this means is to not just to apply a band-aid to your church, to keep going in the old way with a few more bodies and some new blood. It means to really be before the Lord with much prayer and consideration: “Lord, renew our church.” In Isaiah 43, He said, “I am doing a new thing.” (v. 19a) In Revelation 21, He said, “I make all things new” (v. 5b).

Brothers, this should impact the way we “church”, the way we do things, the way we carry on. Would you be open to reconsider everything? Brother Nee had messages in the ‘30s that became *The Normal Christian Church Life*. In Chinese, the book is called *Reconsidering Our Work*. There always needs to be a looking forward to a better, improved, and more scriptural way of working, of carrying out our church life – which in those days they called the assembly life. This involves the way we serve, and the way we have the church life. Yes, we meet on Lord's Day mornings to have the table and the prophesying meeting, we have some home groups during the week, we have the prayer meeting on Tuesdays, we have some children's work, some young people's work, and maybe some college work. And in the different aspects of the church life we need to take care of on the levitical side of service. We need them, but brothers, my deep burden is that we would not just go on as it has been, but that we would have the daring and the burden to go on in a new way to work out something according to what Brother Lee has passed on to us. To not perpetuate the sort of church life that for years has not been working and has not been prevailing, attractive, living, or vital takes another spirit. Brother Lee challenged us in this way. When he first went back to Taiwan, he said that he was there to find a new way, meaning that there was an old way. He was speaking to the church in Taipei, an old church, an established church. He said, “Forget the old

way. Let us take the new way.” Some of us here know that part of the attack from the dissenting co-workers who rebelled in the late ‘80s was exactly to attack this new way. They became dropouts, they dropped out. Now, we may not attack this new way, but we have not aggressively implemented this new way either.

Unless I am in one of the 10 churches here and I can get myself engaged in that church, it is very hard for me to say more or do more because every church is different. We need the Lord's leading, but we also need a proper view of our church as to what to do to renew that church. I cannot tell you exactly what to do, but I hope that we can really seek the Lord. These 36 lessons are really good, but they present the basics of the church life, whether it is old or new. The basics are there, you need to take care of these things. Those points are absolutely necessary, but just those points alone will not necessarily help us to really progress in this new way of the church life. This is why I do not feel to spend that much time on the 36 lessons. If I were going to a brand-new place where there is no church yet and it is a clean slate, that would be easier. Because there is nothing there, you just go from the ground up. The hard thing is when you go into an existing situation of a place or a church with many years of history. How to renew that – that is a much harder work to do. But Brother Lee did it. None of us are Brother Lee. It was not easy, but he did it there in Taiwan. So it is possible. I hope we would have that kind of a spirit. In our fellowship with the 10 churches separately, we get into more of the nitty gritty concerning how to receive the migrants, how to prepare for them, how to fellowship. All these things we must take care of and we are doing that. But here, I will not be talking about that side of things. I will share more on the general side of how to advance the kind of church life we want to build up in this round of the GTCA.

Four Revivals in the History of the Local Churches

This, of course, is a huge subject. Brother Witness Lee has a book called *The History of the Church and the Local Churches*. These messages are from informal training meetings carried out in Los

Angeles back in 1973, the year after Watchman Nee died. In these, he gave not only a history of the church in the last 2,000 years, but specifically, the history of the church in the recovery, the local churches. He mentioned, among other things, four main revivals that took place in our history up to that time in 1973. The first was in 1923-24, in Foochow, Brother Nee's hometown. The second was in 1935, with Brother Nee in Shanghai, through his overcomer conferences that spoke on the overcoming life of Christ. The third one was in 1942-43, with Brother Lee in Chefoo. There was a great revival, even the outpouring of the Spirit, resulting in migration and in a lot of things. The last one was in 1947-48, when Brother Nee's ministry was resumed. That was the greatest and the biggest revival of them all. That happened in China, which spilled over into Taiwan when Brother Lee was sent to Taiwan to carry the Lord's recovery on. And he stopped there.

He said in that book, "Even today" – that is in 1973 – "we are still inheriting all the good points of those four revivals. We are inheriting the experience of the assurance of salvation," – that is revival one in the early '20s – "the overcoming life of Christ," – that is revival two in 1935 – "the practicality of the church life," – that is revival three in 1942-43 – "and the practice of fully surrendering ourselves to the Lord for the church" – that is revival four in the late '40s. He said, "I hope that we would be so clear about these four aspects." In the beginning of this book, he said, "Now I would like to share something concerning the four main revivals among us. We have seen that the revelations plus the sufferings produce the ministry. By the ministry we have the work, and out of the work comes the churches. In addition to this, even in the Lord's recovery, we need periodic revivals." Have you heard that – even in the Lord's recovery, we need periodic revivals? "In the Lord's recovery in China, there were clearly and definitely four big revivals."

The Revival in Elden Hall

I would like to say that we were still in Elden 1973 and we didn't move

to follow Brother Lee to Orange County until a year later in 1974. It was interesting to me that Brother Lee did not mention Elden Hall. Perhaps we were still there. But I can tell you that later on in the late 70s and 80s he would use the word revival to describe Los Angeles. In fact, he would identify 1969 as the peak of that recovery. Some of us who were there remember why he said that - because that was the peak. Out of that peak, that same year or the year after that, the migration spread in the USA. In those few years, we had a very successful migration; we brought in hundreds and thousands of seekers and young people. The recovery started with approximately 30 people in LA back in 1962. By 1974, we had 3,000 to 4,000 saints in this country. It's phenomenal - growth like this. That revival in Elden Hall, although I'm not pining for the "good old days", we were there, and we witnessed. Of course, there was the powerful ministry of Brother Lee with the truth and the life - no doubt about that.

I would say there are two things that made Elden Hall a revival: 1) the great emphasis on the Spirit, the mingled spirit, the exercise of the spirit, calling on the Lord, pray-reading, living and walking in the Spirit. It is just a sign of revival; and 2) the church life based on the ground of the church, the oneness of the church, the absoluteness for the church, paying the price for the church. In those days that's what we did. That church life was visibly seen affecting the neighborhood, attracting people from all over the country to move to Los Angeles to join the church life. There was a very practical side of all the saints functioning.

The Need for Another Revival

For some of us who were there, we have a kind of benchmark because we were there. But many younger saints have never been there, and they ask "What are you talking about? What's the big deal with Los Angeles and Elden Hall?" Well, that's okay. Brothers, I feel, the Lord be gracious to us, it's time for another revival to come among us in this country. Not the Pentecostal kind, but a genuine revival. Brother Lee hoped and prayed for that. He said this could be even be the

greatest revival.

We have to do our part. I hope this fellowship would spur you to have a special view concerning this current round of GTCA and the migration and church life in your city. We actually have a better chance than Elden because we now have tens of thousands of saints, we have so many churches, and we're all one to bring this about. We also have the blueprint Brother Lee has left us. We cannot say we don't know what to do. He gave us the blueprint; he gave us the God ordained way; he gave us the vital groups. We now need to practice those things in earnest.

At the end of the vital group training in the fall 1996, Brother Lee cited, without naming it, Spokane's testimony of practicing the God ordained way. Brothers, you can read the book called *The Vital Groups*. It was at the end of it that he said, "I spoke what I spoke, I'm not going to speak anymore." He used Spokane as a kind of a practical example. I hope that we can have the same heart as Spokane to work out a God ordained way church life in all of these 10 churches, as instructed by Brother Lee. I really want to infuse the faith in all of us to do that. Not merely perpetuating the present church life or making it a little better.

Four Pillars

There were certain truths and experiences of life recovered that motivated these four revivals; if I can use Elden as a revival, then five revivals. We have the ministry and the present speaking of that ministry. When Brother Lee died, he left us with the high peak of the divine revelation on the truth side, the matter of the God-man living on the life side, and the God ordained way on the church side or the practice side. Finally, on the gospel side, he has left us with the new way, the God ordained way, also to practice. These are the four major pillars of the recovery: truth, life, church, and gospel. Thus, we are not without blueprints.

Now all the leading brothers and responsible brothers in each of the 10 cities need to go on in one accord to carry this out. You may say, “Minoru, you talk about all these things, but you still didn't tell us how to do them.” I wouldn't say it's all in the books, but I would say that we will get into these things together with all the saints. I hope to do so in the coming days.

A People-Centered Church Life

What does this new church life look like? There should be the truth, the life, and the structural side of the church there. What should be the primary feature of the Lord's present move? We say that we are blood-washed, spirit-regenerated, born-again believers. We are a God-fearing, Bible-believing, and a Christ-exalting church. But how should that church life be carried out? I thought of a few phrases to help describe this. I would say that this church is a people-centered church as opposed to a meeting-centered church. I do not mean that we should not have meetings or that meetings are not important. But over time, we can have a church life that is maintaining meetings, just having good meetings. Brother Lee was strong about meetings. In *How to Meet*, he spent much time on how to take care of the meetings. Absolutely. We will not give up meetings. We are a meeting people. But I would say that we can become meeting-centered, but not people-centered. I would think that the new church life is people-centered. I also believe that if we are really people-centered, our meetings will be okay. It's about people. In other words, brothers – it's about people. “People” meaning the saints, our brothers and sisters. It means the strong, the weak, the old, the young, the different ages, even the dormant and the backslidden. Needless to say, sinners and seekers too should be the focus. We are here to take care of people, to minister Christ to people, to shepherd people, to care for people. We should be a church life that contacts people, not just maintaining some meetings or a church schedule for the sake of meeting.

In our leading of the church, we should not spend too much time organizing or scheduling meetings. We should spend most of our time

not on affairs, but on people. Leading brothers and district brothers – our time is not for organizing events or to put up a nice calendar. Our time is to be spent contacting people, visiting people, sharing the Lord with people, and shepherding people. We need to shepherd the old and the young. We need to perfect and train people. Then the saints in the church life will feel that this church is warm, ardent, and concerned with human beings, with believers and unbelievers. This may not sound new. Brothers, I think this is one area where we might have been quite short. It may even be the reason for a cold church life, an unattractive church life or a church life with a lack of increase.

Brother Lee spent much time talking about contacting people to us and to the elders. He said the elders should have a phone list of the saints and go down this phone list to visit every saint. When you're done, go back again. He said you don't know how much the saints would feel warmed, cherished, and supplied when a leading brother contacts them. That is regarding the saints in the church. Then for the gospel, we can visit people, sinners, friends and relatives with a heart and interest in them. This is a heart for people. In Brother Nee's book, *The Character of the Lord's Worker*, one of the first chapters is titled *A Lover of Man*. It may seem obvious, but we can have a church life that is full of truth, yet cold as an iceberg. We can have a church life that is very rich in knowledge, yet very lacking in love.

Do not think this is a small thing. Brothers, this is a big thing. Sometimes this has to do with the disposition of the leading brothers. By disposition, they may not be warm, people-friendly or sociable. Then we must stand against that and really care for people. I would rather that we were a bit short in various organizational things and arrangements, but have the heart, the burden, the contact, and the intimate concern for people. You cannot practice the God ordained way if you do not have this kind of heart. Otherwise, the God ordained way is just a cold way. "Do this, do that." I think to renew the church, we need to start with the heart transplant to have a heart of flesh that cares for people. For example, the migrants are coming. If we take

care of these migrants nonjudgmentally, generously, genuinely, and lovingly, then bringing them into the church life is not a difficult thing. That heart is very important. Brother Lee spoke very much about a warm church life, even a “hot” church life. Revelation 3:15 says, “You are neither cold nor hot; I wish that you were cold or hot. Here, “hot” means boiling hot.

Today, as human beings, we are all looking for a place of warmth. We are all looking to be loved and cared for. That's just the way it is, especially in today's world. The second biggest thing that causes anxiety and depression today among people, especially young people, is loneliness. This leads to very poor mental health.

A Home-based Church Life

This new church life should be home-based. One may say we should have a meeting hall. I'm not against meeting halls. Meeting halls are useful. But the real church life, the prevailing church life is home-based. I mean “home-based” in two ways.

The Household as the Building Block of the Church

First the household, the family of the believers is the building block of the church. Actually, you cannot say that a healthy single saint is a building block. A healthy Christian family household is a building block. Note that Paul in his greetings in his various epistles, not only mentioned individuals, but many times “the household of so-and-so.” Brothers, we should pay attention to the saints’ family, their family life, a healthy household in the Lord, even a family that is godly and that loves the Lord and that raises up their children in the Lord. We can have a facade of a church where the building blocks are non-existent or crumbling. We cannot build up a strong church life that way.

I'm not James Dobson. I'm not here advocating for focusing on the family. But, my dear brothers, we cannot be so proud of our family life in the Lord's recovery. Nuclear families are under direct attack by the

enemy in society today. There are also many divorces and broken families in the Lord's recovery today. Some saints can even come to the meeting and give a good prophecy, while at home things are falling apart with their marriage or children. Brothers, we are here to build up a church life, the church life is people, and the block building block is the family.

I have given two messages and I have two outlines. Message One is "A Holy Marriage for God's Purpose." Message Two is "A Godly family for the Church Life." Both messages contain ministry quotes. Brothers, I feel that to really build or rebuild the church, we must pay attention to this matter. Not focus on the family in that way; but focus on the family for the church.

House to House

The other side of the home-based church life is in Acts 2, that is, the house-to-house, day-by-day church life. This is one of the first burdens Brother Lee had when he went back to Taiwan in 1985. He spoke a lot on home meetings. The emphasis is on the "home" not just the "meeting." This means using the homes of the saints as the meeting venue, the place of gathering. Sure, we need to gather as the first church in Jerusalem met by the temple for public gatherings. We do gather into one place as the church did in Corinth. But by and large during the week, during the common daily life of the saints, we gather in homes. Whether it is the family itself, or some neighbors or a small group of saints clustering in a certain neighborhood conveniently in a home. When you go back to all the speaking by Brother Lee, you see how this is so important and that this is how the early church met. They had no meeting halls. They gathered sometimes in catacombs because they were persecuted. But they thrived at the time meeting in homes.

Prisca and Aquila, and this household and that household, they met in the homes of the saints. When the church life is brought into the homes, that church life is real and authentic. You can come to the

meeting hall and still put on a facade. But when you open the homes for the saints to gather, there's no way to hide. It sanctifies your home. It is an easy, low barrier of entry for the outsiders, for seekers and sinners. They are not coming to your meeting hall, they are coming to your home for dinner or a cookout, for backyard barbecue, for a very relaxed and yet sanctified gathering. That is most attractive. Whether it is for children or neighborhood children's meetings or for the sharing of the gospel with gospel friends or for the shepherding of the saints, the homes are the best place. I never meet with a saint in the meeting hall unless for a particular reason because it's very cold and official. I bring him to my home and feed him a meal. Brothers, this matter of home-based church life is a big thing in our practice.

Companionship

We also need to see the importance in our church life of companionship, what Brother Lee called vital companions. This is very scriptural – the twos and threes coming together. I'm not even talking about what we call “small group” on Friday night today. Sorry to say - a lot of those small group meetings are actually dying and dead and old. It just the same old people coming together to read something or have a meal together. I am not saying that's bad. I am not saying that's wrong. But it is not really quite fulfilling the function of gaining people, which is what these groups are for.

Twos and Threes in Matthew 18

Brother Lee shared that vital groups start with one person and then that one finds one or two companions. I did a quite thorough research of twos and threes in the entire Bible. I can give a Bible study of twos and threes. Brothers, none of us can carry on just by ourselves. You've got to read Matthew 18. That entire chapter is on the church life. The main thing in that chapter is the twos and threes. Go read it again; this is the Lord's word. These twos and threes do three things: 1) they gather together in the Lord's name, to enjoy the richness of Christ in fellowship; 2) they bind and loose. Matthew 18:18 says, “Whatever you bind on the earth shall have been bound in heaven, and whatever

you loose on the earth shall have been loosed in heaven.”; and 3) it takes two and three to go and visit that fallen offended sinner, to recover that person. That is a shepherding work of contacting people. Brother Lee touted this matter of the twos and threes as the smallest unit for the church life.

Brothers, please consider these matters. I just mention these few things. Please don't say “Oh, this is no big deal.” Brothers, these are quite pivotal to support a new kind of church life.