

The Portion and Function of Each One **(Fellowship from Minoru Chen on February 14, 2021)**

Prayer

Lord, we take Your cleansing blood for all our transgressions, especially for not living You, not expressing You, not magnifying You, still so much living in ourselves. We ask You for Your forgiveness. Oh, we ask You for Your cleansing. We ask You for Your help and supply, that we may know how to take You more and more in our daily living, not living the self, but really living Christ. Lord, we want You to be lived out through us in our work and service and labor. We desire to be really one with You Lord, that You would be the One working and doing things in and through us. We pray for this genuine abiding, mutual abiding. We pray for real, spiritual fruit, even for lasting and remaining fruit to the Father's glory. Be with us today, Lord regarding what we should fellowship and how we should fellowship. Lord we pray for a renewed practice of the church life, and for a revival in all the local churches, for Your name's sake and for Your testimony's sake.

Organisms Being Organized According to Life

Starting today, I would like to talk to you brothers concerning the organic structure of the church. Notice that we do not use the word "organization." But in an organic sense, the word organism and organization both have this word "organ" in it, so there is some relationship there. Our organic body is actually a very complex organization. To say that we are an organism, and we are organic, and therefore there is no organization, is wrong. The more complex an organism is, the more organized it is, except it is not humanly organized – it is organized according to life.

We all know that the source of life, of all lives, is God. God created things, especially the living things, the organisms, on many different

tiers of complexity: from a single cell all the way to us, the highest of all creatures, the most complex of all organisms. The higher the life is, the more complex that organism is. The more complex that organism is, the more organized it is in a life way, in an organic way. Just look at our body. It is incredibly complex and incredibly organized. If you are not organized, you would not be sitting here. You would have flown apart or fallen apart with the many systems of our body. I trust there are some medical doctors or scientists among us, who can explain, or maybe even they cannot explain, how wondrously we are organized and made. We have not even talked about our brain, the cognitive part, the emotive part, the psychological part. How incredibly complex that is. How about our spirit? Even our spirit has three parts: the part for intuition, the part for fellowship, and the conscience. All these are incredibly complex and organized.

The Church as the Body of Christ
Organized and Structured According to Life

We should all put aside the idea that because the church is an organism, there should be no organization. Yes, there should not be any worldly organization. But it should be livingly organized according to life, according to the divine life, which is the most complex, and even according to the human life, which is a little less complex. Today we even have these two lives mingled. Can you imagine just how complex the whole thing is? The church is that divine-human organism, is it not? So all the things related to the church are very organically organized. All of this is so that this high-level life organism can exist and can function in very wonderful and marvelous way. The Body of Christ needs to function. It has to do things and to build itself up.

If you study the New Testament, the church has different aspects: the Body, the sonship, the household, and even the house of God. As the house of God, it may be less complex, but nevertheless, it is quite organized for life and all the divine riches to be dispensed into the Body. As it says in Ephesians 1, all that Christ is, all that Christ has attained, and all that Christ has obtained are to the church. That little word “to” implies a kind of dispensing. It is by that dispensing that this

Body becomes what it is, so that it can express Christ, it can be the fullness of Christ, who is the One who fills all and in all. These are not simplistic and simple things. In our experience, it may be simple but if you analyze it, it is exceedingly complex in a positive way. That little word “to” means that all that the Triune God has attained and obtained through a wonderful process is now being dispensed to the church. This dispensing causes the church and its constituents, its members, you and I to be made alive or regenerated. Then we will be sanctified, renewed, transformed, conformed, and glorified. One day in this universe there will be the appearance of a holy city, this divine-human universal structure that will have God's glory, the full and enlarged expression of God in man. All these matters that we have heard from the ministry brothers are very deep and very complex things.

Today, we are here talking about the church life, the local church. The local church is organic, for sure. I hope that you have all watched this weekend's International Chinese-Speaking Conference. Brother Lee in the past would often use this first conference of the year to speak something very deep, and he would use a very intrinsic and very organic title for this conference. This conference is very crucial and very timely for where we are today, for the Lord's recovery and for the going on of the Lord's recovery. Do not think that because it is in the Chinese language that it is less important. It does not matter what language the ministry is spoken in. It is the burden, the content, and the oracle of God that is crucial, that is important. Those messages were given in 1990, right after the last great rebellion that we experienced in the recovery. Brother Lee was in a way speaking regarding that. I hope that you all can really pay attention to these messages and get into them with the help of the outlines.

The local churches as parts of the church of God are organized in a life way, in an organic manner. I am taking the liberty to use this word “structure” because organization it implies a kind of structure. Your body and mine are very structured. Your skeletal system, cardiovascular system, and nervous system are all very structured. In the church, there is also a kind of organic structure.

The Structural Aspect of the Church

We have studied the church with the help of the ministry, particularly Brother Lee's ministry which is entirely based on the scriptures. We have considered through many years of study how other groups have practiced the church over the centuries of Christian history and even learning from our own history of the last seventy plus years. We have been learning, studying, and finding the way for us to "church." We are using this word "church" here as a verb to consider the way for us to meet, to carry out our function in the gospel, to shepherd, and to function in so many things that are revealed in the New Testament. Today, maybe we cannot say that we have fully exhausted the study, but brothers, we have come a long way. I would like to say that we have seen very much. One time Brother Lee said that, in terms of the basic revelation, all the revelation of the truth in the Scriptures, by the time he finished speaking on the high peak of the divine revelation, the whole Bible has been opened up to us, including the New Jerusalem. He said that the only thing that still awaited further exploration and research are the twelve stones in the New Jerusalem. He said that he hoped some of us would be burdened to study that. But other than that, the whole Bible has been opened up, including the matter of the church life and the practice of the church life.

In the 1980s Brother Lee went back to Taiwan. I do not think he was burdened to just come up with something new. No, what he discovered further in the 1980, through his five-year sojourn and labor in Taiwan stood on the practice of the past, things that we have learned from others and from our own experiences. In his speaking and in his leading us in the practice of the church life, in the so-called God-ordained way, he made clear this structural aspect of the church. I will be very simple here. In my personal study based on Brother Lee's study, I somewhat concluded that there are, at the very least four levels in this organism, in this "organization." It is primarily based on the number of saints, the number of believers and on the groupings of these believers in the church life. I have studied these things in a very fine way. I have spent the time reviewing Brother Lee's speaking and studied these matters on my own over many years. I am still studying today.

Let me give you just one example. One of the levels or groupings is the twos and threes. As I was studying today, I came across another example of twos and threes. I thought I had exhausted all the examples, but I found another example in 1 Corinthians chapter 14. In talking about the prophesying meeting of the church, Paul spoke of the twos and threes. I will refer you to this famous chapter on prophesying, where you have verse 27: "If anyone speaks in a tongue, it should be by two, or at the most three." Then in verse 29: "And as to prophets, two or three should speak, and the others discern." Now it is talking about prophesying, not tongue-speaking or interpretation of tongues. You may ask me why two or three? I cannot explain, I need more study. I am just showing you that, even in this chapter on the meetings of the church, "two or three should speak, and the others discern." Now you can all prophesy one by one, but here it says that two or three should speak. I will have to ask Paul why two or three. I do not know. Is this not something? It is in the word.

The Release of the Function of the Saints

These four levels are important for all of us brothers because our burden in all ten of the GTCA cities is that by the Lord's mercy we will endeavor to advance, to break ground. Let us not be too shy about it. We should not be proud, but, as we mentioned last week, those who know their God should show strength and take action. Brother Lee was someone like that. He was never satisfied or content with where things were. He was always pushing the envelope. He was always looking to the Lord to do things better, in an improved way. Our church life should be the same. It is wrong that we should be in a stale, stagnant, and stuck church life for years and years. That is the source of oldness in our church life.

We need to always look to the Lord. Only the Spirit is the source of genuine newness, the newness of God that is God Himself. But this should affect us in our practice, just like we mentioned. The new wine needs the fresh wineskin. We need the fresh wineskin so that we can welcome and retain the wine. That is what the church life is in every city, a wineskin to serve mankind; to serve sinners, seekers and the saints with the new wine. But we need a fresh container. That is what

we are talking about here. It is time in the Lord's recovery to have fresh containers everywhere, not the same old containers. Some of the churches here are more than 30 years old. These old wineskins need to be renewed. We do not throw away the old wineskins, but by the Lord's mercy, we need to renew this wineskin to make it fresh and new.

I hope we would all collectively endeavor to do this. Do not do foreign, funny, or worldly things. We always stick with the word, the Spirit, and prayer in one accord as our unique way to go on. I am not talking about changing that, but about the practical way we gather, meet, serve and function. We desire that all the saints can be released and to do things. We want every single part to operate, and every joint of supply to be released so that the whole Body can build itself up in love. This is what has been short these last 2,000 years brothers. The church is still not built up because the function of the believers has been killed and annulled by Satan himself. We are here to release and promote that function. We are here to help the saints to grow so that their gifts can be developed for their service and function. That is the only way that a church is built. All the gifts given to the members of the Body are not for themselves. They are there to perfect the saints, to perfect every single saint, so that in turn, every single saint would do the actual building work. It is a huge thing brothers to work out the building up of the Body according to God's economy.

Four Levels of the Organic Structure of the Church

First Level: Individual Saint

Here again are the four levels of the “organized” structure of the church. The first level is the most basic level, that is the individual saint. Today, as I was considering just before this meeting, the Lord touched me, “Don’t just gloss over this point.” The individual believer is where it all starts. Brother Lee said that the vital group starts with one person, a desperate saint, a saint who is desperate for the increase of the church, the recovery. I started thinking about this *one*. My brothers it is a great matter to be able to impress the saints that every one of them counts, that each one of them is necessary.

Whether they will use what the Lord has given to them not only will affect the building work today but will affect their standing one day at the Lord's judgment seat. Each one will give account according to his or her work. This is a very serious matter. This is the first level, the individual saint. The first, the most basic, component of this organic structure of the church is the individual saint.

It says in Romans 12:5 that we are many, but one Body in Christ. It also says, "...and individually members one of another." Why is this word "individually" used? Some saints know that the church is corporate. They may think that it does not matter whether they show up to a meeting or not since somebody will be there. Whether they serve or not is also not important since other saints will be there. This is wrong brothers. We must impress all the dear saints afresh that we are individually members one of another. I count. You count. You must tell the small sister, "You count, dear sister." You must tell the college-age brother, "You count. You are important." Everyone in the church is necessary. Every member is indispensable. This is 1 Corinthians 12. We need even a revival in this matter. If every saint, every brother, and every sister among us really see this vision, then no one will be idle. No one will sit back and just let others do the work. We would all put in our shoulders and we would all be committed. This is the beginning of revival.

Second Level: Twos and Threes

The second level is the twos and threes. I have outlines through the whole Bible to cover this matter of twos and threes. We need a conference to cover twos and threes according to Matthew 18, and I hope that as we start to have these meetings that will be opened to the saints in your locality, I will speak about this and spend several meetings on "each one." This is the word. Last week we shared on "one another." Next, I will spend several meetings on "each one." This is in the New Testament. "Each one" and then "twos and threes." That's the second level.

Third Level: Small Groups

The third level does not have a clear name in the Bible. We typically call it “small group,” but even two or three is a small group. To avoid confusion, maybe you brothers can help me. It's like the twelve disciples. It's a group, but is there another word to describe that group? What am I talking about? Somewhere between six to eight or fourteen to sixteen people. It is difficult to use a biblical number since the Bible is not clear on this. There is a case or a pattern, however, and that's the twelve disciples. We're not legal; when we say “two or three,” it could be four, but five or six becomes something else. The twelve disciples (plus the Lord) made thirteen. The Lord had a small group. It was the place where the Lord perfected these disciples. He carried out his ministry with the help of these twelve. One time the Lord sent out seventy people; but that was not a small group. The twelve were a small group. But interestingly, within this small group of twelve He frequently just took three apart (Peter, James, and John). Within the twelve, there were two or three that the Lord specifically took apart sometimes to a mountain, the mountain of transfiguration, or sometimes to the garden of Gethsemane. There is something special about twos or threes in the practical outworking even in the Lord's ministry on the earth.

Fourth Level: Districts

In the next level, which is a combination of groups, we have what Brother Lee termed “districts.” He started to use this term in Taipei because the church had thousands of saints. Today the church in Taipei has around 10,000 saints. There is no way that 10,000 saints can meet together every week, so they meet together in what is called “districts.” These districts are the size of many small churches in the US. Some of the churches represented here are of that size, around the number of 50. Please do not take this legally; it could be 60, it could be 70, it could be 40, or it could be 30. I took this number from the Gospels where the Lord fed the 5,000. There He instructed the disciples to have these people sit down in rows. He called them companies of 50 and 100 each. I would say the 100 is the combination of two 50s. We all have experience in the prophesying meetings on the Lord's day. When the meeting is too small, like the size of a small

group it can be difficult. From a small group standpoint, it could be very good in a home or in a living room, and very appropriate. However, for something of impact, twelve people do not have that level of impact, but when you have fifty people, then there is a certain level of impact. Even when you have thirty or forty people, then there is a lot more impact than just with twelve people or fifteen people. This is what we call “districts.” The word used in the book of Mark is “company,” a company of saints, a district of saints. “District” sometimes can give a strong notion of geographic spread. The district is like a particular geographic area, which is okay, but “company” is not about geography. Rather, it's just about the number of people. We need to think about this. Don't think that vocabulary doesn't matter; it denotes a lot. But for now, let's just use the word district. Then if a larger church with a number of districts come together, we have the testimony of the church.

I studied and tried to find out the size of the church in Corinth. No one knows, but from a couple of sources I found out that the church was maybe around 100 to 150 people. Did they have “districts”? I'm not sure, but 1 Corinthians 14:23 says that sometimes the whole church came together in one place. This means that they met in smaller groupings than when the whole church came together. Was that in districts? Was that in homes of the group size? I don't know, but when the whole church came together, there was possibly 150 people. But to use today's terminology and to apply this to what we practice today, the church in Corinth met in districts. Why do we need to break it down into districts or into groups? Brothers, this is not just a game of structure or because we love numbers or numerology. This organic structure is for the survival of an organism, and much more for the function of an organism. When we talk about the church life, we break up the church into these smaller groups and numbers, not just to do it for its own sake, but for the maintenance of the church life of all the saints, for the function of all the saints, and eventually for the building up of the local churches and for the building up of the Body of Christ. That is the purpose.

Each One

I'm struggling a little bit whether I should start with "each one" first, or whether we should jump to "twos and threes." Certainly, I don't want to get into "small groups" or "districts" today. In the interest of not leaping over anything, how about we start with the smallest number - One? Let's start with one because that's where it all starts. If your church would experience a revival, then sometimes it just starts with one saint. One truly revived saint is like a piece of a burning coal that is burning red hot. It gathers two other pieces of black coals next to it and then that heat starts to transfer, and that vitality starts to spread. Soon there are three coals burning and each of these three goes and finds another one or two small pieces of coal. Suddenly three fires are raised up out of one single burning coal. If they all burn, in an ideal case, exponentially they may become ten or twelve burning coals. Brothers this is how we revive a church. It's not a top-down matter. Don't go and tell the saints to do this and do that or arrange this and arrange that with the hope of bringing forth a revival. No, it starts with one, and then three, and then nine, and then twenty-seven. That's how a life revival starts. This is the normal and prevailing way. The more burning coals there are in a church, the more we can burn the whole church.

Each One Has in 1 Corinthians 14:26

I refer to a few passages that would cause us to be impressed by this. This is not a Bible study, so don't take it this way. This is a fellowship to lead us into a fresh practice of the church life in our locality. I want to focus on "each one" and use this word, this phrase. In 1 Corinthians 14:26 we have the phrase, "each one has." This is my key phrase in today's fellowship – *each one has*. You may ask why that phrase is so important. There is a marvelous footnote by Brother Lee in the Recovery Version on this word "has." This word *has* occurred five times in this verse. Each one has a psalm, has a teaching, has a revelation, has a tongue, and has an interpretation. Paul emphasized this word *has* when he talked about each one, each individual each member. Each believer has. We need to put this truth and this faith into every single saint, ourselves included, so that all will say "By the grace of God, I have." No one should say "I don't have" because that's

a lie. Satan has been lying to believers for 2,000 years to cause them to think that they don't have. Only the so-called "men of the cloth," the clergy, the priests, ministers, and preachers have. I don't have; I'm a layman, I'm a nobody." This has caused the church building work to be annulled. This is satanic. The Lord's recovery is to recover "each one has." This is the only way the church will be built up.

Brother Lee says in his footnote in 1 Cor 14:26: "*Has...is a widely used Greek word, a word with many meanings, of which the following three are the main ones: (1) to hold, to possess, to keep (a certain thing)....*" This means that you possess something, here it is a psalm, a teaching a revelation, a tongue, or an interpretation. You have something from God; every believer has something from God. The size of your possession may vary, the number of talents may vary, but each one has at least one talent. We need to preach this gospel brothers. I hope that in all of the ten churches you would preach this gospel. This is the truth.

The second meaning of "has" means "*to have a certain thing for enjoyment.*" You don't just possess something, but you possess something for your enjoyment and for your experience. You're participating in that thing that you own.

The third meaning of "has" is "*to have the means or power to do a certain thing.*" That means now we're talking about a function, a gift, an operation, or an ability to do something in the church. This is in the context of the church life. A gift means a kind of spiritual ability, and that ability is (1) God created - every one of us is different; (2) comes by our learning in our human life; (3) and is through resurrection to add God's grace and God's faith that He apportioned to each one of us. These things added together are the gift. This gift that God, the Head, has given to each one of us is not just for us. It's for the building. Brothers, I'm here touching now the nerve of the church life. This is the touchstone. The problem in an old church life is that many saints are not functioning. Only a few function and they become the collective clergy. We don't have one clergyman, but we can have somewhat of a collective clergy in the churches. We need each one to

function with what they have. Has this happened before? Absolutely. In all times of true revival, all the believers are alive and serving, active, and vitalized.

Each One of His Slaves in Matthew 25

In Matthew 25 we have a parable of three slaves. The whole point of this account is that the Lord gave to each one of His slaves one, two, or five talents. The size is important, but it is secondary. The first thing to note is that everyone received a talent. I once did a little calculation with some help to see what a talent means in today's US dollars. It's at least a million dollars if not more in today's money. In other words, it is a lot of money. Even the one who received one talent got a lot of money. A million dollars, you're a millionaire, every saint is a millionaire slave in terms of what he received from the master. If I give you \$5, you wouldn't care, but would be free to throw it away or lose it. It doesn't matter. But what if I give you a million dollars? On your way to the bank you would look left and right because that check is in your shirt pocket. Brothers, we despise our gift. The saints despise what the Lord has given to them because they don't realize just how much the Lord has given to them. That's what happened to the one who received the one talent. He didn't value it much and just buried it within a handkerchief in the earth. He thought he would just return it to the Lord saying, "here's your million bucks." He was a slothful and evil servant. I'm just here to impress you about "each one has" in Matthew 25:15 which says, *"To one he gave five talents, and to another two, and to another one, to each according to his own ability. And he went abroad."*

I mentioned already that we were all created differently, and we all learn different things in life. Accordingly, the Lord in our regeneration gives to us each something of His grace through faith based on our different abilities. "And he went abroad" means that the Lord, the master, left. How to build up the local church? When each saint rises up and invests and utilizes his gift in the church something gets built up.

Apportioned to Each One in Romans 12

Romans 12:3 says, *“For I say, through the grace given to me, to everyone who is among you, not to think more highly of himself than he ought to think, but to think so as to be sober-minded, as God has apportioned to each a measure of faith.”* The first important point is that grace is given to everyone. The last phrase shows us that each one has a measure of faith. These two things, grace and faith, have been given to each one in different proportions and different quantities. We have all received something of grace and something of faith from the Lord that we need to use to build up the Body.

Romans 12:6 says, *“And having gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, whether prophecy, let us prophesy according to the proportion of faith.”* This means each one or all the members have gifts that differ according to His grace given to us. In verse 3, each one received different portions of grace, and so the gifts differ.

Romans 12: 7-8 says, *“Or service, let us be faithful in that service; or he who teaches, in that teaching; or he who exhorts, in that exhortation; he who gives, in simplicity; he who leads, in diligence; he who shows mercy, in cheerfulness.”* It is *he*, not *they* who teaches in that teaching; *he*, not *they* who exhorts in that exhortation; *he*, not *they* who gives in simplicity; *he*, not *they* who leads in diligence; and *he* not “*they*” who shows mercy, in cheerfulness. It is *he*, not *they*.

Here, in Romans 12, we're talking about the church life in Rome. The main thing is that we need to offer our bodies as a living sacrifice, have our mind renewed, not be conformed to this age, and have our spirit burning. Thus, we need to have our whole tripartite being offered to the Lord. To do what? To serve in the church, and for that, He has given to each one a gift that he or she should exercise.

Your Gift in 2 Timothy 1

In the meetings when we exercise the spirit, it is not just calling on the Lord, but it is to exercise the gift. This is very clear in 2 Timothy 1:6-7, in Paul's word to Timothy, *“...I remind you to fan into flame the gift of God, which is in you through the laying on of my hands. For God has*

not given us a spirit of cowardice, but of power and of love and of sobermindedness." Paul was saying to Timothy, "Fan the gift into flame, use the gift, Timothy." Paul knew Timothy was young and a bit timid. So he encouraged him towards the end of 2 Timothy saying, "Don't bury your gift, use that gift, fulfill your ministry."

The Indispensability of Each Member in 1 Corinthians 12

1 Corinthians 12 is a book on the proper use of the gifts for the building up of the church, both locally and universally. 1 Corinthians 12: 6 says, "*And there are distinctions of operations, but the same God, who operates all things in all.*" Before that he talks about distinctions of gifts, distinctions of ministries, and here, he talks about distinctions of operations. In verse 7, he says, "*But to each one is given the manifestation of the Spirit for what is profitable.*" Verse 8-9 says, "*For to one through the Spirit a word of wisdom is given, and to another a word of knowledge, according to the same Spirit; to a different one, faith in the same Spirit, and to another gifts of healing in the one Spirit.*" Verse 10, "*And to another operations of works of power, and to another prophesy, and to another discerning of spirits; to a different one various kinds of tongues, and to another interpretation of tongues.*"

Brothers, I think the point is very clear. Let's not talk about the kinds of gifts; I'm just here to stress "each one," and "another one." If the saints would see this, there would be a revival. When every saint sees that a precious treasure of a gift from the Head has dispensed into them, and if they would faithfully use and invest it, you will see a revival. To go on, verse 11 says, "*But the one and the same Spirit operates all these things, distributing to each one respectively even as He purposes.*" Now, it couldn't be clearer than that the Triune God has a purpose. And according to that purpose, He distributed to each one, respectively. The rest of chapter 12 talks about the indispensability of each member, whether it's a comely member or an uncomely member, but each member that God has placed is indispensable. Verse 27 says, "*Now you are the Body of Christ and members individually.*" You see that the basic unit in the Body is still the cell or that individual member.

Each Steward in 1 Peter 4

1 Peter 4:10 says, *“Each one, as he has received a gift, ministering it among yourselves as good stewards of the varied grace of God.”* The grace from God is varied or different or distinctive. We are all stewards, and we all ought to minister that gift that the Lord just gave us. I'm supposed to minister “it” among us in the church life. Each one.

I hope you would all ponder, consider, pray together about this matter, about your church, and even pray for every saint that the Lord would release each brother's function. Tell the Lord that we need this sister, or we need that brother. In your care for the church, your help to the saints, bear this in mind. I have told saints who come to inquire as to what their gift is to first just go and use it. Let's not put the cart before the horse. You just start exercising, and you will find out what gift you have. That's my experience. I never knew what gift I had; I was too young. If you just grow and function in the meetings, soon enough your particular gift will become manifested. Don't seek to find out what gift you have before you use it. Just function faithfully in the Lord by the exercise of the Spirit. In the beginning, many younger saints just serve in something and then I tell you that their gift will become manifested.

Every Branch in John 15

Lastly, John 15:1-2 says, *“I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman. Every branch in Me that does not bear fruit, He takes it away; and every branch that bears fruit, He prunes it that it may bear more fruit.”* Do you find it interesting? The Lord didn't say that the branches in Him that do not bear fruit. And He didn't say all the branches that bear fruit. No, immediately, He spoke about every branch. Every branch has to bear its own fruit. If you don't bear fruit, He takes it away - just this one branch. And if you bear fruit, He will prune so that you can bear more fruit. Based on this in verse two, you can almost say that in this passage in John 15 the Lord was not just talking to a bunch of branches. There's that aspect. Rather, the Lord was speaking to every branch. This word in John 15 can be received and should be received individually. Of course, there is the corporate side. And when He says in verse 16, *“You didn't choose Me, but I chose*

you, I set you that you should go forth and bear fruit and that you fruit should remain” – that can be taken both individually and corporately.

Concluding Word

This fellowship is not for the sake of a Bible study. This is to help us to build up the church. A well-maintained church and a robustly functioning church is a church where every member, every believer is living and active. It starts with *one* and this will spread. A lot of our work is to actually open more “playgrounds” for the saints to serve. And the more they serve, the more the saints will be stirred up and joyful because of that serving life within them, that gift that is in them. They will bear fruit. And they will learn all kinds of lessons in the serving life: coordination, prayer, how to give a prophecy, how to shepherd a new one, how to preach the gospel. Brothers, shall we do this to bring forth the fresh wine skin? It's time, brothers. Don't say “We have nobody, our saints are no good.” That's wrong. Even a small saint has something to contribute. Don't despise this one. Don't despise what they have. Amen. That's what I want to share today.

Questions and Responses

Brothers, I would just say “Hallelujah” for such a speaking. It turns out a talent of gold and its current valuation in US dollars is \$1.6 million. I had no idea just how much was deposited with us as stewards. Wow. We have been undervaluing our one talent. Another statistic that I just came across is that every cell in the human body consists of 100 trillion atoms, energizing dynamic atoms, 100 trillion of them per cell. So just to say I've just one cell, there is a lot of dynamic energy in every single cell. There are 100 trillion atoms in that cell. Can you believe that? Mind blowing. Wow, the Lord has really given us a lot.

Brothers, the point that impressed me is that as responsible brothers, we need to be concerned with the functioning of the saints. I consider my own experience, I think a lot of times, I'm just self-absorbed with my own function. As brothers bearing some amount of responsibility, we may slip into the clergy-laity system that we're trying to overcome, just by all the introspection and all the self-concern. But based on the fellowship this afternoon, I was just considering even the saints in my

locality, the need to pray for them, to pray for their function and to be concerned for their growth and their functioning, and not just be inward facing and only concerned with my own function.

Brother Minoru, I was just wondering, how can you practically care for this collectively with the saints? The saints around me, in my home, and the ones I'm getting more related to? How can I affect this, care for this, nurture this, and how do you concurrently or do you take care of the collective whole?

I would say this, that we do need some speaking. Everything starts with the word. I hope that we can have conferences that will just speak to the saints, to show them the truth and the need for such a recovery. But as you said well, in my experience eventually the way to help a saint or to perfect the saints for that matter into his or her function is really not just by speaking. Speaking stirs saints up and gives them the burden and the feeling. But the real help is rendered by individually guiding or mentoring of a person into his or her usefulness. It will start with something small. Let's say you are going to visit a saint or preach the gospel. You can just say, "Hey brother, come along." He does nothing but just watches you. And then time after time, you begin to help him. We need to do a lot of this kind of work. This kind of work is prevailing. I said previously that this is not a top-down work, but a bottom-up work. This is why twos and threes are important, even for this type of perfecting. You should have one or two younger ones with you, new ones even. Even a saint who just got saved yesterday, you should start "employing" them. Get them started. There is something in every regenerated believer who just wants to do something for the Lord. That's not natural; that's automatic. But we don't facilitate that. We don't encourage that. Rather, we say "Well, you're too young. You don't even know the Bible." No, no, no. Concurrently, we need to help them to grow. Even don't say a junior higher in your church or young saints are useless. No! Let them be useful in their small way. And they will grow. I remember Brother Lee said you have to help the saints to declare that it's not that they don't have, but that they have. It's not a matter that one cannot, but that he or she can. Philippians 4 says, "I can do all things in in Him who empowers me." I can. Each one has. Help the

saints to realize “I have,” “I can.” Help even the most timid sister to declare “I have” “I can.” All the various gifts, the distinctive functions are what makes the Body beautiful. We need to do this kind of work. Yes, I would say that we do need some speaking. But we also need to nurture and even perfect, that's where perfecting comes in. Paul said that his prayer was for your perfecting. There needs to be a lot of one-on-one perfecting. That's my experience.

You mentioned something about opening more playgrounds for the saints to serve. In any economy, if you want to employ people, you need to create more jobs. Can you say something about that? Because we just don't want to create services.

One area is simply in the meetings. Say something. Release your spirit. Use 30 seconds and give us your testimony this week. A new one in your small group. Twos and threes. Use Q&A, get them to say something. You don't know how much a believer has when they start to speak, and their spirit comes out. And they want to speak more. One day they could even give a two-to-three-minute prophecy. This is one area that can be opened, the church meetings. Another area is in the gospel. We are all gospel “chickens.” So you need to help them to overcome that, the earlier the better. There is something in us that wants people to be saved, that wants to preach the gospel. In a small way help them, guide them, work with them on campus or whatever you're doing. Another area is all the services in the church. Levitical, spiritual, how about how about the children? How about the young people? How about helping them to do printing, help this one to function on the internet, help that one to be involved in the music? There are so many available areas already. We just need to make this our job, make this a big part of our service, brothers. It's not just about “you, you, you.” Forget about you and me. Look at the saints. Brother Lee, when he was in Chefoo, had in one of his pockets all the names of all the key saints. On the other pocket were all the needs in the church. He was always trying to find who could fit what service or need. I also do that. I think the word employment is good. The worst thing is to be in a corporation and feel unemployed. You're collecting a check, but not fully employed. You're not happy, you're not fulfilled.

When you feel you're useful and contributing, your heart is just given to your job. It is the same way in the church. Many saints lost heart in the church, not because of truth, and not because of just the world. They don't feel they're contributing anything or are useful. They feel that if they are more useful in their secular job, they might as well give their lives to that. You see, we lost people because of this.

Thank the Lord for this fellowship. I'm so inspired by this fellowship. How priceless is every saint in the church? We have to fight to bring each one into function. We have to give much consideration how to bring all the saints into function. Amen.