

Specific Confession and Consecration

Fellowship from Minoru Chen on April 4, 2021

Prayer

Lord, we pray for Your new move in this country, especially Your new move among us. We pray for these cities and pray for all the saints in these cities, that all would be reinvigorated, all would be revitalized, all would be revived. Lord, make this revival our normal condition within Your resurrection life. We pray for a breakthrough, Lord Jesus, in a new church life that is always growing and always multiplying. Lord, speak something to us again. Amen, Lord.

Being Filled in Spirit

Praise the Lord, saints, for another fortnight talk with you all. It is always my pleasure. This morning I was with the saints in the Southeast. I spoke to them concerning the two kinds of fruits in the New Testament that we are to bear. We have an obligation to bear fruit, by virtue of having received the divine life, the life of God, that is Christ and the Spirit in us. Today, as those who have been regenerated or resurrected, those who are children of God, and those who are actually grafted branches in the true vine, according to John 15, we all should bear fruit. This is in the normal course of things. It is not too much to say it is our life responsibility to bear fruit. A branch in a vine is good for nothing if it is not bearing fruit.

I have some vines here for looks, for shade. Besides being nice looking, we know that vine trees primarily exist to bear fruit, even much fruit, in the form of grapes. Those grapes, of course, are for people to eat, but more so, in the Bible, they are to be used to produce wine. Wine is a picture of the stirring and invigorating life of Christ. I quote Brother

Lee in saying it is for stirring up and exciting us, and in the end, cheering us. That is what wine does. It speaks about the stirring up life of Christ and its effect in us. We should “not be drunk with wine but be filled in spirit” (Eph. 5:18). This speaks of the spiritual wine.

The apostles, along with the 120 on the day of Pentecost were said to be drunk with sweet wine (Acts 2:13). Well, they were certainly not drunk with some kind of alcohol or spirits in that kind of a way. They were certainly filled, saturated and drunk with the heavenly wine, that very vivifying, exciting, and stirring life of Christ, which is the Spirit in them. Of course, on that day, that Spirit was not only filling them. That took place on the night of resurrection, when the Lord appeared unannounced in the upper room where they were gathered and breathed into them the breath of life. That night, the disciples, representing all of us, received the gift, received the Holy Breath, the Holy Spirit, this heavenly wine. Many days later, after ten days of prayer, the Spirit came again. It was the same Spirit. Now the Spirit was poured forth, to fill them not only inwardly after the Lord's resurrection, but now ten days after the Lord's ascension, that Spirit is poured forth to fill them outwardly. Both inwardly and outwardly, they were filled with this heavenly wine.

This is what happened to these early disciples of the Lord. Today, although we are not living in that age, in principle, we are still doing the same thing. Day after day, what should we be doing? We should be drinking the Spirit. “In one Spirit we were all baptized into one Body... and were all given to drink one Spirit” (1 Cor. 12:13). The normal yet exciting Christian life is simply a life of drinking, drinking this wonderful Spirit of the Triune God, drinking this all-inclusive, compound life-giving Spirit, which has been given to us as our life within, and you may say, as our gift, the gift of the Holy Spirit. That is the ability that the Lord would give us when He gave us the Spirit, so that we can function, we can serve, we can operate as members of His Body. Both for our living and for our service, for our daily life and also for our service, we are more than well equipped.

Today, brothers and sisters, we have this wonderful Spirit in us. Every day we should perpetually, continually, drink this Spirit, morning till night. Some of these alcoholics, morning till night, the only thing they do is to look for the next bottle. We are not like that, but in a very positive sense, we should be drinking the Spirit all the time. When we call on the Lord, when we pray His word, when we sing praises to Him, when we pray without ceasing, all this is a life of being filled in spirit. With this Spirit, we can live a normal, strong, stirring Christian life. Not only would we live a life full of the Spirit, we can also do the Lord's work. We can serve, we can carry out His commission, and we can fulfill the functions that He has measured to us as members in this Body. And by doing so, we can work grow and serve to build up the Body of Christ in the local churches today.

Dear saints, it is really that simple. We just need more Spirit today. Let us drink every day. Let us every day be filled with this Spirit, this water of life. We will all be energized. We will be strengthened. We will live continually in a revived state, in a revived condition. When we are not revived or when we become dormant, when we become less than living, the reason is simply that we are short of this Spirit.

Living A Life of Confession

Last week, I talked quite a bit concerning the way to be filled in the spirit. One of the first main things is to live a life of confession. This is not to be introspective. This is not to self-analyze. No, don't do that. We just need to come to the Lord more often. If I may say so, I still encourage you that once in a while, once in a week, set aside more time with the Lord. Half an hour or an hour over the course of a week that has 168 hours is not too much. Brothers and sisters, we have wasted hours upon hours doing unprofitable things, wasting time. Why can we not spend just one hour with the Lord, maybe even a set time on a set day in the week? You would be with the Lord for a longer time. At that time, the first thing is to open to Him. Simply open your entire being to the Lord from inside out. Do not cover anything up. No need to cover. Just be completely open to the Lord. "He who covers

his transgressions will not prosper” (Prov. 28:13a). There is no need to do that. Open to Him. I mentioned that in Psalm 51 we have King David's confession after the double gross sins that he committed, murder and adultery in one fell swoop. This was King David. After Nathan the Prophet spoke to him, he was convicted. And so he came before God to make a deep, thorough, and if you read that Psalm you will see, a genuine confession. Through that confession, he would receive God's forgiveness. Not only God's forgiveness of his sins, but God's renewing work in him, because he prayed for that: “Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me” (v. 10). Every time we confess our sins before God, there would be an outcome. That outcome is a kind of renewal.

I hope we would live a life of confession. Confession should not be some event. Confession should be part of our daily life. Our confession is actually the pouring out of our sins. That is described in the famous A. B. Simpson hymn: “I am breathing out my sorrow, breathing out my sin; I am breathing, breathing, breathing, all Thy fullness in.” The more we confess, the more we are emptying our vessel. This is so that the Spirit can fill us again. When you do not confess, when you have so many piled up sins, so many unconfessed transgressions, wrongdoings, and offenses, the Spirit cannot fill you because you are full of those things. The confession is the unloading, the breathing out, the cleansing.

“If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness” (1 John 1:9). This is God's promise, according to His faithfulness and according to His righteousness. The faithfulness is based on His word that if we confess, because He has died on the cross for our sins and shed His blood. With the shedding of blood there comes the forgiveness of sins. That is the faithful word He gave us. We can believe that. We can trust in His faithfulness that He will forgive us. He is also righteous. Righteousness is based on the shed blood to cleanse us. The forgiveness is to remove the guilt of sin, the record of sin, and the

blood is to cleanse us from the taint of sin, from the smear of sin. But it depends on us fulfilling a requirement, that is, we must confess. Do not be afraid to confess your sins before God. The more we have this experience, the more the Spirit will fill us. Because the Spirit will only fill an empty and cleansed vessel, not a full and defiled one, because the content is holy, the Holy Spirit Himself.

Consecrating Thoroughly

What should we do after we confess our sins? The next thing is we need to consecrate ourselves to the Lord, to offer ourselves to Him afresh. Tell the Lord, “Lord, I am here. I am available. Thank You for cleansing. Thank You for forgiving me. Now I am here. I am in Your presence. I’m available. Lord, possess me. Lord, take me over. Lord, gain me. Lord, use me.” This is consecration of ourselves to the Lord. In the Old Testament, the picture of consecration can be seen in the altar of the burnt offering. Of course, in type, all the animals that are burned on that altar typify Christ Himself as the unique offering that satisfies God. But today, brothers and sisters, we have believed into Him, we are in Him, we are one with this Christ. In this Christ, we can also offer ourselves to Him.

Paul said in Romans 12, “I exhort you therefore... to present your bodies a living sacrifice” (v. 1a). There is a call, a beseeching, by the apostle that all the believers should offer themselves as one living sacrifice and that is the consecration. This sacrifice is holy and well pleasing. This sacrifice is satisfying to God. This sacrifice or offering of ourselves, even more specifically, our bodies, to Him, to the Lord, is our most reasonable service. All services begin with sacrifice, with an offering.

I would like to ask all the dear saints in these ten GTCA cities, whether you are local or newly migrated, in these days, to offer yourselves to the Lord again and again and again. Do not just consecrate one time every year. That is hardly adequate. Grant you, I would say that every year, it is good at the beginning of the new year to have a time of

consecration to the Lord of your bodies, that means your time. Because we exist in time, to give our bodies to the Lord simply means to give our time to the Lord. Let us be practical. You cannot say “I give myself to You, my soul to You, Lord”, yet you do not give Him your time. That is just not genuine. That is not practical. To give yourself to the Lord is to give your time to Him.

Then we have to give all parts of our being to Him. There is a famous hymn writer, a sister, called Frances Havergal, who lived in the 19th century in Great Britain. She was one of the key notable figures in the so-called inner life movement there. She was even associated with the Keswick movement there. She was lovingly called the consecration poet. That was sort of her name. If you go to the consecration section of our hymnal, you will find many hymns written by this dear sister Frances Havergal. “Who is on the Lord’s Side” is a Havergal song. “I Love My Master, I Will Not Go out Free,” a slave song based on Exodus 30, is a Frances Havergal song. The hymn “Take My Life and Let It Be” that says “take my life, and let it be consecrated, Lord, to Thee,” “take my hands”, “take my voice”, “take my silver and my gold” is a Frances Havergal song.

Brothers and sisters, we do consecrate to the Lord. I believe all of us in this room are consecrated. But I would like to ask, how thorough is our consecration? Is it like that? Or is it always just a very general consecration? Just like confession, the more thorough, the better. If you give the Lord a very general confession, “Lord, I confess my sins,” that is good. But that is hardly thorough enough. The dealing is not thorough enough, and therefore the forgiveness and the cleansing will not be thorough either. Consecration is the same thing. If you just loosely, easily, generally say, “Lord, I give my life to You,” that is wonderful. But that is not thorough enough. You need to spend time and consecrate each part of your being, each segment of your life. How about your possessions, your job, your family, your marriage, your finances, your future, your children, your grandchildren? We need to have thorough consecration before the Lord. We have to offer

our entire being to Him. This is so that the Lord can have freedom, utmost freedom, in our lives, in our being, to do whatever He wants, to use us in any way He thinks fit. Brothers and sisters, this is the way He can gain full obedience from us. Here is not just a cleansed vessel, a holy vessel, here is an obedient and useful vessel in His hands.

Brothers and sisters, I do not know whether you want to be such a one. I want to be such a one. Fifty-three years ago, I was in Elden Hall. I might have given this testimony to you previously. On a Lord's Day, I was invited by Brother Eugene Gruhler, Sr. to his home for a Lord's Day lunch. Every Lord's Day, he would gather a group of young people to his home to feed them and to shepherd them. After dinner that day, everyone left. He pulled up a chair right across from me, in very close proximity. And he proceeded to tell me the story of D. L. Moody, who was a shoe salesman from Chicago. D. L. Moody visited England and he also visited with the people in the Keswick movement. One of the strongest feature characteristics of that movement is in fact consecration. This is what Brother Eugene Gruhler spoke to me that day. He told me the story, and then at the end, he said this, just staring into my eyes with his eyes with utmost seriousness, "Brother Minoru, today, God is still looking for one man, one man who is fully consecrated to Him." That one sentence moved D. L. Moody to give up his job, his earthly vocation, to go full-time and serve the Lord. The rest is history.

He was one of the greatest evangelists in America. Who knows how many people were saved through him? Today, you still have Moody Bible Institute there in Chicago. That word pierced me, and I would like to tell you that word changed my life. Until today, that simple one sentence still rings in my ears and in my heart. God today is still looking for that one man. Since that time, I don't know how many times I have prayed before the Lord, "Lord, make me that one man."

Dear brothers and sisters, this is still the second year of this present round of GTCA move with these 10 cities. This time our expectation is

high and our anticipation is great because we are convinced that the Lord is indeed doing a new thing in America. Not in a strange way or in a Pentecostal way, but in a real and genuine way. I believe these 10 cities are sovereignly selected by the Lord that such a renewal or revival can take place. At least this is my earnest prayer. But we must render to the Lord a cooperation for this to take place. We're a special group of people, brothers and sisters, even amongst the churches. Not because we're better or because we're superior, but because we happen to be where the Lord is working and where the Lord is moving. It would be a great shame if we do not give Him the timely and perfect cooperation and delay His move as a result and miss His blessing. That would be a real shame. If the Lord can use us once in our life as a stepping-stone, then our life is well lived. That's a word by Watchman Nee. Those saints who went to Russia back in the early 90s did that. We can do that today in America today.

In this thorough consecration, besides giving ourselves and our lives part by part and area by area to the Lord over and over again, the offerings made on the altar of burnt offering, burn by the fire that came from the source, which was from God in heaven. God is the holy fire. That happened only once that the fire came down from heaven, and from that point on the fire was lit perpetually. One of the main jobs of the priests was to add wood to that fire, night and day. Today we don't need to light the fire because the fire is lit in our being. Our need is to add wood day after day and night after night. We should wake up and add wood with another consecration; we should go to bed and add wood with another consecration. Brother Lee told us to consecrate ourselves every hour. He said this quite seriously. Every hour, give yourself again to the Lord. Do you think the Lord would be bored or irritated by that? I don't think so. I think the Lord would be pleased by that. Let this consecration, just like our confession, become part of our daily life. If we are like this, then we will live in a revived condition.

Now I want to be a little bit more specific today as I touch this matter

of confession and consecration. I'd like to apply it to the present burden of the Lord. These migrations, these gospelizing, truthizing, and churchizing of America is for an obvious and specific burden, and that is to gain increase for the Lord's testimony. By increase I mean increase of people in the church life for the growth and strengthening of His testimony. It is also eventually for the spread of His testimony. This is our burden. We are not migrating just to do something new or to switch a city. Migration is to spread the Lord's gospel and to propagate the Lord's testimony. There is a particular burden in these 10 cities that were chosen because these are important cities and different states where there are existing churches. However, there has not been the growth in numbers that is commensurate to the long period of existence of these churches, and that is not right. So, our burden is for the increase and I want to apply this. In these days I would like to direct our confession to this one thing in particular. Amongst other things, we should pray that the Lord would shine on us, expose us, and touch us with our barrenness and the shortage of fruit-bearing and the lack of bringing people to Him and to the church.

Must I Go, and Empty Handed?

A song in the gospel preaching section of the hymnal (Hymn #930) says, "Must I go, and empty handed? Must I meet my Savior so?" That's a story of a young man who contracted a serious disease and had a very short time to live, and he knew it. It was at that time when he got saved and after he got saved, because he was likely bedridden, he couldn't do much or go anywhere, to serve and do something for God. He was sad and sorrowful that he had limited days on this earth, and he confided in a reverend and asked, "Must I go to the Lord empty handed?" The one who heard it told another one that story, and that person happened to be a composer, a writer of hymns. He was inspired and touched, so he wrote that hymn. I don't know whether this is the true story, but what I heard was eventually it was made known to this dying young man, that while he could not do anything, the fruits that were brought in or borne by ones who were inspired by this hymn to go to the mission field and to preach the gospel, would

all accumulate to his heavenly account. The fact of the matter is over the years, many were inspired by this hymn to do just that.

Two Kinds of Fruit

“Must I go to the Lord empty handed?” This morning, when I spoke to the saints in the Southeast, I talked about the two kinds of fruit. The first kind is the kind in Galatians chapter 5 called the fruit of the Spirit. There's a long list of virtues like love, joy, peace, long suffering, endurance, goodness, kindness, faithfulness, etc. All these are just Christ in His uplifted, aromatic human virtues, and to bear such fruit of the Spirit is simply to live Christ in our daily life. As believers today, how do we live the Christian life? In the simplest of terms, it is just to live Christ and express these virtues in our daily living. We do so by walking by the Spirit, living in the spirit, and living in this organic union in oneness with the Lord and in constant fellowship with Him. It is only by this way that we can live Christ, to rejoice evermore, and to pray without ceasing. All this is to help us to live in such a way. But that is only one kind of fruit that we must bear.

There is another kind of fruit that we frequently forget or neglect, and that is the fruit in John chapter 15, where it says that the Father as the husbandman planted a true vine on this earth. We are all branches of this vine tree to bear fruit. But what kind of fruit? The fruit here in John 15 does not refer to those virtuous characteristics of a normal Christian living Christ. The fruit here refers to people. To bear fruit in this way simply means to bring people to the Lord and to bring one who is without Christ or apart from Christ into this organic union with Christ through faith, and to help people to be saved, regenerated, to receive the divine life, and to make sinners sons of God. This is to bear fruit.

We don't have as strong of a feeling when we don't bear this kind of a fruit. When we don't live Christ, there's some condemnation and maybe there's more awareness and concern. But as a Christian and in the church life, when year after year we don't bear some persons to

the Lord or save someone or help someone to know the Lord as life and bear some remaining fruit in the church, for Christ, we don't feel so bad and that is not much of a concern to us. In these days I have a very strong burden and I want to be balanced so that we would be burdened evenly. As a Christian we should be normal on both counts and we should bear both kinds of fruit, living Christ and multiplying Christ in others.

I will use the remaining time to hopefully adjust your concept because everything starts with a concept. The concept change will bring about a change in practice, and the change in practice will hopefully bring in a change in habit, and the change in habit will finally bring in a change in culture among us in the church life in the Lord's recovery. Let's begin with concept.

He Must Increase

Let's remember John chapter 15 which talks about this vine tree and the branches. Earlier in John 3:28-29, John the Baptist talked about the Lord Jesus and said, "I'm not the Christ, but I have been sent before Him...He who has the bride is the bridegroom." He's the bridegroom and the bride is His. Right here is the thought of increase, in multiplication, which should be observed. If there's only one disciple, then there will be no bride. If there are just 12 disciples, then there will be no bride. But when there would be hundreds, thousands, tens of thousands, hundreds of thousands, and millions of believers, then they will form the church, His bride, His wife. "...But the friend of the bridegroom, who stands and hears him, rejoices with joy because of the bridegroom's voice. This joy of mine therefore is made full." Now in verse 30, "He must increase, but I must decrease." I think all of us have used this verse to pray, but not entirely in an accurate way. We pray, "Lord, I must decrease and that means I must die, I must be reduced, but you, Lord, must increase in me." I wouldn't say that thought is wrong, but strictly speaking, this is not what John was talking about. By that time John had his disciples, and if I'm correct even Apollos was one of them later. He had a following, but now that

Christ came, his ministry should stop, and all his disciples should go to Christ. This is what John was talking about. That Christ, the bridegroom, must increase. The people must go to Him and not stay with John. John just opened the door and baptized people, but Christ is the one who will baptize with the Spirit. John must decrease and Christ must increase. That means He must grow and multiply, He must have more following, He must gain His corporate bride. The thought here of increase is a very strong one.

Later in John chapter 12, the Lord Jesus talked about His impending glorification, and that was through death and resurrection. He said in verse 24, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the ground and dies, it abides alone; but if it dies, it bears much fruit." What is the fruit here? This refers to Christ Himself. Is this the fruit of the Spirit? I think not. Christ, in His thirty-three and a half years, was living out the reality of all those virtues in His human life, but now He had to die as the grain of wheat and be buried so that He wouldn't abide alone, so that the shell of His humanity could be broken, and so that life within Him could be released and imparted. In doing so, it would bear much fruit. These fruits are people, including you and me. We are the fruit of Christ. His death and resurrection produced all of us in great numbers to be His much fruit. I think you will agree with me on that one.

Branches Bearing Fruit

Then in chapter 15, which is halfway in this section in John under the umbrella of life's multiplication we have the multiplication or growth in numbers. Here in the middle of this section is the sign of this vine tree and it repeatedly talks about bearing fruit. In verse two, "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." This is not talking about our virtues, strictly speaking. It is talking about our bearing, reproducing or producing people as fruit for this vine as the one grain did by His burial and growth. Today, we are one with Him and being identified with Him in an organic union with him. We are

also here to bear fruit for His multiplication. In verses four and five, “Abide in Me and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself unless it abides in the vine...I am the vine; you are the branches. He who abides in Me and I in him, he bears much fruit.” Then in verse 8, “In this is My Father glorified, that you bear much fruit and so you will become my disciples.” Finally, in verse 16, “You did not choose Me, but I chose you, and I set you that you should go forth and bear fruit and that your fruit should remain.”

I hope by this simple speaking, you will be quite convinced that today as branches in the vine, which you are and I are, we each have the obligation, the responsibility, and the duty to bear fruit for the vine tree and for the spread and multiplication of this vine tree all over the earth.

Specific Confession and Consecration

I will end this way and come back to confession and consecration. I would like to specifically ask that all of us in these days and seasons of prayer would confess and consecrate and specifically confess our shortage in this matter of bearing fruit personally, and even as the church, even as the recovery. “Lord, we receive so much life, so much truth, and unsearchable riches in Your recovery. We are so blessed with this wonderful church life that You have brought us to, and we have even been blessed by all Your up-to-date speaking that nourishes and waters us so that we would live Christ and have a normal spiritual life. But Lord, in this matter of bearing fruit for You, I have been short and have greatly neglected this matter. I have not borne that much. I have not produced fruit for Your multiplication. Only this multiplication will bring the Father joy and will bring the Son glory with a multiplied expression of Himself because of the numeric increase. Lord, I repent. Lord, in this matter, I sinned. In this matter, I have been short. Forgive me, Lord. Help me, Lord, in this matter.” Then in your consecration, brothers and sisters, how about we consecrate amongst other things in this specific way? “Lord, I want to consecrate myself, my life, my home, my everything to You to bear fruit.” This is a specific

consecration. "I want to spend and be spent on behalf of souls. I want to be here to bring the word of the gospel, the gospel of salvation and the word of truth to my friends, my neighbors, my relatives, my colleagues. Lord, You have set me on this earth for this. The church life is not just that we're here enjoying You and would be happy with this. You have a desire, yet unfulfilled, and that is that there would be more people. There are more men that would be saved. Lord, I have been negligent. I have been not so conscious. For many years, I have been barren." Pray the prayer of Hannah. Pray with desperation.

In John chapter 15, again and again the Lord says, "ask what you will and it will be given to you." That asking is not a kind of asking so that you can grow in life; that asking is asking the Lord for fruit. Fruit bearing is not just a job for full-timers. Today, we think we can bear fruit vicariously through full-timers—that doesn't work. We support them, we open the homes to them, but personally, each one of us must bear fruit, for we are branches in this vine and the Lord longs to multiply. After 55 years in the United States, one of the most populous countries on the earth, the recovery here today has no more than 25,000 saints. No, there should be tens of thousands more in the U.S. This country is filled with sinners. It's a Christian country but filled with sinners -- filled with nominal Christians, unregenerated "Christians." It is a country filled with seekers of the Lord, the truth, and the Lord's life. There are people all around who don't have these riches that we have. Brothers and sisters, we are in the church life in these cities not just to have our own enjoyment of Christ, but to bring this Christ to men, and to bring men to this Christ, for His multiplication. We will speak more and more about these things to help all of us be fruit bearing branches. But how about we start here in these days. Pray to confess and pray to consecrate, specifically, for this matter. I believe this is well-pleasing to the Lord and this will be blessed by Him.

Reject any thought within you that you cannot bear fruit, that you are not made to bear fruit. It is wrong. How we do this, how we help one another is one thing. Especially in John 15 it says, "Every branch in

Me,” it does not say the branches, plural. It says every branch, every single branch, every personal branch, must bear fruit, more fruit and much fruit. This means it's possible, just like it's possible to live Christ. Reject the thought that you cannot live Christ. We can. We must render Him the cooperation. We can bear fruit. We must render Him the labor.

Questions and Responses

Q. In John three, Brother Lee mentioned something about John the Baptist. And he mentioned the Bridegroom and then you said the thought of increase is here, and I didn't understand that thought.

R. This bride is a clearly a corporate bride. That means it is a living composition of the Lord's redeemed, eventually to be the wife of the Lamb, even in eternity in the New Jerusalem. The Spirit and the bride say Come. That bride is all the millions or billions of people that the Lord has saved. They make up the composition of this bride for His heart's desire, for His love. And so the thought of increase is clearly there. How do you start with just one? There has to be many, many believers, components, or parts of this bride to form this living composition. And then you have the verse, “He must increase, and I must decrease,” meaning John's disciples should decrease, and all the people should go to Christ. Go to the Bridegroom.

Q. Brother Minoru, I just appreciate your speaking. And I feel like we have made normal what is not normal – our typical situation of lacking fruit. In your sharing from John 15, I just appreciated the Lord spoke even there, “These things I have spoken to you that My joy may be in you and that your joy may be made full.” And I just feel like so much of our lack of joy is not related to our lack of fruit through the virtues, expressing the divine attributes, but actually has to do with the other side of the balance, the fruit bearing of people. I just don't think in our daily life, we associate our lack of joy with the fruit bearing of people. And that's abnormal. I just appreciate your speaking, that we should express Christ in our human virtues and divine attributes,

but just as equally related to our daily joy is participating in the fruit bearing of people.

R. This is why, firstly, we need a change in concept. You have to start here. The concept is not balanced. We are one sided just to bear the fruit of the Spirit, which we must. But what about the fruit of men? We need to be balanced. And you speak about joy. There are two kinds of joy as a result: 1) a joy that is the fruit of the Spirit. When we really are living Christ, we are full of joy. Enjoying and experiencing Christ is filled with the real joy. 2) There's another kind of joy you may not be tasting. A joy attributed to bearing fruit. In John 15:11, "These things I have spoken to you that My joy may be in you, and that your joy may be made full." Only those who bear fruit taste of this joy. Some of us have not tasted this joy for quite a while. Maybe some of us never have. There is a particular joy when you bring someone to the Lord, for which there's no substitute. It's like the time when my first child was born. When that baby came out, I was just a transformed man. I did not know what hit me. I never had that experience in my life. I was in heaven. I was on the earth. I didn't know whether I was crying or laughing; there were a lot of tears. I lost myself in that joy of childbearing. There is a joy when you are praying for a new life to enter this earth. Brothers and sisters, there is a joy in bringing forth fruit for the Lord, a human being, a sinner to Jesus, to the Lord. That is His joy, "My joy would be in you." Dear ones, collectively it is the same. In the church life we can come and have certain joy in the meetings, but if there are no new ones year-after-year, let me tell you, even the first kind of joy will decrease and become stale. Once that meeting begins to have new ones and is even flooded with new ones, we will all be just joyful because of these new ones. Even if there are a lot of needs and problems and challenges, there is joy just to see new babies, the new faces, the increase in the church. Today, let's say in your church, there are ten new ones there, your church will be transformed. Everyone will be excited. That's the Lord's joy in us. Not just our joy, but His joy.

Q. My question is about the gospel that D.L. Moody preached and the gospel that we are preaching. We're preaching a very high gospel; some of us have probably become ashamed to tell people if you do not believe in the Lord, you are going to perish, you will be eternally damned. Moody preached the gospel that got people to go home and worry and be concerned. I'm afraid that sometimes we preach the gospel such that people will say, "Well, that's kind of interesting, kind of different. Hadn't thought about it that way." But our way of preaching the gospel doesn't produce the sense of consequences like that of Moody' preaching. And I've been wrestling with this matter for a while.

R. Struggle no more. D.L. Moody's gospel, the basic, fundamental, yet glorious and wonderful gospel of salvation from eternal perdition, is part of our full gospel. Absolutely. I preach that gospel. My wife preaches this gospel. When we lead people even to pray, we have to help them to pray, to help them ask for forgiveness of their sins and help them receive the eternal life of God, so that they will not end up in the lake of fire. So that gospel of judicial redemption is very much part of the full gospel that we preach. Sometimes we don't know how to meet the needs of people, or we are simply way too high with what we preach to people. So they do not get saved in an adequate way to know the blood of the Lamb, the Lord's blood shed on the cross for their sins. Or they don't know that if they would repent from their sins and turn to God from idols, they will receive the Savior and be pardoned, and then be delivered from perdition. This is absolutely in the Bible. And this is something that we must preach. But we don't just preach that, we preach the whole gospel.

Q. I just want to confirm some of these words. I really enjoyed the balancing word that consecration is a matter of basically letting the Lord work on us. Today, I really enjoyed the matter of a thorough, conscious, consecration. That word "thorough" implies a lot of learning, a lot of practice, a lot of spending time with the Lord. Also, the matter of being vital is a personal matter, spending time with the

Lord, and also includes being vitalized with others, seeking another one to vitalize with to be a vital group. Fruit bearing, it's a body matter. But it starts with our personal time with the Lord. So it's a balancing word. Fruit is not just virtues, but it's also people. And so the concepts you talked about make a huge difference. So thank the Lord for your speaking. Praise the Lord. Amen.

R. I would like to adjust a little bit. Yes, bearing fruit for gospel preaching is a Body matter or a church matter. There's that aspect. But today, I want to make it very personal. It's a personal matter that each one of us one day will stand before the judgment seat of Christ and give an account based on what He has given us, what we have yielded, what have we returned to the Lord personally. Make this personal, brothers and sisters. There is the corporate side, no doubt about that. Consecration is to allow the Lord the freedom to do whatever he wants with us. That's absolutely true. Today, I would like to add something, consecration is also so that we would do something for Him. Not just that He would do something in us, but that we would do something for Him, that is, to bear fruit unto His glory. That is to shepherd His sheep for His flock. There are these two sides.

Q. When I consider my response to repentance and consecration in the context of this matter of fruit-bearing, I am just deeply impressed that there is a prayer focus. I was reminded that in one of the Gospels before the Lord actually chose his disciples, as in preparation of going out, He was actually on the mountain all night, praying with the Father. Then the next day he went and picked them. And I feel the response in me is that there's been a lack of dedicated, focused prayer. I just have a sense that if we would be willing to commit the time, focused time, dedicated time, and specifically, praying about our communities, and praying about our personally being brought into encounters and situations, and actually praying about the people we would meet even before we meet them, that if we really spent the time interceding with God, being desperate before God, seeking to share His burden for the people around us, then God

would move. In myself, I feel that without that prayer, there will be no success.

R. Thank you very much. You're ahead of me. I'm going to talk about this matter of desperate prayer next time when we meet one another. But today, I want all of you to focus on this change of concept of just how serious this matter of fruit bearing is and how much it means to God, to the Lord. If you really see this and touch this, all of us would be deeply convicted before the Lord and even exposed before the Lord. And this is a good reason for us to really enter into specific and even desperate prayer as we are talking about. You are correct to say that we do need to spend time for particular prayer, deliberate prayer, specific prayer in this matter, not just general prayer. Hannah's prayer is very specific, it was just for one son, Samuel, because she was barren. She prayed to Jehovah in a very desperate way and the Lord heard her. I believe, brothers and sisters, if we are so desperate and so deliberate with the Lord, our prayers will be heard. And fruit will be borne in due course.

Q. The one thing that that really weighs heavy on me is that I've been in this situation of barrenness so long. I'm sure many saints probably have the same feeling, that it feels like I'm just comfortable in this situation. It's almost like when you get comfortable with a certain amount of pain, and then you just learn how to live with it. And also, I feel like, over the years, I've made attempts to pray and repent and to work myself out of this situation, but with failure and without any significant results. I'm sure I'm not alone. Hopefully with your sharing we have the beginning of the concept. To change the culture could take over a year. To change our culture personally, and also for the whole church to change its culture –this is a big change for us.

R. Yes, that is true. And I know going in how seemingly insurmountable this matter is. But I still have a faith to believe that when there's resurrection life operating, even a dead almond stick can

bear fruit. That's Aaron's staff. So, let us have faith, brothers and sisters. Let us believe in the Lord that this can happen. I'm not talking about any one of us becoming DL Moody. I'm not talking about each one of us becoming some evangelist. I'm talking, and I'm not stirring up some gospel campaign here at all. I'm talking about how the Lord would bring a good number of dear brothers and sisters who love Him, who are for His recovery, who touch what is moving today, to be renewed and revived and cooperative, so that the Lord in these days can one have a turn. This turn will take some time. But again, I say the turn starts with one, you, me, him or her. The Lord can do this within us. Then this thing can turn. It's not a normal situation, I will tell you that. I totally agree with you. It's abnormal, but we've been used to it for so long. But it is possible. Let's start with the concept. And then we move on to practice. We move on to building habits. We move on to the necessary long-term labor. And slowly we will change the culture in the Lord's recovery. It is possible. I want to put faith in you, brother.

Q. If you lead one on ones to the Lord, and but they never come into the church, and they are not remaining fruit. What do you do about this?

R. Yes, not everyone that we successfully bring to the Lord will be a remaining fruit or come into the church life. But back to my early answer to another brother, aren't you happy that this person is saved? That means that person is not going to the lake of fire. That should be a cause of joy. Brothers and sisters, sometimes we don't even preach the gospel because "what if he does not come into the church?" You shouldn't ask that. You should ask. "Will he die today? If he dies today, will he be in the lake of fire?" Those are the more important questions. Once we bring someone to the Lord, then we nurture and feed to bring this one into the church life at home. Bibles for America gave out millions of pieces of literature and Bibles. We don't expect that everyone who receives a Bible or literature, even if these are read, will come into the church life. Brother Lee says that, in that sense, we don't care for just additions. We care for people getting saved, getting

fed. But among many that we bring to the Lord, there will be those marked out by the Lord, called by the Lord, just like you and I, that will end up in the church. The more people we bring to the Lord, the more there will be a percentage of these people that will end up in the church life. There's a lot more things we're going to talk about in the coming days.